

Which should you follow...
the sinful desires of the self
which lead to spiritual death...

or the Spirit, which leads to
life forever?

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Exalting CHRIST among the Deaf

Personally from Billy



Although this issue is dated November-December 1993, it is now either late February or early March 1994 as you hold this issue in your hands. It is a "general" issue; that is, it has no special theme. But we think you will enjoy the cartoons on *Life in the Spirit* as well as the other assorted selections we have put in this issue.

During the winter, however, when our mission trips are put on hold until warmer weather, we have worked hard to build up material for future issues. We are happy to tell you that we definitely have more comic strips on the way which most of our deaf readers love. One deals with *Christ's Prophecies of the End and His Coming*, a continuation of the strip we began in the November-December 1992 issue. Another strip will take an in-depth look at the *Gay Movement* and what our attitudes toward homosexuals should be. Still other comic strips relate Bible stories like *Daniel and the Lions* and *Jonah and the Big Fish*. We also have material on a bird's eye view of Jesus Christ's mission on earth which should help our readers understand God's plan of salvation for us. In all, we seem to have a very good year ahead for this publication. If the Lord wills, we will have **Light for the Deaf** continuing to come to your home as long as you want it!

Warmly yours in Him,

Billy Leavell

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LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

On these four pages we give a brief look at the Spirit-led life by cartoons that illustrate several scriptures, most of them from Romans 8. We pray these pages will be of much help to you. But you can get much more help if you read all of Romans 8:1-17 as well as the other scriptures cited. Also compare in different translations. You'll learn a lot!

"Change your hearts and lives and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Then God will forgive your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

--Acts 2:38

"...All of us became part of Christ Jesus when we were baptized..."

--Romans 6:3



"So now people that are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty."

--Romans 8:1

"And in Christ, God put His special mark on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that He promised."

--Ephesians 1:13



"When people sin,
they earn what
sin pays--
death."

--Romans 6:23



"You were spiritually dead
because of your sins and
because you were not free from the
power of your sinful self."

--Colossians 2:13

"But God gives
His people a
free gift--
life forever
in Christ Jesus
our Lord."

--Romans 6:23



"...God made you alive with Christ.
And God forgave all our sins."

--Colossians 2:13

"Now we don't
live following
our sinful
selves."

--Romans
8:4



"If a person's
thinking is
controlled by
his sinful
self, then
there is
spiritual
death."

--Romans 8:6

"We live
following the
Spirit."

--Romans 8:4



"But if a
person's thinking
is controlled by
the Spirit, then
there is life and
peace."

--Romans 8:6

"...If a person's thinking is controlled by his sinful self, then that person is against God."
--Romans 8:7



"You are ruled by the Spirit, if that Spirit of God really lives in you."
--Romans 8:9



"...If you use the Spirit's help to stop doing the wrong things you do with your body, then you will have true life."
--Romans 8:13

"The true children of God are those people who let God's Spirit lead them."
--Romans 8:14



"The Spirit is not a Spirit that makes us slaves again and causes us to fear."
--Romans 8:15



"The Spirit that we have makes us children of God. And with that Spirit we say, 'Father, dear Father.'"

--Romans 8:15



"We get our new life from the Spirit. So we should follow the Spirit."
--Galatians 5:25

