

# VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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## THANK YOU

Thanks is in order to everyone who offered prayers and concern during the past several weeks. Mike, Gene and Ray worked hard in the ministry work and as the old saying goes, “Kept the ship afloat.” They took on an awesome responsibility and did a great job. I am still in the process of recovery but the grace of God has been so great and I am humbled more than ever. One of the more humbling experiences is seeing life from a patient’s view rather than just from a pastor’s view. To stand behind the pulpit and share God’s Word has felt so good to me for the past two weeks. My prayer is that I can be a better pastor and teacher in the future and that our church can receive a greater vision of the work of our Lord and that we can accomplish it on this earth. I encourage each one to believe and pray with greater zeal than ever. The Word teaches that all things are possible to those who believe. Again, thanks for everything that has been done for me and my family and I believe to serve you for a long time in the future.

Pastor George Ferrington

## “THE POWER OF SIN IS THE LAW”

The tree of knowledge of good and evil is a powerful Biblical model of the law. The Apostle Paul declared: **“The power of sin is the law.....”** (1 Corinthians 15:56). Paul knew that it is through the law that we derive our knowledge of good and evil. We may wonder how this knowledge of good and evil brings death, that is, until we see its fruit. Earth’s reality (knowledge of good and evil) kills us by distracting us from the One Who is the source of life, Jesus Christ, the tree of life. When our perspective is based on the tree of knowledge of good and evil (earth’s reality), we will focus our attention on ourselves.

Sin is empowered by the law not just because the “evil” is revealed, but the “good” as well. It drives us either to corruption or self-righteousness, both of which lead to death. Another way of saying this is, **“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away”** (2 Timothy 3:5). It is significant that the Tree of Knowledge was said to be found in the center of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:3). Self-centeredness is the chief malady with which it afflicts us. After Adam and Eve ate its fruit, their first response was self-inspection. Before eating of the forbidden fruit they did not know they were naked, their attention was on the Lord and the purposes for which He had created them. After eating, they now understood the knowledge of good and evil, and this forced them to measure themselves by that same knowledge. There is no easier way to keep from the Tree of Life than to have us focus our attention upon ourselves. This is what the law accomplishes. Because of this Paul called it **“the ministry of death”** and the **“ministry of condemnation”** (2 Corinthians 3:7, 9).

When we define the Tree of Knowledge as the Law, we are not referring only to the Law of Moses. We often think of the Old Testament as the Law and the New Testament as grace, but this is not necessarily true. The Old Covenant is the Letter, the New Testament is the Spirit. If we read the New Testament with an Old Covenant heart it will be law to us. And we will have dead religion with righteousness based on compliance, and written commandments instead of a living relationship with our God.

Next months lesson will be a continuance of this lesson, and we will discuss **“ALL TRUTH IS IN JESUS–KNOW HIM”**. Until then, may the Lord bless and keep each of you.

Gene R. Brown, Associate Pastor

## I WAS DRUGGED BY MY PARENTS

The other day, someone at a store in our town read that a Methamphetamine lab had been found in an old farmhouse in the adjoining country and he asked me a rhetorical question, “Why didn’t we have a drug problem when you and I were growing up?”

I replied, “I had a drug problem when I was young: I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions and community socials no matter the weather.

I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults. I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn’t put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me.

I was drug to the kitchen sink to have my mouth washed out with soap if I uttered a profanity. I was drug out to pull weeds in mom’s garden and flower beds and cockleburs out of dad’s fields. I was drug to the homes of family, friends and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one to mow the yard, repair the clotheline, or chop some firewood, and, if my mother had ever known that I took a single dime as a tip for this kindness, she would have drug me back to the woodshed.

Those drugs are still in my veins and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, or think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin; and, if today’s children had this kind of drug problem, America would be a better place.

God bless my parents who drugged me.”

(Reprinted–author unknown)

## COMMITMENT

**“Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”** (1 Peter 4:19) God reminds me frequently that I am committed to Him. Almost like a husband and wife situation, but even more dynamic, because our faithfulness to Him brings holiness and righteousness, and Christlikeness. I have not found the word “commitment” in the Bible, but I know that every reference to faithfulness and endurance and patience and holiness and righteousness and so on, is alluding to

our committed life unto the Lord. As Christians we have declared our belief in Jesus as the Son of God, and that He is the Savior of our souls. As such we should understand that we are now in covenant with God through Jesus, and we have responsibilities that go along with that relationship. Part of that is our commitment to Him, giving ourselves to Him, as He has given Himself to us. Luke 9:23-26 tells us, **“And he said unto them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels.”** Then in Luke 9:62 we read, **“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”** We have new life in Christ, old things are past away, behold all things are new. To look back is to be uncommitted to the task at hand. We have an enduring and eternal reward for our sacrifices in this life. **“For which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”** (2 Timothy 1:12)

What does it mean to be committed? We can see a snapshot in this prayer for the Christians at Colosse. **“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”** (Colossians 1:9-14)

What is our level of commitment? The Apostle Paul declares his level in Galatians 2:20, **“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”** He also teaches of the Christian life and service in Romans 12:1-2, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”**

Why should I be committed to God? **“What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye have been bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) So, we belong to God. When we are disobedient, we grieve the Holy Spirit, Who is continually drawing us toward the Father. When we are committed to God’s plan for our lives, we honor the Holy Spirit’s presence in our lives and open ourselves up to be blessed by our Father.

How do I find that area of commitment in my life? Seek God with all your heart, and He will not let you fail. Jesus in you has already won all the victories—you are expected to be in agreement with Jesus (the Word) within you, and God’s Word tells us that we can then ask what

we will and it shall be done, because we have trusted in the Father.

It is not an easy thing to put down the flesh and gain victory through our spirits. The soul of man is where we must commit ourselves to serve God and to believe and act upon His Word in our lives. To daily walk in this commitment will prove to be a challenge worth undertaking, and God will bless your walk with His presence. May He be eternally glorified!!!

Bro. Mike Woods

## **A TIME TO PRAY**

Our great nation is under attack. Not necessarily from outside our borders, but from within. Corruption seems to be rampant in all aspects of government—national down to local. Problems on every side in the economy, in the Gulf, terrorism, wars, jobs—you name it. What's going on?

We can all get discouraged and throw in the towel, or we can buy up guns and ammo and throw up barricades. That's what some are doing.

But we have a weapon that can overcome every enemy, and that is our faith. If we pray and believe, all things are possible. And our heavenly Father has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us. His arm is strong on our behalf, and His angels are ready to wage war. If you do not believe this or if you have allowed doubt to enter in, please ask the Father to give you the assurance you need in His Word. You don't have to stumble and fall, God is always there.

If you don't know Jesus as your Savior, today is a great day. Just believe that He is the Son of God, and ask Him to save you. He is faithful and true, and you will never be the same.

**WE LOVE YOU, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, GOD LOVES YOU!!!**

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**JESUS IS ALIVE  
AND WELL**