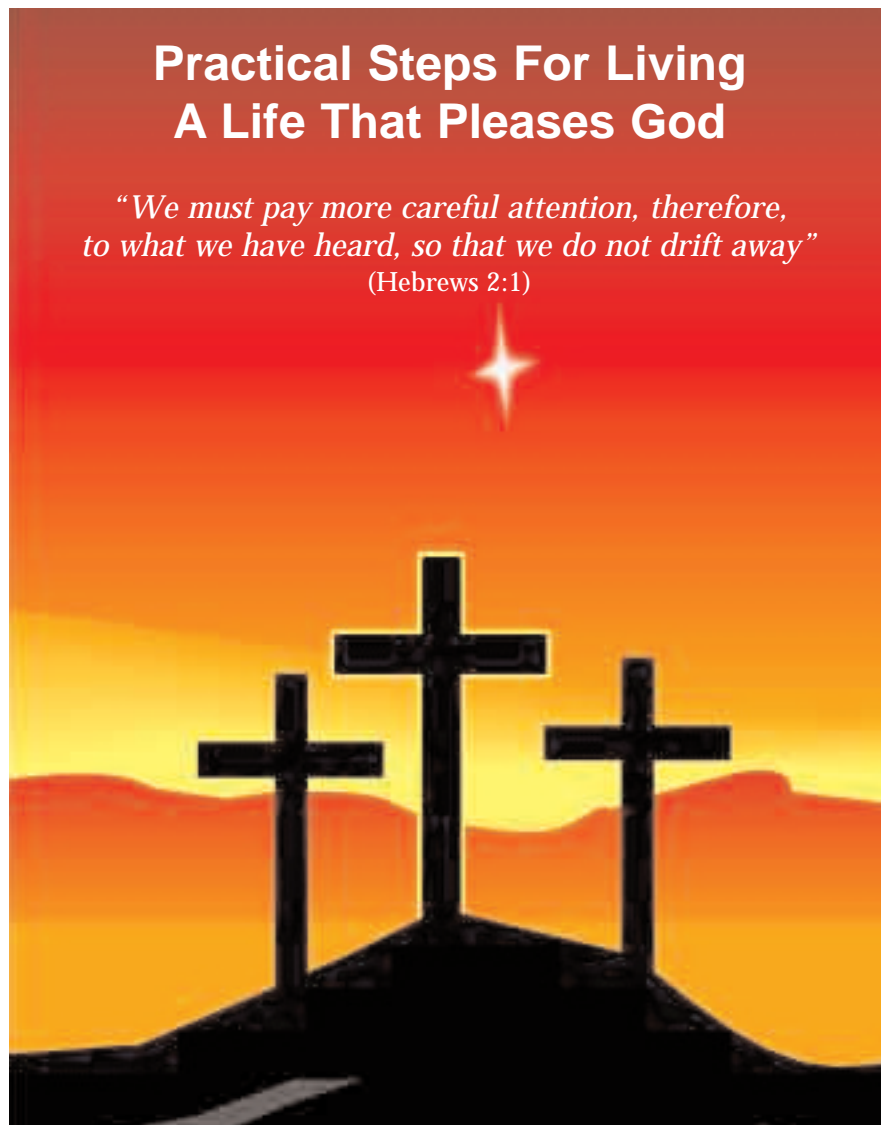


# Lifebytes:

## 27. You Must Be Born Again: Life Begins in the SPIRIT (John 3:8)



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Dear Friends,

In our last Lifebyte, ***Will Jesus Find Faith In You?***, we asked you to evaluate your own faith:

- On the scale below, place an X to indicate where you and those who know you well in the faith evaluate you today.

