

Believing This Lie Affects Your Eternal Destiny

Stories are told of children traumatized when they learn Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny are not real.

But what about the lies we believe as adults? Some are obvious, some not so much.

I recently read an article about a woman who watered a plant for two years before she realized the plant was plastic. Plastic! She posted on her social media, "I feel like these last two years have been a lie."

Now, in her defense, it was a succulent plant. They're slow growers, and they feel rubbery to the touch anyway. And before you question her awareness, several people commented that they've done the same thing.

In another situation, I learned about a friend who had a bowl of realistic-looking grapes set on her kitchen table. They looked so good that another friend plucked one and popped it in his mouth. He chewed and chewed and discovered it was—you guessed it—plastic!

Sigh. We're so easily fooled, aren't we? You and I might not have watered a fake plant or eaten a plastic grape, but we've done other things based on a false understanding of the truth.

We've believed lies about marriage, such as, "Marriage is a 50-50 relationship." The truth is, good marriages are 100-100—each person giving 100%. And even when the other person can't or won't, we still need to be "all-in."

We may be stuck believing a lie we tell ourselves about our relationships, such as, "It's my responsibility to make everyone happy." The truth is, people-pleasing can be

insidious as it sneaks in. It causes us to think our worth is dependent on the happiness of those around us.

Many people are believing a lie about God—the lie that “Good works will earn my place in heaven.” But the truth is, we’ll never have enough of our own righteousness to earn heaven. The Bible tells us Jesus Christ died to give us His righteousness. It’s on the basis of His sacrifice that we can come to God and have Him welcome us as His child (John 1:12). That’s the only way.

Sadly, some don’t want to believe what the Bible says about salvation. Yet they don’t have an objective basis for their own conclusion. Are good works the standard for eternal life just because we want them to be? And if so, who decides the minimum standard? How many good works are good enough?

That’s the thing about believing a lie. Sooner or later, the lie is revealed for what it is. Truth will always prevail. When it comes to a restored relationship with God, however, when do you want to come face-to-face with the truth—now, or when it’s too late to act on it?

Have you caught yourself believing a lie?

How did you feel when you learned the truth? {eoa}

Ava Pennington is a writer, speaker and Bible teacher. She writes for nationally circulated magazines and is published in 32 anthologies, including 25 “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books. She also authored Daily Reflections on the Names of God: A Devotional, endorsed by Kay Arthur. Learn more at .

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What to Do When Your Loved One Stops Believing in God

In late 2018, a close friend of mine tragically lost her cousin to gun violence. The unexpected, brutal death of her 16-year-old family member turned her world upside down, and as she grieved the loss of one of her favorite people, she started to feel as though God stopped answering her prayers.

She felt abandoned, and in her difficult time, she stopped believing. The biblical teachings she once turned to for wisdom and comfort became passages she no longer trusted. I witnessed a drastic change in my friend's faith, and although I could not order her how to feel or think, I wanted to gently remind her of the power, wisdom, grace and love God provides us, especially in our darkest hour.

When faith and fleshly feelings intersect, there are two directions a person can go—their feelings may intensify so they exhibit more love, faith and mercy, thus leading them closer to God, or they completely back away from their faith due to disappointment and sadness, thus abandoning the Father they once loved and trusted. No matter which path a person chooses, He made us to love others. God loves us no matter what, and since we are made in His image, we must love anyway, too.

Love is a powerful tool and so is prayer: "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14). When your loved one stops believing and you'd like to help them find their way back to their faith, keep that person in your prayers. No matter what you say to change someone's mind, and

no matter how convincing you may think you are, God is the only one who can shift someone's mind and heart.

So, add your loved one to your prayer list and pray diligently over their life.

Although your loved one's thought process and feelings are out of your control, there is something you can do within your power, and that's show your love for God through your lifestyle. As you live God's truth in your everyday life and demonstrate faithfulness, your loved one will see and experience faith in action. While you may not be outwardly stating why they should believe in God, your actions will do the work for you! When you live for God, your life becomes a living example of His Word.

