

Godliness is what we are as a result of God's work in our lives.
" A Process - No instant !!"

Process - Faith - Food - Fruit. Pursuing the path of Obed. Ph. 1.3:12-14
Picture - Goals of The Godly

The word is central in A godly life.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF TITUS

STUDY #3

THE PERVERSION OF GODLINESS

Having A Form but denying the power

MSC-350

Terry

TEXT: 1:10-16

- v.10 For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision.
- v.11 Who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things which they should not for the sake of dishonest gain.
- v.12 A certain one of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."
- v.13 This testimony is true, for this cause be rebuking them severely, in order that they may be sound in the faith,
- v.14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who are turning themselves away from the truth.
- v.15 All things are pure, to those who are pure; But to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.
- v.16 They are confessing to know God, but by their deeds, they are denying Him, being detestable and disobedient, and with reference to every good work disapproved.

INTRODUCTION:

Above reproach
one woman man
children-believers

Wine
Self-willed
Quick Tempered
Fist Fighter
Money
Hospitality
Good
Sensible
Just
Holy
Self-dis.
Phy.
spirit.
Psych.

We are pursuing the subject of growth toward godliness. We have scrutinized the process in the first study. We in the process discerned that one moves from faith to truth to godliness.

Faith - Food - Fruit

In the second study we looked at the picture of godliness. What does it look like in flesh and blood? And now we come to the "Perversion of Godliness" in the remaining verses of this first chapter.

Paul warns Timothy in a similar way in 1 Timothy chapter 4: "But the Spirit explicitly is saying that in latter times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and to teachings of demons, by the hypocritical preaching of liars, seared in their own consciences with a red-hot branding iron."

In his second letter to Timothy, 2 Timothy chapter 3, he says, "But mark this, there will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying its power, Have nothing to do with them. They are the kind who worm their way

into homes and gain control over weak-willed women who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth."

v.10 For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision.

Back in our last study, the 9th verse said, "Clinging to the trustworthy message which is in accordance with the teaching, in order that he may be able both to be exhorting in sound doctrine and to be refuting those who are contradicting." And now the apostle here gives the reason for that admonition "to be clinging to the message," and why it is necessary [to be refuting] those who are contradicting.

The reason being "for there are many ^① rebellious men, ^② empty talkers and ^③ deceivers, especially those of the circumcision."

The apostle here is making reference to the Jewish teachers who were coming behind the teaching of the apostle Paul and trying to add legal requirements for the salvation of Gentiles. Titus has already had an encounter with this situation at the Jerusalem Council, and the council voted in favor of salvation by faith alone and Titus was the test case on that occasion, as you remember.

These teachers are characterized in three ways:

1. They are rebellious men.
2. Empty talkers
3. Deceivers

1. The first thing that can be said about them is they are rebellious men.

They were neither submissive to the teaching of God's word or to the ultimate decision of the Jerusalem Council, and so the apostle has every right to call them rebellious. They are not willing to be subject to the rule of others.

2. The second characteristic is they are empty talkers.

This means they speak words that are empty of purpose.

They are able to talk a lot and say a lot of nice things, but it is empty of any value or empty of any truth. There are lots of people like that today who can talk a circle around an issue and never really come to any significant conclusions or relevant applications to the Christian life and experience.

3. They are characterized thirdly in this 10 verse as being deceivers, that is, deceivers of themselves and their theological convictions

Titus was experienced! He knew how to handle!

* Father seeks the submissive Obed. heart to serve Him

"Always learning but never able to acknowledge the Truth..."

John 2:13-22

Living Above All
John 9:1-41

No Such Thing As A Godly Rebel!

Society has changed the message the Bible has All right to be wrong is still wrong. You want to be right?

1 Jn. 1:8
Gal. 6:17

Pleasure Now → Sorrow later → Short view. Live by The Lie!
Grab All You can Get. You only go Around once
Eat drink & be merry For tomorrow they are going to re possess my Jaguar.

and positions about Biblical truths; and also because of their false teaching they are deceiving others, which is the tragedy of the whole thing.

O.T. Full of Stories!