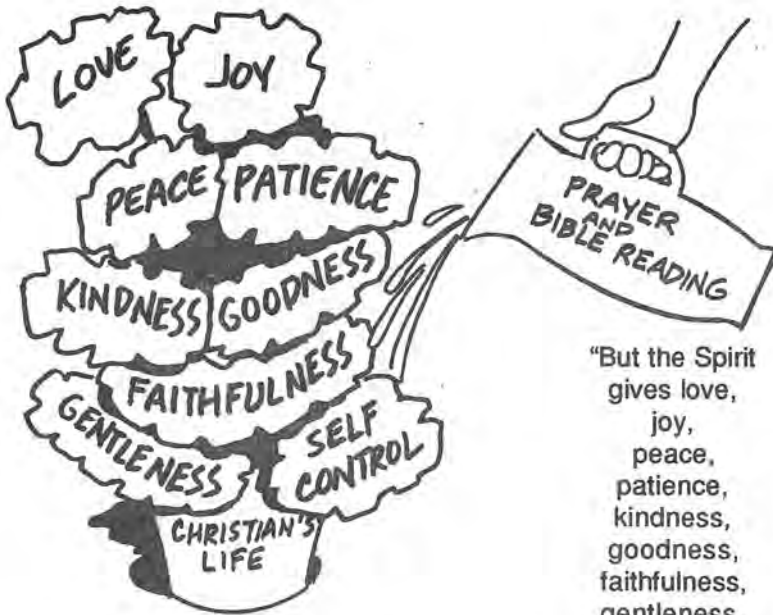
"So, my brothers and sisters, we must not be ruled by our sinful selves. We must not live the way our sinful selves want. If you use your lives to do the wrong things your sinful selves want, then you will die spiritually. But if you use the Spirit's help to stop doing the wrong things you do with your body, then you will have true life."

--Romans 8:12,13



"Don't be fooled. You cannot cheat God. A person harvests only the things he plants. If a person plants (lives) to satisfy his sinful self, then his sinful self will bring him eternal death."

--Galatians 6:7,8



"But the Spirit gives love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

--Galatians 5:22,23*

*Where the English Version for the Deaf (EVD) says "the Spirit gives..." the original Greek says "the fruits of the Spirit...", and is so translated in most other English translations, including the King James Version.



"So I tell you: Live by following the Spirit. Then you will not do the evil things your sinful selves want."

--Galatians 5:16

"But if a person plants to please the Spirit, he will get eternal life from the Spirit." --Galatians 6:8

Patience and the Christian Life

by Steve Richards

We must have a lot of patience to live the Christian life. Often we want to give up and quit the church. We may see many people around us living in sin. They go to drinking parties. They dance. They are involved in many sexual sins. We try to teach them, but they refuse to listen. We may feel depressed and want to quit the church and join the world. We want to give up! We need to remember that the Bible says, "God will strengthen you with His own power; that God will strengthen you so you will not quit when trouble comes, and so that you will be

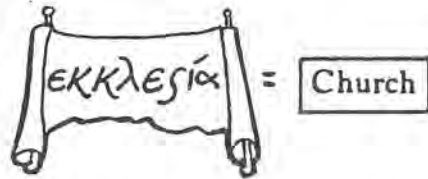
patient (longsuffering) and happy" (Colossians 1:11). If we are longsuffering it means we have accepted the strength of God in our lives so that we will not give up.

Heaven is a prize all of us hope to win. An old saying states, "Winners never quit and quitters never win." If we quit trying to be good Christians we will lose our souls. If we are longsuffering, we can win the prize of Heaven.

"You must be patient, too. Don't stop hoping. The Lord Jesus is coming soon" (James 5:8).

What is a CHURCH?

It is our English translation of the Greek word "**EKKLESIA**".



An "**EKKLESIA**" means the "CALLED OUT".



An "**EKKLESIA**" is any group of people that is called out.



An "**EKKLESIA**" first meant a Greek town in which the citizens were called out for the meeting.



Today an "**EKKLESIA**" of Christ means a group of people saved by Christ. They are called out from the sinful world into a special group.



"So come away from those people and separate yourselves from them," says the Lord. "Touch nothing that is not clean, and I will accept you. I will be your Father, and you will be My sons and daughters," says the Lord All-Powerful." --2 Corinthians 6:17,18

"God is faithful. He is the One who has called you to share life with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." --1 Corinthians 1:9

"God called you to have that salvation. He called you by using the Good News that we preached. God called you so that you can share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So, brothers and sisters, stand strong and continue to believe the teachings we gave you."

--2 Thessalonians 2:14,15

SMOKING

by George Amusasi

This article first appeared in the Christian Signer, a gospel paper for the deaf in Ghana, East Africa. Be sure to read it carefully and prayerfully!

This is not a lesson on how to preserve fish or meat by smoking in ovens or kilns. I am talking about the inhalation and exhalation of the smoke of tobacco or other similar products. We see people walking about in the streets, sitting in public places, riding in vehicles, and sitting in their homes with cigarettes on their lips sucking the smoke from the cigarettes. Some of the smoke escapes through their nostrils and mouths like chimneys. Why should this subject engage our attention now?

