TO MY FACEBOOK FRIENDS

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Category: To My Facebook Friends

To my Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

Please bear with me. I have a suggestion that could well enhance your christianity. As you read this, remember the words of Jesus, “Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear MORE fruit.” Okay?

Your words reveal you are what I call a God-person. I ask you to prayerfully consider becoming what I call a Christ-person. Let me explain. A God-person speaks GOD primarily. A Christ-person speaks JESUS primarily. Jesus is personal; God is general (generic). Jesus at times called His Father 'God' (“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”), but mostly He called Him Father. (“As the Father sent Me”, “Father save Me from this hour”, “Whatever you ask the Father in My name” .... and many etceteras). Can you see the intimacy?

Suppose, just suppose, Jesus appeared to you. Do you think He would say, “Hi christian”? Or “Hi disciple”? Or greet you by your last name? No, He would be more intimate than that; He would greet you by your first name. One of the most startling characteristics of evangelicals is their propensity to avoid the name of Jesus. Like there was something scary about that name. Even preachers say God much more than Christ. But not Paul. Not John. And not Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus taught us, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” What's in comes out. Does the speech of God-people lack intimacy because their heart lacks intimacy? And, more importantly, would speaking Jesus induce intimacy? It seems they cannot say, “To live is Christ.” Or, “I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”. Or, “I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.”

If evangelicals were to transform from God-christians to Jesus-christians the entire world would soon be reached for Christ. Seriously. There is that much power in “the name which is above every name”. Speaking Christ draws oneself to Christ, and that results in “much fruit”. “Much fruit” is, among other things, salvations. That's why every Christ-centred christian is a soul winner. (“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”) Have you noticed most christians lack passion for the lost?

God-christians do not have the power of Christ-christians. Not even close. If evangelists, as an example, preached God, few would be saved. It is the name of Jesus that draws the lost to Jesus. Speaking Christ torments demons; speaking God barely gets their attention. The world speaks God; Christ's church ought to speak Christ (primarily). Amen?

So how does one transform from a God-person to a Jesus-person? Well, it takes grit, perhaps more than most have. It's not easy speaking the name of Jesus. That's why so few do. I had to force myself to speak Christ. Eventually it became natural. What I did, you can do. Amen?

Thanks for listening!

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

May I speak boldly? There is something missing in your christianity. You are probably unaware of this 'something' or you would have corrected it years ago. Jesus had it, as did the apostles Paul and John, as did the baptist, as do some (not many, but some) of those I know and esteem. Most attached to your evangelical religion are missing this trait so evident in our Bible. I point you to....

Ephesians 4:26: “Be angry, and do not sin.”

Where's the anger, my brother, my sister!? Again, where's the anger? I don't see it and I don't hear it and I don't read it in your postings. The Amplified says it this way, “Be angry , yet do not sin.” Every sunday morning you silently witness Christ's sheep being fleeced. With regularity your religion embezzles your brothers and sisters, coercing them to finance unsanctioned buildings and salaries. Claiming to be Christ's appointed leaders, they impose the awful evangelical tithe. (The evangelical tithe is nothing more than an invention of evangelicalism to finance evangelicalism.)

Instead of crying “Theft!” and “Foul!”, you are silent and even melodious. Your lack of anger and retaliation is placid endorsement of this spiritual villainy. Your silence is your nod of approval. I say respectfully, Jesus is not pleased with this missing 'something'.... *righteous indignation!*

Have you not noticed Christ's outrage against leadership's abuse against God's elect? “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses.” “My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves.” “They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders.” If Jesus' fury was righteous your apathy is unrighteous. Can you see that?

Jesus: “And many other such things you do.” Every evangelical tradition – and there are many – bears bad fruit. Every “tradition of men” is an affront to the Bible you and I deem infallible. To 'fit in', to bunch with the bunch – one must compromise. Compromise compromises one's devotion to Jesus. Compromise devalues the Christ-christian relationship. What could be more destructive?

To My Facebook Brother In Christ....

This is a most difficult letter to write. I pray you will receive it as words of love. The subject: your eternity. You do know we all live eternally. Somewhere. It doesn't much matter *how* we go or *when* we go. But it sure does matter *where* we go. Precious, I know where I am going. Heaven awaits me. But I really don't know about you.

I have prayed much regarding this matter and I am not yet comforted. I really (really, really) don't know. Paul warned the Corinthians, “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.” That's all I suggest. That's why I write, to prod you to “examine” yourself, to “test” yourself.

For many years you have been a faithful devotee, attendee and supporter of religions that, thankfully, believe in salvation through Christ alone. Yes, you are certainly familiar with the gospel message. But still I am concerned. Evangelicalism often inadvertently gives a false security. Belonging to a religion that believes in salvation through Christ can somehow be concluded as being saved. We can plainly see that in other religions.

Paul wrote (2Cor:11:3): “I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted.” *Most* “born of the Spirit” have been “corrupted”; their speech gives them away. But in your case I question (not critically! not judgementally!) if you *ever had* a “devotion to Christ”. Over the years I *never* heard, or overheard, you mention Christ in conversation. Doesn't a convert talk about the One to whom he/she is converted? I can't recall you once saying, “Praise the Lord!”

But.... perhaps I am mistaken..... it wouldn't be the first time. Perhaps there really was a glorious 'moment' whereby you were delivered from “the power of darkness”. But even if that be so I know with a certainty the Lord Jesus Christ is not your “first love”. Not even close. Again, I am simply urging you to “examine”, to “test”.

Jesus taught (John:15) that without being relationally attached to Him “you can do nothing”. Nothing means nothing. If we are intimate with Christ, it seems to me, we will speak Christ. Did He not say, “Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks”? And did He not say, “You will know them by their fruit”? Certainly, then, we can examine/test ourselves by the fruit of our lives. I say to you, from the outside looking in, I sense something is terribly wrong.

Let's suppose you somehow *knew,* just *knew,* that tomorrow you will enter eternity. How would you spend the few remaining hours? I suggest you wouldn't sleep tonight. I suggest you would quickly learn humility and fervency and repentance. You would carefully “examine” and “test” your life “as to whether you are in the faith”. How do you test? You can compare the fruit of your life with the “fruit of the Spirit” listed in Galatians 5:22. Also, you can analyze your speech: has it been humble or prideful? Edifying or caustic? Truthful or un-truthful? Gentle or harsh? Healing or hurtful? Unifying or divisive?

You don't want to hear from Jesus, “I never knew you ”. God bless!

To (not most but) Some Facebook Friends,

When I was about 10-12 years old I lit a small fire in the basement of our small, rather old house. Just playing around. Bored, I guess. Because there was always paperboys in our large catholic family, there was plenty of fuel from leftover “Windsor Star” newspapers.

After lighting the small fire, I smothered it with a canvas bag we used to carry newspapers on our routes. No harm done. A bigger fire also proved no challenge. So it was bigger and bigger until *oh-oh!*, this fire is getting away on me! I desperately beat on it, but it spread outward and upward toward the flammable floor joists just above my head. I was in big trouble. Should the old house catch on fire we would all be homeless in an hour. But no way was I going to yell for help; punishment back then meant a very battered butt. Using all my powers, I overcome the flames. Whew! I never played with fire again.

I know what you're thinking, that was dumb, dumb, dumb! Yes, playing with fire is foolish. But – speaking to those not yet “born of the Spirit” – isn't that what you are doing? Aren't you playing with fire?

Have you noticed how often Jesus warned of “fire”? Listen to Him.... “Every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the FIRE”; “He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable FIRE”; “Whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell FIRE”; “All the tares are gathered and burned in the FIRE”; “Cast them into the furnace of FIRE. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth”; “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the FIRE”.

The Bible often speaks of Gehennah, “the lake of FIRE”. This lake isn't a pool or pond; it's a huge sea. A huge sea of fire. A fire that can't be smothered with a paperboy's canvas bag. All the world's firetrucks together couldn't douse it. We're talking an unquenchable, everlasting fire. Soon to be full of people. This is the fire you are playing with.

I once asked Lord Jesus to show me hell, thinking it would make me more passionate for the countless multitude heading there. But then I retracted that prayer. Such a sight might ruin me. Jesus gave a close friend a taste of hell whereby he experienced the eternal *hopelessness* of those there. “How did it affect you?” I wanted to know. “I screamed”, my friend replied.

You are not a foolish 10-12 year old. You have the ability to reason – to think, think, think! You may not have the confidence I have in the Bible, but you can't ignore all the evidence that points to its authenticity. Only the supremely ignorant would tell you it's just another book. If you admit to even a

10% chance the Bible could be accurate, you must likewise admit you are indeed playing with fire.

