

A CHALLENGING WORD

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Convict, Convicted or Convinced

By Dwight Knight
(part 2)

When Paul admonishes Timothy to “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”, he is assuring that the **results of righteous living** is worth it. The prophet says in Prov. 10:22, that God’s blessings never leave us lacking. All that the world has to offer in its temporary pleasures can never come close to the fulfilling power of living for Him. To some these characteristics of the life are distasteful. Sad. So sad is the heart that can be dissuaded to believe it’s better to live without the glory of His presence, even for a just a moment.

CONVINCED

For all that Christ guarantees the members of his body, He lovingly still requires that the world be abandoned and the life of faith be lived. This is not an unreasonable request when compared to all that He supplies. Our mission for the kingdom is accomplished as we pursue it with the understanding that it is possible only as we live a **life that requires sacrifice**. The sacrificial existence is to live contrary to everything that feels natural to our nature. The power that will exude from such a commitment to denial can only be described as supernatural. And, it is the only way to please Him (Heb. 11:6).

Such a contradiction of our nature cannot happen by wishful thinking. It must be fueled and empowered by a **love that requires service**. Only one who is completely in love with the Lord Jesus can serve Him to the depths of sacrifice. Many can give of themselves without loving Him. But no one can give themselves completely and eternally unless there is an amazing love and devotion involved. Not just that He loves us, but that also we love Him. All that have received from the hand and heart of Jesus can attest to the truth that our gracious Master is a **Lord that requires surrender**. In every facet of life He demands that we no longer write the pages of our lives, but instead yield completely, surrender totally to Him. Even in personally matter His commands to us is to allow Him the sway of our world and the things we might love in it. A totally convinced believer is one who has given up the right of independence, surrendered every plan for the future, and has given all things into His hands.

The Precious Promise in II Peter

By Dwight Knight (part 1)

The opening to the book of II Peter 1:2-8 is one of the most beloved hymns of the church. In it we find the prerequisites to live a godly life, the sublime promises of God and the simple principles for growing in Christ. Verses two reveals the **peace** we receive by knowing Him. Jesus said to His disciples in John 14:27, “**My** peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. **Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**. The operative word for us is “**let**”. Do not allow your hearts to be troubled. In other words, He has given the components necessary to provide our hearts with comfort and assurance enough to weather the raging insane storms around us.

What are they? Passion and prayer.

These two partners of godliness are the essentials necessary to living in God’s divine peace and knowing Him.

Rebekah's Story

A testimony by Dianne

L. Coventry

(Part 2)

I was told I didn't have a lot of time to decide because I was approaching 8 weeks gestation. The pressure was on. I believed the lies of the enemy (satan), and I trusted man instead of God. My instincts were screaming, no! all the while right up to that moment the nurse put the needle in my arm.

Proverbs 14: 12 says:

...There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death...

JS and his mother walked me through a crowd of pro-life activists. "Keep your head down and stay close," his mother told me. A part of me died that day with Rebekah. Could God ever forgive me? Could I ever forgive myself?

After the initial relief I quickly entered denial. You see, we didn't talk about it at all. JS's family acted as if it never happened. I don't remember JS and me discussing it either. I went home and cried and then I had to get back to surviving. The guilt and shame soon encompassed my private thoughts. I challenged death on a winding road near home, just hoping I would hit a tree or an oncoming car, feeling I would be better off dead than living with the guilt. I hated what I did; I hated myself because of it.

Jesus was there because I am still here.

How that "right to choose" affected the rest of my life:

Gagged by Guilt and Silenced by Shame

Stuffing my feelings about my choice, I continued in denial for 29 years. I was hurting but no one could know about it. Society doesn't believe you need to grieve the loss of your child because society doesn't believe it is a child. Terms to describe abortion are emotionally detaching from the reality of what you are really doing.

When I found out I was pregnant I called it a baby. Abortion took my baby away (end of story).

In recent years God has been bringing this to the forefront of my mind. I was troubled because I thought I dealt with this a long time ago, when Geoff was born (my first live birth). Holding him and watching him grow at times brought deep sorrow and horrible feelings of guilt about my previous choice. One time I remember holding him while he napped (my arms wrapped around him) and I sobbed. He was soaking wet when I was done crying (his head, his shirt) and I was amazed he didn't wake up or even move the whole time I sobbed. God kept him so still so I could grieve.

My second son was born (premature at 26 weeks), and later I was divorced. Once again, I found myself in survival mode raising two boys, working full time. I started going to a different church, one that taught me the Bible. I participated in studies and learned all about Jesus and his personality. I began to ask Him for advice instead of listening to the world.

It became obvious to me that I needed more help with this. I was still experiencing uncontrollable crying, consuming sadness, guilt and shame all stuffed on the inside. I could not let go of the reality of what I did, how I could choose one child over another. I couldn't tell anyone of my pain and shame.

Isaiah 54:4

Do not fear for you will **not be ashamed; neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; for you will forget the shame of your youth...**

[The continuation of this testimony will be in the next few issues of "A Challenging Word". National Helpline for Abortion Recovery 866-482- 5433 (You may download the entire testimony at www.challenge-ministries.org. Go to the Directory's Corner and click on A Challenging Word and Rebekah's Story will be listed among pass issues).]

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