

The boldness of the righteous inspires making our Lord Jesus known!

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

"I don't know what it means to be persecuted. I've never been persecuted!" This is what



an older gentleman who was sitting in our cardiologist's waiting room told us as he saw the Name "Jesus" on Mike's 'fishing shirt'. Sue too was wearing a 'fishing sweatshirt' and was placing Christian magazines around the waiting room. The older man had just read some testimonies about our persecuted family in a recent Voice of the Martyrs magazine he had at home. We could hear his deep sorrow as he voiced to us his concern over why he hadn't been persecuted for Jesus (see Matthew 5:10; 2Timothy 3:12). Here in front of him were two seniors publicly making known our relationship with our Lord Jesus — and the 3 of us recognized this as a divine appointment!



Like us, he had been a longtime supporter of VOM. Building on the man's statement, Mike offered him a woeful reason why Christians in this land haven't been persecuted yet. In our research, we had uncovered that the well-meaning Reformers had made following Jesus a private matter which most people kept private except during corporate services. Personal public evangelism apart from those in ministry certainly wasn't the norm. And historically the Roman Catholic institution had long kept individual adherents from exploring and discussing their faith openly, since all religious matters were left in the hands of the priests and religious hierarchy. So in regard to one's faith being a private matter and not a life-changing relationship with Lord Jesus that you publicly proclaim outside "church", Protestant Reformers and Roman Catholics are similar.

Encouraging Christians to make Christ known in public by words and by deeds that proclaim Jesus as the reason for the good deeds has been very important to us personally. Authentic personal representation of our Lord's **love, compassion** and **forgiveness** not only encourages other followers of Jesus; it also gets unbelievers thinking! Viewing your spiritual life as solely a private matter is totally opposite of what our Lord's first followers did in enacting their faith. For example, John and Peter were arrested for publicly proclaiming Jesus in Solomon's Colonnade (Acts 3:11). Philip journeyed down to Samaria proclaiming Christ there (Acts 8). Making Christ known to unbelievers was the hallmark of early Christians even when threatened (Acts 4:23-31).

Wearing 'fishing' gear (revealing to people Someone we value and about Whom they might ask) is just one aspect of expressing our relational commitment to our Lord Jesus, His loving rule of us, and our willingness to carry out His command, *"As you're going [through life], make disciples..."* We don't peddle Jesus. Rather we publicly express our Lord's unequaled priority in our lives. And many people thank us for this! Whether on our daily prayer walks, at appointments or shopping, we pray for opportunities to represent our Lord Jesus to others: *"We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God is making His appeal through us"* (2Corinthians 5:20).

And because of the authority our Lord has given His own, we bind the demons before entering a town or building or public park, ordering them in the Name of Jesus not to interfere as we fulfill our Father's purposes for and through us (Mark 6:7-13, 16:17; Luke 10:1-12, 17). Opportunities don't arise every time to represent our Lord publicly, but often enough for us to rejoice!

Find further encouragement about this in Lifebytes 37 & 38: ***Extending The Kingdom: The People Movement Approach*** 37: <<https://www.restorationministries.org/download/37.peoplemovement1.pdf>> and 38: <<https://www.restorationministries.org/download/38.peoplemovementpart2.pdf>>.

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Repentance yields righteousness, righteousness breeds boldness

Just before we returned to the United States with the Hebraic Foundations, our heavenly Father told us the conditions upon which He would continue to use us to share the Hebraic foundations. *“It is because you live repentantly with Me. As long as you remain repentant, I will use you to share this message.”* Biblical repentance means you turn away from what displeases God and turn toward our Father through ongoing obedient trust in Jesus. As you press forward by His Spirit and His grace, you can keep receiving forgiveness when you sin and repent, cleansed and enabled to do His will. Out of grateful love for your Lord, you want to be fully available for His Spirit to work through you! God’s Word reveals that repentance is the *only way* to maintain full fellowship with our Father and our Lord Jesus (1John 1:1-10). Our Father longs to forgive. But sadly, few Christians confess their sin(s) or study His commands to discover what He considers sin and what righteous living actually looks like in practice. From motives to values and actions, too many who say they’re Christians live the same way those who are captive to the world and its ways do.