So just how does one get 'fire insurance', assurance that when life on earth passes you will never end up in that place of eternal torment? There is only one answer and you know what (Who) it is. I freely admit I cannot understand hell. If I were God I wouldn't keep the worse sinner in hell longer than a minute. Two at the most. But I am not God. As I don't understand His love, I don't understand His justice and holiness. No one is more *loving* and more *severe* than God; Calvary fully verifies His love; hell fully verifies His severity. (Paul: "Consider the goodness and severity of God."**)**

When will you learn that there is no success outside of Jesus Christ? Only Christ can fulfill the longings of your heart. Once you get to heaven all regrets, all doubts, all heaviness will instantly dissolve. No boredom, no insecurities, no anxieties. Got it?

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

So what's so hard about speaking the name of Jesus? Imagine if you will....

You just arrived in heaven. Got it? You notice Jesus off in the distance and say, "Look everybody! That looks like *God!* I think *God* is coming to see us! Oh yes, *God* is coming! I will see *God* for the very first time!" No, no, no! You will say, "Look everybody! That looks like *Jesus*! I think *Jesus* is coming to see us! Oh yes, *Jesus* is coming! I will see *Jesus* for the very first time!"

When you finally see Jesus face to face will you say, "Oh wonderful *God*! It's so good to finally see You, *God*! Thank You *God* for the cross! And thank You *God* for the crown of thorns and the Roman whip!"? Or will you say, "Oh wonderful *Jesus*! It's so good to finally see You, *Jesus*! Thank You *Jesus* for the cross! And thank You *Jesus* for the crown of thorns and the Roman whip!"? So-o-o-o....

If it's going to be *"Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!"* up there, why is it *"God, God, God!"* down here? What is it about "the name which is above every name" that you find disconcerting? I think I know....

Speaking the name of Jesus draws one closer to Jesus. And that's not good for the one wanting to preserve life-as-is. A distant Jesus is no threat to the way we live and the relationship we have with others.

In almost every christian there is a YES and a NO.... a "YES Jesus, I want more of You" and a "NO Jesus, I *don't* want more of You". Relationally speaking, you have the exact amount of Jesus you desire to have. If you wanted more you would have more. If you wanted less you would have less.

Before you became "born again" you actually wanted Christ. Yes, before. There was within you a YES to Jesus. But your NO to Jesus surpassed the YES. Got it? The day your YES (finally!) surpassed your NO was the day you surrendered to His lordship, the day you embraced Him as Saviour.

Now that you are His, there is still the warfare of YES vs. NO. You want more of Jesus and you also *don't* want more of Jesus. It's hard to admit, but there really is a pernicious NO within.

Could that explain why you speak "God, God, God" instead of "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus"? And why most evangelicals (etcetera) rarely speak Christ? Something to think about?

Dear Facebook Friend....

Jesus often said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Please allow me to speak, candidly and sincerely, into your life. I think I can help. Hopefully you will have "ears to hear". Hopefully you will discern lots of love mixed into my words. Hopefully you will not mistake my concern for criticism. So here it goes....

You are young, you are intelligent, you are nice. And very depressed. Melancholy has gripped your life. Sadness reigns over you. I write to tell you life can be more than a continuous drizzle; above the clouds of gloom the sun shines brightly.

There is One, only One, who can lift you up and into the sunshine of hope and elation. Jesus fixes people. He proclaimed that God "has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives." Jesus said He has "come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Who is "they"? They is you and they is me and they is every person.

Before you is a life much better than the one you are now living. But this better life must be *received*; Jesus will not impose it upon you.It seems you have always put up a strong guard against that which your heart really wants. Like most, you crave acceptance, oodles of money, and a loving and faithful spouse. I assure you these things will not lift your depression.

You are putting the cart before the horse. Jesus said, "Seek *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." The "kingdom of God" is a spiritual kingdom whereby Jesus is King. This is where the hopeful and elated live. You must seek this kingdom *first*.

"All these things" are necessities of life including friends, financial stability and a loving spouse. The Lord promises, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart." That's *"all* your heart." Jesus promises, "Seek and you *will* find."

Precious, not once have you shown the slightest interest in spiritual matters, not even mild curiosity. Never asked a question. Had you opened the door to your heart even a crack I would have gladly told you of the Christ who lifted me above the drizzle into the sunshine, above fear and confusion into peace and contentment. (Never, never would I have lead you into a religion!)

The Bible teaches, “A merry heart makes a a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.” Jesus replaces a broken spirit with a new spirit. “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.”

I am not suggesting conversion to Christ translates into a trouble free life. Not at all. “Many are the afflictions of the righteous.” But pointing you to Jesus is pointing you to a better life. Much better. Much, much better. Okay?

To *(most, not all)* My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I want to point out a major difference between me and thee. Are you ready? *I am a follower of Christ and you are a follower of christians.*

Before you respond “No way!!”, please listen to A. W. Tozer, a highly respected writer/preacher, the most influential writer of my christianity: “That terrible zone of confusion so evident in the whole life of the Christian community could be cleared up in one day if the followers of Christ would begin to follow Christ instead of each other.” (The Divine Conquest)

Tozer is talking about *most*. It is so obvious you are a part of most. You do what most do, church where most church, talk like most talk, give regularly where most give regularly. A real 'team player'.

On the other hand, I do what Jesus says to do, I 'church' with friends, I often talk “Jesus Christ and Him crucified”, I give regularly into my own Jesus account, spending as directed by the Holy Spirit. While you are mindful of christians I am mindful of Christ. While you talk churchianity, I talk Jesus. Men lead you, the Spirit leads me. You seek their approval, I seek His approval.

I say again, *I am a follower of Christ; you are a follower of christians.*

Please read again (and again and again) Tozer's above statement. Do you agree that confusion will fade as christians commit themselves to the lordship of Christ? And.... would they suddenly become “fishers of men”? And.... would “treasures in heaven” (that's eternal treasures!) be multiplied? And.... would the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) be plentiful instead of skimpy?

You have spent almost your entire christianity following others; is this how you will spend the remainder of your christianity? To transfer from church-ianity to Christ, from christian-consciousness to Christ-consciousness will take serious repentance. And humility. And courage. To become a Christ-follower is but a decision away. I suggest you decide Christ!

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I write about a crucial matter, one avoided in social media. What I share regarding a neglected command-promise could impact the lives of many. Are you ready for this....?

Exodus 20:12 (Amp): “Honor (respect, obey, care for) your father and your mother, so that your days may be prolonged.” Let's consider the promise attached to this fifth of the ten commandments: “So that your days may be prolonged.” Is not obedience to this command insurance against premature death? And debilitating disease and accidents? And poverty?

Though we are New Covenant sons and daughters, we still benefit from the promises of the Old. That Jesus expects His new covenant saints to likewise honour parents is made clear in the NT. Paul tells us to “repay parents” who raised and nurtured us by honouring them as they age. “For this is good and acceptable before God.”

I wish I would have honoured my parents more than I did. Children start life wanting/needing parents more than parents want children. In time that is reversed. Parents want/need their adult children more than they want their parents. I knew that. I could have been more attentive, entered their world, asked questions, phoned more often, *just been there*.

Today exclusive respect for dad and mom has to many, it seems to me, become passe, even in Christ's church. Many are more conscious of their local church's wants and needs than their own parents. Which reminds me of the words of Jesus to the pharisees who abused parents wholesale, “Why do you by your traditions, violate the commandments of God?”

(Some parent-offspring relationships are unhealthy. A brother regularly attended catholic mass to please his mother; this is wrong. Loving parents more than Jesus is wrong. Allowing parental interference in one's family is wrong. Elevating parents above one's spouse is wrong. Amen?)

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I really, really wish you had an intense enthusiasm for John chapter 15 including, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in Him, bears much fruit.”

You can tell to which branch you are abiding by simply listening to your own words. It may become apparent that you actually abide in two 'vines', the “true vine”, as Lord Jesus called Himself, and also the vine of religion. Very not good. Please hear me....

Many years ago I concluded that if I could envision Paul doing what I did, I would be safe. And if I couldn't I shouldn't. (Paul: “Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ.”) I cannot imagine Paul embracing, promoting or financing your evangelical religion. Can you? Like really?

Paul preached through the media of speech and example. And so do we. We preach by saying and we preach by doing. Our example is our epistle, as surely as the words we speak. Again, can you visualize Paul attaching himself to your religion? Or any religion?

While Paul preached Christ-alone, your gospel is Christ-and. Or Christ-plus. You preach Christ-and and Christ-plus by word and example. You are part of the institutional machinery that soon introduces the new convert to your religion (which is catholicism tweaked). The m.o. of every sect is to convince the subject of his/her need of them. Not Christ alone, but Christ-plus (they being the plus).

Like Paul, you are an ambassador for Christ. Unlike Paul, you are also an ambassador for evangelicalism. Paul would say to the new convert that Christ is your sufficiency. You would suggest that Christ is not, in Himself, sufficient. You insinuate, “More is required than just 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified'; you need the religion I represent (or one similar)”. This is so debilitating to the one looking to elder brothers and sisters for direction. Jesus gave us the “Spirit of truth.” (“He will guide you into all truth.”) Religion vies with the Holy Spirit to give leadership to Christ's flock. Religionists immediately assault the new convert with traditional logic and human practicality, and don't back off until they have captured his/her loyalty (and money).