There is No hell!
God is A God of Love Not Judgment

* II Corinthians 11:13-15 "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising then if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve."

* John says in 1 John 8 "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

These false teachers who have been characterized as "rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers" are further described as being "especially those of the circumcision."

* J. B. Phillips translates this verse: "For there are many, especially among the Jews, who will not recognize authority, who talk nonsense, and yet in so doing have managed to deceive men's minds."

v.11 Who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things which they should not for the sake of dishonest gain.

The whole focus of these false teachers is just the opposite from that of the apostle Paul. The process of true godliness has been described for us as coming to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and as we receive divine truth, our lives are changed into the image of Christ. We become godly ones. The whole thesis of the false teachers that are plaguing the ministry of the apostle is they are saying that a man becomes godly by keeping certain legal requirements. And so, whereas Paul is pointing up true godliness comes from a work that God does in our lives as a result of reception of truth, and the false teachers are saying that godliness comes as a result of man keeping certain requirements. In one case the focus is upon what God does and the focus of the false teachers is upon what man does.

The apostle makes it clear that action has to be taken. These false teachers who are rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, must be silenced.

There are two reasons why this must be done:

- * 1. They are upsetting whole families.
- * 2. They are teaching things which they should not for the sake of dishonest gain.

Same
Thing in Sal.
Truth = God does it.
False = Man does it.

True Godliness
Reception of Truth
False Godliness
Requirements of
law.

True = What
God does
False = What
Man does

What these fellows are teaching is disturbing entire family units. And the things that they are teaching they are doing this for the sake of dishonest gain. Evidently, they were putting real pressure upon the people with regard to the tithes and the giving of offerings, so that the funds could be used for their own personal advantage.

Take Another Offering

I tell you, the longer I am in the ministry, the more nearly I am ready to say that a man who has to spend his time talking about money has departed from his primary function--and that is to be a minister.

You can tell the perversion of godliness because true godliness is the result of God's work in our lives, and false godliness is the result of what man does. True godliness is godward. False godliness is manward.

Truth builds & unites the Family Unit!!

True godliness trusts the God who so graciously has worked in the life to supply the needs. And false godliness is hoping to gain material advantage.

Patterson points out "Space scientists tell us that minute error in the mathematical calculations for a moon shot can result in a total failure of the rocket to hit the moon. A slightly altered doctrine of salvation can cause a person to miss heaven also."

Barnes points out "The phrase 'must be silenced', the word here rendered 'silenced' occurs no where else in the New Testament. It means properly to check or to curb as with a bridle, to restrain or bridle in and then to put to silence. It is of course implied here that this was to be done in a proper way, in accordance with the Spirit of the gospel."

Double Hamster
OF the Tongue

I believe in the (People's Temple) in San Francisco we have a great illustration of what error will do in that it upset hundreds of families. Much of the teaching of Jim Jones was to pool all of their finances and he certainly took personal advantage of all of this. It was teaching things which he should not for the sake of dishonest gain. 26,000,000 in a Swiss bank

v.12 A certain one of them, a prophet of their own said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."

The apostle quotes from one of their own philosophers to verify the fact that others like themselves recognized that the people on the island of Crete were characterized by being liars, evil beasts and lazy gluttons.

Godliness
builds the
Family !!

1) Moonies
2) Eastern Rel.
3) Children of God.

True-Godward
False-Manward

Money's
Looking to
Man...

Looking to
God.

Phil. 4:13

I have learned
Jim Jones !!

Patterson points out "The dwellers of Crete had become notorious for their lack of morals. To demonstrate the depths to which these people had fallen, Paul quotes a native of the island. The poet quoted is Epimenides, a 6th century B.C. resident of the island. Paul also quoted from a learned philosopher at Athens, and on other occasions demonstrated a great knowledge of the literary accomplishments of the ancients. We are told that Paul received his religious training at the feet of the famous Gamaliel in Jerusalem. His knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy makes it highly probable that he also received training elsewhere, possibly from the scholars at the University of Tarsus in his hometown. Paul often used this training to open a door for a witness for Christ.

