

# Prayer Strategies to End the Vicious Cycles of Unforgiveness

Today, on June 28, we remember two anniversary dates which are linked together in a cycle of bloodshed and unforgiveness.

On July 28, 1914, 103 years ago, a young Serbian terrorist assassinated the archduke and crown prince of the great Austro-Hungarian Empire. The act led Austria-Hungary to revenge itself by declaring war on Serbia. The Russians entered the blood feud to protect their fellow Slavs, the Serbians. The Germans came to the support of Austria-Hungary, France and England came to the aid of Russia, and Europe erupted into the massive slaughter we now call World War I. All because of a cycle of unforgiveness.

Five years and millions of deaths later, the war was officially brought to a close on June 28, 1919 in the Treaty of Versailles. Once again, unforgiveness carried the day as the victorious Allies imposed draconian conditions on the defeated Germans. The resulting hardship and resentment created an opportunity for Adolph Hitler and his Nazi party to drive Europe into a second horrendous conflict which became the Second World War. Then, for another 50 years, the Russians extracted their revenge by turning the Eastern European nations into subservient police states. The First World War, called the "war to end all wars," ended with the peace treaty of Versailles, which a critic called "The peace to end all peace."

It was up to the Americans to break the cycle of unforgiveness. With the Marshall Plan in Europe and a humane occupation of Japan, the Americans turned their German and Japanese enemies into friends. America has also forgiven its

cold war enemies in China, Vietnam, Russia and Eastern Europe, leading the world into a time of prosperity and relative peace, and making way for the unprecedented worldwide Christian revival.

The American ability to forgive goes back to our history as a Christian nation. The Lord commands us to forgive our enemies, and the experience after the second World War showed how the biblical command to love our enemies produces Godly fruit of peace and revival. Forgiveness is perhaps the most powerful spiritual weapon to change the atmosphere and bring God's answers into a situation.

There will always be those who are driven to attack others, and we thank God for those who protect us. But we must also know that there is no true peace without forgiveness.

Let us pray that we will remember that we are called to bless and not curse, and that we can use the spiritual weapon of forgiveness to end destructive cycles of unforgiveness. {eoa}

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## **The Surest Way to Overcome Life's Harsh Disappointments**

Disappointment often stems from failure to realize who and what we really are in the Lord. Failing to comprehend this leads in turn to loss of a sense of purpose. Closely related to hope, purpose gives us a reason for pressing forward in life. How many of us would go to work every day if there were no hope of receiving a paycheck? What would be the purpose?

Self-focus can never provide a sense of purpose or fulfillment sufficient to sustain a life. Yet, conditioned by the surrounding culture, this is where huge numbers of us have been stuck without realizing it.

For more than 40 years, the body of Christ has been too influenced by self-serving teachings that promised to chart a course to personal prosperity, personal blessing, experience of the supernatural and healing for the pain our self-orientation inevitably creates. The teachings produced best-selling books, built megachurches and launched popular Christian TV programs.

As this wave of self-focused material washed over us, how many of us missed the central truth of the gospel—that Jesus didn't die on the cross and rise again to make us rich or grant us an easy life, but to transform the nature of who and what we are for eternity. He came to reveal the nature and character of His Father (See John 14:9).

He also came to impart that same nature and character into us. We have been called to the life of the cross in oneness with Jesus. In Him we come to understand who and what we truly are.

We mean well when we say, "I want to be invisible so that Jesus can shine." But we're making a statement at odds with what Jesus actually taught. Jesus meant something more like, "I want you to be very visible so that I can shine in and through the wonder of what you've become in Me."

The world can't see Jesus. They see you and me. And it's you and me the Lord uses. He longs to exalt us and reveal us to the world so the nations can admire His handiwork in us and therefore witness how great He is.

Jesus stated the purpose for not obscuring the light, "That they may see your good works." How do we define the good works?