Let us remember to respond to an unbeliever's feelings with love and intentionality. Pray for their heart, that they may realize the enemy is tugging at their heartstrings in hopes of permanently removing God from their heart. Address their feelings with care and respect. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to every man who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, with gentleness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Find opportunities to draw them back to a faith-filled lifestyle and mindset. When all else fails, never lose hope. After all, God never gives up on you, so let us treat the people in our lives in the same loving and merciful manner.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities nor powers, neither things present nor things to come, neither height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39). {eoa}

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real world that motivates people to celebrate and share the good all around them. Learn more at

How This Woman Learned to See Male-Female Relationships in a New and Godly Way

The truth is, we women really do love our men. We love them so much that we tend to only see the good in them through hopeful vision. On the other hand, we can see the bad in them through hurt vision. Yet no matter how we see men, we truly love you. Some of us were taught how to view them through generational hurt and pain. On the other hand, some of us learned through the man or men who hurt us.

Those of us who had good fathers growing up only want in a man the same qualities we were raised with. We want a male friend to be as a brother. We want our boyfriend or husband to be a protector and a provider. Most importantly, we want to feel physically and emotionally safe.

Most of us were taught being strong means being controlling. We won't admit it, but it's true. Most of us don't want or have the desire to manipulate or control men. We really don't want to teach a man how to treat us.

Maybe it's unrealistic, but the facts are, we just want a man to already know what a woman needs. Generations of women have been hurt by men. Yet we still rise up in the belief that one day, this relationship will work, this brother will respect me or I can feel safe with this guy.

I really never knew any better until God showed me through His Word what our roles are. Scripture gives us many examples of

honor and respect from men toward women. My eyes began to open as He showed me 17 years ago, and I then made the decision to count everything I thought I knew as dung.

I want to see differently. I have chosen to believe I can have and I will have a healthy, godly relationship with a man. I have finally grown into my worth. I share my message with people because there are many living in shame and guilt about their experiences. They have been feeling as if they did this to themselves. They have no idea that they are not alone—that maybe, just maybe, this is generational, or this could be a manifestation of things buried in their subconscious.

Men and women are both worthy of having a healthy, loving relationship. You are worthy of true love. Soon, I'll be writing something I've never openly spoken about concerning male and female relationships. I'm giving the point of view from the darkest place women don't want to deal with, but we constantly laugh about it and, for most, are living it.

After having turned 51 years old on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020, I am living free. I've been serving the Father now for 17 years nonstop. I'm tired of living a lie. What I've seen, been taught and have lived all those years in the past are over! I'm done with it! None of it worked, and none of those who taught by action, words and deeds are in healthy relationships themselves to this day. Let me tell you what God showed and told me about it! Stay tuned ...

Click [here](#) to hear more from Dr. Gina on male-female relationships.

The One Dangerous Habit You Must Drop to Move Toward

Health in Body, Soul and Spirit

On Valentine's Day, more than half of the consumers in the United States spent a total of \$1.8 billion on one thing. Know what it was? It's something I never buy anymore for anyone and something no one ever buys for me anymore because they know it goes straight to the trash.

Candy.

Mainlining Sugar

However, Valentine's Day is not the holiday where the most candy is sold. Those holidays are Halloween and Easter, where estimates are \$ billion for Halloween and \$2.6 billion at Easter.

Friends, that is a lot of candy, and eating candy is like mainlining processed sugar. Most of that is sold with the intent of going to children; however, if the adults buying it are anything like I was 20 years ago, a lot of it is eventually consumed by adults.

It's interesting to me that we will try to minimize the amount of sugar our children and grandchildren consume, but many adults don't apply the same cautions to themselves.

Disease and Sugar

There are many diseases associated with our fascination for the sweet stuff. Recently, however, with the results of a nine-year study, a connection was made between the "s" word and the "c" word. Yes, research now shows that glucose from processed sugar is directly connected to many types of cancer.

So, if you haven't been listening to my cautions about the white stuff before, maybe you'll start listening now. I pray

that you do.

First, we need a bit of history. In 2017 an article in *PLoS Biology* reported that a research project conducted between 1967 and 1971 by the Sugar Research Foundation revealed a connection between sugar and cancer.

