

# GENTLE SHEPHERD MINISTRIES

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*CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH ~ MAKING DISCIPLES ~ EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR MINISTRY*

## THE COVER UP By Rayola Kelley

In a world that seems to be becoming more insane in its perversion, and more unrealistic in its philosophies, once in awhile a bit of fresh air of truth breaks through the darkness. Truth of this nature causes the insanity to stop for a second, and the philosophies that inspire such lunacy, with their many platitudes, to appear ridiculous and unrealistic.

This happened on a program I was watching recently. It was dealing with people who supposedly could not forgive themselves. One woman had accidentally killed her grandson when she backed over him with her car. Another woman, who also had been instrumental in the death of three of her children due to a car accident, was there to share with this grieving grandmother how she emotionally survived such an ordeal. As the audience waited to hear how the woman finally forgave herself for an error that cost her dearly, she admitted to the grieving grandmother that she could not truly forgive herself. Rather, she accepted the fact that she was human. This wise woman pointed out that as humans we err, make bad judgment calls, and mistakes. Once in awhile these flaws or limitations can prove to be tragic.

This wise woman was correct in her evaluation. After working with people for years, I continually discover that the core of the problem in dealing with this type of tragedy is not the terrible accidents or mishaps that occur, but that people have a hard time facing the fact that they are human. Being human means that we are limited, we will fail, and yes we can be very wrong in our conclusions and actions. The other part of the harsh reality of our humanness is that we do not want to face our hu-



man flaws. These flaws are not necessarily unacceptable to God, but they are to us. In order to be realistic and wise about the issues that plague our humanity, we must come to terms with our attitude about being human.

Back in 2002, we published my book *"Battle for the Soul."* The subtitle of the book is *"Man's Quest for Godhood."* Now, this title may seem almost blasphemous, but the reality is that we humans have a hard time accepting our humanness. In our unwillingness to accept who we are, we endeavor to create a reality that ultimately will leave us disillusioned with our lives. In our reality we strive to be perfect in all we do and say, so we never have to face the embarrassment of being wrong. We want to control our reality and somehow become the center of our world. We want to come out on top. In essence, we want to be God of our worlds.

Such attempts set us up for failure in our humanity, and in the end, are simply cover ups that keep us from facing the limitations, flaws and the failures of our humanness. Many people cannot accept the fact that they can be wrong or do something that would be foolish, embarrassing and destructive.

The question is why do we have a hard time facing ourselves? It comes down to our inner person. The one constant reality that most people run from or refuse to face is the affect that sin has upon our humanity. Because of one man's sin, all of creation now groans under the terrible reality of a fallen state that is utterly flawed in so many ways. Sin has clearly marred our potential. In fact, we have become lost, and as a result, we do all we can to avoid facing the terrible reality of its affects and consequences upon our lives.

The workings of sin upon our lives are what often keep us from facing our humanness. Due to sin, we are full of pride that refuses to be wrong, and selfishness, which insists on its own way and reality. Because of this disposition we have a hard time accepting any real discrepancy in our character or ways. Besides trying to avoid facing our hu-

man flaws, we struggle with the world around us as to why it refuses to submit to our selfishness. After all, we are so right in our conclusions and ways.

As we consider the end result of our humanness, we will try to figure out how to get around it, as well as change the odds of being discovered as miserable hypocrites. Some individuals have covered up their human plight with religion or good deeds. They try to adopt some form of religion to reform themselves enough to hopefully cover up the fact that there is no life in any of it, and that death ultimately marks it. There are those who do all kinds of good deeds to cover up the insecurities that lurk behind them, but ultimately their motives are eventually exposed to be self-serving and untrustworthy.

Other people play games of control and manipulation. These games can include acting innocent, ignorant, insulted, or too fragile to face reality. I know of people who want to remain innocent in their sins, ignorant to the wickedness of their ways, act as if you are unjust if you dare pop their bubble with the truth, and appear as if too fragile to face it. However, all such attempts are games that find their inspiration in pride that refuses to be made accountable. After all, once a person is made accountable, he or she will have to take the necessary responsibility to change.