The “works” Jesus referred to can be seen in a teenager who came to us as an abuser of his siblings, a high school dropout known by every detention center in town, and a drug user stoned on something every day. Today he’s a leader, he’s proclaiming the gospel and leading others to Jesus, and he’s earning a college degree—all because believers let their light shine in such a way that it melted his heart. Condemnation couldn’t do that. It never will be able to.

The Father’s heart through Jesus did that as believers let their light shine in love upon her. The world can see the light emanating from a life like that, and it can only be attributed to our Father. This redeemed and restored woman didn’t have to perform for God or white-knuckle her recovery. As we who are the light of the world obediently gave the love God showed us, she received it from a Father who loves her.

Let it shine! There’s hope in the world!

Our light shines in the joy and security you see in the children of a solid home where the parents know the Lord, as opposed to the confusion and chaos in the world around them. Something shining from that family makes a statement to a dying world and gives hope to those who’ve lost it.

The culture around us has shifted from covenant, commitment and sacrifice for the sake of others to a focus on self that says, “If you don’t make me happy, then I’m taking a hike.” Misery, loneliness, and hurt remain.

By contrast, when our marriages stand out healthy and strong, it’s a “work” that shines before the world and makes a declaration of the glory of our God. My wife and I have been married 41 years (since 1972) at this writing, and people look at us and say, “You give us hope.” People whose lives have been a train wreck come to me personally to express what an inspiration my marriage and my family are to them.

They say, “How did you do that?” That is the lamp in the dark

place. It is an example of the good works Jesus spoke of, not performed legalistically, but simply lived out in the wholeness Jesus has given for all to see. {eoa}

**R. Loren Sandford** is an author, musician, and the founder and senior pastor of New Song Church and Ministries in Denver, Colorado. He has a bachelor's degree in music and a Master of Divinity from Fuller Theological Seminary. In addition to pastoring, Sandford has an international teaching and worship ministry. Married since 1972, he and his wife, Beth, have two daughters and one son. They live in Denver, Colorado. This passage is an excerpt from his book, Yes, There's More.

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## **Pray for Israel: Assad Planning Mass Chemical Attack**

The Assad regime in Syria is preparing for a massive chemical weapons attack aimed at civilians, the Trump administration claimed Monday evening, June 26, 2017.

U.S. intelligence agencies have evidence suggesting the Syrian government was preparing for a large-scale chemical attack, similar to the strike near the city of Idlib in April 2017 which left dozens dead and hundreds more with serious injuries.

The White House strongly advised Assad that a new chemical weapons attack would not go unpunished, Arutz 7 reports. Days after the April 4 attack, two missile ships in the Mediterranean fired a barrage of 50 Tomahawk missiles at a Syrian military facility used in the chemical weapons attack. U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley added that in addition to the Assad regime, the Russian government and Iran would

also be held responsible for the mass murder of Syrian civilians.

Intercede that another brutal chemical weapons attack will not take place against Syrian civilians, which will result in agonizing deaths and injuries for multitudes—and likely lead to further harsh discord between superpowers Russia and the U.S. {eoa}

*This article originally appeared at .*

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# **Transgender Agenda Sowing Seeds of Confusion in Our Children**

The promotion of transsexual policies in schools is leading to “confusion about gender identity” in children, a leading educationalist has warned.

Author and lecturer at the University of Kent, Dr. Joanna Williams, made the comments at The Telegraph Festival of Education.

She criticized campaigners for seeking to change school policies on gender and forcing children to “unlearn” the difference between boys and girls.

## **‘Confusion’**

Dr Williams said: “We are increasingly reminded that schools are struggling financially. Yet the time, effort and money that goes into producing and monitoring transgender policies is out of all proportion to the tiny number of trans children

currently in British schools.”

She added: “Children—encouraged by their experiences at school—are beginning to question their gender identity at ever younger ages.

“In doing more than just supporting transgender children, and instead sowing confusion about gender identity, schools do neither boys nor girls any favors”.