“The head of the church” wants you (and all) to build your life on the Bible, chiefly the New Testament. That's why He gave us the Book. (We are not to study the Bible to learn His will and His ways and then live an opposite christianity.) He would have you detach yourself from the vine of religion and abide solely in Himself, “the true vine”.

John 15 is pivotal. Abiding in Christ *alone* assures bountiful rewards at “the judgement seat of Christ” where “we must give an account”. Jesus: “He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears MUCH fruit.” He who abides in Christ-plus bears LITTLE fruit. Jesus taught (Matthew chapter 7) it is the “wise man” who hears His words and builds on them; the “foolish man” is the christian who hears the same words yet builds his/her life on the sand of tradition. The double-minded build on both.

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

I am sure when Paul and Timothy were miles apart, they thought of each other often. I think of you often. I thank Jesus for your devotion to Jesus. Daily you “lay up.... treasures in heaven.” Our common love for Christ has preserved our friendship for many years though we have yet to meet face to face. So what could I write that would benefit one so devoted to Jesus? Though you “bear much fruit”, I have a suggestion/challenge that just might cause you to bear even more fruit, perhaps much more. I know you have “ears to hear”.

Speaking in tongues. When Paul declared to the tongue-talking Corinthians, “I speak with tongues more than you all”, he wasn't referring to a public message directed to an assembly of believers, a word requiring interpretation. No, he was referencing his own private prayer life. This second use of “speaking in tongues”, one's personal prayer language, is the subject.

Is it a coincidence that the one who spoke “with tongues more than you all” is the same who wrote more of the NT than any other? Could Paul have written so profoundly of our beautiful Jesus had he not spoke in tongues so frequently? If so, isn't that an indication that the more you and I speak “with the spirit” the more *we* can accomplish for Jesus?

Relative few, even in pentecostal circles, speak with tongues with regularity. Though Paul instructed, “Do not forbid to speak with tongues”, such forbidding is common practice. Why is there so much confusion and contention about this wondrous gift/sign of God? Could it be that you-know-who has something to do with it? Has this thief stolen this marvellous gift from the bulk of Christ's church?

Paul said, “If I speak in a tongue my spirit prays.” I conclude we have two choices: either our spirit prays or our spirit does *not* pray. Again, either our spirit prays to God or our spirit *does not* pray to God. God gave our spirits the ability to pray, but most stifle that ability, even though it is the most pure of prayers, not affected by our confusion, ego or tainted motives.

My practice of praying in the spirit has been greatly expanded by the teachings of Curry Blake.... who was influenced by the teachings of John G. Lake.... who, during the early years of the previous century, had a powerful healing ministry in Africa and the U.S..... and who credited much of his success to speaking in tongues. Curry Blake, when working in construction years ago, would pray in tongues (out loud!) throughout his workday. I am sure he also could say, “I speak with tongues more than you all.” Is it coincidental that this brother is the one who inherited Lake's world renown healing ministry, that Lord Jesus has used him to heal multitudes, that he now teaches christians worldwide to pray effectively for the sick?

I am determined to spend much of my future christianity speaking and singing in the spirit.... during morning prayer, when walking or driving or working, whenever. After only two months of intensified praying in tongues I already feel.... *elevated*. Hmmmm. How elevated will I be in 2-5 years? How many people will be saved because “my spirit prays” routinely?

Should you be interested in Curry's teaching, type in “Curry Blake, Diversity of Tongues” on the YouTube search bar. Okay?

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

Just a few words from someone who cares. Regarding established evangelical christianity, you and I

see the same absurdities. But you are missing a key element.... the answer. The evangelical must know the alternative to evangelicalism. If he/she is not directed to a better way it may be an act of kindness to say nothing.

So I gently say that that's the difference between us. I know and preach the only true alternative to religion and you do not. My very first writing was entitled “A Catholic No More”, a message to born-again catholics clinging to their catholicism, this to their serious detriment. While pointing out the folly and dangers of that religion, I simultaneously pointed them to the alternative, that alternative being the person of Jesus Christ. My subsequent writings also pointed to Christ. In one book, “The Way It Is”, directed to evangelicals who likewise cling to their religion, I point to the same alternative, the Lord Jesus.

You see the problem but you don't seem to comprehend the answer. I conclude you don't know the answer because you don't know *The Answer*. You don't *know* Christ who is the one and only alternative to religion (and every other entrapment). That is to say, you are not intimately connected. You may be “born of the Spirit” – I like to assume you are. Perhaps you are one of most who have left “first love”.

To evaluate your relationship with Christ, check your memory. Like me and like all, you speak the overflow of your heart. Have you spoken Christ recently? Have you spoken *to* Christ recently?

I rejected evangelicalism to recapture the strong devotion to Christ I once had. No more following the crowd who are following the crowd. Today I am one of the micro-minority who follow Lord Jesus, and for this blessing I am grateful. May I ask, precious one, who/what are you following?

Bear with me as I offer a suggestion: START OVER. I'm talking re-commitment. The starting place to a better life is always Jesus Christ. Make sure Lord Jesus is your Lord in fact.... that He is the One you are, in your here-and-now, following.... that you are, in your here-and-now, serving, obeying, living for.... that He is indeed “first love”.

Now, after that beginning (or re-beginning) make it a daily habit to *recommit* your entirety to Jesus. Very important. Had that been your custom your relationship today would be much healthier and wealthier. You would be more content. And you would be a greater blessing to those you influence.

And, when you feel the nudging of the Spirit, you can “be about Father's business”. The church of Christ desperately needs reformers. Sadly, “the laborers are few.” Reformation requires voices “crying out in the wilderness” declaring, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” It is apparent these voices must be from outside institutionalized christianity; those on the inside have proven themselves unfaithful; salaried culprits have brought Christ's people into religious bondage and have no heart to set them free.

Thanks for listening.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I will tell you a story about a story. The story, "Divine Collision," is a testimony featuring Jim and Henry. Jim is a lawyer called to Uganda to help young people incarcerated for an unreasonable duration while awaiting trial. One of those incarcerated teens was Henry. It's a gripping testimony of the love and the power of God evidenced through these two christians and other christians.

The story within the story is the number of times the book speaks "God" compared to the number of times it speaks "Jesus". Are you ready for this.... ?

The people within the book spoke (wrote) *God*, collectively, 106 times. They spoke *Jesus*, collectively, 6 times.

The story within the story is actually an account of evangelicalism. And it is therefore your story if you are one of most attached to that religion. Please understand I am not critical of the book or its people or any evangelical. I am critical of evangelicalism. The ratio of *God* vs *Jesus* in

the book is not abnormal within that religion, and is a sure indication something is terribly wrong. Fixing this problem is fixing most problems.

Relationally, when *Jesus* becomes a faraway Jesus He becomes *God*. Adversely, when *God* becomes nearby God, He becomes *Jesus* (or *Father*, or *Holy Spirit*). *God* is impersonal; many outside christianity pray to and serve *God*. *Jesus* is personal; only devoted disciples relate to Jesus.

Evangelicalism is certainly not a Christ-*less* christianity. But it is a Christ-*impoverished* christianity. "Divine Collision" is but a sample of evangelicalism. The approximately 18 to 1 ratio, *God* vs *Jesus*, is probably the same in your church setting, in your family and in your friendships. You can verify this by simply auditing your memory. When was the last time you spoke "the name which is above every name"?

And the solution?

Your only solution is to discard all religion. Just walk away. Religion hurts most and benefits none. Return speedily to "first love". You will be welcomed and forgiven. A better life awaits the sincere prodigal.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I have written much about and against religion. And yet I think when I speak of religion a cloud of puzzlement erupts and encircles the reader. Am I correct? Do you have a good understanding of

what religion is and is not?

As you read my remarks about this subject, please keep in mind that it was religion that made the "Father's house a house of merchandise".... and it was religion that paid thirty pieces of silver to apprehend our Lord Jesus.... and it was religion that crucified our Christ.... and it was religion that harassed Christ's apostles.... and it was religion that hounded

Martin Luther and the etceteras of his age.... and it was religion that opposed every move of the Holy Spirit in church history. And it is religious pulpiteers who demand to be heeded and salaried.

But what exactly is religion?

Simply said, religion is a set of non-biblical traditions. And religionists are those adhering to and promoting these traditions.

Jesus confronted the religious pharisees: "You have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition." That's what traditions of men do.... they make the "commandment of God of no effect." Traditions of men oppose God. Traditions of men spawn a vast multitude of dysfunctional religionists.

Fully understand that Jesus lived in a religious world, a spiritual world contaminated with traditions of men. And fully understand, my precious friends, that you do also.