People also try to cover up their humanness and fallen state with worldly wisdom with all of its platitudes, worthwhile causes that make them look good, images that appease others' pride, and intimidation that will make them appear to be in control.

The harsh reality is that we need to be saved from the bondage that occurs from being human in a fallen state. Instead of seeking deliverance from our present state, we devise ways around dealing with the hopelessness and despair of it. We run from facing the fact that we will make wrong judgments that will bring us face-to-face with our humanity. We

hide the issue of sin behind justification so we do not have to see how far away from the mark we are in our attitudes, decisions and actions. We try to cover up our inabilities by trying to right what we cannot right. The end result is hopelessness.

Let us now consider some of the ways that humanity, with all of its platitudes, tries to deal with the hard issues of life.

*Forgive yourself:* The idea of forgiving yourself is a popular theme, but it turns out to be a terrible, unrealistic platitude to those who are tormented by some grave error. The idea of forgiving yourself is a platitude because it sounds good, but it is not possible. Forgiveness has to do with pardon which results in reconciliation. The one offended can only pardon the person who has done a disservice to him or her. For example, our sin will offend God in some way. Therefore, we seek His forgiveness to be restored back into a relationship with Him. Clearly, the grandmother on this TV program could not seek forgiveness from her grandson, and the parents of the child already had forgiven her.

However, as I listened to the grandmother, she was not seeking forgiveness, but resolution as to how she could change the terrible reality that haunted her night and day. She had made a terrible mistake that robbed her of something more precious than words. Sadly, this is true for many situations. We want to change our reality, rather than accept the devastation that plagues each of us because we live in a fallen world due to sin. Since we are bent on insisting on resolving it according to our requirements, we either cannot or will not seek the one that has been offended or the means to be healed. We would prefer to punish ourselves because it appears noble, as if we are paying the necessary penance to somehow make it right.

*Guilt:* This brings us to guilt. People have a terrible time with guilt. Guilt can lead to two arenas: conviction or condemnation. The Holy Spirit convicts, while the ways of the flesh and the world operate in condemnation. This grandmother did not murder her grandson; rather, she acci-

dentally killed him. In the Old Testament this grandmother would not be required to seek a pardon from her victim or God. Rather, she would be allowed and encouraged to seek a refuge city. For the Christian, as well as all tormented souls who are struggling with guilt, Christ is our place of refuge where we can find healing for our guilty conscience. Whether that healing comes through forgiveness for sin, or resolution that comes through accepting reality for what it is, healing comes when we fling ourselves on Christ as the only solution to an unclean conscience. Clearly, this is the only antidote for guilt.

This grandmother was not operating from conviction, but from condemnation. She clearly could not believe she deserved healing or reconciliation; therefore, she had passed this sentence upon herself. She had condemned herself to pay the terrible punishment for her error. Sadly, her self-inflicted punishment will never silence her own condemnation as long as she lives. After all, she lives in a state of condemnation where there is no hope. As a result of her condemnation, she is making another terrible error. Her reality, no matter how cruel, remains what it is, and all her punishment will never bring the child back. Meanwhile, she is robbing herself of the life she could have with her family and others.

*Shame:* As you study guilt, you will realize it covers up shame. People are ashamed that they are human. Failure of this type always happens to the next guy. The reality is that it can happen to anybody. Most people are compassionate towards those who have such a terrible lot befall them. It would be easy for most of us to stand on the sideline with others debating and cheering her on to let go of her guilt. Yet, how many of us, if we were in her position, would be in the same state? This grandmother is ashamed that she made a terrible error. She is ashamed of the fact that she is human. Therefore, she stands guilty for being human. This is the real crux behind most guilt. If we are ashamed of our humanness, then we will be found guilty whenever our humanity is exposed in failure.

