

Do All Good People Go to Heaven?

I remember watching a video of a husband and wife being questioned on the street on whether or not they believed they would go to heaven when they died. They both confidently said, "Yes."

Once they were questioned with why they believe this, both their answers were striking. They both believed they were going to heaven simply because they were good people.

Mark 10:17-18 says, "When [Jesus] set out on His way, a man came running and knelt before Him, and asked Him, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good, except God alone.'"

Moral uprightness is a great virtue to possess as a human being, but it is not an express ticket to the kingdom of God. Being morally upright in character and being a Christian are not mutually exclusive. There's a huge difference between these two.

No one is good except God. Your standard of goodness falls short from Jesus' standard. Even when we think that we are blameless and good in ourselves, we aren't. The natural man is inherently wicked. No one can be good enough to earn their way to heaven. Isaiah 64:6b says, "All our righteousness is as filthy rags." In other words, your sense of morality is a filthy rag before the Lord.

Many believe that the majority of people in the world are good by nature and that hell is only for extremely evil people. That's not what the Bible says.

From the moment we are born, we're on a trajectory to hell, and the only way we can change our trajectory is not through good works. It is simply by accepting the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

I've gotten angry when I shouldn't have gotten angry. I've lied when I shouldn't have lied. And if I tried to earn my way into heaven, I would fall short every time. But I thank God for Jesus and all He did for me on the cross.

We often place the burden of living right on our own shoulders. We want to do it by ourselves, trusting our flesh and our own works. But once we snub the Holy Spirit and try to do it on our own, living a holy and righteous life becomes impossible.

All we need to do is surrender totally and trust His leading. Partial surrender isn't surrender. Giving Him half of your life and keeping half for yourself isn't surrender. Absolute surrender and brokenness are an invitation to the Holy Spirit to take over and help. We don't have to bear the burden of life alone.

We have an open invitation for the Holy Spirit to help us. In Matthew 11:28-29, Jesus says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Watch the full video above or at this link. {eoa}

Rob Vischer is a freelance writer for Charisma Media.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

On the Ground in Ukraine: Michael Evans Tells Frightened Jewish Seniors, 'God Has Not Forgotten You'

The care and protection for Jewish people in Ukraine—especially seniors who have been full of fear during the Russian invasion of their country—have become a heartfelt quest for Michael Evans.

The son of Mike Evans, founder of the Friends of Zion Heritage Center in Jerusalem, wants Jewish seniors to know that the world has not forgotten them—and neither has God. Evans recently returned from a trip to Ukraine after delivering supplies and comfort to Jews in that worn-torn country. With no regard for his own safety while in country, he brought back heartbreaking stories of the desperation and devastation that the Russians have inflicted upon all Ukrainians, including Jews in Kiev and surrounding towns.

“Many of these seniors are alone,” Evans says. “Some of them are bedridden with fear. The community leaders told me those in the area who could leave did—the people we served were either too sick or too old to evacuate.

“My personal goal was to visit the Jewish seniors we’ve been supporting in Ukraine and make sure they got the food they needed,” he adds. “We delivered 20 tons of food to churches and the Jewish community.”

Because of the perils of the war, Evans says once he arrived in Ukraine, it was a “challenge” to find anyone who would take

him to the places where the Jewish seniors lived.

“Igor, the Ukrainian pastor who was helping me, was understandably scared,” Evans says.

One synagogue Evans visited has housed Jews in its basement, and Evans says one can see the toll and stress the war has caused them.

“Many of them are on antidepressants trying to cope with what they are going through. I can’t blame them for that,” Evans says. “I brought them food, listened to their stories, prayed for them and shared an encouraging word.

Evans says the daily atmosphere around Kiev is what one might expect from a war zone—terrifying.

“Ukraine isn’t reporting on civilian casualties,” he says. “Every 100 feet there is a military bunker made of sandbags, and there are soldiers everywhere. Photography isn’t allowed in many places because there are traps everywhere. There are land mines in the streets and camouflaged trenches in the medians. The Ukrainians are super dug in. They keep winning the ground battles, but the Russians are bombing the heck out of them.”

Evans says he met a girl staying at one of the local churches who told him horror stories of what the Russians are doing to the Ukrainian people.

“She’s from a village in the north,” Evans says. “She told me that the Slavic Russian troops were bad, and then other troops came in. They started killing people in the streets for no reason. Then they started raping the girls. Her mother hid her. Then they started taking the girls out of their homes completely and tearing up their passports and documents, saying, ‘You don’t need them anymore.’ The other girls in her village weren’t seen again. She walked for seven hours at night in the dark to escape without even using a flashlight

because it would give her away.”