Sugar and Bladder Cancer

Named Project 259, the study researched how sugar intake affected the digestive systems of rats. It compared conventional rats fed a high-sugar diet to those fed a high-starch diet. Results showed that sucrose (sugar) consumption could be associated with elevated levels of an enzyme associated with bladder cancer in humans.

The study was terminated without publishing the results. As far back as 1971, the sugar industry did not disclose evidence that sucrose should be scrutinized as a potential cause of cancer.

Results of the nine-year study, also released in late 2017, revealed a direct link between processed sugar and the continued stimulation of the growth of cancerous tumors. More research needs to be done, but this is a foundational breakthrough, and news is just now coming out about this.

How Cancer Grows

Dr. Lewis Cantley, the Meyer director of the Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City, has abstained from sugar for decades. "As we learn more and more about cancer metabolism, we understand that individual cancers are addicted to particular things. In a lot of cancers, that's insulin—and sugar," he said in a 2019 article on the .

Probably the most important thing to understand from this research is that all cells need energy to function, and there are many types of energy sources. Glucose is the preferred

source of energy in cancer cells. Cancer cells need more glucose than healthy cells, and they metabolize faster.

According to an article in the Daily Health Post in November 2019, cancer cells reprogram their metabolism to quickly and efficiently break down sugar to grow, survive, proliferate and maintain.

Warburg Effect

Discovered by Nobel Prize winner Dr. Otto Warburg, he found that tumors required enormous amounts of glucose compared to healthy surrounding tissue. Researchers have wondered if the Warburg Effect was related to how aggressively tumors grow and how cancer cells ferment sugar. It is this fermentation process that has now been linked to tumor growth.

According to researcher Johan Thevelein, professor at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven, Belgium: "Our research reveals how the hyperactive sugar consumption of cancerous cells leads to a vicious cycle of continued stimulation of cancer development and growth.

"Thus, it is able to explain the correlation between the strength of the Warburg Effect and tumor aggressiveness."

Processed Sugar Is the Culprit

Perhaps the biggest eye-opener and direct application for every person is to understand the sugars that come from fruits and vegetables are different from processed types of sugar. Commercially made sources of sugar have been stripped of all cancer-fighting antioxidants.

Natural sources of carbohydrates that come from fruits and vegetables come with a variety of antioxidants, which help fight cancer. And many foods are good sources of antioxidants.

Here's a partial list of antioxidant-loaded foods: blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries,

cranberries (not prepared with sugar or artificial sweeteners), oranges, spinach, kale and beans of all types including green beans, lima beans, navy beans and pinto beans (Note: Always cook beans).

Eat Real Food

Basically, if it is a real food grown on the vine or on a tree, it's better than anything processed or man-made. Frozen foods or home-canned foods are always a great second choice if you can't have fresh foods.

What all the research is boiling down to is, it's good to stay away from foods with added sugars and any ingredients that you can't pronounce.

I very much agree with what Dr. Cantley says, because it is the way I have learned to eat. He said, "I have a very simple rule. I eat fruit, but I don't eat anything that has sugar added to it. And I guarantee everybody would be better off if they ate zero sugar."

What God Said

This is what God told me back in 1977 and what I struggled with for almost 30 years. He told me to stop eating sugar. It was in regard to weight loss, but now I see how it was also in regard to healthy living.

I didn't know how to stop eating things made with sugar and flour; both were contributing to my weight gain and had already become strongholds in my life. Had I asked Him the simple question back then of, "How can I do that?" I probably would have saved myself decades of heartache and real physical pain.

One doesn't gain up to 430 pounds without a lot of both of those things. When I was finally ready to surrender sugar to Him, He showed me the way and gave me the strength to do it.

Giving Up

One thing I had to do for sure was totally give God every selfish, fleshly desire I had. “If anyone wishes to follow Me [as My disciple], he must deny himself [set aside selfish interests], and take up his cross daily [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come] and follow Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me]” (Luke 9:23, AMP).

At the time, the only example I could think of regarding suffering was giving up the thing I loved the most in this world. Unfortunately, that wasn't God, my husband, my kids, my extended family, friends, career or even money. That was sugar.

When I took my hands off the thing that felt like my everything—protector, best friend, companion, comforter, provider, stress reliever—God became all of those things to me.