Shame will drive us crazy with the "ifs" of a situation. After all, if we had considered all the angles of a matter, we would have avoided facing the harsh reality of our state. In such situations we

should be an exception, not the rule. This grandmother can continue to go over all the "ifs" of the situation a million times, but it will never change the tragic reality of what happened. Since the reality will never change, the only conclusion is that she must let go of the shame. How do you let shame go when the despair is so deep? You accept the reality of the flaw, the terrible judgment call, or the error. You accept you are human, and that along the way you are going to blow it like others before you, because none of us are exempt from being human.

This brings us to the cross of Christ. The cross reminds each of us that we stand on equal ground when it comes to our fallen state. We stand on this equal ground because we are human and we are in great need of forgiveness, healing and resolution. After all, sin has made us fall short in being right and getting it right causing us to wallow in guilt. It has exposed our weaknesses, causing us to be ashamed. It has robbed us of any hope that there is deliverance from such shame. Whether we sin or fail, we need a refuge place in which to find forgiveness and resolution. However, by faith we must seek this refuge place.

How many of you are dealing with some form of guilt, lack, or resolution over a past or present incident? How many of you are drowning in the "ifs" of life? When was the last time you accepted your humanness in the midst of sin, failure and guilt? It is vital we accept our human state so we can recognize that we have need of our Creator's intervention. Whether we need to be saved from sin, guilt or unresolved issues, Jesus is the place of refuge where one can find forgiveness, healing and restoration.

Next month, I will be writing about how we cover up the failures of our humanness with worldly philosophies. These philosophies sound wise, but they have no life to them. They may sound good on paper, but they are unrealistic in changing the terrain of a matter. Sadly, even Christians hide behind these worldly platitudes because they sound wise, but to those who are experiencing the fallout of a tragedy they seem indifferent and cruel.

## FACE-TO-FACE By Jeannette Haley

As many of you know, I nearly died in May due to a seemingly harmless sinus infection that suddenly spread to both ears, went very deep and resulted in severe vertigo. If you've ever experienced extreme vertigo, you know what happens next. Nothing stays down. In my case, I was violently ill from a Friday night to Sunday morning. During that time, Krista and Rayola exhausted themselves taking care of me, and, with other friends, prayed fervently. I knew that once again I had come face-to-face with death.

I'd love to be able to tell you that I saw the Lord, or heard angels singing, or received visions of heaven, but I didn't. All I knew was that a major battle was going on in the spiritual realm. I have to admit, there were dark times when I wondered if God had forsaken me. (Before you pick up a bucket of rocks, remember the anguish and same agonizing experience of many of the Old Testament prophets, along with Job, John the Baptist and even our Lord on the cross.) I can also tell you that no matter what we go through, God is faithful. You see, just a day or so before I was "shot out of the saddle," as I call it, I received an email from a Christian friend who lives in Arkansas. In it she wrote that God had spoken to her as she drove to work telling her to pray for me, which she did. Thank God for her obedience to the Spirit's prompting!



I have to admit, I had forgotten about her email until I was able to sit at the computer once again, and she reminded me. This time, I came face-to-face with not only the faithfulness of Almighty God, but His intimate care and foreknowledge.

Even though there are dangers and pitfalls in this life, most of us try to avoid coming face-to-face with anything that will strip us down to the very essence of our existence. In other words, we shy away from those things over which we have no control, such as life and death. Instead, the natural thing for people to do is to fill their life

with excitement, entertainment, and excess. Such deceptive recourses are of this present world, but, let's face it; most professing Christians are also immersed in the same things. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out why the mega churches are mega.

We all can be clever at self-deception. Admittedly, it can be frightening, and sometimes downright maddening, to see ourselves for what we really are. Therefore, is it any wonder that the self-esteem propaganda has been so enthusiastically welcomed by both the world and the church? If I highly esteem myself, then I don't have to come face-to-face with my sin, right? Self-esteem is nothing more than the pride that God resists, yet it is a leaven of self-deception that results in destruction.

Psalm 36:2 tells us, *"For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good."* Self-esteem is nothing more than self-flattery that tries to conceal iniquity (moral deviation.) The words coming out of the mouth of such a deceived person will give him or her away. Such a person is not only a fool, but his or her life will not represent Christ, who was the greatest example of humility the world has even seen.