Evans said he had a close call himself.

“I was right behind the defense line when a battle broke out,” he says. “You could hear the gunshots and explosions right in front of me and then shots from my left, and I could feel a bullet on my face as it zipped by. I backed into cover.”

Evans wants Christians worldwide to know the horrors the Ukrainian people—especially Jewish seniors—have faced every day since the war broke out in February.

“I prayed with each one I visited and told them that we have not forgotten about them—and neither has the Lord,” Evans says. {eoa}

Shawn A. Akers *is the online editor for Charisma Media.*

Follow breaking news like this on our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

Prophetic Word: The Lord Says, ‘My Justice Shall Be Served for the Sake of the Children’

God, You have upon Your heart the children of the earth and have seen the injustice and the things that have taken place

among the children of the earth.

Yet I hear the Spirit of the Lord say, "For there was a day in the days when children were being sacrificed and slaughtered, in the days of Moses; and yet I prepared, through My plan, a way of rescue—a way of escape—to protect the life of the innocent child, Moses.

"So, I say to you that many things that are happening in the earth—some say these are wars that shall end all things; these are rumors of wars." But God says, "Look deeper, for you will see, that in the battles and the things that rage in the earth, that *it is the children who are upon My heart* and have been upon My heart.

"And I even said, before your election, that I dedicated the election to the children and to the honor of My Son, and so *I shall have the last say. I will have the last action.* Do you think that the liars, the thieves, the traffickers shall have their say, their way? Do you think that they shall have any victory?"

Justice for the Children

God says, "Watch, for this is the season and the time, now, of justice, and My justice shall be served for the sake of the children. Therefore, watch the strange turns of events that shall happen even concerning Ukraine and Russia. Keep your eye upon Taiwan for there is more that is happening. For the ground shakes, the waters rise—the tide waters. ...but so does justice for the children.

"Therefore, watch what shall arise as a *new House* shall come unto this nation. And I will sweep, I will sweep, I will sweep through this land to restore honor to the children, and it shall come through the House, the Senate—yes, even it shall come with a new presidency.

"And there shall come even justice throughout the courts for

the sake of the children, and this shall affect the schools, the curriculums; it will even affect what shall even be allowed regarding certain entertainment," God says. "For you will say, 'Could this be possible in a land called America?'"

God says, "You don't understand the new era you are in, nor do you understand the justice that will be served at My hand."

Lighting Up a Generation

"Therefore, watch. Watch what happens, and watch who I bring to the forefront who shall be celebrated among the children—but also those who shall be brought to justice because of what they have done to the children. I will do it for those who think that this is the end of all things."

The Spirit of God says, "Why do you, through fearmongering, steal a generation of their future? For I say, as the *Father of lights*, I shall light a generation of children that shall be part of a remnant to bring forth My glorious church. Therefore, watch [for] great shakings to those that have done injustice. I speak of institutions, even. I speak even in the area of creativity, animation movies, music" God says, "There is something *new* that will arise, and you will see it."

The Children Shall Dance

You say, "God, can You be more specific?" The Lord says, "I will show you what justice looks like, but I will show you what righteousness will be established among children, and there will be a holiness that will arise among the children of this day. They will say, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord of all. Let us worship the Father.' Children shall dance in the streets. They shall gather in the streets with their parents; yes, and it shall not be in protest of what is coming, but it shall be in celebration and marching to declare the majesty of God who reigns among men."

"For they have tried to pollute the children." God says,

“There shall come a holiness from the children that shall arise in this day. Watch as they abhor evil—they will resist evil!” says the Lord. “And they will crave righteousness!” (*To watch this full word, click here.*)

***Hank Kunneman** is the senior pastor of Lord of Hosts Church, a thriving church in Omaha, Nebraska, and founder of One Voice Ministries. As an uncompromising voice whom God is using to stir up the Body of Christ, he is known for a strong prophetic anointing as he preaches. He travels and ministers extensively as he and his wife, Brenda, preach together at conferences, churches and national television programs throughout the United States and overseas. Together, the Kunnemans also host their own nationally and internationally televised weekly program, New Level with Hank and Brenda, airing on Daystar Television Network, Victory Television Network and Faith Broadcasting Network. Pastor Hank is a published author with both Destiny Image and Charisma House, with his most recent books being The Lord Himself Is Stepping In, Prophecy with the Wind in Your Mouth, My Heart Cries Abba Father, The Revealer of Secrets, Barrier Breakers and Don't Leave God Alone. He has also written and created several children's books.*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

How You Can Discover the Most

Valuable Treasure of Your Life

As Christians, believing in God is what we do best! We believe in a God who is able to work all things together for our highest good and for His glory. We are invited to rejoice, but we are cautioned not to worry.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7, NIV).