Habits Have to Change

I'll be talking more about this later, but for me, giving up sugar wasn't a quick detox thing. My sugar habit had turned into a stronghold and then into an addiction. Sugar was my drug of choice, and I was hooked.

I had to go through a process to get rid of it for good. I had to willingly admit my addiction and lay it on the altar. From there, it was all about habit change. An ingrained habit such as eating as much as you want of sugars and carbohydrates has to change, but that will not happen overnight.

It's time to start cancer-proofing your life, giving up your addiction or at the very least, becoming more healthy—body, soul and spirit. {eoa}

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study guides, including her latest, Sweet Journey to Transformation: Practical Steps to Lose Weight and Live Healthy, and her No. 1 bestseller, Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds. She is also a blogger, spiritual weight loss coach (check out her coaching group, Overcomers Academy) and speaker at . Check out her new podcast, Sweet Grace for Your Journey.

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The Devious Way the Leviathan Spirit Goes After Its Victims

In a recent podcast and article about the spirit of Leviathan, Jennifer Eivaz shared the teaching that this spirit most closely resembles a crocodile. In today's episode, she unpacks that teaching more and also discusses the attributes of pride, since, she says, Leviathan is considered the "king of pride."

On the *Take Ten With Jenn* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network, Eivaz says, "What does a crocodile do? Well, a crocodile likes to hang around the water. So we could say that a spirit of Leviathan likes to hang around the river of the Spirit," she explains. "And then on top of it, that crocodile, have you noticed that they float ... under the water. You just kind of see their eyes ... just barely over the surface of the water. What are they doing? They're looking for a victim. And so when they get that victim, they will actually drag that victim with their powerful jaws, they'll snap onto that victim

and drag that victim under the water and thrash about until that victim gives up, and then go in for the kill.

“And that’s pretty much a good picture of what the spirit of Leviathan does, it looks for a host. And through that host, that person who has come in agreement with the spirit of Leviathan, it goes after a victim and will thrash that victim and wear that victim out until that victim gives up. And then it goes in for the kill,” Eivaz says.

“And so that tells us something; it tells us that we need to really understand how this Spirit works. Because every power, every principality, works differently,” Eivaz says. “And a spirit of Leviathan works differently than a spirit of Jezebel; a spirit of Leviathan works differently than a python spirit. It works differently than a spirit of religion. And so the way you handle it, the way you overcome it and the way you battle against it is going to be different, and I’ll explain to you how this works.”

To hear more of Eivaz’s powerful teaching about the spirit of Leviathan and the dangerous attributes of pride, [click here](#).

Is Your Stress Blocking Divine Miracles?

Does life ever stress you out? I think we could all give a resounding “yes!” answer to that question.

But I have found out that the closer I am to God, the less

stressed I feel. Because He has the answers to every problem. And He loves me (and you) like crazy and wants to be closer to us so we can hear His voice, react in His wisdom, receive His power and walk in His peace.

There's a story in the Bible about a woman named Mary who found out the same thing. She discovered that time spent with Jesus is much better than stressing out—it does us so much good!

Mary's story is in Luke 10:38-42, where one day Jesus paid a visit to the house she shared with her brother Lazarus and her sister Martha.

Jesus probably brought quite a few people with Him to their house that day, as He rarely traveled alone, and He also probably didn't call ahead for reservations. So that meant that Mary and Martha had quite a bit of work to do to serve a meal to all those people at a moment's notice.

It was obviously pretty stressful, because we see Martha in the kitchen, plucking the chickens, preparing the salad, making the lemonade, ordering the servants around, banging the pots and pans—and then suddenly she looked around her and noticing that *Mary was not in there helping*.

We know this ticked Martha off, because she immediately ran into her living room and *yelled at the Lord* (you know you're pretty stressed out when you yell at the Lord in your living room!).

With the vein standing out in her neck, Martha sputtered, "Lord, I'm working pretty hard in here! Make my sister help me!" I'm sure she totally expected Jesus to say, "Oh you poor girl, yes! Mary, go help your sister." But no.

Instead Jesus focused on Martha with a look of compassion and said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good

part, which will not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42, NKJV).