This reminds me of a certain individual we once knew who spoke up one day and said, "I'm a good person. We are good people." We were stunned into silence. How can you present the truth to such a self-deceived soul? *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one"* Romans 3:10-12. This person had never come face-to-face with her own sinful disposition, need for repentance and true salvation. Yet, she considered herself to be a Christian.

Sadly, many people share in this woman's self-deception. And, why not? After all, we live in a time of great spiritual harlotry, brought about by the marriage of the church to the world. The offspring produced by this unholy union (which Satan has fought long and hard to achieve) are an undesirable blend of

self-deluded individuals whose spiritual blindness prevents them from coming face to face with the reality of their lost condition. The philosophical drumbeat of the world declares, "You're okay, I'm okay," "love yourself," "forgive yourself," "accept yourself," and the modern church rushes to join the parade. After all, the successful marketing methods that the world has to offer bring success. What pastor or church in their right mind would choose to remain separate from the world and thus risk being obscure and, worse yet, financially poor?

"So," you may be asking, "what is wrong with being "okay," loving yourself, forgiving yourself and accepting yourself?" The answer is everything! Either God means what He says as recorded in His Word, or He is a liar. You cannot find a single verse in Scripture (in context) that backs up such a philosophy. Any individual who chooses to believe the vain philosophies of the world is a person who rebels against coming face-to-face with truth. Truth and falsehood can no more be joined together into one harmonious whole than can light and darkness, good and evil, or the wrong spirit and the Holy Spirit. Such unity is the dangerous agenda of the world and the deceived church, and it very much resembles the goal of the builders of the tower of Babel. True unity can only be achieved for discerning Christians through separation (from the spirit of the world) to the right Spirit. We read in 2 Corinthians 6:14-17: *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."*

Concerning the spiritual bondage that comes as a result of self-deception, Isaiah 44:20 declares: "He

*feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"* All that the deceived soul feeds on is "ashes." There is no real life, joy or hope in it, yet because the heart is deceived, such a person cannot deliver him or herself, or even recognize that a lie has been bought. Even ashes, after awhile, become "normal" for the deceived. The tragedy is they simply do not know the difference because they have never been willing to come face-to-face with the truth.

One example of people under such spiritual bondage is the Insect Tribe of New Guinea. These primitive people, unknown to the outside world until 50 years ago, worship the preying mantis—hence the name, "Insect Tribe." By now you may be thinking, "Of course they are deceived. They don't know the difference!" However, this tribe did have missionaries living among them for some time, but they refused to forsake their idolatry and receive the Gospel.

Of course people in our so-called "civilized" world have taken idolatry to a whole new level where it's barely recognizable for what it really is. This includes countless people who call themselves Christians. Immersed in the excitement, entertainment and excess that the modern, "successful," "emergent," churches enjoy today, these deceived hearts are feeding on spiritual ashes while proclaiming to "love Jesus." But, they do not know Him, for they have never come face-to-face with their sin and their lost state.

Another area of great self-deception is in the area of pride, or conceit. *Galatians 6:3* puts it this way: "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." This brings us right back to the self-esteem issue, and tells us that a high opinion of self is deceptive. Not only is it deceptive, but it sets a person up for a fall. A self-deceived person who thinks highly of self will not be able to rightly divide the Word of Truth, exercise sound judgment, or have spiritual discernment. As a result, such a person is a sitting duck for spiritual deception. How much better it would be for a person who tends to think highly of him

or herself to humble self, and come face-to-face with this or her need to repent.

Another way to deceive ourselves is through disobedience to the Word. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" *James 1:22*. How many people sit and listen to the Word of God being preached week after week, month after month, year after year, yet they do absolutely nothing that God tells them to do? I have to admit that in our 17 years of ministry, we have known perhaps a handful of people who have actually applied the Word to their lives and lived it, consistently, without turning back. Jesus explains the reasons for this in *Matthew 13:18-23*. Again, most people refuse to come face-to-face with the fact that hearing is not enough. They must be obey, or they are merely deceived unbelievers.