Paul’s words are not a mere suggestion; he is seriously pleading with all of us who identify as Christians not to be worried about our circumstances or about the things that we see with our natural eyes. Paul is reminding us with fervor not to allow the events of our lives to throw us into an anxiety attack or cause a nervous meltdown.

Please don’t spend another long night lying awake and worrying, but spend it in relishing all of the facets of His character. When we accept the invitation of the Holy Spirit to refuse anxiety and to perpetually pray, supplicate and give thanks, there is a benefit that begins to head straight toward us as a result.

The peace of God will override every human thought and act as a buffer for all of life’s problems. The peace that we receive from the Father is not based on our circumstances, but it is based on His character. He is the Prince of Peace.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28, NIV).

The peace that is ours through Christ does not come delivered through perfect or serene circumstances, but it is a peace that rules in our hearts when we quietly acknowledge that He works all things together for our good and for His glory. It is a peace that is never delivered without His presence.

God's peace is more powerful than your brain could ever be! How can anything be too difficult when you realize that the one who knows you the best and loves you the most has promised to always be at your side?

As I picture Paul writing these words from a Roman prison cell, I can imagine he realizes that he needs to pass his mantle to those who will come after him. Paul was acutely aware that believers all over the ancient world had been closely observing his life as he preached, wrote, spent time in prison, dealt with storms and shipwrecks, was persecuted for the cause of Christ and encouraged those under his watch. Now it was time for a new generation of believers to lead with honor and a Christlike demeanor.

Paul reminded those to whom he was writing, "The God of peace will be with you" (2 Cor. 13:11c, Phil. 4:9b). And in those words, we discover the blessed assurance that encouraged Paul's heart and mind no matter his circumstances. I pray that the words that Paul wrote as a blessing over the early church will resonate in your heart as well.

One of the most cherished aspects of life this side of heaven is friendship with Jesus. Time with Jesus turns an awful day into an amazing day. When I settle down and spend time in prayer alone with Jesus, it revolutionizes a mediocre day into a magnificent day. When I choose to read the Word and ignore the distractions in my world, it delivers the peace that passes understanding. When I choose to sing myself to sleep rather than cry myself to sleep, it ushers me into His presence, where there is always fullness of joy.

Do not ignore the gift you have been given in Him. Paul's God is your God, and He is with you today just as He was with Paul in prison. When you stop that nasty habit of fretting and then begin the delightful discipline of rejoicing, praying, supplicating and giving thanks, you receive the most valuable treasure of your entire life: the peace of God. {eoa}

Carol McLeod is a best-selling author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, *CHARISMA PLUS*.

Tearing Down the Stronghold of Fear in Your Life

Fear is a stronghold the devil loves to set up in us. All he has to do is move all the players in place to set up circumstances that cause us to feel we are all alone. This leads us to believe no one—not even God—is there to protect us.

When this happens, we either go crazy or we will try to protect ourselves. I couldn't go crazy because I had already determined I never wanted to have an emotional illness like my mother. This left me believing I had to protect myself.

As an adult, when I realized I had developed a stronghold of self-protection, I knew it stemmed from an incident when I was 11 and was molested by an older "friend" of our family. I want to emphasize it was inappropriate touching and was thankfully curtailed.

Hiding the Truth

Although I wanted to tell Grandma what happened, I couldn't. Minnie was her best friend. What if Grandma didn't believe me? What if she thought it was all my fault? Was it all my fault? I didn't know for sure.

Fred went to church every Sunday. He was supposed to be a good, upstanding man. Maybe it was my fault because Dad always told me not to wear shorts or sleeveless tops. It was summer. I had worn both. Maybe I enticed him?

I couldn't tell Dad. He'd think it was my fault. I couldn't tell Mom. She had enough problems dealing with everything she was going through. I decided I would have to protect myself. First, I wouldn't stay at Grandma's while Fred was there. If I had to go to an event where he was, I would stay far away from him even if it meant being rude.