Wearing our ‘fishing’ gear is a visual sign of the Spirit of our Lord abiding in us. In living *“cleansed from all unrighteousness”* when we do sin and repent, there’s a holy and love-impelled boldness which the Spirit freely imparts: *“the righteous are bold as a lion”* (Proverbs 28:1). Too many self-pleasing, worldly-compromising reprobates populate Christianity in the US. Their lives are indistinguishable from nonbelievers. Living reprobate lives and not being born of the Spirit, they lack the loving boldness which repentance produces. In our November 9 email we discussed some identifying characteristics of a reprobate. Here’s another common characteristic: When you try to gently tell them that something they’ve done is a sin or has hurt their relationship with you, they retort, *“What’s wrong with what I did?”* They aren’t concerned about what they should have done right, nor do they want you to tell them—because they don’t intend to change.

“He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him” (Ephesians 1:4).

The genuinely born again must avoid demonic captivity with the same life and death determination that David displayed in avoiding being killed by King Saul. It begins with remaining repentant and determining by His grace to keep loving Jesus as Lord of your life and following His commands. (Keep your focus on the One Who gave those commands!) Picture your repentance and that of your family like the Israelites of old placing blood over the doorposts of their home (1Corinthians 10:1-12). It’s the blood of our Lord Jesus that covers over every sin you confess, as John makes clear in 1John 1:9. •If you keep attending weekly services without any call for attendees to repent before the service begins, and •if you’re not collectively praying for this nation to have righteous leadership, then you’re going to lament before 11/5/2024 has ended. If you know Jesus as Lord, you’ll forsake any sin and keep His commands:



•*“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him* (1John 2:3,4).

•*“You know that He appeared so that He might take away our sins. And in Him is no sin. No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen Him or known Him”* (1John 3:5,6).

Please heed this: If your unconfessed sin doesn't **break your heart that you've offended our Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father**, then weigh the likelihood that you may not be genuinely born again. Why? Because the **Holy Spirit within you would convict you of your sin**. And if you keep preferring your sin to His righteous way, you may be **so reprobate** that you can't be brought to repentance. In effect you're publicly crucifying Jesus all over again (Hebrews 6:6).

The Age of Enlightenment in Europe influenced a lot of **anti-Semitic theologians** in their intellectual analysis of Scripture, resulting in numerous diverse creeds and making creedal allegiance the foremost issue in Christianity. But in contrast, looking to God's Word alone and in its entirety, **we're affirming repentance**. *If* you're taught the Older Testament first, you'd more clearly understand the New Covenant relationship that our Lord Jesus made possible. You'd realize and grieve over the depth of sinfulness which lay within you and the cost and pain which Jesus willingly suffered for you. The Older Testament reveals why the shed blood was so necessary to redeem you. This reality introduces becoming genuinely born again.

Have you resisted God's way of reconciliation through Christ by ignoring or neglecting repentance and love-grounded obedient trust? Then don't expect at the **judgment throne** that you'll receive grace — not when you were able NOW to accept **truth according to Jesus, His Spirit, and the Bible which you can freely access if you choose to**. If you have a Bible to read or hear, then the Spirit will give you the means of understanding what Truth is as you ask Him. That's why John said, *"You do not need that anyone teach you at this point"* (1John 2:27) It's not getting rid of teaching. Rather, it's **YOU allowing yourself to be convicted by the Holy Spirit if need be — and you doing something about it so you can press on in His will**.

"Now for a little while you may have to suffer grief in all kinds of trials" (1Peter 1:6).

We know that some of you have gone through all kinds of very painful trials this past year. 2023 has been one of our most difficult years too! The circumstances which led to our time at the cardiologist's office talking with that older man began in 2021 with Mike being plagued by unrelenting pain, often sleeping less than an hour at a time. And, beset by a particular form of afib, he twice went to the emergency room with congestive heart failure and pulmonary edema. We're so grateful that Father uses medical intervention to serve His purposes! But for two years the VA sent him out to civilian medical practices in Spokane to treat his chronic pain and afib, to no effect. (Mike felt like he was their "cash cow" as nothing they did helped!) While we still labored to share with you all that the Spirit was giving us during that time, a sense of overwhelming hopelessness was beginning to take over. Mike's spirit was strong but his body and emotions were falling apart.