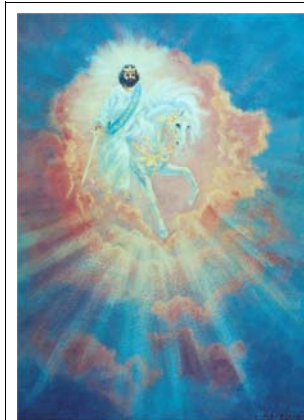
An unbridled tongue is another form of self-deception. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" *James 1:26*. This verse cuts right to the heart of the matter. Gossip and evil speaking reveal the heart condition. Jesus proclaimed that "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh" *Matthew 12:34b*. The terrible truth is such self-deception blinds a person to the fact that his or her religion is in vain. In other words, it is empty and worthless. An unbridled tongue should cause us to come face-to-face with our spiritual state, and bring us to our knees in repentance. Sadly, the deceived heart will continue to go on its hypocritical way, completely unaware of the judgment that lies ahead.

Sin is not a popular subject today. You don't hear it preached by the popular preachers in the popular churches. You don't read it in the popular books written by the popular writers. You don't hear it sung in the popular songs by the popular singers that have replaced the old hymns. You don't find many Christians today who are concerned about their own sinful disposition, failure to do right, and failure to be right, even though many are concerned about the sins of others. Could it be that the worldly philosophy of self-esteem has indoc-

trinated professing Christians, or can the finger of blame be pointed at the church for allowing this insidious dogma of self-love to permeate the church, along with all of the other worldly philosophies and activities?

We need to come face-to-face with the truth about ourselves. We need to come face-to-face with the fact that this present world has nothing to offer—that it is passing away. We need to come face-to-face with the reality of Jesus Christ, of judgment to come, and with the fact of heaven.

The question is are you prepared to come face-to-face with who you really are in the face of Jesus Christ? Are you ready to meet Him face-to-face, either when you leave this present world, or when He returns in the clouds with great power and glory? Will you run to Him with your arms spread wide, in great joy and rejoicing like the little six-year-old boy whose daddy returned from Iraq, surprising him and his classmates at school? As I tearfully watched this video clip and listened to the heart sobs of the son while in his daddy's arms, it reminded me of how wonderful it will be when our struggles are finally over, when we shall be safe in the arms of Jesus, and, at long last, see Him—face-to-face!



And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge

and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God...And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.—*Revelation 19:11, 12, 13, 16*

[Painting by Jeannette Haley]

## RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

### HOMOSEXUALITY—A SIN, OR A HATE CRIME?

**Q:** *There is a belief that homosexuality is influenced by the presence of some gene. The latest is that there is a bill in Congress trying to outlaw any preaching against it, qualifying it as a hate crime. What is your view about this issue?*

**A:** Regardless of my view or whether the freedom to preach against a practice is outlawed and passed or not, God's view on man's conduct or actions does not change with the fickle, self-serving ways, or immoral irresponsibility of men and nations. God's view of all sin remains the same. It will be judged, and the judgment for it remains unchanged—death or eternal separation from God.

The normal attempt of man in his unregenerated, sinful state is to cover up, justify away or change the Law of God in regards to any type of sin. Ultimately, such attempts will cause man to go into despair, depression or delusion. However, the reality, results and consequences of sin remain the same according to God's evaluation.

Since God is the ultimate judge, all other judgments will be confirmed, nullified or condemned by God. God has already judged sin for what it is. As a result, sin is a fact, and, people who refer to others who dare call sin sin as being hateful, are insane. In fact, to call any sin good falls under the woes pronounced upon those who call evil good, and good evil in *Isaiah 5:20*. Clearly, God's attitude about homosexuality remains true, and as His people all we can do is agree with Him and stand on His judgments. And, when you study the inspired and anointed version of the Bible (*KJV*), God's evaluation about homosexuality remains consistent—it is an abomination that will cause even the land to spew out the people who dare practice it.