First of all, cigarette smoking *kills!* There came a time when doctors became concerned about the fact that many men and a few women were dying of a disease called *lung cancer* ever than before. They, therefore, set out to find out about the cause of this dreadful disease, and soon they came out with the answer: 90% of all cases of lung cancer is caused by *cigarette smoking!* Since then the effect of smoking on health has received a great deal of attention. Much research and many publications have been devoted to this subject.

Now, cancer is a very deadly disease. By the time you realize you have cancer it will be too late. You will be almost dead. And for cancer to affect your lungs-- the only organs which take vital air to the rest of your

body-- you really see what harm you do to your body when you smoke.

Smoking can also cause *cancer of the mouth, throat, voice box, oesophagus and bladder* (with which you urinate). Smoking also causes other lung diseases which doctors call *chronic bronchitis* and *emphysema*. Cigarette smoking also causes a disease of the arteries which can result in *hypertension* and *stroke*. The longer you smoke and the more cigarette sticks you smoke, the more likely you are to get these diseases. Again, in pregnant women who smoke there is increased risk of *miscarriage, still birth, premature birth and neonatal death*.

If you consider the effects of smoking on the health of people and consider the various advertisements for smoking, one is not surprised. Since the revelation of the harmful effects of smoking on the body, governments in many countries have enacted laws banning the advertisement of cigarettes on the radio and television. Our country has just recently done the same. Warnings appear on cigarette packets and billboards indicating that cigarette smoking can be harmful to your body. In many developed countries, smoking is not allowed on buses and other public places in order to prevent

non-smokers from inhaling some of the smoke coming from smokers.

Secondly, cigarette smoking *enslaves!* The knowledge of the harmful effects of smoking has had little effect in persuading people to give up smoking. Many people know the harm in smoking and want to quit. They have attended funerals of friends who died of lung cancer or heart attacks because of their prolonged smoking. They have tried to discourage their own children from smoking. But they still lack the will power to throw away their cigarettes! They have been enslaved to them.

Thirdly, we have to look at smoking in the light of God's word. The Bible does not specifically say anything about smoking. We have, however, established that smoking destroys the body and smoking enslaves people. The Bible on the other hand asks in 1 Corinthians 6:19: "*What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own!*" Verse 20 continues: "*For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*" In 1 Corinthians 10:31-32 we receive the following instructions: "*Whether therefore you eat, or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense, neither to the Jews; nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.*" The Christian's body and spirit have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. He should not harm it. He should not deliberately destroy it.

Your body should be kept *healthy*. The Christian has a solemn respons-

ibility for what he does with his body--the temple of the *Holy Spirit*. The Christian should glorify God in his body in whatever even with regard to what he eats or drinks. We can't say we are glorifying God with our bodies if we smoke to destroy our bodies.

Suicide is *self-murder*. Whether a person commits self-murder in an instant with a knife or with a gun, or slowly with poison or over a longer period of time by smoking cigarettes, the sin is the same. In 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 Paul says it is "*the will of God... that each of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel (i.e., **body**) in sanctification and honour.*" If you do not sanctify your body it is against God's will and that is sin against God.

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:12, "*All things are lawful for me; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any.*" No appetite or desire can be allowed to overwhelm a child of God and thus deny him his power of free choice. To be brought under the power of something which is capable of being held within your own power of choice is degrading and wrong.

However it is possible to stop smoking. Various methods to help you stop smoking are available. But for you a Christian how can you stop smoking? I think the method is very simple. Paul tells us in Philippians 4:13: "*I can do all things through Christ who strenghtens me.*" Do you believe this? Just commit the problem to God in prayer through

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The answers given to the questions below are the responsibility of the Editor. You may direct all queries to LIGHT FOR THE DEAF, 2285 Frayser Boulevard, Memphis, TN 38128.

When a Christian can read the Bible daily, does this mean he obeys God's commands? If a Christian can't read the Bible daily, does this mean he doesn't obey God's commands?