So, I determined I would stay away from being near him. I would protect myself from him.

Weight Loss and Fear

Fast forward to when I was an adult and had discovered I had lost 100 pounds. I walked into the office building where I worked and got on the elevator with one of the department directors. As soon as the elevators closed, he looked me up and down and said, "You're looking really good today."

I froze. I didn't know what to say. He kept talking and said something like, "We'll have to get together sometime."

As soon as the elevator doors opened, I ran to my office. I

had interpreted his actions as an older man coming on to me, much like Fred. I realized my fear of certain types of men was still very much alive.

That day I started eating sugar again. I went to the break room and bought two candy bars and a diet soda. I thought if I hadn't lost 100 pounds, the department director wouldn't have come on to me. If I didn't look good, I wouldn't have enticed him. Extra pounds could be my protection.

Breaking the Stronghold of Fear

This stronghold of fear became entrenched in me. I knew it was crazy. The department director probably wasn't coming on to me, I just thought he was. The 11-year-old me who was molested still believed I was in danger.

It was such a stronghold even when I forgave Fred during a Joyce Meyer conference, it did not erase my need to self-protect.

Forgiving Fred, though, was a first step in breaking the stronghold that said I must protect myself. Whenever I would think about Fred, I would see him as a huge monster in my mind and I was a tiny wimp. When I forgave him, I saw him as a shriveled-up little old man compared to me. I could take him on easily.

God is My Protector

To go forward, I needed to embrace the spiritual truth that says God is with me. Self-protection was no longer necessary. God had removed my need to constantly be on guard. I finally began to trust Him to protect me.

I found many biblical promises that reinforced my understanding of God as my protector. Probably the most helpful chapter and the one I return to time and time again is Psalm 91:

“He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with His wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day. Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday” (Ps. 91:4-6. NLT).

“If you make the Lord your refuge, if you make the Most High your shelter, no evil will conquer you; no plague will come near your home. For He will order His angels to protect you wherever you go. They will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone” (Ps. 91:9-12).

No Fear

How could I be afraid when I have a faithful God who protects me with His promises and sends His angels to protect me? I self-protected out of fear. God tells us we should not be afraid because He is with us and will protect us with His strength. We must use these truths to buoy our trust that He will protect us.

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isa. 41:10, ESV).

“Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you” (Deut. 31:6).

Not living in fear is the best feeling in the world. God is my protector. He will lead me where He wants me to go. I am not afraid because I trust Him. {eoa}

Teresa Shields Parker is the author of six books and two study guides, including her No. 1 bestseller, *Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds*. Her sixth book, *Sweet Surrender: Breaking Strongholds*, is live on Amazon. She is a Christian weight loss coach (check out her coaching group at [Overcomers Academy](#)) and

speaker. Don't miss her podcast, Sweet Grace for Your Journey, available on CPN. This article first appeared on . Tune into Episode 126 of Sweet Grace for Your Journey, titled My Protector.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

A Prophetic Vision of Spiders Coming Out of Russia

I had a vision of spiders crawling out of Russia and into Europe. This was a startling vision. The spiders I saw were gigantic and fast moving.

As Europe moves closer and closer to the edge of war, some intercessors are growing weary while others are growing bolder. Some are just waking up.

It's only the hand of God that's holding back Russia's massive army from completely annihilating Ukraine. Although we're seeing terror unfold before our eyes, God never promised there wouldn't be lives lost if we prayed. God charged us to pray without ceasing. And many are.

While Ukraine cries out for more firepower to combat the Russians, I am urging you to release more firepower in the Spirit. Don't give up now. This unprovoked war is far from over.

I want to share with you a prophetic vision I had last week of spiders in Russia crawling across Europe. We need to pray

against these spiders.

I share about this vision on my podcast, *Praying the News*.

What I found later amazed me all the more. I stumbled across a video from Kim Clement in which he shared a dream he had about Putin. My jaw dropped.

I started digging into Scripture about spiders. These Scriptures paint a clear picture of what is happening in Putin's mind. Listen in and get the show notes.

Jennifer LeClaire is an internationally recognized author, apostolic-prophetic voice to her generation, and conference speaker. She carries a reforming voice that inspires and challenges believers to pursue intimacy with God, cultivate their spiritual gifts and walk in the fullness of what God has called them to do. Jennifer is contending for awakening in the nations through intercession and spiritual warfare, strong apostolic preaching and practical prophetic teaching that equips the saints for the work of the ministry. Jennifer is senior leader of Awakening House of Prayer in Fort Lauderdale, FL, founder of the Ignite Network and founder of the Awakening Prayer Hubs prayer movement.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

New World Order Is Coming,

Whether Believers Like It or Not

“We shall have a one-world government, whether or not we like it” declared James Paul Warburg on February 17, 1950, speaking before the United States Senate. “The only question is whether world government will be achieved by conquest or consent.”

