



Inside Out — Outside In

It is entirely possible to take care of the outside while the inside is a total mess.

Who is the culprit here?

Religion.

Religion often focuses on the outside, while at the same time the inside, or the heart, may be a mess.

Jesus' greatest conflicts were with the religious people of the day . . . the Pharisees. They were constantly quoting the law to Him, and His response to them was "You've missed it! You've missed the whole point and essence of what a relationship with God is all about."

He was really blunt. He didn't mince words. He said basically, "All of your focus is on the outward behavior, but inside you're a disaster. You are like whitewashed tombs, but inside you're full of dead men's bones!" Matt. 23:27

Yuck!

Do we have modern day Pharisees? You'd better believe it!

The tragedy, I believe, is that scores of Christians misunderstand Christianity. They adhere to a religious order that has composed a long list of do's and don'ts. The idea is that if you follow the rules, do the do's and don't the don'ts, you will be a good Christian. What I hate about this exercise is that it puts the participants in bondage.

The Apostle Paul made some pretty shocking statements about this practice. Really, it's a modern day parallel to the Jewish law . . . and Paul said no one has ever kept the law, nor can any human being keep it. To do so would mean you are perfect. We know there has never been a perfect human being . . .

. . . Except Jesus. Jesus was perfect.

What does that mean to you and me, exactly?

All of our striving to do the do's and don'ts will not add one hair of substance to our salvation. Salvation comes only when we accept the perfect work of Christ on the cross for our sins. We cannot add anything to that sacrifice for our sins, because it is perfect and complete. We just accept it, and He gives it freely to us. That means when God sees us He sees us through the perfect sacrifice; He sees us as if we had never sinned.

Isaiah says that all of our righteousness is as filthy rags. Forgive me here for being graphic, but the Bible is graphic. The Hebrew words are sometimes translated "used menstrual cloths." Is. 64:6

Salvation takes place in the heart, the very inside essence of man. That transformation then rules our outward behavior. To strive to make ourselves good enough for heaven is totally useless. The only thing that makes us good enough for heaven is the finished sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

That's why trying to follow a list of do's and don'ts for the purpose of getting to heaven is totally useless.

Religion, that is a man made system of making yourself better, is a waste of time.



Things go in cycles. They surge for a time, then fall away, only to emerge to be popular again after receding for a few years.

The number of young women becoming Nuns has increased . . . by about ten times, and those going into the Convent are about ten years younger than in previous years. (*Source: Apple News*)

Why is that, you say? Well, think about it. For decades our educational system has told our young people that there is no absolute truth. (The Bible is absolute truth, by the way.) While the educational system was doing that, parents in general, usually both of them working, increasingly let their children grow up without boundaries and with far less discipline.

So the effect on the youth generation, was that they were encouraged to make up their own truth and morality, and to just develop an attitude of "do what you want to do."

Could the increase of young women becoming Nuns be a backlash on the current

cultural norms? Research shows that boundaries and absolutes make the child or young person more secure, and therefore happier.

Perhaps these new candidates for the Convent want some rules, absolutes and structure to their lives.



Our Last Trip

On July 13th and 14th Lorraine and I did the Kelliher Days/Big Bog Festival in northern Minnesota where we grew up. It is a combined summer event, that features Kelliher Days on Saturday, and The Big Bog Festival in Waskish on Sunday.

Many people visited our table on Saturday and we handed out 18 free packets of newsletters, plus added some people to the mailing list who came up and specifically asked to get the monthly newsletters. Lorraine also sold some of her chocolates and we sold some CD's.



Our logo and Website banner



Our table set-up



One of the candy items for sale made by Lorraine, labeled with our logo and Website

Newsletter Packets contain 15-plus previous newsletters. That's over 120 individual letters we handed out!



A new venture to our ministry is that we have resurrected a music album I did when I was 23. It has been dormant for a few decades. Lorraine really likes it and we decided to have it made into a CD. There are ten songs on the CD, all of which I wrote, except for one that was written by a fellow musician who was stationed with me at Fort Hood, Texas at the time. If you would like a copy, we are offering them free this month only, for a contribution of any amount. See the enclosed card.



Sunday morning was a great success, a very good and seamless service. The big surprise was the attendance, which was double or perhaps two and a half times the attendance of last year and the year before. A pancake breakfast follows the service and my sister reported that 237 people were served. That's quite remarkable for a town that doesn't have a population sign.

It was reported to us that several people were wiping tears from their cheeks as we sang our last song, *Softly and Tenderly*. It's very humbling when people are moved and blessed.

Where We Will Be

Church of Yahweh

(We will be bringing the Word and special music.)

Sunday, August 18th, 2019

10:00 a.m.

Jordan Middle School

500 Sunset Dr.

Jordan, Minnesota

In His Service,

*George and Lorraine
Halama*

George and Lorraine Halama

GEORGE & LORRAINE

georgeandlorraine.com



scarlet circle

P.O. Box 41291, Plymouth, MN 55441

All contributions are tax deductible