This past summer, after losing many months of sleep and crying out to our Lord, Mike doggedly pressed the VA to take him in-house for pain management by people who understand the ravaging effects of Agent Orange. Since September we're delighted to report that he has been receiving care from the VA Pain Clinic who've helped him live with moderately less pain. At the same time, he was thoroughly researching his cardio situation. He persistently pursued the VA to send him to a cardiologist in Spokane who specialized in the procedures he needed. Again Father answered his need by providing a pacemaker on November 21 which ended several years of on-going weakness and fatigue. We definitely praise the Great Hand behind this means of relief!

We were at the cardiologist's office to follow-up on the pacemaker when we met the man we mentioned. On December 18 Mike will have an ablation on the nerves in his heart that have been causing his particular type of arrhythmia. He's delighted that through his unrelenting pursuit of medical care through and beyond the VA he has also opened the way for other vets to get the same procedures he received. As difficult as times were for us, we were also very aware that we were being undergirded by the prayers of others. Thank you so much for journeying with us during all this time!



During this entire time we have continued our several-mile prayer walks even if they were slower and more laborious. Anyone who knows us realizes that our lives rely on the Holy Spirit and the revelations He gives us during these walks. We've been able to share some of these with you—with more to come!

We Must Collectively Repent To Forestall Heart-Piercing Lament

The revelations we've been receiving from the Holy Spirit haven't been pleasant and soothing; rather, they've been **heart-piercing lament**. Our heavenly Father views reprobate Christianity in the US as deplorable. His Son's holy and precious Name is openly blasphemed and insulted because self-identified Christians have so grievously misrepresented Him to an unbelieving world. We'll be addressing more of the Spirit's revelations in upcoming Prophetic Insights and Realities. But as we've previously written: Repentance and the centrality of the Lordship of Jesus and His love have been replaced by **unconfessed sin, tolerated demonic strongholds, and allowing Humanism to influence Christian worldview**. Many Christians have lost sight of the unchanging truth of God's Word and His holy commands.

In upcoming Prophetic Insights we'll be confronting various tolerated evils that so many Christians embrace and don't think of as sinful. The common source to this widespread unholiness is that Christians are readily giving into their sin nature without resisting (John 8:34; James 1:14,15; Hebrews 12:4). Having no fear of God, they've made Him to be like themselves—a far cry from how His unchanging Word presents Him! In our own spiritual pilgrimage we've had to leave behind some who chose to go back to living with sin in their lives. They loved their sin more than they loved Lord Jesus. It especially hurt when those who, by the authority of Jesus, **had freed themselves from demonic strongholds but never sustained their spiritual freedom**. Instead they returned to the familiar comfort of their old sinful ways and the people who took part in sin with them. A number dived even further into sin, especially in feeding their toleration for **immorality and defaming Jesus' Name as an expletive** in movies, TV shows and internet "humor".

Here's a reminder of a tool the Spirit gave us three decades ago which you may find useful at this stage of your life and this season of family get-togethers: We wrote our workbook, **Demolishing Strongholds**, to help people free themselves from demonic influence/agitation/control in the Name of Jesus. But over the years we found that those who'd been delivered from demonic influences *by another person* instead of evicting the demons themselves in the Name of Jesus are very susceptible to re-establishing a demonic presence. Another reentry point for demonic influence comes in those who obtain spiritual freedom but fail to fight to hold onto it. By not asking others to confront them when they exhibit unChrist-like attitudes and behaviors so that they might repent and walk according to the Spirit, they soon begin committing the same sins again, **only with more gusto** (see Luke 11:24-26). To our sadness, this happened among some of our own relatives who tasted spiritual freedom but didn't press on in it. They gave up on resisting the devil and maintaining spiritual freedom in and for Christ.

In our free online book, *Demolishing Strongholds*, we consider Chapter 13, *Do This After You've Demolished The Strongholds*, and Chapter 14, *Take Back The Ground In Your Soul* to be crucial steps in maintaining spiritual freedom.

Our upcoming writings affirm for us that the Holy Spirit is the Source of what we're sharing. His revelations especially on our prayer walks are closely connected to the way of life we cite in our series, **Discussing How To Restore The Early Church**. We strongly encourage you to go through and discuss the 50 lessons in that series. We're only asking that you have a noble character in Christ to ask His Spirit for confirmation or denial. • Revelation is insufficient without confirmation. • And receiving confirmation is inadequate without you taking action.

Mike & Sue