### **‘Shocking and Immoral’**

Dr Williams went on to criticize schools which blur subject knowledge with “the promotion of particular values.”

“The role of the teacher becomes policing the values, thoughts and language of children to bring them in line with one particular ideological position,” she said.

In April, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) called for 2-year-old children to be taught about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual issues. At the NUT annual conference in Cardiff in April, delegates passed a motion calling for compulsory teaching of LGBT issues “throughout all phases of state education,” including in nurseries.

Ciarán Kelly, Head of Communications at The Christian Institute, described the NUT’s plans as “shocking and immoral.”

### **Institute Briefing**

The issue of transsexualism—wanting to change physical sex because you feel you are “in the wrong body”—has become increasingly high profile.

To aid understanding in this area, The Christian Institute has produced a briefing with key information and theology on the subject. {eoa}

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# The Real Reason You're Exhausted All Day

I've never had low thyroid problems until just recently when my adrenals became very stressed. The thyroid and adrenals are closely associated, so my thyroid has shown a little distress. I'm working on both. And it seems I'm not alone. According to the United States National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health, an estimated 27 million Americans suffer from thyroid disease and 13 million people go undiagnosed. Besides stress, the following are the most common causes of thyroid problems:

1. Deficiencies of iodine and selenium.
2. Food sensitivities to gluten and A1 Casein/dairy)allergy
3. Toxins—especially heavy metals and radiation exposure
4. Hormone imbalances—cortisol too high from stress, too many carbs, not enough fat in the diet

## Symptoms of Low Thyroid

- Depression
- Poor memory, absentmindedness
- Feeling of deep gloom for no apparent reason
- Irritability for no apparent reason
- Chronic fatigue and weakness
- Weight gain or difficulty losing weight
- Hair loss or coarse, dry hair
- Dry, rough skin
- Intolerance to cold
- Abnormal menstrual cycles
- Decreased sex drive
- Constipation

- Muscle aches and cramps
- Fluid retention or puffiness

## **How You Can Improve Thyroid Function**

1. Avoid all gluten and dairy. These foods can cause leaky gut syndrome which can contribute to inflammation of the thyroid gland. Only consume dairy from goats or sheep.
2. Avoid all plastics with BPA.
3. Increase your iodine if you are low. Take kelp tablets or liquid iodine. Watercress is one of the best vegetable sources of iodine. Studies show that watercress helps the thyroid.
4. Increase selenium. Brazil nuts are an excellent source of selenium.
5. Do a heavy metal detox. You can use a combination of Milk Thistle, Turmeric, Chlorella and Cilantro.
6. Ashwagandha can help reduce stress and support the adrenals and thyroid. See Vitality Renew.
7. Avoid sugar, refined carbs and starches.
8. Join my weight loss pilot program The Watercress Diet.

## **Juices That Help the Thyroid**

Juices with the following vegetables are good sources of iron, B vitamins the body needs for hormone creation, Vitamins C and D, beta-carotene, chlorophyll and magnesium.

- Watercress
- Spinach
- Kale
- Collard greens
- Turnip greens
- Beet greens

Excerpts from *The Juice Lady's Remedies for Thyroid Disorders*

### **Juice Recipe:**

#### **Watercress Lemonade Thyroid Booster**

- 2 apples, green is lower in sugar
- 1/2 lemon, peeled if not organic
- 1 handful of watercress

Juice all ingredient, stir and enjoy!

Serves 1

From *The Juice Lady's Remedies for Thyroid Disorders* {[eoa](#)}

**Cherie Calbom, M.S.**, holds a Master of Science degree in whole foods nutrition from Bastyr University. Known as “The Juice Lady” for her work with juicing and health, she is the author of 32 books, including her latest book *The Juice Lady's Guide to Fasting*. She and her husband offer juice cleanse retreats throughout the year, *30-Day Detox* online and *Garden's Best Juice Powder*. “What You Can Do When Your Healing Doesn't Come” is one point from her teaching “7 Keys to Your Supernatural Healing.” You can connect with Cherie at [.](#)

*This article originally appeared at [.](#)*

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## Will Martial Law Actually Protect Christians?