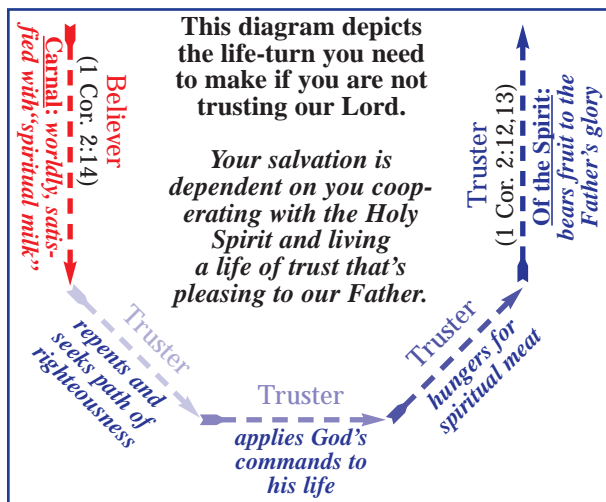
### Your Faith

**Belief** < 0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 > **Trust**

As you'll see in this new Lifebyte, anything less than a "10"—which is **total abandonment of self to God's will**—reveals *distrust* of our Father in heaven. In other words, **belief** runs all the way to 9. Only a 10 is the **trust** that produces *love-grounded, active obedience* in response to the Spirit's power and prompting:

### Faith is TRUST

**Belief** < 0<1<2<3<4<5<6<7<8<9<10 > **Trust**



### Consider this reality:

#### **Believers:**

- lack the trust that God calls for;
- are carnal in their life pursuits;
- may not even be known by God;
- have nothing recorded about them in heaven (see Rev. 20:12, Matt. 16:27).

We hope you'll never hear Jesus's reply, "***I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.***" This will be His response to those who make *false assumptions about their faith* and spurn the will of the Father (see Matthew 7:21-23).

Try to picture how it must feel for our Lord Jesus to have to utter such words to anyone in light of His sacrifice for all of us. Try to envision what it's like for our Lord to look down from heaven's throne upon many **believers** who claim to be His. And yet, unless they *turn* and begin to **trust**—then He will ultimately say to them, "***I never knew you.***"

**Those who trust God and those who only believe have NOTHING in common. The truster is indwelled by the Spirit of God; heaven is his destiny. The believer is devoid of the Spirit; hell is his journey's end.**

We want to share an anecdote that epitomizes the person who lives a life of **belief**. You may have known someone who fits the pattern:

For eleven years I (Mike) was a counselor to church leaders. The denomination of a particular congregation I was helping was urging the elders to become more liberal in their teaching and to minimize any emphasis on righteous living in Jesus. The denominational leaders wanted Sunday services to be a pleasant experience for all so that they could attract more people.

I encouraged the pastor, "Bill", and the rest of the leadership to hold true to God and His Word. Not long after, the denomination administrators stepped in and defrocked Bill.

Many months later I was playing golf

with my close friend, Casey, who was pastoring a different flock. Casey had invited “Jim”, the retired head of the denomination that had defrocked Bill.

As we were finishing the last hole, Jim asked me, “What’s your last name again?” As soon as I replied, Jim yelled, “You’re the one who caused all that trouble by supporting Bill! They brought me out of retirement to get rid of him!”

As the man ranted on, I bowed my head and silently asked God for His evaluation of Jim. The Spirit revealed two things, telling me to only share the first. He would then let me know if I could share the second insight.

I interrupted Jim’s diatribe and asked, “Would you like to know how *God* sees you?” He stopped in surprise and answered “Yes.” I told him the first point the Spirit had imparted to me: “Jim, you’re full of pride, and **there is nothing recorded about you in heaven.**” Jim’s head sunk into his hands as he replied, “Twenty-five years ago my own brother told me the same thing.”

Filled with sorrow and regret Jim went on, “You don’t get to the head of my denomination by trusting God. You get there by *controlling and directing people.*” Then he turned toward me and asked, “What can I do?”

Because Jim’s heart was so repentant, the Spirit gave me permission to share the second point: “Go see Bill, the man you defrocked. He’ll show you how to walk humbly with God.”

Another religious leader once told us, “We can’t have our people trusting Jesus the way you call for. That would cause *mayhem!* We need to control and direct the spiritual activities of the people in our congregation.” In other words this leader was really saying, “We can’t have them trusting God and living by the Spirit; they’ll be *out of our control!*”

In the days that followed our publishing Lifebyte 26, ***Will Jesus Find Faith In You?***, the Holy Spirit made this clear to us:

***That Lifebyte will be the last one you’ll write on milk issues. People have heard enough about repentance and faith. Now it’s time for them to bear fruit to the Father’s glory.***

***The only type of faith the Father accepts is a “10” — total, absolute trust. Nothing less is acceptable to Him.***

***You need to especially confront men with the meat of God’s Word. They must produce fruit befitting their repentance. Too many men are looking for a breast to be comforted by. Their desire to be comforted is what keeps men from immediate and unconditional obedience.***

[You may be disturbed that the Spirit would use the imagery of a woman’s breast to convey the childishness of men who seek comfort from a woman rather than pressing on into obedience. Please read God’s words in Ezekiel 23:20,21. Intense imagery is found throughout the Bible to display the hideousness of man’s sinful bent.]