In our text, he quotes Epimenides as saying that 'Cretans are always liars.' They are further said to be 'evil beasts', evidently a reference to their brutishness and self-centeredness. Furthermore, they are unemployed stomachs. The A.V. reads 'slow-bellies', but for an understanding of what is actually involved, the literal Greek rendering of 'unemployed stomachs' should not be overlooked. In other words, the people of Crete had not intention of working for their food. If by trickery they could secure satisfaction for their ever-expanding stomach, they would avoid work altogether. One

wonders if this disease of laziness is not contagious when he observes the general lethargy of many Christians who desire the blessings of the Lord without having to make a contribution of time and energy to the Lord's work." Phil. 3:18-19 "For as I have often told you before, now day again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of X. their destiny

Guthrie points out "The apostle supports his argument by appealing to a venerated Cretan critic of the Cretan character. The lines quoted are from Epimenides, a 6th century philosopher, who his fellow countrymen had raised to mythical honors. Many ancient writers, Aristotle, Cicero, mention him as prophet and the apostle therefore cites him by this well-known description. Being a well-known Cretan condemns his own people, the apostle cannot be charged with censoriousness for his exposures. That Cretans were notorious for untruthfulness is strikingly confirmed by the Greek language containing a word 'cretizo' meaning 'to lie.' The accompanying elements in their unenviable reputation give the measure of their sensuousness. 'Evil beasts' represents a maliciousness akin to the more savage animal creation, while 'slow bellies or idol gluttons' describes their uncontrolled greed. The inclusion of such a lashing criticism of the Cretan character in this letter to Titus would seem to rule out the idea that the letter was semi-official. The apostle is about to urge Titus to take a strong hand with the unruly element in the church and is first priming him on the well-known characteristics of the people with whom he is dealing. This principle has constant relevance for every minister of the gospel must, of necessity, be cognizant with the character of his people, however distasteful the facts may be."

Can't tell
The Truth

Selfish
+
Savage

Food Stamp
Program

Dog Food
+
Hamburger

is destruction
their god is their
stomach, & their
glory is in
shame.

Push everyone
to Gain
Advantage

Untruthful
Selfish
Pleasure loving

Hendriksen points out "The expression 'evil brutes' describes the savage and cruel character of the Cretans of the days of Epimenides and of the days of Paul and Titus. They would push everyone out of the way in order to gain an advantage for themselves. Some see in this descriptive epitaph an illusion to the mythical Cretan minotaur who was half bull and half man, whom Minos hid in the Cretan labyrinth where until Theseus slew this monster, he devoured the Athenian youths and maidens sent as a tribute every nine years. 'Bellies inactive' marks the Cretans as lazy gluttons, sluggish and sensual gormandizers. The Cretans then are untruthful, selfish and pleasure loving. Now some writers consider the action of Paul in quoting this devastating verdict with respect to the character of the Cretans as singularly untactful, a smear upon the good name of the entire population. However, the character of the Cretans displayed itself so clearly that confirmation of the severe judgment comes from every direction and is not limited to a single century."

Barclay says "The Cretans were notorious liars and cheats and gluttons and traitors. Here precisely is the wonderful thing. Knowing that and actually experiencing it, Paul does not say to Timothy, 'Leave them alone. They are bad and all men know it. Go and convert them. There are few passages which so demonstrate the divine optimism of the Christian missionary and evangelist who refuses to regard any man as hopeless. The greater the evil, the greater the challenge. It is the Christian conviction that there is no sin which is too great for the grace of Jesus Christ to encounter and to conquer."

Titus

v.13 This testimony is true, for this cause be rebuking them severely, in order that they may be sound in the faith,

Paul makes reference to the statement that he has just quoted in v.12 and agrees with it by saying, "This testimony is true."

He then tells Titus what he needs to be doing. He has the command to discipline them. It is the responsibility of the apostle Paul to present them with the truth. To show them their selfishness and the horrible deterioration that has taken place in their personal lives, and to show them by his own personal life of truth and service that discipline also brings real blessing.