In her frenzy, Martha thought that 65 things were needed to get dinner on the table that day. She thought someone needed to roast the chicken, mash the potatoes, pour the drinks, set the table and more. But Jesus said *only one thing* was needed, and Mary was doing it.

What was Mary doing? She was sitting at the feet of Jesus. Spending time with Him. Listening to Him.

Jesus was obviously trying to tell Martha to stop working so hard and getting so agitated. He wanted her to know that spending time with Him is more beneficial than stressing over all the things *she* thought needed to get done.

Stop the Merry-Go-Round

We don't get to see what happened after Jesus said that to Martha. She probably either huffed away, even madder than before, or she let His words sink into her heart and just stopped the merry-go-round right then and there, sinking to His feet to listen. I hope that's what she did!

Because if she did, all sorts of miracles might have happened. Just one chapter before, Jesus had miraculously turned a few loaves and fish into a meal for 5,000 people. I don't think He would have had any trouble getting a meal on the table at Mary and Martha's house. Could Martha's attempt to do everything in her own strength have stopped a miracle from happening at her house that day?

I think that Bible story is such a powerful illustration of time spent with Jesus. Putting Him first, sitting at His feet, reading His words and listening for His voice takes the pressure off us and sets the stage for miracles! {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at . It is an excerpt from Karen's book Closer Than You Ever Imagined: Experiencing the Deep Relationship With God You Always Wanted. You can read the first part FREE and/or order your own copy by clicking here.

5 Life-Giving Ways Holy Spirit Wants to Work With You

Are you missing out on the divine lessons of business and leadership Holy Spirit yearns to teach you? When men or women love Jesus, pray to God for wisdom and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, they are uniquely positioned to thrive on a higher level than if they were relying on their natural abilities alone. We weren't meant to work alone. The Holy Spirit wants to help.

God is calling believers everywhere to embrace their callings as spiritual professionals: people who value their skills and knowledge and embrace the leadership of the Holy Spirit. This dynamic combination uniquely qualifies men and women to influence the world by the power of the Spirit.

Picture believing professionals partnering with the Holy Spirit, such as attorneys, CEOs, entrepreneurs, teachers,

doctors, support staff, customer service representatives, clerks, sales professionals, IT managers—those you encounter every day reflecting God’s kindness, the comfort of the Holy Spirit and doing business with excellence.

5 Life-Giving Ways Holy Spirit Wants to Work With You

1. Holy Spirit is present to be your advocate. Agree with Him and let Him work on your behalf. “I will send him [the Counselor] to you” (John 16:7c).

2. Holy Spirit will teach you and remind you of what you need to know. Listen to His voice. “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you” (John 14:26).

3. Holy Spirit will give you the right words to speak. “We speak words given to us by the Spirit” (1 Cor. 2:13b, NLT).

4. Holy Spirit will give you instructions about your actions and connections. Pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit. “The Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go to this chariot and stay with it’” (Acts 8:29, MEV).

5. Holy Spirit has an opinion to help you make wise decisions. “For it was the Holy Spirit’s decision—and ours—to put no greater burden on you than these necessary things” (Acts 15:28, HCSB). “But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God’s deep secrets” (1 Cor. 2:10, NLT).

Welcome the Holy Spirit to His rightful place in your life. He’s eagerly waiting. {eoa}

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Are Your 'Good' Works as Good as You Think?

Do you remember the ancient fairy tale about Rumpelstiltskin? A king locked the miller's daughter in a tower, requiring her to spin straw into gold or lose her life. But each night, a strange little man entered her room and, for a price, spun the straw into gold for her. His final price was her first-born child after the king married her. Her only way of escape was to guess his name: Rumpelstiltskin.

My Bible study this week reminded me of this fairy tale. The passage that triggered the connection is 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. The NIV translates it this way:

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

Christians are called to live in a way that honors the Lord. Of course, the good things we do are not what bring us into right standing before God. Only faith in Christ does that. Still, we have the opportunity to build our life on the foundation of the salvation He gives.

So when are those good works *not* good? Which works will “survive” and which will be “burned”? As I studied this passage, I came face to face with the realization that this issue is more than good works versus bad works. It’s also about motive.