Religion is the mean and hungry wolf menacingly salivating over the flock of sheep. Religionists are competent hijackers of hearts once enamoured with Christ alone. That man behind the pulpit? - you must know he is an ardent religionist. And all those pew-people? - they are those who once followed Christ but now follow the pulpiteer.

Religion has mutated your up-close, intimate, caring Jesus into a distant, casual, remote Jesus. Beautiful has become quite unlovely under the ministry of religionists. Time to run from and run to? To run *from* religion and run *to* Jesus?

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

I write to tell you that which no one has ever told you: You are backslidden. Backslidden, to me, is sliding backward from passionate to ho-hum. Abundant evidence is in your postings. I tell you this because I love you. Because I love you I am willing to risk your wrath.

Tell me, do you think backslidden christians know they are? ("The heart is deceitful above all things.") How does one determine if he/she is lukewarm or fervent? The answer is not how often one attends church. Or how faithful one is to the collection plate. Or being nice. The answer is evident in the

words one speaks (or writes). ("Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.") Is your speech peppered with Jesus? Paul both spoke and wrote "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The ho-hum avoid His name.

I tried to warn you about following the crowd ("Cursed is the man who trusts in man") and, it seems, I became your adversary. Later, you did get seriously hurt by those you revered. Such is not uncommon.... a Pastor Whoever once announced a special meeting whereby pastors in Kelowna would be apologizing to the people they hurt.

I know your pain. I have been shunned, slandered, shamed, mocked, betrayed and isolated – by those distant and those close. Several times I have been publicly belittled by the preacher as I sat in the pew. Worse, loved ones have been punished for the sin of associating with me.

I have been wounded but not damaged. It seems you have been wounded *and* damaged. It has been said adversity makes one either bitter or better. I fought off bitterness, this by God's grace. Have you, my brother in Christ Jesus? Relationally, my Jesus is "closer than a brother" and your Jesus is faraway, almost out of sight. Or so it seems.

Christianity is meant to be more than a sport, more than a social venue, more than a place to display spiritual wares. Healthy christianity is pursuing the Christ we captured. It is branches abiding in "the true vine". It is a love relationship with His and our Father. So....

So how does one regain the richness of relationship once held? The answer is simple, very simple.... *Talk to Jesus! Talk to Jesus! Talk to Jesus!* That's it. Talking to Jesus, consistently, is the answer to every problem.... because Jesus is the answer to every problem.... and speaking to Jesus brings Him near.

The church of Christ is so messed up because christians don't talk to Jesus *consistently*. The backslidden are backslidden because they stopped talking to Jesus *consistently*. The world is perishing because christians are not talking to Jesus *consistently*. Talking to Jesus draws one closer to Jesus. Ignoring Jesus pushes Him away. (Jesus: "I wish you were cold or hot.")

I, sincerely, wish you well.

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

I am about to say something that, in all probability, no one has said to you. But before I do, please consider Proverbs 27:6: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." And you are my longtime friend. So.... here it goes.... *I am almost 100% certain you are not a follower of Jesus Christ.* Born-again, yes. Blood-washed, certainly. Name recorded in the "Book of Life", no doubt. But a follower of Lord Jesus?....

sorry.

When just a newborn in the family of God, attending a small gathering of saints, the Holy Spirit dropped something scary in my heart as we sang the words of that enduring song, "Though none go with me, still I will follow, no turning back, no turning back." He said, most clearly, there would be a day I would get to prove the words I just sang ("Though none go with me, still I will follow"). In other words, there would be a time Every *person* with whom I was acquainted would stop following Jesus. Would I also stop following Him?

It was about *five years* later I finally understood. While at an evangelical service it was plainly revealed to me that christians – that is, all christians present in that gathering and all those with whom I was associated – were not following Jesus; they were following each other. Christians followed christians who followed christians who followed christians. (That certainly included all church leadership.) Today I can count on one hand the friends who truly follow our Lord Jesus Christ. Sadly, my precious brother in Christ, you are not one of them. But that can change.

You might wonder, "How can one determine if it is Christ or christians I am following?" Simple. Your speech (and your writings/postings) reveal your heart. Jesus: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." To know, listen to (and read) your own words. What's in comes out. Jesus in, Jesus out. Christians in, christians out. Churchianity in, churchianity out. I have conversed with you many times over many years and can't recall you mentioning that "name that is above all names". Not once. You spoke of this and that and those and them, but never Him.

Jesus said to Peter and Andrew, "Follow Me." Later He said to Matthew, "Follow Me." Their response? They "followed Him." Jesus calls every new convert to "Follow Me." And they do.... for a time.... until ensnared by a religion.... which contends with Jesus for their allegiance.... and after a dozen or so sunday services the convert no longer follows Christ, but instead follows christians..... who are following christians.... who are following christians. Their words give them away.

You can become, once again, a follower of Jesus Christ, just like when first "born of the Spirit" before ensnared by institutionalized christianity. But will you? Peter and Andrew "immediately left their nets". Matthew left his trade. What are you willing to leave behind? More acutely, what are you *NOT* willing to give up? Approval? Applause? Reputation? Friendships? Is the cost of Christ too costly? I pray not.

THIS LETTER IS DIRECTED TO MY MANY FACEBOOK FRIENDS FROM THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES....

May our Lord Jesus Christ abundantly bless you all and the work you are doing for Him in various countries. Thanks to the many who have said they are praying for me and my work. I apologize that I

have been unable to respond to both your greetings and your requests for financial help. I simply lack time, energy and finances. Let me explain....

I use Social Media platforms, mainly, to preach "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" to Christ's people, those "born of the Spirit". I am of the opinion most have lost the devotion they once had for Jesus, having been swallowed up by one of many religions. These religions have coerced Christ's saints to finance and otherwise support these harmful religions. That is why I am your social media friend, to warn you of the serious pitfalls of all religions. I emphasize evangelicalism simply because most born-again brothers and sisters are so associated. This is what Lord Jesus has called me to do, and therefore this is where I invest my time, energy and finances.

Also, it is impossible for me to verify the legitimacy of each request; this would take more time than I have. Although I assume most appeals for support are genuine, I also know some are not.

I assure you, the Lord Jesus Christ, the "head of the church", will respond to your trust in Him to supply your needs and those under your care. He once said, "According to your faith let it be to you." Paul wrote, "The just shall live by faith." Jesus accomplished so much because of His unwavering trust in the Father.

(Those of you who support children orphanages have at your disposal a tremendous asset.... the children! Children have more trust in God than adults! Do you remember Jesus saying, "Whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven"? Children can receive from God more readily because they have not yet learned unbelief. And they are not afflicted with the ego of grown-ups. Point your kids to a loving Jesus and Jesus will hear their prayers. Amen?)

Thanks for your understanding.

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

In your 3-part teaching, "What Is The Church" (posted on Facebook) you invited readers to watch a video of your 2013 ordination. Having never witnessed an ordination I didn't pass up the opportunity. I was never aware of a Scripture supporting ordination, but hey, maybe I can learn something; I do consider myself to be teachable.

My misgivings regarding ordination are plenteous. As Christ's church is divided – not by Lord Jesus but by christians – into the salaried and non-salaried, the titled and non-titled, the licensed and non-licensed, it is also divided into the ordained and the non-ordained. "Is Christ divided?" (1Cor.1:13)

Also, the word *ordained* or *ordain,* in reference to christians, is not to be found in the KJV, NKJV, NASB and most other translations. Also, the 'ordained' within evangelicalism disagree on many

issues, sometimes vehemently; is this not adequate evidence the ordained do not have exclusivity on truth?.... that their teachings are far from infallible? With these concerns I guardedly listened to the video. I share my impressions for your consideration....

Much of the language of the presider, who I assume was the 'chief pastor', cannot be found in NT writings (i.e., “ordination service”, “special position”, “reverend”, “our seal”, “our representative”, “official board”, “voted”, “certificate”). I learned a long time ago non-Scriptural words are needed to validate non-Scriptural applications. Other words mentioned in the video are found in the Bible, but seemingly misapplied. It is suggested now that you are ordained you are “set apart”. Aren't we all? Are some christians more “set apart” by Jesus than others? The presider *charged* you, just like Paul charged Timothy. I too have been charged.... by none other than the Lord Jesus.... and so has every born-again. It was said you have been ordained because you have been “called into the ministry”. Who hasn't been so called? The congregation is to hold you “accountable”, and yet the only reference to accountability is unto the Lord Jesus.

The presider admonished you to walk uprightly, to obey New Testament's mandates applicable to leadership (and all), even specifically mentioning some of these mandates. However it was assumed that one of those admonitions of Paul was to be ignored. What admonition? “Nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.... to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.” Can you see the cherry-picking?

