



Christian Report

To Win...To Disciple...To Equip...To Win

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In Trust, Being Called, Abraham Obeyed — by Bob Flynn, President/CEO

As we begin a new season of the year, perhaps it would be good to consider our spiritual seasons as well. This world, filled with the fallenness of man, brings with it a host of uncertainties and insecurities that pervert the intention of the original design. The

only eyes that can see through this perpetual darkness are the eyes of faith. We must learn to walk by faith lest our lives be swallowed by the darkness. The learning must never cease, for each step will discover new hazards that require renewed sight to avoid. Whether we are babes in Christ or ancient saints, the requirement of the faith walk remains. Faith living is obedient living: we must apply the truths given us by holy writ — that are also inscribed upon our innermost parts. It matters not whether our feelings tend to lead us in an opposite direction, or perhaps circumstances arise that pressure us to alter course. Maybe we foresee negative consequences which would inundate us with aspersions from the “darkness dwellers” of the day. The season in which we live is the season in the kingdom where leaves do not wither but rather continue to bear fruit in the continuous season of God’s perfect light. Recognize that your enemy is also engaged in the salvation of souls (though it be counterfeit) and you will be mightily tested just as was the Patriarch Job. But when you appear on the other side of the fire, your life will have the purity of fine gold.



For you were called into this faith by the very hand of the Almighty, and it is by this same hand He will lead you if you are obedient to follow. Hebrews 11:8 says that by faith Abraham obeyed (πιστει καλουμενος αβρααμ υπηκουσεν) — pistei kaloumenos abraam

upekousen). Literally, “In trust being called, Abraham obeyed.” There is a reason the translators struggle with Ephesians 2:2, whether to render the phrase “the children of unbelief” or “the children of disobedience.” For unbelief and disobedience are toes on the same foot — contrasted with faith and obedience on the other. Therefore, we must be careful to watch our step! Will our steps lead to “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” by Whom we have been called? Will we steer a course of obedience into His glorious light — or meander in disobedience to be smashed upon the rocks of the “Prince of the power of the air?”

Job 23:10 But He knows where I am going. And when He tests me, I will come out as pure as gold. (NLT2)
Heb 11:8 It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. (NLT2)

ἀπειθεια *apeitheia*; *gen. apeitheias*, *fem. noun from*

apeithes (G545), disobedient. Disobedience, unwillingness to be persuaded, willful unbelief, obstinacy. In the NT, it corresponds in its use with the verb apistéo (G569), to be unbelieving, opposing the gracious word and purpose of God; a stronger term than the syn. apistía (G570), disbelief, unbelief (Heb 3:12, Heb 3:19); hence we have the sons of apeitheías, disobedience, unbelievers, i.e., heathen, pagans (Rom 11:30, Rom 11:32; Eph 2:2; Eph 5:6; Col 3:6; Heb 4:6, Heb 4:11). (The Complete Word Study, General Editor: Spiros Zodhiates, Th.D)

Disobedience and unbelief have as their center, SELF. It is our SELF that rises to claim freedom over liberty, seizing the throne of our life from Him who has justly earned all honor and glory — as if our shield of arrogance would dare try to reflect the light of His righteousness.

Self lives on the selfishness of others, and uses the same principle in them for the gratification of its ends. Abimelech appealed to the men of Shechem by ties of race and blood, and by the inducements of their own self-interest. And so self-aggrandizement becomes a web of countless coils woven and interwoven with the selfishness of others, until hand joins in hand, and a thousand chords of mutual self-interest bind together political parties, commercial monopolies, criminal confederacies, and the baneful associations of evil men which so largely constitute human society. Each is bound to the other by

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In Trust, Being Called, Abraham Obeyed — by Bob Flynn, President/CEO

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his own selfishness, and the man who knows best how to play with the selfish passions of others makes them all tributary to his own needs, while the devil sits supreme as king over all. When you see a man appealing to the selfishness of others you may be very sure that he is selfishness incarnate.

We see self in partnership with Satan. Abimelech goes to the house of idols and gets the means for his unholy war from the temple of Baal. The devil is always ready to advance the funds to carry out any scheme of human selfishness. He is a very liberal investor in selfish trusts and sinful monopolies. You can always get money for a political campaign and a whiskey trust even when missionary societies are threatened with bankruptcy. Millions and millions of dollars are being thrown away every day in Satan's investments and sin's cooperative societies, and the cause of Christ is languishing by reason of the selfishness of its followers. The devil has his providences as well as the Lord, and the man who wants to plunge into the depths of Satan will find plenty of capital waiting his call and wonder often at his own success.