This brings us to whether homosexuality is inherited, preferred and/or practiced. If this practice is truly inherited, then God is unfair in demanding that man cease in such practices. Although the tendency of man is present to give way to whatever feeds his

fleshly lusts, he does not inherit such practices.

Jesus put it best when He stated that man prefers darkness to the light. The reason for this is because man's deeds or practices are wicked. This brings us to the reality that even society admits that homosexuality is a preference. In other words, it is preferred to other practices and clearly not inherited. Those who prefer such a practice would like to think it is inherited, and then they do not have to be responsible for their actions. But clearly, it is a preferred practice.

Since it is a practice, it can be changed. Practices simply represent the habits that exist in our way of thinking about a matter. These habits usually start with experiences that bring us pleasure or some type of association. The problem with these experiences or associations is that they can entangle our affections. Once affections are associated with a certain pleasure or practice, it becomes a desire that will confuse even the natural order of things. Once the person allows his or her desire to define him or her in an area, then a practice can become a preferred way of living.

Homosexuality is not a matter of some gene being out of order, it is a preferred practice because somewhere along the line these individuals allowed an experience (or confusion due to association based on feelings) to define them, rather than take responsibility for the direction of their affections. This is why Paul told us to set our affections on things above and not on the earth. Once we get control of our affections and direct them heavenward, rather than towards the practices of this present world, Jesus will be the one who defines us. Our preferences will change as His perspective transforms our mind. As our mind is changed about a practice, the habit in how we consider something will be broken and replaced with that which is holy and acceptable.

This is a quick explanation of this subject. If you would like to know

more about how personal preferences work, see my e-book entitled, *"Manual for the Single Christian Life."*



### GATHERING: BUT NOT FOR THE BETTER! By Chip Brogden

*"Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse" (1 Corinthians 11:17).*

"Many churches, gatherings, meetings, ministries and fellowships do more harm than good. They should be shut down because Jesus does not have the preeminence there. Thus, they serve no Kingdom purpose. I am convinced that most churches exist only to give the pastor someplace to preach on Sunday. The meetings continue but no fruit is produced. They are dead branches still clinging to the vine that need to be hacked off to make way for new growth.

"Paul told the Corinthians that when they came together it was not for the better, but for the worse. To be sure, they gathered together. They were faithful to assemble. But their gathering together was not a testimony to their faith, it was a testimony to their division. Actually, they were not assembling together at all, they were assembling separately. 'Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you!' What pastor is willing to stand up and say, 'There will be no more services until we can learn how to come together for the better, and not for the worse.' Not many!"

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### THE GIFT OF HOLY HATRED By Chip Brogden

*"I hate your show and pretense—your hypocrisy of 'honoring' Me with your religious feasts and solemn assemblies. I will not accept your burnt offerings and thank offerings. I will not look at your offerings of peace. Away with your hymns of praise—they are mere noise to My ears. I will not listen to Your music, no matter how lovely it is" (Amos 5:21-23, Living Bible).*

"I want to be a blessing and a delight to the Lord. I do not want to grieve Him. What about you? Friends,

*Continued Page 6, Column 1*

*Holy Hatred, Con't.*

we need to find out what the Lord loves and what the Lord hates. It would be better for us to cancel everything and just lay face-down in the dirt than to shuffle through yet another 'church' service and run the risk of grieving God yet again. We have a responsibility to find out what the Lord loves and what the Lord hates; what is acceptable to Him, and what is unacceptable. It is vain to continually ask Him to bless the thing He is disgusted by. It is a waste of time."

**PREACH THE PERSON OF GOD—by A.W. Tozer**

*He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. --Romans 4:20-21*

"My faith does not rest on God's promises. My faith rests upon God's character. Faith must rest in confidence upon the One who made the promises....