The Filipino military declared a brief ceasefire Sunday, allowing Muslims to peacefully celebrate the end of Ramadan. The lull in the fighting also allowed for the rescue of six civilians trapped in the city of Marawi.

Government forces are forging progress toward peace, but it's slow-going. Earlier last week, about 200 suspected members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) took hostages and holed up for hours inside a school, then took five

civilians with them after fleeing. Some say the attack could be a diversion for the Islamic State to gain more ground in Marawi.

“That is a common perception because the BIFF is sympathetic to the radical group,” says Herman Moldez with Asian Access, an organization that trains and equips Christian leaders throughout Asia. “In fact, there had been some effort for reinforcement coming from Salou and these areas, and so one of the reasons for the declaration of martial [law] of the entire [island of] Mindanao is for the military to be able to respond quickly and not to complicate the whole matter in Marawi City.”

Moldez recently visited Zamboanga City on the island of Mindanao. He says that for the most part, violence isn't affecting Christians or impeding their efforts in spreading the gospel.

“It's very, very safe. Christian communities are very safe. [The violence] is only in Marawi City, really,” Moldez says. “They feel safe because the military is just there to protect and to monitor people coming in and going out.

“It's not interfering, because they are minorities, and they're up on the mountains. So we are not yet feeling or experiencing what ISIS is doing in other countries.”

“They may be safe for now, but Moldez says it would be unwise for Christians to let down their guard.

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“So pray for vigilance. That’s our prayer, that not only the Christian community, but even the Muslim community, will continue to be vigilant. I think the majority of the Muslim communities want to have the peace process with the government to be established.” {eoa}

This article originally appeared on Mission Network News.

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# 7 Spiritual Warfare Prayers for Loved Ones Making Destructive Decisions

It's hard to watch those you love make self-destructive decisions. It's at least as difficult to keep yourself from intervening while trusting God to do what only He can do. While our hasty actions are well-meaning, they tend to only make things worse. On the other hand, history records countless testimonies of the power of prayerful patience.

To aid your prayer time, I've handcrafted seven strategic prayers based upon related Scriptures. These are each designed to be personalized with the name of your loved one. I encourage you to bookmark or print this page to help you contend for your loved one every day.

## 7 Personalized Prayers

"Father, \_\_\_\_\_ is walking in darkness with no interest in what's right. I ask You to bring them to trust in Your name and to rely only on You" (see Is. 50:10).

"Lord, Your Word assures that you created \_\_\_\_\_ with a plan for good works. But right now, they are running from that plan. Please remind \_\_\_\_\_ of their assignment and bring them back on the path of Your purpose" (see Eph. 2:10).

"God, \_\_\_\_\_ is in bondage to their flesh and cannot find the way out. I ask You to reveal their sin as exceedingly sinful, lead them to repentance and give them freedom from these struggles" (see Rom. 7:13).

“Father, your Word says You desire that all are saved and come to knowledge of the truth. I ask for this to become a reality for \_\_\_\_\_. Please reveal Yourself to them in a powerful way that brings their salvation, deliverance and a desire for what’s right” (see 1 Tim. 2:4).

“Lord, I am confident in Your promise that You finish the good work that you begin. And so I pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and the work you started in them. Remind \_\_\_\_\_ of Your call on their life; lead them to return to You to see it through” (See Phil.1:6).

“God, \_\_\_\_\_ is bombarded with wrong thoughts and unrighteous behaviors. I ask Your Holy Spirit to interrupt evil actions and cleanse their mind of wickedness with reminders of whatever is pure, true and right” (See Phil. 4:8).

“Father, \_\_\_\_\_ is surrounded with wrong relationships that are leading them astray. I ask You to bring these bad influences to an end. Please surround \_\_\_\_\_ with godly people who speak life into them and influence them to follow You” (See Prov. 13:20).