We were deeply affected by the Holy Spirit’s message. His words about “milk issues” immediately reminded us of the warning from the writer to the Hebrews:

***We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are **slow to learn.*****

***In fact, though by this time you **ought to be teachers,** you need someone to teach you the **elementary truths of God’s word** all over again. You need milk, not solid food!***

*Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

*Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment (Hebrews 5:11-6:2).*

Let's examine some key parts of this passage, which is addressed to those who have repeatedly heard the "elementary teachings" — the foundations of beginning a journey with Jesus.

***Though by this time you ought to be teachers.***

An Hebraic teacher was a person who taught from the *way he lived*—quite the opposite of today's Hellenist lecturers whose pulpit discourses represent nothing of the man's life outside the steepled building. Nor do the messages of most, even if they contain biblical content, spur toward Christ-likeness those for whom the words are *optional advice*.

The listeners are "*slow to learn*" because there's little difference to them between sermons and TV shows: neither demands *changed lives* in response to what they've heard! People who "learn" within a Hellenist framework as *hearers only* remain spiritual infants, unable to get beyond their own concerns to meet the interests of others.

The teachings of our Hebraic ancestors in the faith, on the other hand, flowed from the life experience of the teacher as he himself grew in increasing

Christ-likeness. Life wisdom and experience, along with a *repentant heart*, provided the basis for discussion and dialogue that stirred hearts to respond to God's ways and purposes.

- Are you a *teacher* of the Hebraic foundations, sharing with others the reasons for your way of life? Yes or No? If yes, explain how you go about this. If no, why aren't you?

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***You need milk, not solid food!***  
***Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.***

Spiritual milk is designed by God to nurture those who are *beginning* their pilgrimage with Jesus with the basics upon which they'll then become equipped to walk uprightly—righteously—in Kingdom service.

But far too many men today are still "little boys" in their faith, still "*looking for a breast to be comforted by.*"

In my 30 years of ministry, the majority of men I've encountered in Christendom are trapped by their own quest for **personal comfort** and **security**. They live as **believers**, giving mental assent to the claims of Christ. However, they're devoid of the **total abandonment to God's will** that He demands of those who walk His path. And, even more grievous, they don't *want* that privilege and responsibility!

As the writer to the Hebrews admonishes, it's the constant, ongoing persistence of *putting righteous living into practice*

that enables a followers of Jesus to discern between evil and good. Without such discernment, a person can “talk the talk” but live as though the commands of Scripture are just “suggestions”.

If all the men to whom I ministered were single, that would be problem enough. But the majority were *married*. They role-modeled a belief that never penetrated their heart in such a way that their lives mirrored Jesus. Certainly their wives and children could testify that there was no role-modeling of righteousness from these guys!

Having observed the seeming fruitlessness of their lives, I’m convinced that ***there is nothing in heaven recorded about such men*** — with tragic consequences for those who have deluded themselves: “*If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire*” (Revelation 20:15).

Men who are “**believers**”, who mentally agree that what the Bible says is true but evidence no work of the Spirit in their lives, are Hardened, Mocking, or God-denying Fools. [For more insight on the prevalence of fools in religious systems, see **Lesson 10 of *Discussing How To Restore the Early Church***, a free download.]

The cure? To cry out in repentance, yielding to the Lordship of Jesus and embracing His Spirit’s work within them. Then they can *press on to maturity* and fulfill the high calling to which Jesus Himself has called them!

### **Nicolaitan Systems: Supporting Men’s Comfort Zones**

We want to review especially for you men the corrosive influence that Nico-

litanism — the system of relying on someone else to represent you before God and provide religious programs for you — has had on you. You may be out of organized religion with its self-satisfying complacency and activities. BUT, its influence on your goals and motivations may still have you living as a **believer**.

We noted in our last Lifebyte that most married men who came with their wives on retreats were so bent on seeking personal comfort that they resisted going through the fires of perseverance that their wives were enduring (see 2 Peter 1:5-11). It took sober rebuke to get them out of their comfort zone to press into the season of suffering with their wives.