Men’s Dream of Dominion

World government has been the dream and dominion of men through the ages to this present age from the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 to the trumpeting of the New World Order in our generation.

The problem with pursuit of global government is not in the nature of government itself, for God has ordained government as “the minister of God to thee for good,” to protect against evil and praise that which is good (Rom. 13:1-4). Civil government among mankind is to be conducted under the overarching fear of the God of the Bible and His governance. When humans forsake the fear of the Lord, God’s ways of government and covenantal oversight and revelation are no longer available. Man thus devises his own ways, seeking inevitably to create a utopian world order promising peace on earth.

The promise and hope of a global order ushering in world peace is profoundly alluring to the natural mind. After all, who in their right mind would not yearn for peace to avert a nuclear holocaust?

The Battle for Dominion

The battle for dominion rages. The great dragon (Satan) is determined to dominate the planet to satisfy his personal vendetta against God. His determination is to “deceive the

whole world" (Rev. 12:9). That is why Yeshua (Jesus) warned us in His final words before His crucifixion, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt. 24:4).

How will such diabolical deception take place? Why will the vast majority be deceived? What is the deceiver's scheme or modus operandi? What is wrong with globalization? Will you be able to discern the difference between truth and deception?

The Moment to be Seized

The date was September 11, 1990. U.S. President George Herbert Walker Bush stood before a joint session of Congress. Consider closely the words of the 41st president: "Out of these troubled times ... a new world order can emerge: a new era—freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice and more secure in the quest for peace."

That "new world," declared President George H.W. Bush, "is struggling to be born." The "opportunity" that he so eagerly desired to seize, was the building of a "new world order." Over 200 times, the senior President Bush declared this "new world order" during his administration. It was historic. It was as if the world had become pregnant. The birth would come in the "fulness of time" ... heaven's prophetic time and Satan's false-gospel hour to seduce the world.

It would be man's glorious gospel of self-salvation, of utopian peace and of global safety without the God of creation. A substitute god would be prepared, designed democratically, without dogma or doctrine offensive to a multicultural, religiously pluralistic world intent on global unity.

Unity Fever

The pressure for and toward world unity, at every level, is unprecedented. This pressure has reached a fever pitch. The flames of global fever are fanned by fear of global

conflagration and by a utopian vision for a global peace and prosperity that has heretofore escaped man's grasp.

This emerging globalism is being forged out of the multitude of prevalent "isms" in our world, the most significant of which we can broadly distill as the "science-isms," "social-isms," "political-isms" and "religious-isms," with the ultimate goal of unprecedented materialism. The merging and synergetic interaction of these various broad categories of isms, each reinforcing the other, is developing a kind of "magnetic" attraction into an uncanny bond now universally defined as *globalism* to bind the world in the final thrust for global unity.

The Anti-Gospel

Global governance is not a conspiracy theory but a confrontative truth. The "gospel" of global government and the unification of the world is secularly described as globalism. Its spiritual roots draw life not from trusting God's wisdom, grace and power, but from man's desire to sever dependence on his Creator and to depend upon mankind's "good nature" to do the right thing for the "common good," and hence save himself. It is the "anti-gospel" precisely because it denies man's fundamental sinful condition necessitating a savior other than himself, shifting ultimate trust to the "arm of flesh," which brings a curse (Jer. 17:5).

Nature abhors a vacuum. When our genuine trust in God and His Word wanes, Satan is quick to interject an alternative, inevitably shifting our focus from authentic faith to a fleshly counterfeit. We are wide open for Satan's final spiritual deception, designed to entrap both Jew and Gentile.

Religious Oneness

Massive spiritual deception is mounting as the final bridge into a counterfeit "Promised Land" of global *security* and *prosperity* (Shalom). The world's religious isms are now

combining to propel even professing Christians and Jews in the powerful currents of global “oneness” into the counterfeit Christ’s new global order.