The video reinforced, not weakened, my suspicion that ordination was building on the sand of tradition, that it is contrary to the words of Jesus - “You are all equal as brothers and sisters” (NLT). It has been said that while there certainly are clergy in the church, there are no laity. We are all “kings and priests”. We are all called into “the ministry of reconciliation”. We are all gifted. Yes, there are leaders in the NT, but not *organized* leadership! Yes, there are elders, but not a *board* of elders! Yes, there are pastors, but not *salaried* pastors!

Thanks for listening. I certainly wish you an abundance of “treasures in heaven.” Pleased to have you as a social media friend.

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

Please bear with me, once more, as I share some insights regarding your 3-part teaching, “What Is The Church?” Okay? You probably surmise, by my response to your ordination video, my perspective on church is at variance with yours. And, mostly, you would be correct. I think the quotation (from your teaching series) that best identifies our differences is: “The one and only superintendent of the church is Christ through the Holy Spirit.” You might ask, “How could anyone disagree with that?”

Please hear me....

We both know there is “one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” Most don't realize there is a Mediator between “the Man Christ Jesus” and the christian, none other than the Holy Spirit. Jesus says of Him (Amplified): “Whom the Father will send in My name .” Doesn't that sound like a mediator?

You would say the Holy Spirit is a Mediator between Christ and the CHURCH but, though somewhat true, it is misleading. It suggests He leads the local church *as a group* when in reality He only leads *individuals* within that church.

Peter once said, “The Spirit told me to go.” Paul and Silas were “forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.” Of Stephen it is written that he spoke “by the Spirit.” Still not convinced? Consider Rm.8:14: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” And 2Tim.3:16: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” Had you written, “The one and only superintendent of the CHRISTIAN is Christ through the Holy Spirit” I would declare “Amen and amen!!!”

You mostly exclude the Holy Spirit in your 3-part teaching. (He was also excluded from your ordination.) While my perspective on governance is Christ.... Holy Spirit.... christian, yours seems to be Christ.... local church.... christian. What an enormous difference! My perspective minimizes the need of pastors, yours enlarges it.

When speaking of church leadership, the first person to come to mind should be Jesus Christ. Doesn't the Bible declare Him to be “the head of the church”? The second person should be His representative, the Holy Spirit. Pastors, elders etc. should be afterthoughts. Perhaps that's why Jesus said, “Do not be called leaders; for One is your leader, that is, Christ.” (NASB) However, since the early church there has been a transference of emphasis. Pastor Whoever has become the focus. More accurately, Pastor Whoever has *made himself* the focus, having used the pulpit to rally the people *around him*. He has replaced the Holy Spirit as emissary between Christ and christian. For this, he has persuaded the fawning congregation, he is worthy of ordination. And appellations (titles). And a respectable salary.

My precious brother, the successful christian is he/she who “bears much fruit”. Amen? That's what we both want for our brothers and sisters, isn't it? Jesus gives the recipe for such an outcome: “He who abides in Me, and I in him, *bears much fruit*.” Utter simplicity (though not easy). Paul was concerned the Corinthians would lose their “pure and undivided devotion to Christ”. From my perspective, that is exactly what has happened to those who consider themselves evangelicals. And who brought them to this sad plight? Surely not compliant pew-people. *Hmmm. Who.... could.... it.... be?*

Thanks for listening, my brother-in-Christ.

Dear Facebook Sibling in Christ....

Because you have been heavily influenced by the Word-Faith movement over the years I would like to express some observations/concerns for your consideration. Is that okay? On a positive note, I am convinced Kenneth Hagin, considered to be the “father” of Word-Faith, did have a mandate from Jesus to “Teach My People Faith”, just as he claimed. I am, (praise be to Jesus!) one of those people. His teachings on the subject of healing are authentic and helpful to those in need. The people raising the most passionate objections are, seemingly, those who have been convinced Jesus no longer heals.... a preposterous but popular position. And, also, those not understanding the fullness of the covenant Jesus provided at the cost of His blood. And, also, those misconstruing the sovereignty of God. That said, let me tell of a friend negatively impacted by 'Word-Faith'....

He refused to wear a protective mask when working in his dust-filled cabinet shop. A mask was unnecessary, you see, because he attended a Word-Faith church, quoted Bible promises throughout the day and constantly binged on audio tapes. Unfortunately he soon had to close his shop because he developed a serious allergy to dust. My friend is a sampling of the many, many, many (including you?) disappointed and/or embittered because 'Word-Faith' didn't work

for them. Much money has been invested in 'seed-money' - not millions but billions - in a quest to become wealthy via the prosperity gospel. So why what worked so well for Kenneth Hagin did not and does not work for most? (As you know, Hagin was cured of a debilitating disease, enjoyed an exceptionally healthy life, was instrumental in the healing of multitudes.) I think I know the answer....

Kenneth Hagin loved Jesus supremely and most don't – it's that simple. It is so obvious his centre was Christ while the centre of most in Word-Faith, seemingly, is prosperity. Hagin enjoyed prosperity (which, by the way, he defined as sufficiency) but enjoyed Jesus more. Jesus promises (take note all Word-Faith people and those of other religions!), “He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.” And He also warns (take note all Word-Faith people and those of other religions!), “Without Me you can do nothing.” That's nothing as in nothing! Our Lord was talking RELATIONSHIP. Only the intimate “bear much fruit”. Quoting promises, giving obeisance to 'Word-Faith' teachers, planting a ton of 'seed-money'.... these do not negate “Without Me you can do nothing.”

Another promise found in John chapter 15: “If you abide in Me AND My words abide in you, you will ask what you will desire and it shall be done for you.” The conjunction AND emphasizes TWO requirements for answered prayer. Kenneth Hagin had both ONE and TWO. Most Word-Faith christians have, in my opinion, only ONE, “ My words abide in you”. And that, as I see it, is the problem. The pharisees also had the Word, memorizing and often citing Scripture, but they were not relationally attached. (Jesus: “You know neither Me nor My Father.”)

Paul taught, “The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.” Couple that with Christ's words, “Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” Those loving money speak money (wealth,

prosperity, possessions) EXCESSIVELY. I'm sure you agree Word-Faith teachers and their followers speak wealth inordinately. In this they have commonality with the pharisees who Jesus exposed as “lovers of money”.

Racketeering is pandemic throughout evangelicalism but many Word-Faith leaders, driven by an abnormal affection for “treasures on earth”, have taken it to a surpassing level. Many (including you?) have been ruthlessly fleeced. The love of money and things have toppled love for Jesus; this is, in my opinion, the reason Word-Faith doesn't work.

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

Thirty years ago you gave me a gift, a birthday gift. A bunch of us were celebrating my 50th in our backyard. Your gift was a compilation of four classic christian books. Do you remember? A few years ago I came across one of these classics, Andrew Murray's “Abide In Christ” (which, I confess, I had never read). What a find! What a treasure! I like to pass on books after reading, but never this one. I will tell you why it was so meaningful and comforting....

Abide in Christ. Christianity should be an abiding relationship with Lord Jesus. Many years ago the Lord 'gave' me a few verses, which I am sure you are familiar with, John 15:4: “Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me”..... and John 15:5: “He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.” These two passages have been my mainstay for many years. While lukewarm is fraught with danger, there is safety in intimacy. Jesus protects sheep grazing contentedly under His shadow; it is these devoted ones who experience the abundant life He paid for with His blood.

For many years the cry of my heart to Christ's people, expressed in my writings, has been RETURN. Return to the intimacy we all experienced when first “born of the Spirit”. I am of the strong opinion that most have exchanged “first love” for something much inferior (religion, money, relationships, addictions, etc.). When I say “most” I mean well over 90%, pulpit-people and pew-people. Almost a hundred years ago Andrew Murray explained why so many in his day experienced disappointment in their christianity: “YOU HAVE WANDERED FROM HIM.” He writes, “The blessings He bestows.... are only to be enjoyed in close fellowship with Himself.”

“You have wandered from Him.” Sheep wander. And when they drift from “the good shepherd” to follow after human shepherds or, perhaps, wanting to regain the self-rule they had before their conversion to Christ, they lose much of their power and much of the “fruit of the Spirit”. So what does our Shepherd do? Does He reject those who have snubbed His lordship? No. He raises up voices to call them back. To return. A century ago Lord Jesus raised up a powerful yet gentle voice. If I had

opportunity to distribute only one book to every christian within Christ's church it would be “Abide in Christ” by Andrew Murray. And if every reader were to heed the brother's beckoning to return to “first love” the cumulative fruit would be enormous. How quickly the nations would be reached with the gospel.

So thank you. When reading this gift I often think of the giver. I hope all is well, precious brother-in-Christ. May we both go deeper in Him. Amen?

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

Paul wrote to the Galatians, “Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?” (NLT) Paul preached Christ to the Galatians, the Galatians received the gospel and were converted to our Lord Jesus, and then.... and then.... they turned from Christ to religion. How sad.

Veering from Christ to religion was not unusual in Paul's day, nor is it an unusual happening in our time. Most reading these words are seriously steeped in religion. Please understand that it is impossible to be devoted to a religion and to Christ simultaneously.