No wonder **believers** lead this nation in divorce, and 85% of divorces are instituted by frustrated wives.

Many of you men found great comfort in the way Nicolaitan teaching allowed you to mentally sift spiritual information but take no action on it. That which you heard wasn’t role-modeled for you, nor were you personally confronted by anyone when your life choices screamed sinful.

Therefore, you may *still* see no need to change the way you are and grow in trust-grounded obedience to our Lord.

In Lesson 10 of ***Discussing How To Restore the Early Church*** we share about the kind of learning processes that stir a man to shift from sinful foolishness to righteous obedience:

Our Hebraic forefathers understood that a man is changed:

- **by close personal access to role models.**

A man changes by what he esteems in people he respects and doesn’t want to let down.

- **by being confronted.**

Confrontation is an essential part of the shepherd-disciple relationship. That’s why Paul directs, “*We ask you, brothers, to respect those who are working hard among you, those who are **guiding** you in the Lord and confronting you in order to help you change*” (1 Thessalonians 5:12, CJB).

- **not at all by education.**

Education only permits a man to acquire more facts. Yet, education is the method of Bible teaching that the Hellenists introduced—impartation of concepts and facts. That’s why so few Christian men truly *participate* in their faith by walking in loving obedience in a Christ-like manner. Fact acquisition may titillate their brain, but their motivation and purpose remain untouched.

Your wife, on the other hand, is wired differently by God. She is changed by role-modeling and education. She’s able to store information she’s heard and then transform it into life changes. Confrontation, however, is far less effective with a woman. Her emotional reaction to the presentation may keep her from implementing the content.

Many of you men have just tagged along with your wife, sitting quietly while someone in a pulpit lectured at you. This learning style may work for *her*, but never for you. Being “talked at” has allowed you to stay in your comfort zone, never sensing any need to be changed.

Milk...milk...and more milk is all you know *if* you haven’t been mentored and disciplined to APPLY the Word of God to your daily life—especially by someone who you know has a personal interest in developing your spiritual maturity.

Sadly, you may still be a “breast

man”, satisfied with hearing elementary biblical truths over and over but not hungering for the meat of God’s Word.

- **On the scale that follows, place an X indicating the source of most of your past spiritual development.**

**Your Past Means of Growing Spiritually**

Religious < 0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 > Role models  
Education & Confrontation

- **On the scale that follows, place an X indicating the source of your more recent spiritual development.**

**Your Current Means of Growing Spiritually**

Religious < 0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 > Role models  
Education & Confrontation

- **Has anything changed? Yes or No? If you aren’t a “10” on the last scale, describe why this isn’t happening. Ask your spouse, family or close friends for input.**

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In our *Jesus In Your Home* video series we compare the way of life of a **trust-based person** with that of a **belief-based individual** [see diagram next page].

The life of a **trust-based person** flows out from God through the individual as a conduit to fulfill His purposes in the world. The person’s relationship with their Lord is a big part of their daily life. And, because of their sensitivity to the indwelling Holy Spirit, the trust-based person represents **Jesus-in-the-flesh** among those they encounter in the world. Through trust they live to glorify the Father and please Him.

No such preeminent Spirit-obedience

exists in the **belief-based individual**. God occupies such a minute portion of their awareness perspective that His ways never permeate their daily life decisions. Personal interests, the concerns and worries of life, and worldly goals and pursuits press in so that God is relegated to a prescribed activity time.

**Trust-based Life**

**Belief-based Life**



Men in particular who pursue personal comfort and spiritual complacency hang around Nicolaitan (“other-directed”) religious activities:

- home groups for *social reasons only*
- Bible studies for *knowledge only*
- church services for *personal edification only*.

The very idea of an intimate relationship with God is beyond the scope of their spiritual understanding.

- Which of the diagrams above most defines your life right now? Describe yourself in terms of the preeminence of God in your daily walk.

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Ask your spouse, family or close friends for feedback.

***Too many men are looking for a breast to comfort them. They're forfeiting their spiritual manhood.***

In **Lesson 33** of ***Discussing How To Restore the Early Church*** we depicted marriage relationships that are *contrary* to God's Word:

Epidemic numbers of women in Christendom today are blinded by domination, manipulation and an independent resistant spirit. When this type of Jezebelic woman marries, she'll often choose to ***mother her husband*** rather than fulfill her biblical role as *ezer* — his life companion and helper.