My motives can tarnish the best actions, causing them to have no eternal value. A wrong motive may seek attention or accolades from others—yielding a temporary reward in this life, but nothing more. So, in effect, my wrong motives can take a good thing (gold) and spin it into something with no lasting value (straw).

On the other hand, God can take the simplest, most ordinary actions (straw) and spin them into extraordinary results (gold). It happens when I act for the sake of the gospel and God’s glory rather than my own interests.

What a wake-up call for me. May I be as concerned about my motives as I am about my actions!

How about you? {eoa}

Ava Pennington is a writer, speaker and Bible teacher. She writes for nationally circulated magazines and is published in 32 anthologies, including 25 “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books. She also authored Daily Reflections on the Names of God: A Devotional, endorsed by Kay Arthur. Learn more at [.](#)

This article originally appeared at [.](#)

How to Free Yourself From a Familiar Spirit

To help ourselves get free from a spirit of death this year, let's talk about a familiar spirit. What is it? How does it affect our health and hinder our well-being? How does it gain access into our being? And how do we get free from it?

First of all, what is a familiar spirit? It's a demonic, evil spirit that is bent on our destruction. It takes its orders from Satan, who only desires to steal from us, to kill us any way possible and to destroy us and all that is important to us.

Jesus says in John 10:10 about our enemy, the devil, "the thief does not come, except to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

When we hear the word "familiar," we hear the word "family." And this is what happens: This familiar spirit becomes like a family member and gains personal access into every area of our lives.

Allow me to give you some spiritual insight that I have gained over the past 25 years ministering healing to people. I believe you will see clearly how a familiar spirit stops your healing from manifesting and may also hinder your well-being. This message will help you recognize what's keeping you sick and weak and give you steps to take to get free from this familiar spirit.

Signs You Are Bound to a Familiar Spirit

When it comes to sickness and disease or a negative situation, such as an addiction:

-Your whole life is centered around the disease or the problem.

-Your every conversation revolves around this sickness.

-Quite frankly, you wouldn't even know what to say if you didn't talk about it.

-You know this disease inside and out.

-You are so "familiar" with it.

-You know it better than you know your spouse, your kids, the Bible—even God Himself.

-It has become your closest family member.

-It even becomes your idol, your god.

-Your very life and conversations are consumed with it.

-You don't do anything without consulting the disease first.

-It totally controls your every moment.

A Few Ways a Familiar Spirit Gains Entrance Into Our Beings

-Sometimes it enters through a generational curse, which is a curse such as breast cancer passed down from one family member to another.

-Soul ties are another means in which a familiar spirit is transferred to you, through sexual relationships. What has the other person bound will bind itself to you.

-A transferring of spirits from people you are around a lot, like a spiritually unhealthy friend, co-worker or professor. You pick up their unhealthy forms of speech and ways of thinking. Also the transferring of spirits can take place in a

spiritually polluted atmosphere such as a bar or hotel room, or by watching ungodly shows such as horror movies. While watching this horror show, a spirit of fear enters you and takes control of your mind and emotions. Reading ungodly materials is another way a transferring of spirits happens, for example, you are reading through pornographic magazines or sites, and you find yourself in bondage to an addiction to porn.

—A familiar spirit also gains entrance into our beings via the supernatural power of our own words. Remember what it says in Proverbs 18:21 (AMP), “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it and indulge it will eat its fruit *and* bear the consequences of their words.” A good example of this would be if you continue to say that you are a poor man, you end up cursing your finances and hinder God’s financial supply over you and your family.

How Do We Get Free From a Familiar Spirit?

Renounce this familiar spirit in the name of Jesus. Say aloud, “In the name of Jesus, I renounce this familiar spirit. I command it out of my being in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Repent to the Lord for allowing a familiar spirit entrance into your life. Pray, “Father God, forgive me for allowing myself to speak negative word curses over myself, for not heeding godly counsel and hanging out with ungodly friends, for not speaking up against ungodliness with my co-workers, for not taking a stand against the teachings of ungodly professors and for watching movies or reading materials that are destructive to my well-being in the name of Jesus. Forgive me and help me to start a fresh from this moment forward, amen.”