"When I think of the angels who veil their faces before the God who cannot lie, I wonder why every preacher in North America does not begin preaching about God--and nothing else. What would happen if every preacher just preached about the person and character of God for an entire year--who He is, His attributes, His perfection, His being, the kind of a God He is and why we love Him and why we should trust Him? I tell you, God would soon fill the whole horizon, the entire world. Faith would spring up like grass by the water courses. Then let a man get up and preach the promises of God and the whole congregation would join in chorus: 'We can claim the promises; look who made them!' This is the confidence; this is the boldness.

*Faith Beyond Reason, 45.*

**THANK YOU** ~ Each and every one who has faithfully stood with us through the years in true friendship, prayer and support. Without you, this ministry would cease to exist. May the Lord will bless you with all spiritual blessings. You are precious to us.



**EMAILS & LETTERS**

"... was very blessed by your newsletter this month [June] . . . God really spoke to me through both of you. I feel so blessed to be your sister." - AR

"All of the articles [September 2006 issue] are great as always. The one that the pastor wrote. . . Well, isn't that the truth! Most churches in North America operate as he says, God help us! Even though our church is not into any funky stuff and all seems on the up and up I sense the Holy Spirit is not really present there. The teaching is good but there is no altar call where there is laying on of hands. The pastor does ask each Sunday if anyone needs prayer or has something to share, then he prays from the pulpit. I used to so enjoy the altar call from [former church]. The Sunday night services were so Spirit filled." - BC [Note: You may access former issues of the newsletter on our Web Site]

"First off I want to thank you. Your book "Hidden Manna" was wonderful. It points out a lot of things that 'was' going on in my life, also I was able to identify myself . . . [It] gave me beneficial insight on submitting to the Lord. Also, the *Discipleship Course* was the most useful piece of information I've yet to read. It gave me very beneficial insight on how to pray, love, repent and most of all be a faithful 'obedient' Christian. I have constant contact with the Lord through prayer." - ID inmate

Sha-Zam!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WOW! You gals have sent me yet another "slam-dunk" newsletter!!! My heart raced and jumped as I read 'Have You Heard The Latest?' simply because I sort of keep tabs on all of these whacko happenings, and Rayola just called it as it is.

"Then, my spirit soared as I read "Close Encounters." It was so well-written, from a heart of love unfeigned! When the very Spirit of God convicts a person of the need for our Savior, what more of an encounter can we ask for? That was close enough for me!

"A tip of my Irish Hat to you gals. As you labor in the field, I'm honored

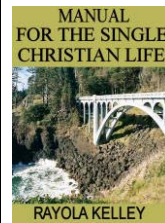
to be called a fellow-laborer as part of the self-same body!

"Well done, thou good and faithful servants! May He continue to make His face to shine upon you, as you plow up the fallow hearts, and stir people to follow Him." - FL

"I absolute REFUSE to limit God in anything He chooses to do! [Regarding a June CBN news article, "Signs and Wonders Transform Indonesia."] But, I must admit that I'm quite jaded anytime a HUMAN name, or a HUMAN ministry is involved in an article such as this!! It then swings over (in my mind) to organized religion, or a human being, getting the glory, rather than our Creator!!! What is the point in spreading this around the world in a news article? The only thing it will accomplish is yet another group of people trying to imitate the PROCEDURE to accomplish the same end results!!! I think the real miracles like this go unpublished, and ONLY GOD gets the glory!!" - FL

"Regarding true evangelists, I can go back even farther than you. There were none better than Gladys Pearson, Mr. Pentecost and others. What days those were. I mourn that they are gone, but things will never be like that again. What tragic loss, and the moderns think they have it all together..." - MO

"Bless you for your ministry. Thank you for the book, "He Actually Thought It Not Robbery". It is an inspiring work. I'm hoping to share many of your thoughts with others." - ID



**MANUAL FOR THE SINGLE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

One of the issues in the Church that can be ignored or overlooked concerns the challenges of single people.

It can prove difficult and hard to be a single Christian. Most people are comfortable with married couples, but skeptical about the single person.

This Manual addresses the various problems single people encounter. It will not only help a single person find his or her place in the kingdom of God, but it will bring valuable insight to those who find these individuals as a part of the Church body.