Daughters who have been raised by divorced mothers are strongly inclined toward this domination pattern. Many marry to *mother* men rather than lovingly support them.

The rule of such a wife in their home only adds to a man's comfort zone because she assumes many of his biblical responsibilities. These men never mature in Jesus.

They often come across as nice guys who have no backbone. You always find yourself having to deal with his wife as he sits silently next to her. She brazenly speaks for the both of them as though he wasn't even present.

- If you're a married women (or have been married in the past), which role do you fulfill in your husband's life: wife or mother? Describe your inner motive for the relationship you have with your husband.

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Ask your spouse, family or close friends for feedback.

In our series, **Going to the High Places, Lesson 4**, we discuss the “Momma’s boy”:

### **A Momma’s Boy—The Breast Man**

1. A Momma’s boy is always looking for recognition for his accomplishments. “Momma, Momma, look at *me!*” controls his motivation. Often this man is a child of divorce who’s been raised by his mother. Or, he grew up in a home in which his mother dominated while his father passively dwelled in a personal comfort zone.

Many boys who idolized youth sports and received adulation for their achievements carry this dependence on praise into adulthood. They need fans. (“Momma” for a man might be his wife, his boss, even his buddies.)

The Jezebelic control and effeminate nature of modern-day Nicolaitan congregations rely heavily on Momma’s boys. Warm bodies are needed to keep the various programs and activities running. And, Momma’s boys, still driven to seek recognition, are all too happy to fill positions in religious systems (see Matthew 23:5-7).

2. A Momma’s boy immediately seeks out empathy when his feelings are hurt. This *search to be comforted* sets him apart as a ‘breast man’ because his feelings rather than his responsibilities to God and others rule his inner being. He’ll do anything to avoid being accountable to and confronted by a mature man in the faith.

By contrast, **a trust-based man of God seeks the will of God and follows it no matter how he feels.**

3. A Momma’s boy always finds himself controlled by the women in his life. Fearful of displeasing them, he refuses to face the turmoil that any confrontation with them might entail.

Momma’s boys are prisoners in their marriage because they fear their wives more than they fear God. This fear is idolatry, which our Lord will confront.

The life-pattern of a Momma’s boy’s marriage and family life is based on *co-dependency*. He, his family and friends are ruled by apprehension that’s never confronted. The gears keep turning, and Christ-like change never takes place since no one wants to upset the status quo. [For more on this, see **Lifebyte 5, When Fear Is Good.**]



### **A Momma’s Girl—The Manipulating Woman**

1. Girls who have been raised under the feminist influence have been engrained with independence and self-reliance. Any thought of “submitting” to a husband’s headship or coming alongside as his “helper” has been poisoned by both her educational training as well as her often-bitter mother. She believes she must be in control of those around her and feels justified in manipulating their lives in order to achieve her way—the outcome *she* feels is right no matter how she arrives at it.
2. A Momma’s girl has probably grown up in a home with either a single mother or a passive, uninvolved father. She’s been urged to always have a “backup plan” or at

least her own stash of savings in case her marriage doesn't work out.

Not only has she accepted the idea that men are unreliable; she's also come to believe that not even God can be depended on. Therefore she finds herself taking on responsibilities in her marriage that God ordained for a husband, and feels threatened when confronted by anyone about her domination.

3. A Momma's girl who is involved in religious activities wants to make sure things run smoothly and that everyone feels accepted even if they're violating God's Word. Generally inclined to dismiss the Older Testament as harsh and legalistic, this woman perpetuates a "God-idea" that fits her own concept of what her god is like. Thus, the infiltration and proliferation of a genderless god, a god who winks at immorality, a god who has no laws or standards.

A generation of Momma's boys and girls have produced a religious culture that mirrors the world's ways. So many men who live as **believers** have allowed their wife to assume the role of mothering them. So many women who live as **believers** have taken upon themselves a dominant role of control.

Little wonder that modern-day prophets within the Church have decried the predominance of "Ahabic" paralysis and Jezebelic manipulation in Christendom today.