Release the healing and prophetic power of your words over yourself and declare by the redemptive power of the blood of

Jesus, “I am healed, I am delivered from this familiar spirit and all other spirits that have latched onto this demon controlling my every thought and action. No longer will I allow this familiar spirit to control me. From this day forward, I will no longer familiarize myself with this disease or problem and will become intimate with my heavenly Father, my Savior, Jesus Christ, and with my Comforter, Holy Spirit. I take up the Word of God, the Holy Bible, and I renew my mind and emotions with the promises of God. And in His precious name, I move forward free, strengthened and healed in spirit, soul and physical body, amen and amen.” {eoa}

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Mike Bickle on Kanye’s Conversion: ‘We Need to Be in a Spirit of Encouragement to Him’

It’s exciting: A major celebrity makes a public profession of faith in Jesus. Even better, his new album is called *Jesus Is King* and includes songs that quote Scripture. “Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, Jesus is Lord” are the lyrics

of “Jesus Is Lord,” which references Philippians 2:10-11.

What are we to make of Kanye West’s testimony? Is it encouraging—something to celebrate with the hope that it will help reach the masses for Christ? Or is it more like a phase or fad—something that will “wear off” when the pressures of this world mount? How do we handle our hearts in response to this big news?

Mike Bickle, director of the International House of Prayer of Kansas City, shares some helpful thoughts on Kanye’s profession and dealing with new believers in general, whether they are famous or not.

Affirm the Testimony

Gratitude as a response to someone’s profession of faith in Jesus Christ should be the first attitude we express.

“I look at this man, and I think, *I’m so grateful for your confession,*” Bickle says. “[Revelation 12:11, NKJV] says we overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony, and he’s giving a bold testimony.”

While some can be quick to dismiss Kanye’s faith, others go the way of raising him up to “super saint” status. But Bickle cautions against these extreme views.

“I think our approach should be different from either one of those polarized views,” he says. “I think we look at [Kanye] and say, ‘Here’s a person who is making a confession: “Jesus is King—He’s King of my life.”’ It’s a recent confession, and we need to take it at face value, that it’s sincere, unless he gives us strong evidence in his character in the days to come that it’s false, and it’s public (but even then, we don’t need to have a big opinion on it).”

Focus on Jesus, Not Man

The reason we don't need to form a strong opinion about Kanye's salvation, Bickle explains, is that he's a new believer. Scripture cautions us about too quickly elevating a new believer to a leadership position in the church.

"[The leader] must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap" (1 Tim. 3:6-7, NIV).

Jesus Christ is our Savior, not a man. And every new believer needs time to grow. The church's role is to surround and support them in their faith.

"I say ... we need to be in a spirit of encouragement to him," Bickle continues. "He might find some stumbling and some tripping, like all of us in our early days in the Lord. He isn't going to come out of 'the spiritual womb' in perfect doctrine, in perfect maturity, in perfect humility. No one does. We give each other tons of grace."

Extend Grace

New believers, like newborn babies, need grace. And famous people, including Kanye West, likely need more because of all the people forming judgments about them.

"He's got all this attention that's negative, meaning opinions," Bickle says. "I can't imagine what he's having to navigate in all of this because he wants to live for Jesus. I say we give him time, as a born-again believer in the family of God."

Time reveals a lot. When Jesus talked about the four types of soil in Mark 4:1-20, three of the four received the Word of God and began to grow, but adversity came, and only one of those soils produced a great harvest. New growth is exciting, but time and life reveal the soil of our hearts (and soil can

change through prayer, repentance and the decisions we make).

Pray

In light of the challenges that all new believers face, including West, prayer is perhaps the most important thing we can do for them.

In Ephesians, Paul exhorts us to “be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, ... praying at all times in the Spirit, ... *making supplication for all the saints*” (Eph. 6:10, 18, ESV, emphasis added).

Praying for the saints is biblical. So is keeping our attention on Jesus, for He, as the book of Jude says, “is able to keep [us] from stumbling, and to present [us] faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24, NKJV).

Let that be our prayer for Kanye West, for ourselves and for all believers.

[Click here](#) to watch Bickle’s entire response to Kanye’s *Jesus Is King*.

Which celebrities, if any, do you have a burden to pray for?
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