### **A Prayer for You**

“Father, I admit that it’s difficult to watch \_\_\_\_\_ make destructive decisions, and I so badly want to intervene. But Lord, I surrender my will to You and place my trust in You to open their eyes and bring them to truth in just the right timing. Help me to remain patient and encouraged while I wait for You to do what only You can do.” {eoa}

**Kyle Winkler** equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, Shut Up, Devil!, is the #1 spiritual warfare app; and his book, Activating the Power of God’s Word, uncovers 16 strategic declarations to transform your life. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.

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# This Is What Happens When the Liberal Media Tries to Play the Victim Card at the White House

Mike Huckabee's daughter had another "Wow" moment Tuesday at the White House Press Secretary's podium.

Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the principle deputy White House press secretary, was filling in for Sean Spicer—who is also now handling communications director duties—on the same day the Veritas Project's newest investigative piece on "fake news" came out. And the liberal mainstream media members of the White House Press Corps were playing the victim card.

Sanders would have none of it.

What ensued was a meltdown of epic proportions as the White House officially plugged James O'Keefe's video, liberals insisted there's no such thing as bias in their reporting and conservatives kept stoking the fire with their own questions. The fun times begin immediately following Secretary of Energy Rick Perry's discussion of Energy Week (see the video clip above).

Charlie Spiering of Breitbart News asked if the apologies from CNN over its now-retracted story about collusion between President Donald Trump and Russian bankers "wasn't enough." Sanders said the president's comments on Twitter were directed more toward the entire load of fake news articles published against him and his administration, and the year-long focus on the "Russia Narrative" that has yet to produce a single shred

of evidence of collusion between the Trump 2016 campaign and the Russian government.

“You point to that report; there are multiple other instances where that outlet that you referenced has been repeatedly wrong and had to point that out or be corrected,” she said. “There’s a video circulating now, whether it’s accurate or not I don’t know, but I would encourage everybody in this room, and, frankly, everybody across the country to take a look at it. I think if it is accurate, I think it’s a disgrace to all of media, to all of journalism.

“I think that we have gone to a place where if the media can’t be trusted to report the news, then that’s a dangerous place for America. And I think if that is the place that certain outlets are going, particularly for the purpose of spiking ratings, and if that’s coming directly from the top, I think that’s even more scary and certainly more disgraceful. And I hope that that’s not the direction we’re headed. I hope that outlets that have continued to use either unnamed sources, sometimes stories with no sources at all—we’ve been going on this Russia-Trump hoax for the better part of a year now with no evidence of anything.

“Things like the success at the VA barely get covered. They may get covered for an hour at a time, but this story gets covered day in, day out. And I think America is, frankly, looking for something better. They’re looking for something more. And I think they deserve something better from our news media.”

Spiering asked if that meant the president didn’t want the press asking questions about legitimate news topics, such as evidence that Russia wanted to infiltrate the 2016 elections. Sanders repeated the White House’s only concern was with regard to fake news.

“I think that there are a lot of things happening in this

world that, frankly, a lot of people would like to hear about—whether it’s job growth, whether it’s deregulation, whether it’s tax reform, healthcare,” she said. “I think a lot of those things deserve a lot more coverage than they get.

“And all we’re saying is I think that we should take a really good look at what we are focused on, what we are covering and making sure that it’s actually accurate and it’s honest. If we make the slightest mistake, the slightest word is off, it is just an absolutely tirade from a lot of people in this room. But news outlets get to go on day after day and cite unnamed sources, use stories without sources, have—you mentioned the Scaramucci story—where they had to have reporters resign.”

Liberals in the room were instantly triggered. Brian Karem of Sentinel Newspapers attempted to shout down Sanders with a “Come on!” followed by a rant about journalists just doing their jobs and how she was inflaming the situation with her comments.

And, again, she would have none of it.