• **If you're a man, are you a Momma's boy? Yes or No? Describe yourself in light of the symptoms we've described.**

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**Ask your wife, family or close friends for input.**

• **If you're a woman, are you a Momma's girl? Yes or No? Describe yourself in light of the symptoms we've described.**

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**Ask your husband, family or close friends for input.**

• **For everyone: Describe the inner motivation of your heart in your relationships and life pursuits. Do you seek recognition? Why do you do the things you do?**

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**Ask your spouse, family or close friends for feedback.**

• **Describe the emotional atmosphere of the home you grew up in, particularly the relationship of your parents with each other and with you. How is your own home now the same or different?**

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***Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.***

What does God mean by the phrase, "teaching about righteousness", or, as the NAS puts it, the "word of righteousness"? Remember, we're affirming that a

Hebraic restoration is taking place throughout Christendom today. Our Father is restoring *Hebraic truths* that take us back to the Hebrew who is our father in the faith, Abraham. This is the man who **“trusted the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness”** (Genesis 15:6; see Romans 4:16).

In James 2 we are told that Abraham’s trust was evidenced by his actions. What are the kind of actions that produce righteousness? First, let’s consider *why* God chose Abraham to receive His promise to bring forth a nation from him:

***For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what He has promised him*** (Genesis 18:19).

**God chose Abraham because He knew that out of this man He would reap the lasting fruit of generations that would follow the Lord’s way. If this is true for Abraham, it ought to be true for you and your family as Abraham’s spiritual offspring.**

What does it mean to walk in righteousness as a *way of life*? The writer to the Hebrews makes clear that those who walk uprightly are both consistent in their decisions and set apart from worldly ways: **“But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained their senses to distinguish good from evil”** (5:14).

It takes diligent practice day by day to make decisions based on what you have discerned to be good and pleasing

to God rather than evil and gratifying to your sin nature. Our Lord makes clear *through His Word* the standard for measuring what is good or evil from *His* perspective:

***For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart*** (Hebrews 4:12).

[We’ve quoted often from the Book of Hebrews because this is an *Hebraic* restoration. Our God made sure His children would be convinced that these truths are found in the *Newer* Testament as well as the Older. They’re not just for our Jewish brothers and sisters in Jesus but for *all* who follow Him.]

Those who progressively pursue a pattern of righteous living understand the command to *make every effort* to walk according to 2 Peter 1:5-11. They hunger to be useful and fruitful for the glory of our Father!

As you keep *pressing on together* in fellowship within your family and your extended spiritual family, you continually add to your trust, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and the most profound character trait, love.

It’s a two-fold collective process within your family and faith community.

- **You clarify through discussion the actions that are righteous in God’s sight** (see Matthew 18:19,20).
- **Then you go do them** (see Mark 3:35; Luke 6:47-49).

**Collective discussion which leads to action** is the essence of Hebrews 10:24: **“and let us consider how to stimu-**

**late one another to love and good deeds.”**

Within western Christianity is a trend to blur the lines between righteousness and unrighteousness. We’re living in a time in which that which is good is called evil, and that which is evil in God’s sight is thought to be good. It’s vital that you know the difference so that your life choices reflect righteousness!

Over time, you’ll mature in your upward spiral of spiritual development if you have access to **discussion that leads to action**. In this way you’ll learn more and more to *distinguish good from evil*.

As you seek **rhema** from God **together**, determining what is His will for you and what isn’t—you’ll learn to *distinguish good from evil*.

As you establish **halakhahs together** by applying His Word to your daily lives, you’ll learn to *distinguish good from evil*.

- Describe how your daily activities and decisions demonstrate that you’re diligent in pursuing a righteous way of life.

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- Do these activities and decisions flow from your *collective cooperation* with others in the faith? Yes or No? If not, why not?

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## The Discomforting Path To Righteousness

Each of the above steps will bring to you some measure of discomfort and inconvenience. Why? Because walking in righteousness confronts the easy alliance you have with your sin nature.

Remember, at conception you received an invisible force within your soul, your *sin nature*.



You grew up under its influence.

Your willingness to obey God will very often lead to an internal battle with your sinful propensities—certainly a discomforting situation! You’re resisting an unseen force that’s been operating within you all your life. [For more on the nature of this invisible reality, see our series **Certain Of What We Do Not See**, a free download.]

Paul’s Romans 7 discourse on this internal struggle leaves no doubt that diligence and effort are needed to stay on the narrow road of holiness. This is why you must be very selective about those with whom you walk in true biblical fellowship. Your extended spiritual family — your load-bearers — must help you grow in righteous maturity so that you don’t yield to your sin nature. In effect, your fellowship family must be willing to help you be *discomforted*.