As Jesus well warned, “if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matt. 24:24, KJV). Globalism is, in reality, the “anti-gospel,” choreographing an increasingly faithless, feeling-driven world in a final collective rebellion against God in the battle for *King of the Mountain*, as the Antichrist takes dominion. It is time to “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

Chuck Crismier is an author, pastor, former trial attorney, President of SAVE AMERICA Ministries and host of the VIEWPOINT podcast. His website is , where his books KING of the Mountain and ANTICHRIST can be obtained.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

Do Your Values and Transparency Match Your Self-Proclaimed Faith?

Christians have long dealt with controversy and threats of persecution, but today the cultural and spiritual contexts present serious challenges to faith, values and authenticity—all three of which remain essential to religious beliefs and practices. Without the interdependence and interaction of faith, values and authenticity, a professed believer’s moral principles, stated opinions and behavior may come into question. The believer’s life may prove ineffective.

The term "faith" implies complete trust or confidence in someone or something; as regards religion, the term implies an acceptance of the operation of God's spirit. It involves spiritual apprehension even if physical proof doesn't exist. The essence of faith involves the assent to the existence and availability of God. For Christians, "faith" can be defined as "belief in Christ and His teachings."

Faith and grace remain inseparable, and grace enables faith. Christians understand that God spontaneously offers grace to aid the development of faith as an operation of His Spirit. Faith enables believers to receive grace, which, in turn, helps the further growth of faith.

Faith helps produce faithfulness or loyalty and steadfastness. It encourages strong religious beliefs and practices and implies a healthy relationship. Christians and Christ remain faithful to each other as their ultimate priority and duty.

The word "value" focuses on an individual's principles or standards of behavior and what she/he considers important in life. Values motivate people and guide their behavior. They also influence the way people live and serve as a significant force in decision-making.

Desirable common values include loyalty, humility, compassion, honesty, kindness and selflessness; several of the common values are viewed as core values. Spiritual values, however, differ from core values and comport with spirituality and faith. Those values include a sincere search for meaning, altruistic love, visioning, an acknowledgment of the happy work of Christ and authenticity. A believer will, at times, experience guilt and feel the need for reconciliation with God and His Son Jesus, but each one possesses the hope of eternal life.

Believers often subordinate the core values to the spiritual, not because they see the former as unimportant but because

spiritual values serve as an umbrella for the development of core and common values. They do not necessarily relate to worldly laws and values but to the relationship between the believer and God and the believer's understanding of that relationship. Spiritual values determine believers' moral responsibilities.

"Authenticity" serves as a core value and infers adherence to both common and spiritual values regardless of adverse pressure. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines authenticity as "the quality of being real"; authentic Christians know who they are and don't succumb to what society wants them to become or do.

Authentic Christians stop—at least to the level they can—living and acting like the world. They acknowledge and honor Jesus Christ in every facet of their lives. They seek to follow Jesus's instruction quoted in John 8:31-32: "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Faith, value and authenticity remain essential to the evolution and maintenance of spirituality and the biblical growth of the believer. Faith in God and the death and Resurrection of His son Jesus serve as the foundation of each Christian's belief in and faithfulness to Christianity.

Those who possess spiritual values seek meaning in life and display altruistic love. They seek and exhibit authenticity congruent with their relationship with Christ and the people around them. {eoa}

Franklin T. Burroughs was awarded a *Nishan-e-Homayoun* by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi for his work in the Iranian Ministry of Court and has received certificates of recognition from the California Senate and State Assembly. He is a member of the adjunct faculty of John F. Kennedy University and has served as president of Armstrong University and interim dean of the

School of Business at Notre Dame de Namur University. He has taught at the University of California at Berkeley. He has been the managing director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Iran and has served as consultant to the Ford Foundation, UNESCO, the U.S. Department of Commerce and the government of Iran. He has also been visiting scientist at the U.S. Department of Energy. He serves as an English language officer (contractor) with the U.S. Department of State. Dr. Burroughs serves as an international consultant in education, Middle East affairs and cultural diplomacy.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

Messianic Rabbi: 'Jonah: Wrong Place, Wrong Time'

The book of Jonah is one of the most loved books in the Bible, especially among parents. What parent or child doesn't love the story of Jonah and the whale?

One reason parents love the book so much is that the book is packed with so many event lessons from which we can teach. Think about it: Jonah provides some of the greatest jumping-off points for teaching biblical values and lessons to our children. Within four short chapters, we are introduced to an ungodly nation in need of repentance, a prophet of G-D who runs from his prophetic calling, a miraculous fish being used to bring the prophet to partial repentance, a gourd being used to teach Jonah to love the people to whom he was called to preach and ultimately a king calling his people to national repentance which saves the nation.