Then let us take another look, and gaze on Calvary. What is this that lacerates our Savior's brow and wreathes His gentle face with such a rude, tormenting crown? Ah! it is the old bramble again; it is the crown of thorns. What are those drops of blood that stain His face, and the tears that mingle with them and flow down His cheeks? Ah! they are the brambles of my selfishness; they are the thorns of my pride. It was this selfish "I" that I let not only crush my

fellows, but even murder my Lord. It was not only for our sins He died, but it was for our selfishness, and in that death we die. (A. B. Simpson, Danger Lines in the Deeper Life)

As I look around the our world today I see that we have somehow, through the transition of the years, lost the essence of what it really means to be a Christian. For we, like the Jew, have been called for a special purpose to praise and glorify God and to exalt His name among the nations. We are as a people, set apart. There is a whole host of things whose origin is from this carnal reprobation that must not be part of our lives. The inhabitants of the satanic system may extol the virtues of the despicable habits they so much enjoy, because they are on the way to hell and are simply living their lives consistent with their character. But when those in the body of Christ start emulating this same wantonness that through holy wrath was abandoned unto eternal judgment, then contradiction of profession becomes a perversion concert casting aspersion toward Him who sits upon the throne of heaven by those called by His name.

When Paul wrote to Timothy, he said that all who belong to the Lord must turn away from evil. There is no room for compromise for those who are called of Christ. You bear His name and therefore have no business living as you please and doing what you want. For when you do, blasphemy will come from the world and rightly so. They'll say, "if that is Christ, I want nothing to do with Him." Are you a Christian? Is

your life like a light upon a hill illuminating everything it touches or is it a "dark absorber" drinking in the contents of the cesspool?

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light. "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy." (1 Peter 2:9-10 NLT)

But God's truth stands firm like a foundation stone with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and "All who belong to the Lord must turn away from evil. (2 Timothy 2:19 NLT2).

In the Holy Scriptures we have a standard of right and wrong upon which we can always depend for the general principles at least which should direct our actions, and in the voice of the Holy Spirit we shall always have the special guidance which we need in particular circumstances. But there are certain conditions which we must ever observe. "The meek will He guide in judgment." The yielded and willing heart will find His way. The selfish will, the heart that chooses its way and then comes to God to have Him indorse it, will be very likely to go astray. (A. B. Simpson, Danger Lines in the Deeper Life)

New Members

SFC David & Sibylle Dean, USA (Ret)
Mrs. Desiree Douglas
SFC Brian & Sonya Farrell, NG
SSG Tom & Amy Garretson, NG
COL Rich & Sue Goldsmith, USA (Ret)
Mr. Jon Heath
CPT Theo & Kim King, USA (Ret)
Sgt. James Pinckney, Jr., USMC

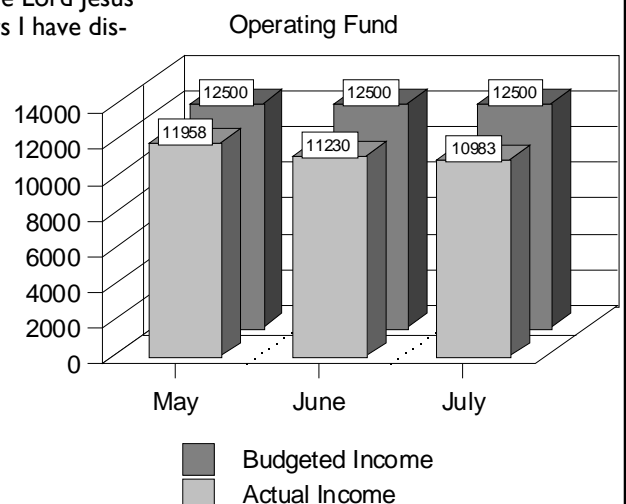
Promotions

1LT Todd Newcomer, NG
MSG Gregg Winn, USAR

Financially Speaking—We Need Your HELP!

After walking with the Lord Jesus for over thirty years I have discovered that the greatest opportunities to invest in the Gospel of His Name come when the temporal circumstances are at their worst. The widow gave her mite when it was all she had.

I am sure that we each could look at our budget with a certain amount of fear and trepidation. However, bringing the Gospel to the military society is an investment worthy of sacrifice. Become a regular giver!



Nuggets of Faith — by SMSgt Tony Barnes, USAF (Ret), CMF Board of Directors

The grandfather loved the cup of coffee his grandson had made for him. The flavor was horrible. However, the fact that the 8-year-old had tried his best to make his grandpa's coffee made that irrelevant. As he finished off the last drop, the elderly man was surprised when something hit the tip of his nose. He looked down at the supposedly empty cup and found that an olive drab green toy soldier was in the bottom of his cup. Trying his best not to laugh, grandpa asked the young lad why there was a toy soldier in his coffee cup. The young man replied, "Granddad, the commercial says 'there's nothing like soldiers in your cup.'"