Your faith family *collectively* fulfills with you the four purposes for fellowship we discussed in **Lifebyte 26**. But be warned:

We contend that it’s far better to not waste your life feeling comfortable among unrighteous “**believers**” who think they’re “Christian” but have *no fellowship* with our

Father and Jesus. Whoever *doesn't* spur you on is supporting and influencing you in lukewarmness in your life. Over time you, too, will only be a “**believer**”, hollow and fruitless — and controlled by your sin nature.

Let's review the reality you'll face if you choose to live a life of trust:

**When you leave the unrighteous way of life and refuse to be a **believer** any longer, you will be *discomforted*.**  
**When you set your heart on becoming like Jesus in motive and action, you will be *discomforted*.**  
**However, everything you forfeit is rewarded in the *joy of true fellowship with God and with others who trust*.**

### ***Men, Don't Fail To Pursue The Path of Righteousness!***

In **Lesson 33** of ***Discussing How To Restore the Early Church***, we shared the difficult dilemma of wives who find it hard to respect their husbands:

During women's retreats we'd often ask wives about their feelings and attitude toward their husbands. One of the more frequent responses:

**“I love the man, but I don't like him.”**

As we probed, it became clear that it was a challenge for many to respect their husbands. They weren't able to see in their men the humility and concern for God's principles that He calls for in family leadership. These husbands neither sought God's *rhema* nor established biblical *halakhahs* for their family. The families were sheep with no on-site shepherd.

The biblical injunction for a wife to respect

her husband has too often been misused as a unilateral demand from men to appease their own selfish interests. The essence of respect, however, is the manner in which a person leads and exercises authority; therefore respect must be earned.

A wife may humbly give her husband deference because of his biblical position of authority, but that doesn't cause her to respect him as the servant-leader of his home.

**To love in the way Jesus calls for, we men humbly owe it to our wives to make it easy for them to respect us.**

If it's hard for your wife to respect you, then *both of you together* need to be diligent to solve this predicament. A man who doesn't do all that God requires for him to be respected abides in hidden sin; or, he's entertaining idols in his heart (see **Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lesson 26**). If you love your wife, you need to eliminate from your life whatever hinders her from fulfilling God's command to respect you.

Blessed is the wife whose husband is in relationship with an older, wiser man—a man who operates as a father in his life to *role-model Christ-likeness* and *confront* him in order to help him change.

A man who is accountable is developing into a husband that his wife finds easy to respect! But a husband who lacks the wise counsel and direction of older men will thrust upon his wife the difficult burden of trying to respect a foolish husband. She will in time compensate by mothering him.

- **On the scale below, place an X indicating where you are when it comes to seeking comfort or obeying God no matter what the cost.**

#### **Your Comfort versus Your Obedience**

**I pursue** < 0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10 > **I seek**  
**personal comfort** **immediate, willing**  
**obedience to God**

- If you're not a "10", what will it take for you to change?

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**Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings.**

It's vital for your own pilgrimage to heaven that you get off milk and get onto solid spiritual food—**FAST!**

In other words:

**Stop living like a believer and grasp wholeheartedly the life of a truster.**

**End your carnal pursuit,**

**and become a person who walks**

**in step with the Holy Spirit.**

**Choose for yourself life not death.**

You may be among those who are drifting into the lukewarmness and lawlessness of the world's ways, giving up on Jesus's admonition to "endure to the end" in steadfast trust (Matthew 24:13).

Perhaps you think it's okay to be a "carnal believer", consistently indulging your sin nature and believing the lie that your deliverance is secure because you agreed with a "sinner's prayer" years ago.

But this warning to a group of Hebrews warns against the pathway that **heads for eternal death:**

*It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to*

*their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting Him to public disgrace.*

*Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God.*

*But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned (Hebrews 6:4-8).*

The promises of God in Jesus will never fail. HE will eternally keep His Word. YOU, however, must maintain daily diligence in your choice of how to live in the time you have remaining here on earth:

**Your ongoing trust and the fruit it produces is the critical affirmation that you are heading for the narrow gate and an eternal welcome into heaven.**

**If you choose to break the Covenant with your Father, you terminate your pilgrimage to salvation. Choosing to fall away is indeed tragic for you, but how many others are you influencing to walk a path to eternal death?**

**"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...."**