But the book of Jonah has an extremely vital and valuable lesson within it that most parents miss.

The truth is that Jonah's four chapters hold within them some of the Bible's most compelling messages. Yet, while this book is loved by so many and used to teach our children in such a powerful way, the entire book stands contrary to the beliefs of the vast majority of New Testament teachers. This causes many to take the position that Jonah simply doesn't belong within the canon of the Old Testament at all.

You may be scratching your head and wondering why I would make this statement. It is because the book of Jonah is a story about G-D sending a Jewish prophet to a Gentile nation to call them to repentance. To the vast majority of believers in Yeshua and the New Testament, there is a belief that in the Old Testament G-D was the G-D of Israel, or the Jewish people, while in the New Testament G-D rejected the Jewish people because they rejected Yeshua and G-D then turned his heart toward the Gentile people (and any Jewish people willing to separate themselves from Judaism and attach themselves to a Gentile church).

Understanding the events of the book of Jonah may cause many New Testament believers to reassess their beliefs about what makes the New Testament the New Testament, and who exactly are the people of G-D. It should cause them to search for answers to questions such as, "Why did G-D send a Jewish prophet to a Gentile nation?" and "If G-D was calling the Ninevites to repentance (return), to what exactly were they returning?" and "If the people of Nineveh didn't know anything about G-D and Torah, how could G-D judge them as sinners?"

Unless you come to terms with these and other questions about the book of Jonah, then you are left to conclude that G-D mistakenly allowed the events of the book Jonah to take place around 760 years before they should have happened. After all, if G-D was the G-D of the Jews in the Old Testament and the G-

D of the Gentiles in the New Testament, then Jonah clearly belongs in the New Testament and not in the Old Testament.

However, if you come to terms with the answers to those questions, you are left concluding that G-D didn't make a mistake and allowed Jonah to take place at the wrong time. You can only conclude that G-D has been the G-D of both Jews and Gentiles from the start of the book of Genesis, which would also mean that G-D didn't change His mind two-thirds of the way through the Bible and reject the Jewish people and turn His heart to the Gentiles.

This would also mean that the people of G-D throughout the entire Bible have been made up of both Jews and Gentiles, and that is exactly what the body of believers should look like today. {eoa}

Eric Tokajer *is the author of* *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians and Galatians in Context.*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

8 Reasons Why the Fear of Man Is a Snare

First, the fear of man will cause you to focus on everything but God. You say to yourself: "What will people say?" "What will my friends say?" "What will my enemy say?" This is one of the reasons why Paul said: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6).

The fear of man is a signal to pray. And be thankful. To focus on God. To seek Him.

"I waited patiently for the Lord, he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God" (Ps. 40:1-3).

Remember to pray "with thanksgiving." When Jacob was scared to death he prayed, remember that he referred to God's "steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant" (Gen. 32:10).

"We are told to set our affection on things above not on things of the earth" (Col. 3:2).

"We are to keep our eyes on Jesus" ().

Second, the fear of man is a snare because we overestimate the value and benefit of what people can do for us.

"The Lord is on my side; I will not fear, What can man do to me? The Lord is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes" (Ps. 118:6-9).

Who might “princes” be if you are not in touch with the royal family? Answer: those with money. People who are well connected. People you trust and admire. Authority figures. Or those whose connection with important people might advance you. Those whose recommendation you need.

If God raises up such people, fine. But make sure He does it!

It isn't always easy. But one must focus on God and keep trusting Him. He will answer. He is never too late, never too early but always *just on time*.

Third, the fear of man may cause you to overestimate the harm people might do to you. Third, the fear of man may cause you to overestimate the harm people might do to you. Louise and I endured several crises during our 25 years at Westminster Chapel. What made them so serious is that I feared I would lose my position as the minister of Westminster Chapel. I feared that the people would not want me any longer. That public opinion would send us packing. What had happened convinced me that I was finished; that I had no future. It was when I was betrayed and decided to share my agony with my old friend Josif Tson. Assuming he would put his arm around me and say, “Get things out of your system,” he said: “R. T., you must totally forgive them or you will be in chains.”

What I thought to be the worst thing that ever happened to me turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me! So too with every succeeding crisis. In each case I feared that the church would vote me out. Instead, they voted out my opposition. Some of these crises were satanic attacks. It is when I saw first-hand how the devil always overreaches himself. Satanic attacks, as we will see further below, always result in the devil being defeated and openly shamed.