What the apostle is saying is that the teaching of these rebellious men, these empty talkers, these deceivers of the circumcision has done nothing to affect the personal lives of these Cretans, so there must be something wrong with their teaching. This leads us to a principle that when truth is presented, lives will be affected by it. For godliness is the result of truth.

Teachings
do nothing
to affect lives

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
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Aging

230-09

Dear Ann Landers: I have never written to you before, but I believe the following might interest you and your readers. I found it in an old magazine. It was written by Rudy Joe Mano.

It Was Grandfather's Birthday

It was Grandfather's birthday. He was 79. He got up early, shaved, showered, combed his hair and put on his Sunday best so he would look nice when they came.

He skipped his daily walk to the town café where he had coffee with his cronies. He wanted to be home when they came.

He put his porch chair on the sidewalk so he could get a better view of the street when they drove up to help celebrate his birthday.

At noon he got tired but decided to forgo his nap so he could be there when they came. Most of the rest of the afternoon he spent near the telephone so he could answer it when they called.

He has five married children, 13 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. One son and a daughter live within 10 miles of his place. They hadn't visited him for a long time. But today was his birthday and they were sure to come.

At suppertime he left the cake untouched so they could cut it and have dessert with him.

After supper he sat on the porch waiting.

At 8:30, he went to his room to prepare for bed. Before retiring he left a note on the door, which read, "Be sure to wake me up when they come."

It was Grandfather's birthday. He was 79.

p. 322

Could it be that

reveals a deeper problem asked of the truth!!

Living in a Paul day:
1. Don't believe the truth
2. destroy godliness in it

Why they are dishonest selfish unmotivated
"I am a mess."

The absence of (honesty) and (love) and (hard work) causes one to examine what is being taught. The painfulness of truth is that it gets down to where we live. It brings about a change in our personal lives. I believe the reason people respond so readily is that it makes them comfortable.

Paul wants these on the island of Crete to be rebuked severely with this purpose in mind: "in order that they may be sound in the faith."

Paul has already made reference to "Titus, my true child" in a common faith." And now here in the 13th verse it is his hope that these Cretan Christians can become sound and healthy in their faith, and this would only be true as they are freeing themselves from the error of the false teachers who are pressing them at this time.

v.14 Not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who are turning themselves away from the truth.

The purpose behind Paul's command to Timothy to discipline them by rebuking them severely is seen positively in v.13 "in order that they may be sound in the faith," but negatively in v.14 so that they will "not be paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who are turning themselves away from the truth."

Here is the key to why their lives are such a mess and there is such an absence of true godliness among them. They are turning themselves away from the truth.

Back in our first study, we noted together that in the process of godliness, a man comes to faith in Jesus Christ. He then comes to a knowledge of the truth, which does produce godliness in the personal life.

The problem in Crete was they were listening to teachers of error who were turning themselves away from the truth of the Word of God, and as a result, their personal lives were displaying it by an absence of true godliness.

These men of error were teaching Jewish myths and the commandments and traditions of men, rather than the exhortations, instructions, and commandments of God.

v.15 All things are pure, to those who are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

Kent points out "To unbelievers, however, nothing is clean because their sinful lives, thoughts and motives which are at cross purposes with God will infect even that which is intrinsically pure. Good

Mind + Conscience Affect Conduct II Cor. 10:5; Phil 2:5

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

food will be used to gain strength for evil deeds. Such persons are defiled in their intellectual and moral natures so that their decisions and attitudes are no longer reliable guides. Only the light of the gospel and the regeneration of the spirit can bring such persons into real purity."

It was Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount who said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "All things are pure to those who are pure."

Here the apostle points out that one of the things that happens when a man becomes a Christian, Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come thou, let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." As a man is purified by the blood of Jesus Christ, then all things are pure to this person. Having the mind and the conscience purified and cleansed, then the new believer has a different perspective.

In the verse we have the little word 'but' which forms the contrast to those who are characterized in two ways: Those who are defiled and unbelieving; that is, without knowing Christ as Savior, nothing is pure.

Sex becomes something which is dirty and defiled because it becomes something for selfish gratification. The love of money is the root of all evil because materialism becomes the dominant factor in the man's life who is not walking with God.