The Galatians lost so much when they lost intimacy with “that great shepherd of the sheep”. They lost, to varying degrees, protection, peace, power, joy, eternal rewards and every good thing. Religion does that. Like really. Religion is doing that to you in your here-and-now. Religion has eaten away at your devotion to Christ Jesus, and still is.

Paul's question to the Galatians is my question to my precious Facebook friends, “Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?” I spend much time and energy and resources exposing religion as the christian's chief competitor to Christ. I steadfastly proclaim “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” to believers – let's make that half-believers – steeped in religious conformity.

Evangelicals have much in common with other religions. All are trapped by religionists who have been entrapped by religionists. Religionist?.... what's that? I have an unusual definition: A religionist is one who cannot/will not solemnly sign the Bible in the presence of the Triune God as a solemn declaration of obedience to the Bible (as he/she understands it). Most reading these words cannot/will not make such a declaration before the Father, His Son and His Holy Spirit. This is the nasty fruit of the religion that has ensnared you. This is what religion has cost you.

It was Jesus Himself who taught us the devastating effects of religion: “You have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.” Evangelical traditions have made the Bible “of no effect” to evangelicals. Question: What about evangelicals who refuse to bow to evangelical traditions? Answer: Such is not an evangelical; attending an evangelical church does not make you

an evangelical; bowing to its traditions does.

You may conclude, “This letter is not very encouraging!” Please understand, it is not meant to be encouraging. It is meant to warn, to awaken, and, yes, to sting. Jesus did not encourage the pharisees. Encouragement is for those devoted to Christ alone. Paul wrote sharply to the Galatians: “O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?” He was not being mean; he was being faithful; he was being responsible. I parrot our precious brother-in-Christ: “O foolish evangelicals! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth ?”

To My Facebook Brother in Christ....

A while back you responded to a posting in which I challenged the tithing practice within evangelicalism. My response to your comment was defensive and childish. This I regret. For this I apologize. However, I do not back down from my conviction that the evangelical tithe is nothing less than (what someone has called) christianized extortion. Yes, I said extortion. Please bear with me as I unfold my perspective on this matter of surrendering a tenth of one's income to the local church. And please do not misinterpret my candour for disrespect; on the contrary, I respect you very much.

The new convert is taught he/she is obliged to attend church 'services'. (“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.”) They are then admonished to “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive.” Hmmm, thinkest the new convert, that ruler must be the guy everyone calls 'Pastor'. Pastor Whoever soon introduces the evangelical tithe needed to finance his salary, etcetera. As years evolve into decades, the convert donates not tens of thousands of dollars, but hundreds of thousands.

Mostly by example, he is taught: To neglect the guidance of the Holy Spirit (which is actually relinquishing the lordship of Jesus Christ). To have no urgency toward Christ's Great Commission. To adapt a herd mentality whereby the church is his safety and guide and comfort and lord. To build simultaneously on God's Word and man's tradition. To be ill-prepared for the upcoming “judgement seat of Christ”. This person will not come close to fulfilling the special, unique call that God has placed on each of our lives.

The cost of salaries and buildings, both lacking Bible precedent, is not just millions and millions of dollars but millions and millions of souls. Money intended to finance Christ's Great Commission is diverted elsewhere. Salaries and buildings are financed, mostly, by the evangelical tithe that has been pressed upon pew-people by salaried pulpit-people. Can't you see the glaring injustice? If it were not for this awful evangelical tithe a countless number of people would escape hell and enter heaven. With that conviction, how can I be silent? How can I face Lord Jesus on that day of accountability knowing I was silent regarding this spiritual racketeering? I can't feign ignorance; this

atrocity doesn't take place in the shadows of a dark alley, nor in a dingy and smoke-filled back room, but openly, blatantly.... every sunday of every month of every year.

Lord Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to you and me and all to guide us, individually, throughout our christianity. Spiritual authority and guidance were always intended to be in this order: Jesus Christ.... Holy Spirit.... christian. NOT: Jesus Christ.... church.... christian. And NOT: Jesus Christ.... Holy Spirit.... church.... christian. We are to be lead, individually, by "the Spirit of truth", as was Jesus, as were the apostles, as is every person "fight the good fight of faith". We must consider the lordship of Christ as a sacred thing, not only in our own life but that of others. Controllers violating this sacred thing will "suffer loss", eternal loss. Herd mentality must be rebuked by true elders, those following Christ unreservedly. Everyone should point everyone to Jesus.

Collection of money (the evangelical tithe, offerings, whatever) whereby the people are not admonished, by those claiming to be shepherds of Christ's sheep, to seek the guidance of the most Holy Spirit is, in my opinion, nothing less than theft. Thanks for listening. Please pray for me.

To My Precious Facebook Sister in Christ....

Y'all gots grit girl!! Takes real spunk to LIKE someone who isn't liked by the religious establishment. So thanks, sincerely, for the dozens of Facebook "Amens!" (A LIKE is an "Amen!") What a strengthener and comforter you have been. (It's kinda' lonely out here, know what I mean?)

So I ask myself: If you LIKE many of my postings, why don't many others? No, I don't expect anyone to LIKE everything, but, given the fact I post to christians on many subjects, why doesn't everyone LIKE some? Surely a few of my postings stir a big fat "Amen!" in the belly of many readers. I know two things: 1) friends and family do read my postings and 2) many don't LIKE what they like and agree with. Again, I have asked myself many times, why is that? I think I got it figured out..... herd mentality.

Herd mentality? Yes, Precious, herd mentality. Within evangelicalism, herd mentality is the bunch being more concerned about the bunch than about Lord Jesus. He-she-they rule the behaviour of most. He-she-they often trump reasonable-true-right. It takes courage to call wrong wrong and right right when their religion decrees otherwise. Go-with-the-flow is the mindset of compromisers. We do what we do because everyone does it. Example, people call Pastor Whoever "Pastor" because everyone calls Pastor Whoever "Pastor". Compromise has made the evangelical an evangelical. He/she has long ago learned unity at all cost. The alternative to compromise is integrity and integrity often induces TENSION. To all reading this letter, seriously consider: animus toward tension often prevents us from doing right.

Nobody likes tension. Tension arises when we don't do what the bunch does. Or we do what the bunch doesn't do. Decisions are often made according to what does and doesn't bring tension. LIKE-ing what he-she-they may not approve is always accompanied by unease. Best to keep "Amens!" buried. And yet.... to be a faithful follower of our Lord Jesus often necessitates tension, and lots of it.

Many (most?) in every religion are dogged by he-she-they. They accompany their subjects wherever they go.... shopping, walking, driving, whatever. Herd mentality rules the church just as cruelly as it does the world. Many in the world will be forever regretful because they deferred to the he-she-they of secularism. And.... many in Christ's church will be regretful at the judgement seat of Christ because they deferred to the he-she-they of evangelicalism. It takes more grit than most have to buck "tradition of men" and follow Christ fully. Paul wrote (NLT), "If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant." Men-pleasers can't be Christ-pleasers. Just can't. Men-pleasers avoid persecution down here, but "suffer loss", eternal loss, up there.

Jesus commanded Paul, "Do not be afraid, but SPEAK, and do not keep silent." What moved Paul moves you and I, my sister-in-Christ; I speak by posting and you speak by LIKE-ing what you deem likeable. For your courage, thank you, thank you, thank you.

P.S. "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart." (Ps.37:4) Since your delight is Jesus, Jesus will give you your heart's desires.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ.....

When about 13 years old, my parents asked us kids if anyone wanted to go to confession. There were two visiting catholic priests whose specialty was getting people to repent and confess their sins. I think I surprised and pleased my parents when I agreed to accompany them. I had been particularly troublesome, so much so that my Mom said I was more trouble than all the other siblings combined.

In the chapel annexed to imposing Assumption Church in Windsor, Ontario were confessionals, each confessional consisting of three cubicles, the middle cubicle was where the priest was seated and hidden. People lined up on both sides of the confessionals that evening awaiting their turn to unload their sins and dispose of their guilt. (I remember how the wooden floor creaked ever so annoyingly every time someone shifted forward in his/her line.)

God visited that 13 year old as he stood in line waiting his turn, perhaps honouring my desire to turn from bad kid to good kid. I felt His presence, perhaps the first time ever. One of the priests protruded from his cubicle and demanded we all sing a song, a most unusual thing to do. I believe God used that priest to embellish my special moment. Sixty-two years later, I still remember the words to that

song: *"Holy God we praise Thy name.... Lord of all, we bow before Thee.... All on earth Thy sceptre reign.... All in heaven above adore Thee.... Infinite Thy vast domain.... Everlasting is Thy reign.... Infinite Thy vast domain.... Everlasting is Thy reign."* Soon after my grade 8 teacher, a catholic nun, saw such a change in me she declared before the class, "I think Larry will be a priest."