It's a funny story of a young man who "missed the message" of Folgers coffee. The original line is, "there's nothing like Folgers in your cup." In the centuries since Jesus Christ died on a bloody cross outside of Jerusalem, the message of the cross has also been missed by many. Jesus said the road to salvation which he preached would be very narrow and few would truly experience the eternal life He came to provide. The Messiah also said the road to destruction would be wide and many

would travel that route.

What possibly could Jesus have meant? Surely he knew that America would be founded upon Christian principles. Certainly, the Savior knew that we would be a nation of 300 million people. Didn't he realize that the majority of Americans surveyed would claim to be Christian in their faith? Yet, how do we reconcile that to His statement regarding the way of salvation being a narrow path? Can it be that scores of people are missing the message, as the little boy did by serving a toy soldier in his grandfather's coffee cup?

Many people miss the message of the cross when they make a decision based on emotion. It could have been at a church youth camp, or while watching a Billy Graham crusade on television, or simply during a bad time in their life. A few words may have been expressed in a tear-filled prayer, with promises to God that if He will fix things I will go to church for the rest of my life. Yet, somehow in the days that followed, there was no change in that life. There was no effort or excitement about finding a church, little interest in reading the Bible, and prayer was seldom, if ever,

more than a cursory sentence while drifting off to sleep.

If church was suddenly proclaimed to be illegal by our Congress, would you still find a way to gather with other believers to worship? Would there be a sense of longing or desperation to worship with other believers? The Old Testament tells us about Daniel, a young man who prayed three times a day in front of an open window. When it became illegal to do so, Daniel still prayed. For his devotion, he didn't get invitations to conduct revival meetings. Instead, he was thrown into a lions' den to be eaten alive. The young Hebrew man answered to a different law. He was not to be stifled in his worship of God. (Daniel 6)

What about you? Are you truly a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you in the faith? There is too much at stake not to be sure. Don't miss the message of the cross. Accepting Jesus Christ as Savior is a free gift of salvation. However, being a Christian will cost you everything as you submit your life to new management. Don't miss the message and at the end of your life find a toy soldier at the bottom of your cup.

Truth, Lies, and Horseback Riding — SGM Dan Cartwright, USA (Ret)

You are probably thinking that's a rather silly title for an article. Maybe, maybe not. If it stimulated your curiosity to the point you are actually reading this, it accomplished the desired goal of the author! Therefore, it makes at least a little bit of sense. Agreed? Now on to the point.

Months ago, maybe even years ago in some cases, while studying various aspects of Christianity in light of Scripture (a favorite pastime of mine), I began to see beliefs in Christendom that had little or no Scriptural support, and that some of those questionable beliefs had achieved the status of "doctrine." To disagree with them was labeled minimally as growth-hindering misunderstanding of Scripture, and, at the other end of the "error spectrum," blasphemy deserving of Hell. I had then, and still have now, a soul-deep conviction that God wrote the Book and therefore what was taught as truth, but didn't agree with the context of Scripture, was wrong or false in some measure and in some cases, was an outright lie.

The unavoidable question brought to this inquiring mind was, "How did these falsehoods and lies end up so widely believed by professing Chris-

tians?" The answer I arrived at after a considerable amount of Scripture study, researching a range of historical resources, and comparing them both to widely held beliefs of professing believers was and IS, precisely this: The "accepted" lie always rides in on the back of truth. Without an element of Scriptural truth upon which to hitch a ride, the lie never survives.

A prime example from the early church would be the Pelagian heresy; it denied any adverse effect of Adam's sin on the rest of mankind that was birthed after the Fall. That lie didn't get very far and was condemned as heresy. The "Semi-Pelagianism" that followed acknowledged that Adam's sin affected all of us, but said that man is still able in and of himself to cooperate with God in the salvation of his soul. That was also condemned as heresy (at the Council of Orange), but is in fact alive and well in both major camps of Christianity. No segment of Christianity has ever admitted to being Semi-Pelagian, although a synergistic Gospel is by nature, exactly that.

There you have one man's explanation of the connection between truth, lies, and horseback riding. The initial lie,

without an element of truth, failed. The second lie, while admitting "some" truth, made a modified version of the first lie perfectly acceptable, and even pleasing to human sensibilities.

There have been other examples of lies riding in on the back of truth, some with a longer history of acceptance than others. The two most damaging to both the cause of Christ and the souls of men are 1) that Christ established a single religious organization as the only true church with an "infallible" human as head of that church and 2) that God "accepts" us unconditionally, WITH our sin. (*Don't panic — please read on!*)

Both have a segment of truth. Christ *did* declare he would establish His Church on earth. God *does* LOVE unconditionally — it's His nature and one of His divine attributes.