Personal relationships are defiled because of greed, resentment, bitterness, jealousy, envy, and strife.

The godly man sees the happenings of life from a positive perspective from the hand of a loving God, bringing about good in his life. The defiled man forms a critical spirit and becomes stubborn and resentful when difficulty comes into his life, believing that he has less than he deserves.

The reason nothing is pure to those who are defiled and unbelieving is given in the last statement of verse 15: "their mind and their conscience are defiled."

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The emphasis in the scripture is upon bringing every thought captive under the obedience of Christ, letting this mind be in us which was also in Christ.

Ps. 119:9, 11
II Cor. 7:1
I Jn. 3:3

Psalm 51:
"Purge me"
"Wash me"

Ps. 139
"Search me"

Joni

Ps. 119:
9; 11

~~18~~ Philippians 4:8,9 "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me, put it into practice and the God of peace will be with you."

Not only is the mind defiled, but the conscience also. The apostle says "Herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man." Acts 24:16

To the man who has a pure mind and a clear conscience all things are pure.

v.16 They are confessing to know God, but by their deeds, they are denying Him, being detestable and disobedient, and with reference to every good work disapproved.

Jesus has said, "By their fruit ye shall know them." These that he has been speaking in this section are confessing to know God. It is awfully easy to confess with one's lips that there is a knowledge of God, that he or she is a Christian. But when you look at their lives, you see a real absence of godliness. They are saying, "Yeah, I know God." "Yes, I know Christ." But by their deeds, when you examine the fruitage of their lives, you see 4 things described here in this 16th verse:

1. by their deeds they are denying Him
2. detestable
3. disobedient
4. disapproved

Flowing out of my life will be evidences that I am in His Word

James 2;

This is the message of James that "faith without works is dead."

Their personal lives are detestable; that is, vile, repulsive, ugly. And on top of all of this, they are disobedient to the truth of the Word of God.

Getz points out in his book A Profile for a Christian Lifestyle: "And what made this problem even worse, they had purposely mixed truth with error in order to deceive more people. Thus Paul wrote, 'They claimed to know God, but by their actions, they deny Him.' How could any person lower himself to the place where he used the name of God for purely selfish purposes. This these men did. And when this happened, Paul showed little mercy. This explains why he used certain words to describe them. They are

detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good. In other words, a gentle approach could only serve to further their own selfish endeavors. There is only one way to reach men who deliberately lie, who destroy people's families without a twinge of conscience, and who rip people off in the name of God. They must be directly confronted with the Word of God by godly persons whose motives are pure and whose lifestyles exemplify the characteristics of Jesus Christ. Paul's hope was that these men would respond to this approach and, even more so, he wanted the body of Christ in Crete delivered from their destructive influence."

"and with reference to every good work disapproved."

Math. 7: "Many will say..."

As far as true authentic godliness and good works flowing from a living faith in their lives, everything they do is disapproved.

One is reminded of 1 Corinthians 9:27 where the apostle Paul says, "I treat my body roughly and make it serve me, lest when I have preached to others, I myself would be disapproved (or ordered to stand aside and not be eligible for reward at the judgment seat of Christ.)"

When you hear these men speak, they are giving a message that they know God, but when you look at their personal lives, you see that they are denying Him. They are detestable. They are disobedient. And as far as every good work is concerned, they are disapproved. What a tragedy when we can see in something like this a perversion of godliness. Men, who with their lips speak one thing, and with their lives live something else.

CONCLUSION:

As we have discerned together how to recognize error from truth, the apostle has described for us these men who are speaking error are rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers. They are upsetting whole families and teaching things which can make for personal financial benefit for themselves. They are like the Cretans who are liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons. They are those who are turning themselves away from the truth. And as a result, turning themselves away from the source of true godliness. They are those who confess to know God, but by their deeds they are denying Him. By their deeds, they are detestable. And by their deeds, they are manifesting disobedience and there is no good work which is approved.

Garner Ted

Disqual

- ① Account
- ② Obed
- ③ Teachable Spirit

All From The Flesh For a Show!!

dishonest selfish lazy

What are some of the lessons that we learn out of this particular study?

