



Managing GOD's Money

Theme for the October: Satan Is Active

Church folks are growing more “religious” and further away from Jesus. In a June 2000 study, “Church Lay Leaders Are Different From Followers,” Barna Research Group Ltd., of Ventura, California reported 39% of lay church leaders in the USA said there is no Satan. And a 2010 PewResearch “U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey” shows even more ignorance of the Bible. Among other things, it states, “on questions about Christianity – including a battery of questions about the Bible – Mormons ... show the highest levels of knowledge.”

Preachers push easy believe-ism to grow congregations so we have scores of people ignorant of the Bible in churches. This month we try to shed some light in the following areas:



October 1-7: The god of this age

October 8-14: Dress suitably

October 15-21: Wear your helmet – use your sword

October 22-31: Walk in the light

October 22-31: Walk in the light



1 John 1: 6-7

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

In this Book, John is challenging a false teaching that existed then and exists today: *denying the reality of sin*. If we deny sin and live habitually in sin, how can we claim to belong to God?

Today, as Governments and judges continue to tear apart society's moral fabric, some churches have accepted

Governments and courts as their source of truth, so they accept some sins as part of a normal lifestyle.

Apostle Paul reminds us in **Romans 3:23** that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. These days, it is essential believers, while accepting same sex marriage as sin, recognize the Bible sees it the same as *white lies*, stealing, fornication, adultery and other sins named in **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**.

We lie and live in the darkness if we do not practice what God's Word teaches (**1 John 2:4**).

Sometimes believers give Satan access into an area of their lives, knowingly or unknowingly, such as through the Masonic Lodge or Transcendental Meditation. They do not realize that quickly Satan infiltrates other areas; thus starting the *Slow Burn Process* —

a toehold becomes a foothold that turns into a stronghold, then a stranglehold.

Followers of Jesus must walk in the light by loving the Lord with all our hearts, souls, minds, and loving our neighbors as us; this is what Messiah Jesus calls us to do. We must not compromise God's Word to accept as truth, another person's views or lifestyle that contradicts Scripture.

Jesus showed love to prostitutes and others in sin; but never excused their sin.

In **1 John 1:6-7**, Apostle John states that the salvation experience of folks who claim fellowship with Messiah but habitually sin, couldn't be genuine. Fruit flows from a life surrendered to Messiah. In **James 2:20-22** we read:

You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.

Admitting, confessing, and repenting sins are part of the journey to surrendering our lives to Jesus. When Messiah Jesus becomes our Lord and Savior, we move from Satan's domain, darkness, into God's domain, light.

In the darkness, we lived in sin; sin characterized our behavior — this was our normal condition. In the light, we seek continually to learn, then do God's will — assured of our place in heaven.

Paul says not only should we avoid specific sins such as lust, greed, and sexual immorality, but also we should expose them (**Ephesians 5:1-20**). We do not need to become detectives to search out dark deeds (**Romans 13:12-13**); but when the Holy Spirit brings them to our attention we must ask Him how to handle them. We mustn't shy away, fearing we may offend others if we follow the Spirit's guidance. We must ensure we follow His path (**John 16:12-13**). Partial obedience is disobedience.

There is Good News for the follower of Jesus. The Holy Spirit lives in him or her and helps each



Memory Verse

James 1:22

Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

to see right from wrong according to Scripture. Besides, we know from **1 Corinthians 10:13** that when temptation comes the believer's way, the Spirit will always show him or her a way out. So the believer has continuing access to truth and can walk in the light. We have no excuse.

Pressure to conform to society is great. So too is emphasis on tolerance, meaning watering down biblical truths. Still, we must walk in the light and turn away from deceit and wickedness. Listen to Apostle Paul's encouragement to young Timothy, in **1 Timothy 6:20-21**:

Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing

have wandered from the faith. Grace be with you.

Be alert to the devil's subtle schemes that liberal-educated clergy presents. It's bogus theology wrapped in *tolerant* packages.

But what is tolerant? As practiced in North America, it means denying everything biblical and accepting minority views that are contrary to biblical values. It seems governments want *secular societies* free from Christian values but infiltrated with other religious teachings.

Sometimes ignorant people become enamoured with popular anti-biblical teachings such as *evolution*. They do not try to understand the sources and are unaware of awful sexist and racist connotations. Here is Darwin's take on women:

The chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shewn by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than can woman — whether requiring deep thought, reason, or imagination, or merely the use of the senses and hands.

—Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, p. 564.

On page 156 Darwin has some equally stupid and degrading comments about blacks and Australian aboriginals.

Superficial discussions on evolution, sexual immorality, abortion, sometimes sound logical, reasonable, and caring to the politically correct, but are

unbiblical. These are excellent examples of godless chatter that will lead us into darkness. We must always bring these matters back to the Bible and into the Light.

Liberal theologians forget Jesus' followers are commanded to love each person as him or her; but we must reject behavior that goes against God's Word.

Believers must stop isolating homosexuality as the *unpardonable sin*, and examine our lives for sexual and other sins. We pray and ask the Lord to help us walk in the light and not be stumbling blocks to others.

To complement Apostle John's comments about walking in the light, and to contrast living in darkness as an unbeliever with living in the light as a believer, meditate on **Ephesians 5:8-11**:

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

God has given us everything we need to live godly lives. With His help we can walk in the light; but we must allow the Spirit to guide us. We need to stay focused on Jesus and His Word and we will remain in the light. Apart from Jesus, we act in our humanness and achieve nothing (**John 15:5**).

Application



John 8:12-18

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.

You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

Reflect on your values and their sources. Do you agree there are moral absolutes? Do you find yourself discussing various moral issues situationally, based on logic and rational arguments? Do you change your views on these issues based on circumstances and individuals involved?

This week, meditate on **Colossians 1:9-14** that Apostle Paul wrote to Colossians' believers. Notice why he never stopped praying. *For this reason* refers to good reports he got about the Colossians in the earlier verses. They were walking in the light and so were susceptible to attacks from the devil. Paul knew that's when the devil strikes. When Satan has you in his kingdom, he is happy, but when you are on fire for the Lord, he attacks relentlessly. *For this reason*, never stop praying, obey the Spirit, and follow His lead.

When Messiah Jesus rescues you from the dominion of darkness, if you don't change and start to bear fruit, ask the Spirit to show you stumbling blocks. Fruit is certain from a surrendered life.

Ask the Lord to speak His truth about morality issues you might be struggling with into your heart. He will assure you His Word contain moral absolutes that transcend time.

Jesus isn't hiding. Listen, He is calling you today. He will accept you as you are and immediately you will start your journey homeward, and start walking in the light.



Daily Reflections



October 22:
1 John 1:1-10

October 23:
Romans 3:22-25

October 24:
1 John 2:1-17

October 25:
1 Corinthians
10:7-13

October 26-27:
John 8:12-18
1 Timothy
6:20-21

October 28-29:
Ephesians
5:1-20;
Romans 13:12-13

October 30-31:
Ephesians 5:1-2;
John 16:12-13
Colossians
1:9-14

Considering the month's *theme*, and the period's *topic*, daily reflect on verses on the left. These questions might help your reflections:

1. Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
2. How do these verses apply to me today?
3. What lessons from these verses can I start today?

U n l e s s o t h e r w i s e noted, Scripture quotations are from the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible (Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. All rights reserved.)