Was that a born-again experience? Had that catholic teen been "rescued from the kingdom of darkness and transferred.... into the kingdom of his dear Son"? (Col.1:13) Do you remember, friends, the words of Lord Jesus to Nicodemus?: "You MUST be born-again". Must, must, must! I had a powerful experience, but was it 'the real thing'? Had I been "born of the Spirit", "born again"? No! No! No! I say all this to lead into a most important question....

Have YOU been "born of the Spirit"? Have YOU been "born again"? Nicodemus was not yet "born of the Spirit", but, being a seeker, possibly (probably?) had similar spiritual experiences as that 13 year old.

I soon relapsed into old ways. Fourteen years later (Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!) I was truly born again. I am now a legitimate son of the living God. My name has been added to "the book of Life". I don't know *when* I'm going, I don't know *how* I'm going, but I sure know *where* I'm going. The problem I have is....

Many who are considered christians and consider themselves to be christians don't act like what one would think a christian should. Their speech and lifestyle give them away. They seem ashamed to speak the name of Jesus Christ. Like those of the world, they have no concern for the eternal future of their loved ones. They seem to think being a christian is simply being nice. Are people such as these saved? I really, really don't know. Perhaps they assume a visitation from God, such as my encounter in that catholic chapel, was a born again experience.

In closing, I say this to my FB friends: If you cannot say with full sincerity (even if you have declared it before), "Lord Jesus, I place all who I am under your lordship, and I receive You right now as Lord and Saviour and Shepherd and Teacher and King", you have cause to be nervous.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

The coach says to the baseball team: "Listen up!" The exasperated parent says, "Listen to me!" Jesus often said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." I say to my social media friends, "Read and heed."

Many of my postings are messages that can alter your christianity – from meagre fruit to "much fruit", from few "treasures in heaven" to many. Many of my postings are perspectives you won't find elsewhere. My enemy is Christ's enemy; Christ's enemy is institutionalized christianity. I hear Him saying to institutionalized leadership, "Let My people go!"

Ask yourself, “Am I satisfied with the quality and quantity of fruit I am now bearing?” If not, perhaps your perspective, passed on by others also bearing meagre fruit, is askew. Do you agree that present-day churchianity is a mess? If so, you can't follow the crowd and expect success. Amen? Make sense? A radically contrasting perspective is needed, one that emphasizes “the true vine” and His branches. So I humbly say to my FB friends, “Listen up!”.... “He who has ears to hear, let him hear”.... “Read and heed!”

Is my perspective, though often not mainstream, biblical and therefore carries the stamp of JESUS on it?.... or not? Jesus' approval.... does anything else matter!?

I have often said, “Evangelicalism only makes sense to the one who realizes it is not based on the Bible.” For many, this matters little, so deep is their devotion to 'the way it is'. Friends, you can determine for yourselves if your religion is 'Bible' or traditions of men, the rock of Christ's “sayings” or the sand of man's wisdom (see Matthew, chapter 7) by simply comparing its teachings with the New Testament.

But evangelicals are afraid to challenge evangelical teachings. Many evangelicals are even afraid to talk Bible matters, yes, even with each other. They have been stifled and don't know they have been stifled. Religion has muzzled them. Pastor Whoever, the most religious person in the congregation, has captured the devotion they once held for Jesus alone. This salaried brother has created a team of loyalists of which he is the undisputed captain and overseer.

I solicit your comments. Religion will continue to reign if the church is silent. Tradition will trump Bible if evangelicals are afraid to reason, to challenge, to rebel against religious tyranny. Tear that muzzle off your face and speak out!

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

Pastor Whoever announced to the congregation the need to extend the section of the commercial building we were leasing. “This is where we believe the Lord is leading us.” I want you to focus on the word 'us'.... “the Lord is leading US.” 'Us' is the entire congregation. 'Us', obviously, included me that Sunday morning, as I was part of the congregation. I suppose everyone thought of him/herself as a component of 'us'.

Can you see the entrapment? Probably everyone came to the same conclusion: “If the Lord is speaking to 'us' and 'us' includes me, the Lord must be directing me to participate in (finance) this building project.” Everyone wants to belong; everyone hates exclusion. Evangelicals will pay big bucks for approval and acclamation. To be accepted is as important as being healthy and wealthy. A team player BELONGS. So-o-o-o sweet. He/she is INCLUDED. So-o-o-o comforting. But the price of

acceptance/approval is high indeed....

You started your christianity Jesus-and-me. Then you went to church. Soon Jesus-and-me became Jesus-and-us. Not good. Giving yourself over to the group is removing yourself from the lordship of the Holy Spirit. And distancing yourself from the Holy Spirit is distancing yourself from Jesus. That pastor assumed himself to be a little Moses. Not content to lead by example ("being examples to the flock") he played the role of spiritual executive, contesting the Holy Spirit for your loyalty and commitment.

Beware! Commitment to anyone other than the Holy Spirit is idolatry!

You visit a patient in the hospital. The hospital is both a good place and a dangerous place. While much good is accomplished there, it's also a prime place to catch a nasty virus. Church is like that. Much good is accomplished, but it's also a place to catch a nasty spiritual virus.... religion. It's a place where your relationship with Jesus, your most valuable possession, can be weakened. So what's the answer?....

When visiting a patient, ask Jesus to protect you. If and when you attend a church service, ask Jesus to protect you. Safeguard your devotion to Christ with the same ferocity a mother bear protects her cubs. Though most are going the way of religion, you must go the way of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified". It's called loyalty. It's called wisdom. Remember, at the judgement seat of Christ it will be Jesus-and-me, not Jesus-and-us. Amen?

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I want to talk to you about what I call "dirty tricks". Basically, a dirty trick is an indirect or coded message that says: "You are no longer welcome here." The first of many dirty tricks was played on me about forty years ago....

After a sunday evening service I was chatting with a small group of friends and family in the main section of the church, what some would call the sanctuary. Pastor Whoever was in the foyer talking to a couple as they were leaving the building. Between us was an open door. Then I noticed Pastor Whoever staring at me (from a distance of about a basketball court). I returned his gaze, wondering what he wanted. He didn't signal me to come to him, didn't seem to want anything, he just stared. So there we were, looking at each other for an uncomfortable length of time. Because of the doorway between us, no one could notice this silent confrontation. At last he disappeared up the stairs leading to his office.

For me, it was a surreal moment. Did this really happen? Just a short while ago this pastor was preaching a rousing message to a large appreciative audience; now, minutes later, he was behaving

in a most hurtful manner. I eventually came to understand that dirty tricks, such as this, were a common method of 'culling' undesirables, much like an orchardist culls his apple trees of unwanted apples. An undesirable could be anyone considered to be less than a team player. Or worse yet, expressing a contrary opinion.

Paul told Timothy, “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” Those who love and aspire to serve Lord Jesus “will suffer persecution”. Guaranteed. Be it from family or friends or church people, persecution WILL come. It's a Bible promise. Those loving Jesus the most are harassed the most. Followers of Jesus Christ will be excluded by followers of christians. There is a gap between you and them. There just is. If you are seeking to be guided by the Holy Spirit, be aware your independence from them irks them, and won't be long tolerated.

Be consoled by the certainty that today's rejection is tomorrow's reward. Jesus said, “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

We are so easily offended. So-o-o-o easily. Why is that?

Many years ago I accompanied a friend who was preaching to a small crowd about a two hour drive. It was a good message and on the way home I told him so. “That was a good talk.” He was so-o-o-o offended. “Good talk!? I preached my heart out and all you got to say is it was a good talk?!”

A friend once suggested I accompany him on a trip to a distant country where he was invited to teach/preach. This would be about his twelfth return, and he felt I would be supportive if I assisted him in his travels. I was so-o-o-o offended. He never hinted we were to share the teaching responsibilities. Oh, no; I was to be his tagalong, someone to help with the baggage. Yes, so-o-o-o offended.

A cashier at a local grocery store asked me if a particular fruit was a plum or a nectarine, as both looked much the same. “Nectarine”, I replied. She then picked up bananas to weigh them. “Those are bananas”, I said. (Dumb, I know.) At first I thought she would laugh, as it was intended to be funny, but no, she was so-o-o-o offended. And I could tell she stayed offended and unforgiving for a couple of years!

Because we are so-o-o-o easily offended, we are cautious not to say anything that could be misconstrued or considered contrary. We will even pretend to agree when we don't, anything to avoid offence. People call Pastor Whoever “Pastor” because of fear to offend. Get along, agree, be compatible.... that's the evangelical way.

Jesus was often angered, but never offended. Adversely, the pharisees were often insulted. Is it the pharisee in us that causes us to be offended? Is taking offence a certain indication of spiritual flaws? Does being offended reveal hypocrisy?

Being at war with religion (Christ's chief competitor) has caused me to offend multitudes over the span of decades. Touching one's religion is touching his/her god.