- LESSON #1: Those who are teaching error use a lot of words but say little.
- LESSON #2: Those who have to speak often of financial matters in their ministry must be scrutinized with suspicion.
- LESSON #3: False godliness is the result of man's human effort. Whereas, true godliness is the result of God's work in our lives.
- LESSON #4: The decision to turn away from the truth produces the ugly lives in this passage.
- LESSON #5: The goal of every growing believer ought to be a pure mind and a clear conscience.
- LESSON #6: Watch the person who confesses to know God, but whose life cannot bear close scrutiny.

Lesson #7) Could it be that the absence of honesty, love + hard work are the result of turning away from the truth?

Interpersonal

Father, I thank You for the people in my life who seem to bring more pain than joy, for I believe You have let our paths cross for important reasons. Thank You for the good things You want to do in my life through the things that bother me (their irritating habits? their moodiness? their unloving ways? their demands? their insensitivity? their unrealistic expectations?). I'm grateful that You are with me, to meet my needs when others--even those close to me--fail to do so. I'm so glad that You are also within me, working to make me more like Jesus--more patient, more gentle, more loving--through the very things I dislike.

Thank You too that You love these people, and that Your love is adequate to meet their deep needs and to transform their lives, however willful or unwise they may sometimes be. Thank You that You care for them deeply, and that each of them has the potential of being a vast reservoir from which You could receive eternal pleasure. And so, though I may not feel grateful, I give thanks for them by faith, trusting Your goodness, Your wisdom, Your power, and Your love for them as well as for me.

And I praise You that I need not fret about these people, or be envious, or mull over angry thoughts to prove I'm right. Thank You that by Your power I can receive them as You receive me: just as I am, warts and wrinkles and hangups and all . . . that I can choose not to judge them, but to forgive them . . . to cancel any debts I feel they owe me--any apologies, any obligations . . . that through Your grace, I can choose to wipe clean any slate of grievances I have within me and to view these people with a heart that says, "You no longer owe me a thing." Thank You for Your Spirit who empowers me, so that I can do them good, delight in You, and commit my way to You, resting in You as You unfold Your good purposes in these relationships--in Your time.

pp. 88-89
(99-A-8)

Marriage

Thank You, Lord, for each specific strong point and admirable quality in my life partner.* Thank You for bringing us together, and for the way Your love sweetens our earthly love! I bless You, Lord, for the many benefits You have given me through this dear one.

Here are some special reasons I want to thank You for this relationship:

Yet, Lord, I praise You that You far surpass even the best person in my life. You are distinguished above all, "the most winsome of all beings" (Tozer). You are my share in life, my reward, my inheritance.

Who can compare with You? You are my perfect Life Partner, my dearest, most-delightful Loved One, my always-present Companion. You are the strength of my life, and my portion forever. Only my relationship with You is sure to be lifelong and more, with never a goodbye!

Thank You that "You are so vastly wonderful, so utterly and completely delightful, that You can meet and overflow the deepest demands of my total nature, mysterious and deep as that nature is" (Tozer).

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Commitment	107-05	<p>Lord, I submit myself to You, presenting life and my desires as a living sacrifice. I acknowledge You as Lord of my desires, my plans, my successes and failures, my place in the world, my friendships, my popularity. You are Lord of my present and future relationships, health, money, possessions, and human approval. How good it is to yield to You, knowing that You withhold no good thing from your obedient children who trust You and call on You.</p> <p>I choose to give up all right to myself, take up my cross day by day, and follow You. Give me power to resist the devil. Give me grace not to let the world squeeze me into its mold—its desire to indulge . . . its desire to possess . . . its desire to impress. Instead, may Your Spirit remold my mind from within. I really need this, Father, so that I can know You better, delight in You more constantly, and experience Your good and perfect will for me.</p> <p>Show Your mighty power, Lord, by keeping me following You closely. Do the same for my Christian friends and family members, especially the young ones. Deliver us from sin and from Satan. Do this especially for those who right now are toying with temptation or giving in to sin.</p> <p>p. 59</p>

COUNTRY ONE-LINERS

* "THE WORST YOU EVER GAVE ME WAS THE BEST I EVER HAD."