The Church that Christ established is made up of those persons for whom He died, from every tongue, tribe and nation — those whom He purchased with His own blood. We weren't put on layaway!

If God could "accept" us into His Kingdom *WITH* our sin, His Son died in vain. The first point of the Gospel is that Christ *DIED* for our sin!

Weapons of War—Encouragement—by Bob Flynn, CMF President/CEO

The Fruit of the Flesh is: **“sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin.” (Galatians 5:19b-21 NLT)**

Considering the aforementioned Scripture, it should come as no surprise that divorce, immorality, dishonesty and greed are running rampant in the Church! The divorce rate among Christians is now 8% higher than among the peoples of the world. Dr. Billy Graham has said that, according to his research, at least 90 percent of all Christians in America are living defeated spiritual lives.

This tells us that there are a whole lot of deeply hurting people in our world. One thing we should know is that our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ gives us inexhaustible resources that can be used to heal the hurt. What then is this resource? Grace is always the answer — God’s wonderful, matchless, empowering, and life-changing Grace!

A tool of Grace that can be utilized in these kinds of situations is Encouragement. What is encouragement anyhow? Encouragement takes place when the Holy Spirit allows our love to touch the hurting person’s fear. Encouragement is God’s salve for the wounded spirit. That is why encouragement is a **weapon of war**. We are in a spiritual battle that can cause many kinds of wounds, both spiritual and physical. Satan is our chief enemy, and one of his most used weapons is discouragement. But we who have “presented ourselves as instruments of righteousness” can be the salve-bearers for the Chief Encourager, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are enabled to do this because, “...we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.” (Rom 5:5 NLT) We want to do this because, “...God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him.” (Phil 2:13 NLT)

The Lord that Isaiah saw, “...seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.” The Lord to whom the angels sang, “Holy,

holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” (Is. 6:1b, 3 NIV) This is the same Lord of whom David said, “But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.” (Ps. 3:3 KJV) I think that I could have never known the meaning of these words of the Psalmist’s unless I had experienced deep discouragement, the kind of discouragement that makes your chin rest upon your chest. It was then that I discovered that the Lord Jesus Christ was my Encourager! He is the source of my encouragement, and He enables me to be an encourager of others: the kind of encouragement that allows others to see His “glory” that fills the whole earth; the “glory” that shakes the foundations of the temple when the angels sing, “Holy, holy, holy.” This is the encouragement that shakes our world with the joy that is ours in Christ Jesus!

So what? Look at it this way. Nine out of every ten of your brothers and sisters in Christ are wounded! And chances are that they can say the same thing about you! The wonderful thing about being a part of the body of Christ is that you can be a doctor while you are a patient!

A few years back, I was having a little pity party for myself because I hadn’t had an opportunity to share the love of Christ with a nonbeliever for a while. When you work for a Christian organization the reality is that you spend your time with the brethren (what a great blessing). With the technology of today I pay for my gasoline at the pump and use the self-checkout at the grocery store. (I am thankful that my barber isn’t computerized yet!) Then it happened! I found myself in the hospital emergency room. The Holy Spirit said to my heart, “here they are, knock yourself out!” Here was an opportunity to encourage those who were trying to encourage me!

Only God could make this happen. Over the course of the next 24 hours I had the opportunity to be with at least 50 different people. They were doctors, nurses, employees, and patients. Each one was God’s treasure whom He died to save. Do you want to be encouraged? Then be an encourager! Our very life depends on you!

“The tongue has the power of life and death,...” (Proverbs 18:21 NIV)

“An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word

cheers him up.” (Proverbs 12:25 NIV)

“The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life...” (Proverbs 15:4 NIV)

“Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.” (Proverbs 16:24 NIV)

“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.” (Proverbs 25:11 NIV)

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with His comfort through Christ. Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. (2 Corinthians 1:3-6 NLT)

Doubt sees the obstacles—Faith sees the way. Doubt sees the darkest night—Faith sees the day. Doubt dreads to take a step—Faith soars on high. Doubt questions, “Who believes?”—Faith answers, “I.” Author Unknown.

Nominations are Open

Nominations are now open for the CMF Board of Directors. Directors are appointed at the October meeting and serve a three-year term that begins in January. The Board currently meets four times a year at the CMF office in Englewood, CO.

If you are interested in serving the ministry in this capacity you may express your desire by communicating with the home office by any means.

The following is an excerpt from the CMF Bylaws that outlines the qualifications:

The Board of Directors shall be comprised of a majority of individuals possessing a professional graduate degree and/or significant corporate board/ executive level experience. As many as practicable shall be active-duty enlisted when elected who are also currently serving as CMF Local Representatives with active local ministries.