The devil tried to make focus on those who opposed me and tried to make me think that my destiny was in their hands. Wrong! My destiny is in God's hands. God put me in Westminster

Chapel without my raising a little finger. The principle of Galatians 3:3—what the Spirit begins the Spirit will accomplish—was at stake. God wasn't finished with me yet!

Fourth, *the fear of man will make you take yourself too seriously*. We saw how Abraham instructed his wife Sarai to tell the Egyptians that she was his sister. Abraham took himself very seriously indeed. He said to her, "Say you are my sister, that it *may go well with me* because of you" (, emphasis added.). Abraham took himself seriously. He should have known better. He had been given one of the greatest promises in the entire Bible:

"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse" (Gen. 12:2-3).

Fifth, the fear of man will cause you to be less teachable and less open to criticism. The fear of man can make us defensive. Some people live defensively day and night. This means no freedom. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:17). The result can be that we never learn anything anymore. It is as though we know everything and don't want to admit it when we are ignorant in some area.

Sixth, it will keep you from being at home with yourself as you are. "Be yourself plus God" I used to hear people say. Why be yourself? Because that is the way God made you. He used your heredity and environment to make you as you are. You are "wired" in such a way that nobody is like you. God wants you to like yourself. If you say, "I hate myself", you slapped your Creator in the face. He likes it when you like yourself. It is also true of course that he or she who tries to please God will not please everybody! But it is the best way to live. It is when you are truly true to yourself.

Seventh, the fear of man will keep you from being true to

yourself. "To thine own self be true," said William Shakespeare (1564-1616). That is not a biblical verse but it certainly parallels Romans 14:19: "let us pursue what makes for peace." This includes inner peace. What you feel in your heart of hearts.

As I said above, when you are true to God you will be true to yourself. God will never lead you to violate your conscience. The peace *with* God that comes from faith in Jesus' blood not our works (Rom. 5:1) leads to the peace of God which passes knowledge and understanding (Phil. 4:7).

Consider asking yourself, "Am I being true to myself?" when you are with certain people. When you adopt a certain set of beliefs. When you accept or refuse a particular invitation. When go to a particular place. When you say what you say and do what you do. In other words, how do you *feel*? Our instincts are not put there for nothing. It is true that some—because of disobedience to God—develop a seared conscience. But that will never happen to the person who walks in the light of God (1 John 1:7).

Eighth, the fear of man could keep you from fulfilling the will of God in your life. This is the bottom line why we should not be governed by the fear of man. As Paul said to Timothy, God has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Tim.1:7). This fear is the devil's tool to scare you into doing what is against God's will.

I think Jacob got out of God's will for a while. This was evidenced in the way he reacted to his sons who took vengeance on the people who had defiled Dinah: "You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household" (Gen. 34:30).

Jacob's reaction was out of the fear of man—what would now

happen to him. But God stepped in and said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau" (Gen. 35:1).

This was a pivotal moment in the life of Jacob. He got his sense of authority back. He said to his family, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone" (Gen. 35:2-3).

The family did this. Lo and behold, as they journeyed, "a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob" (Gen. 35:5).

This is what will happen when the church gets right with God! A fear of God will return.

Perhaps you need to go back to Bethel?

God has a will for your life. Satan will work overtime to get you to miss God's will. He will make things look "providential". He will use a person you admire but who could sometimes be an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). A person who has been generally wise could get it wrong—and cause you to miss what God is up to.

The opposite of the fear of God is the fear of man. Strangely it is the fear of man that is responsible for keeping us from choosing the fear of God. The greatest competition in the entire universe might be said to be choosing the fear of man over the fear of God.

Yes, choosing. You must make a conscious choice. It is an act of the will. Don't wait for God to knock you down! When you see the evidence right before your eyes, proceed. If you don't have the evidence, *do nothing*.

Because people did not “choose the fear of the Lord”, calamity followed. It does not need to happen. It does not need to happen to you. {eoa}

*The preceding is an excerpt from **R.T. Kendall's** book, Fear (Charisma House 2022). For more information or to order the book, please visit . **R. T. Kendall** was the pastor of Westminster Chapel in London for 25 years. Born in Ashland, Kentucky, he was educated at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (MDiv) and Oxford University (DPhil). Kendall is the author of numerous books, including Total Forgiveness, More of God, Word and Spirit, and We've Never Been This Way Before.*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.