* "FLUSHED FROM THE BATHROOM OF YOUR HEART."

* "DON'T CRY DOWN MY BACK, BABY, YOU MIGHT RUST MY SPURS."

* "SHE STEPPED ON MY HEART, AND STOMPED THAT SUCKER FLAT."

* "WHEN THE PHONE DON'T RING, YOU'LL KNOW IT'S ME."

* "IF YOU WANT TO KEEP THE BEER REAL COLD, PUT IT NEXT TO MY EX-WIFE'S HEART."

* it's Commode-huggin' time in the Valley!

* "WALK OUT BACKWARDS SO I'LL THINK YOU'RE COMING IN."

"MY WIFE RAN OFF WITH MY BEST FRIEND, AND I MISS HIM."

* I Knew I'd lean, but I never thought I'd Fall!

"I'M JUST A BUG ON THE WINDSHIELD OF LIFE."

* He's walking in my tracks, but he can't fill my shoes

* "OUR LOVE IS LIKE A FAR-AWAY RADIO STATION, FADING IN AND FADING OUT."

"I'M JUST A DANGLING PARTICIPLE IN THE COMPOUND SENTENCE OF LOVE."

* I'm living in Mexico on Re-Fried dreams!

"I'M GOING TO HAVE THE TIME OF MY LIFE LOV'N YOU TO DEATH!"

* "I'M LIVING UP TO HER LOW EXPECTATIONS BECAUSE HER LOW EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH ENOUGH FOR ME!"

* we hardly ever talk and never touch at all.

* "Ever since we said 'I do!' There are so many things you don't"

(Holy Hilarity by Cal & Rose Samra)

Hazel Bimler of Itasca, Illinois, spotted this sign at Christmastime at Women's Work Out World:

p. 58

* "Merry Fitness—Happy New Rear!"

Health Club
Fitness Center

(Cowboy Poetry by Larry McWhorter)

Drip Coffee

On the day that I got married,
A present I was given
Which was supposed to update
My archaic way of livin'.

Now don't think me ungrateful,
'Cause I'll tell you that I'm not,
But I've always been suspicious
Of the slow drip coffee pot.

For you see I've never trusted
Cuisine cooked with Franklin's find.
My friends tell me that's silly,
It's all just in my mind.

But one thing's always bugged me
And put my mind in doubt.
A feller could just starve to death
If a power pole goes out.

Now it never has been said of me
That I've treated things unfair
And so one day it got its chance,
My new coffee makin' ware.

So I filled its little basket
And poured in the water, too.
Then set back and awaited
This "Buck Rogers" style of brew.

The aroma it emitted
 Was a pleasant one I found.
 I caught myself relaxing
 To its steady dripping sound.

But something here just wasn't right,
 The familiar sounds I missed.
 The way it boiled o'er the spout
 And the friendly way it hissed.

Then suddenly, it hit me,
 I jumped and turned it off!
 I know it's all just in my mind,
 But hear me 'fore you scoff.

As I listened to its dripping,
 I changed my mind 'bout switchin'
 'Cause its sound was of the bathroom
 And not that of the kitchen.

pp. 133-4

(Cowboy Poetry by Larry McWhorter)

Sitting on something where you're afraid to even scratch your nose
 sure makes you appreciate those gentle horses.

p. 114

CUPCAKES

For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

ISAIAH 41:13



I will never forget the sad image of myself standing in my kitchen, trying to frost cupcakes for Luke's class. I was trying so hard to be normal, to go on smoothly with the regular duties of life. But suddenly it all seemed too much for me. I sat down and cried, still holding my frosting-covered spatula, shaking and broken.

Right then, my friend Paige let herself in and entered my kitchen, somehow (thank You, God) knowing I needed her. She literally picked me up off the floor and helped me finish my frosting. She was the voice of God for me that day: "Fear not, I will help you."

I still smile, and probably always will, every time I frost a cake. It always reminds me of how much God loves me, and how sweet life can be, even in the midst of pain.