“I disagree completely,” she said. “First of all, I think if anything has been inflamed it’s the dishonesty that often takes place by the news media. And I think it is outrageous for you to accuse me of inflaming a story when I was simply trying to respond to his question.”

Toward the end of the press briefing, Sanders was again asked about the CNN article, as well as a February article from *The New York Times* that many believe it may have been based on and that was later refuted by former FBI Director James Comey. The reporter asked if the White House felt there were other stories that should be retracted.

“There have been many by *The New York Times* that I would probably disagree quite a bit with,” she said. “I think you could take it pretty straightforward that this administration disagrees with all of the stories that claim that the

President and his campaign colluded with Russia in any capacity.

“So I think he’s been extremely clear that he believes that’s a hoax and certainly something that’s not true and didn’t take place. And any story related to that you would I think find frustration from this team here ...

“I certainly don’t think that you would get arguments from us if there were retractions from outlets on fake stories. But I also think that there’s a moment where we can all do better, and I certainly think that’s what we strive to do every day.

“And hopefully that’s the goal—I know it is—of many, and hopefully it will continue to be of not just the news media but everybody involved in the process to continue to do better, to continue to strive for excellence, and to continue to deliver the best we can for the American people.” {eoa}

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## **Christian Man Decimates Ten Commandments Statue Less Than 24 Hours After Installation**

A Christian man decimated the Ten Commandments monument in Arkansas less than 24 hours after its installation at the state capitol.

Police arrested Michael Tate Reed for smashing his car into the monument early Wednesday morning.

“Oh my goodness,” Reed says in a video posted to Facebook as he smashed into the statue. “Freedom!”

Reed professes to be a Christian on his social media profile.

“I’m a firm believer that part of salvation is that we not only have faith in Jesus Christ, but we obey the commands of God and that we confess Jesus as Lord,” he says in a video posted to Facebook the same day as the incident.

“But one thing I do not support is the violation of our Constitutional right to have the freedom that’s guaranteed to us, that guarantees the separation of church and state, ’cause no one religion should the government represent.”

He asks his friends and followers to use the hashtag “checkmate” if they support his decision.

Reed is not the only one who challenged the installation—though his protest may be the first.

According to Reuters:

*Civil liberties group pledged a court challenge, saying it showed an unconstitutional government preference for a certain religion.*

*Legislators approved the act for the monument in 2015, and whether it was appropriate for the public grounds has been debated since. Similar monuments erected in Oklahoma and Alabama were ordered removed by courts.*

*At the installation ceremony for the some 3,000-pound (1,360 kg) granite slab in Little Rock, state Senator Jason Rapert noted that the Ten Commandments were chiseled into the portals of the U.S. Supreme Court.*

*“If it’s good enough for the U.S. Capitol, it’s good enough for the state of Arkansas,” said Rapert, an evangelist who sponsored the legislation permitting the new monument.*

Reed even set up a GoFundMe to replace his car. At the time of

reporting, he raised \$80 of his \$20,000 goal. {eoa}

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# 11 Unsettling Signs You're a Functional Atheist

Although the definition of an atheist is one who denies the existence of God, in this article, I use the word to depict those identifying as Christians who live as though there is no God to which they are accountable. Unfortunately, in my estimation, there is a very large percentage of Christians who live as functional atheists.

The following are 11 signs that you are a functional atheist:

1. You makes important decisions about your career without consulting Scripture or praying.

I can't tell you how many Christians I know who choose a career or job solely on the basis of how much money they will make. They do not take into consideration how God internally wired them, how it will impact their ability to mature as a believer in the context of a local church or how it will affect their key relationships. When a person does this, they are behaving like a functional atheist.