Yes, a Christian would be obeying God's commands if he reads the Bible daily. However the key words I notice you use are can and can't.

There are many Christians in parts of the world who are not able to read because they never learned how to. But that does not mean they are stupid or dumb, or even that they refuse to obey God. When they do hear God's word, they obey it.

These Christians listen to the word of God being read by someone else. This is what was done in the Jewish synagogues and early churches of Christ in the first century. Someone always read the word of God aloud for the people to listen to. Too, copies of the Bible were expensive in that time because the copies were made by hand (there were no printing presses then). So a Jew or early Christian could not afford to buy a Bible to read

daily. But they did listen and did learn the word of God.

Notice what the apostle John said in the book of **Revelation**: "The person who reads [*aloud*] the words of this message from God is blessed (happy). And the people who hear [*listen to*] this message and do the things that are written in it are blessed" (Revelation 1:3).

But if a person hears (or reads) the word of God, and refuses to obey it, then he is not obeying God. Read James 1:22-25; 2:14,20; Matthew 7:21).

If you are able to read the Word of God, great! But if you are not able to read, but can listen to someone read from the Bible, that is also great. It doesn't matter if you are deaf or hearing; if you are deaf and understand sign language, someone can sign the verses for you.

I read Hebrews 6:4-6. It says: "After people have left the way of Christ, can you make them change their life again? I am talking about people who have learned the truth. They received God's gift and also shared in the Holy Spirit. Those people heard the things God said, and they saw the great powers of God's new world. And they saw for themselves that those things are very good. But then those people left the way of Christ. It is not possible to make those people change their lives and

come to Christ again. Why? Because those people that leave Christ's way are really nailing Christ to the cross again. Those people bring shame to Christ before all people.(EVD)"

Does this mean that if a Christian has left Jesus Christ for a long time he kills Jesus on the cross? Does Jesus suffering on the cross make the person suffer? If a person repents and turns back to Jesus does this mean Jesus doesn't make the person suffer? Does it mean to take Jesus' nails off the cross?

Before we answer your questions, we have to understand the background of the passage you are talking about, Hebrews 6:4-6.

The writer of **Hebrews** was upset because many Jews who had become Christians were going back to the Jewish religion. The writer was talking about those Jews who saw how good Christ's grace is. But those Jews still went back to their old ways. The writer did not say those Jews really went back and put Jesus on the cross again. He meant it was *like* they did that. No, Jesus' suffering on the cross does not make those people suffer, but they will suffer God's punishment (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9).

When the writer of **Hebrews** said it was not possible to make those people change their lives and come back to Christ again, he did not mean none of them could ever come back. He was talking about some people who were stubborn and went back to their Jewish ways. You could not go and force them to come back to Christ. It is *like* they nailed Jesus back on the cross. They bring shame to Christ before all people because Christ has done so much for them, but they turned their backs on Him.

We must be careful that we are not like those Jewish Christians-- we might turn our backs on Christ and go back to a sinful life. Then it will really be bad for us (2 Peter 2:20-21)!

SMOKING

by George AmusasI

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another day pass without touching a cigarette. Pray to God about it again the following day and determine not to Christ. Throw all your cigarettes away. Pray earnestly to God to help you stop this bad habit of smoking and ask for forgiveness. Yes, the devil will tell you to go for the cigarettes again. Resist him again and let

touch a cigarette. Repeat this day after day and before you realize it, you will have conquered the devil!

If you do not smoke, happy are you and thanks be to God. Do not ever dream of holding or lighting a cigarette. Stay as you are and continue to please God in your life, for this is your duty as a man.

Bible Thoughts on
DEATH



"No person will ever get enough money to buy his own life. No person will ever get enough money to buy the right to live forever, and save his own body from rotting in the grave."

--Psalm 49:8,9

- "It is worth nothing for a person to have the whole world, if he loses his soul. A person could never pay enough money to buy back his soul."

--Matthew 16:26

- "You don't know what will happen tomorrow! Your life is like a fog. You can see it for a short time, but then it goes away."

--James 4:14

- "Teach us how short our lives really are, so we can become wise."

--Psalm 90:12

- "Every person must die once. After a person dies, he is judged."

--Hebrews 9:27

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