2. You choose a church solely on emotional connections.

As a pastor since 1984, I have seen more people leave a church because their friends left than because they truly heard from God. Consequently, people are led by their emotions more than by the Holy Spirit when it comes to this all-important matter regarding their church family. That being said, it is totally normal for a person to come to Christ and attend a church

because a friend invited them; however, once they mature in the faith, God expects them to go from carnal reasoning to a spiritually informed process regarding the choice of a church. Among other things, a mature believer will choose a church based on the will of God, where they are growing spiritually and whom God has placed in their life to be their spiritual parent (1 Cor.4:15).

3. You choose a mate based solely on mutual attraction.

Based on my pastoral observation, I have seen countless Christians marry a person merely because of an emotional or physical attraction. Although God can work through any marital situation (Rom. 8:28), making a decision like this is no different than an atheist who will also choose a mate merely on emotional and physical attraction. I believe God uses the way He has wired us emotionally, physically and spiritually, for example, I would never council a person to marry a person to which they were not physically attracted. However, at the end of the day, God has a specific spouse who matches your calling and destiny, which comes from being led by the Spirit and hearing from God. To be fair, I have seen many married couples come to Christ whom God brought together even though they were not believers, but after you are saved, much more is required of you regarding decision-making.

4. You have no consistent communion with God.

Any believer who does not seek the Lord regularly, aiming to be in continual communion with Him, is living like a functional atheist. Moses said to the Lord, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here" (Ex. 33:15). Being in communion with the Spirit and being led by Him continually is a staple of normal Christianity (Rom. 8:14; Eph. 5:15-18). Believers who continually fill their lives with activities bereft of seeking Him behave like functional atheists.

5. Scripture does not inform your worldview.

Every election season it amazes me the unbiblical policies and candidates some believers support. It is obvious to me that they are primarily informed by secular humanism and don't understand how to integrate their private faith with public policy. Those who are not informed by Scripture regarding their world and life views are functional atheists in this area.

6. You casually speak negatively about churches and spiritual leaders.

The Bible teaches us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 1:7). When a person casually speaks evil of other people, especially Christian leaders and churches, it demonstrates that they lack the fear of the Lord who hates discord among His people (Prov. 6:19; Eph. 4:29-31). Slanderers and gossipers in the church live like functional atheists.

7. You determine how many children you will have.

One of the original commands God gave humankind was to bear fruit and multiply, which means to have children (Gen. 1:28). Biological children are a heritage from the Lord (Ps. 127:3-5). Having children is one of our primary callings because we partner with God to expand His eternal family; those who cannot have children or called to be single should focus on having spiritual children. With something as important as this, married couples should pray over Genesis 1:28 and ask God how many children He wants them to have; those who determine family planning without God act like functional atheists.

8. You choose to divorce your spouse for unbiblical reasons.

I have known of spiritual leaders who glibly divorce their spouses merely because they do not get along. Jesus did not

make divorce that easy (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:1-10). Those whose primary plumb line for divorce is happiness break covenant with God and their spouses and act like functional atheists. Of course, if a believer chooses to divorce, the other person in the marriage is not responsible or in bondage (1 Cor. 7:15).

9. Your walk with God is based on blessing and convenience.

Those who only serve God when it is convenient or only requires a minimal sacrifice live as functional atheists.

10. You live independent of His body.

Once we come to Christ, He places us in His body (1 Cor. 12:12-13). Conversely, lone rangers who continually church hop or live without being in covenant or accountability with spiritual leadership live as functional atheists. I have learned through studying the New Testament that I cannot walk out my calling apart from a local church.

11. You make a geographical move without hearing from God.

I am amazed at how many Christians I have known since my conversion in 1978 who have moved away from the church God planted them in, only to waste years of their lives floundering in a stagnant spiritual state. Before a geographical move that impacts a life-giving church connection, I would suggest you do the following: Make sure you have heard from God in conjunction with the independent witness of other mature believers, consult with your spiritual leaders, make sure you are not being driven merely by money or convenience, make sure there is another church in that new community that you have visited and to which you sense a connection and make sure you do not burn any bridges in case you make a mistake and have to return. Those who superficially make a huge geographical move act as functional atheists.

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