Offences are nasty things. Offences beget grudges.... grudges, if unrepented, will devalue our relationship with Jesus.... an inferior relationship makes us more vulnerable to offences. Around and around we go.

The antidote: repentance.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I was raised a catholic. I was “born of the Spirit” at the age of twenty-seven after reading a tract, “The Four Spiritual Laws” by Campus Crusade. Immediately there was pressure to compromise the teachings of Christ. Although Jesus instructed, “Do not call anyone on earth your father, for One is your Father, He who is in heaven”, every catholic calls the priests “Father”.

To not call Father Frank “Father” would be an affront to Frank. The same be true of all priests. What was I to do? Noncompliance is nonacceptance. Ouch!

An easy escape from this predicament was compromise; just call the guy “Father Frank”. Peer pressure versus Jesus. Demands of religion versus demands of Christ.

It has been said that to compromise is like drinking salt water.... the more you drink, the thirstier you become. There were many born-again catholics at that time (the 1970's), those who discovered Christ during (what man labeled) the catholic charismatic movement. They all, without exception, called the man “Father Frank” in direct contrast to Christ's command. This increased pressure on me to compromise. (But I didn't.)

After escaping catholicism I entered another religion, evangelicalism. Though less stringent, there was nonetheless the familiar pressure to compromise. No, they didn't call their man “Father Frank” but they did call him “Pastor Frank”. I immediately recognized this as a trespass against Jesus' words (Amplified): “Do not let yourselves be called leaders or teachers; for One is your Leader (Teacher), the Christ.” Why should I call Frank “Pastor Frank” when Christ alone is my pastor? (“The Lord is my Shepherd .”)

Most reading this call the man “Pastor Whoever”. Why? Why do you call someone other than Jesus your pastor? Peer pressure. May I humbly challenge you to you put on your big-boy, big-girl pants

and stop calling the guy “Pastor”?

When you “appear before the judgement seat of Christ” (and you WILL appear before the judgement seat of Christ), you will be so happy that you did not “call anyone on earth your Father” or leader or teacher or.... pastor. Amen?

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

Beware of controllers! I say again, beware of controllers! A controller is not satisfied to influence but has a need to manipulate your christianity. Controllers in marriage will not be satisfied until his/her spouse is fully compliant. In the secular world controllers often seek positions of authority whereby they can exploit the lives of others. In the church, controllers drool over the ultra-powerful pulpit.

A good example of a controller is the guy directing traffic in a busy intersection when the traffic lights stop working. This is his moment. He puts on a uniform, blows his whistle, and points. “*You stop! You go! You turn. You wait!”* One man controlling so many. Oh, the power! Oh, the glory!

A politician may run for office because of an honest desire to serve his country. But often his motivation is nothing more noble than a need to control. Many Pastor Whoevers seek the powerful pulpit because of an honest desire to serve his fellow christians. But often their motivation is nothing more noble than a need to control.

Controllers are everywhere.... in the workplace, on the sports field, in official offices and.... in the church. While the percentage of controllers occupying pews may be small, the percentage of controllers occupying pulpits is quite high.

The personality and motive of controllers are opposite that of the Holy Spirit. While the Holy Spirit guides (“He will guide you into all truth”) the controller manipulates. While the Holy Spirit is gentle (“The fruit of the Spirit is.... gentleness”), the controller can be cruel when his 'authority' is threatened. While the Holy Spirit is sincere, the controller is cunning. The Holy Spirit always magnifies Christ; the controller has no such urgency. The Holy Spirit serves (Jesus called Him “the Helper”); the controller pretends to be a servant. The Holy Spirit calls you to preach “Jesus Christ and Him crucified”; the controller wants you silent. The Holy Spirit feed's the sheep; the controller fleeces the sheep.

Again I say, beware of the controller! He may be charming, dynamic, charismatic, whatever, but his heart is to use you to fulfill his religious ambitions.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

Have you ever asked yourself, “Why do you I call the man *Pastor*?” Like really. *Why do you?* Why is the man “*Pastor* Whoever” instead of just “Whoever” (or “Brother Whoever”)? Jesus never told you, or wants you, to bestow him with that (or any) appellation. Your Bible gives no such command. Isn't it rational to ask yourself the obvious question, “Why *do* I call the man *Pastor?”*

Perhaps you think it un-christian to be non-compliant. Perhaps you think it's prudent to avoid confrontation at any cost.... being 'nice' is better than being disruptive.... don't want to break the unity of the brethren. And yet.... and yet.... *you are called to be Christ's ambassador*, Christ's representative. Christ is your Example (isn't He?) and your Example was *always* entangled in controversy. Let's take a stroll through the gospel of John....

Chapter two finds Jesus making “a whip of chords” saying, “Don't make My Father's house a house of merchandise!” In chapter four Jesus is telling a woman, “The one you now have is not your husband.” In chapter five the Jews “sought to kill Him” because He healed on the sabbath and, also, claimed to be God's Son. In chapter six “many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more” because of His many “hard saying”. In chapter seven Jesus confronts His own brothers “who did not believe in Him”. In chapter eight Jesus tells the unbelieving Jews, “You are of your father the devil.” In chapter ten they said of Jesus, “He has a demon and is mad.” In chapter eleven “they plotted to put Him to death.” In thirteen Jesus tells Judas, “What you do, do quickly.” In chapter eighteen Jesus is arrested by “a detachment of troops, and officers”, and soon He was further confronted by the high priest and Pilate.

Confrontation is inevitable to true “sons of God” (“sons of God” being christians with grit). “*All* who desire to live Godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” Spiritual wimps cannot be disciples. Just can't. The condition of Christ's church doesn't anger the apathetic, those intent on being 'nice'. Let it not be said of us (Mat.12:43), “They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”

If you can't take a stand for Christ by simply refusing to call another christian 'Pastor', how can you possibly hope to rid yourself of all other evangelical “tradition of the elders”, each “making the word of God of no effect”? (see Mark 7)

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I have something to say, and I ask you to hear me. (Jesus: “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”)

Previously I made a valid argument against your practice of calling 'the man' “Pastor”. I said that you have only ONE pastor and His name is Jesus. How, I asked, can you have two (or more) pastors, especially when they often travel in different directions? And yet – correct me if I am wrong – you

continue to call a man who is not your pastor “Pastor”. Why? From my perspective, there are but two possible explanations....

One, Pastor Whoever really is your pastor. Yes, you call him “Pastor” because he is. ('Pastor', as you know, means 'shepherd'). But please fully understand: *if he is Jesus isn't.* Both are not your pastor. Understand? Every sheep has one shepherd and “they do not know the voice of strangers”. You have chosen a mere man over “the Man Christ Jesus” to navigate you through your christianity. And you are not alone. Many, perhaps most, have made that same silent and secret pact of the soul, to follow a man instead of “the Man”.

And the second possibility.... you call the man “Pastor” because to not call him “Pastor” would cause tension. Tension comes when you do what the bunch doesn't do. Or you don't do what the bunch does. Many live by whatever it takes to please the bunch.... which long ago became lord. The bunch must be placated. We say Jesus is Lord, but He isn't. (“Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord', and not do the things which I say?”)

I say again and again, there is a better life than the one you are now living. This better life is intimacy with the very “Son of God”. This better life is increased fruitfulness. This better life is an abundance of “treasures in heaven”, eternal rewards. This better life translates into a huge 'catch', a multitude of people escaping hell simply because you chose “the Man Christ Jesus” as your shepherd.

If you can't/won't cease calling 'the man' - the one the congregation considers to be their shepherd - “Pastor” how can/will you ever shift from being a man-pleaser to a Christ-pleaser? But if you do take this stand for Jesus Christ it could be the first step toward freedom from religion. Forsaking this “tradition of men” could lead to forsaking ALL “tradition of men”. Amen?

If you lack boldness to take a stand for Christ ask Jesus to give you the necessary boldness. He will. (“Ask, and you will receive.”) A better life awaits you. Repeat, a better life is yours for the receiving. Like really.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

I challenge you to exercise your imagination. Okay? You are a Jehovah's Witness and have been for years. Many days you stand on a corner, “Awake” magazine in hand, or you go door-to-door seeking converts. I know it's not a pretty picture, but please bear with me for just a little while. Now, imaginary JW, ask yourself....

“Why am I a Jehovah's Witness?” Better yet, ask yourself, “Why am I STILL a Jehovah Witness?” Christians have tried to tell you about salvation through Christ, it sounded real good, a part of you acknowledged the truth of the gospel (truth has power), but yet..... but yet....

A Jehovah's Witness dare not ask him/herself, “WHY am I a Jehovah Witness?” for the same reasons a catholic dare not ask, “Why am I a catholic?”, and the same reasons a mormon dare not ask, “Why am I a mormon?” And....

And the same reasons an evangelical dare not ask, “Why am I an evangelical?”

I am trying to make you aware of the power of religion, all religions. Okay? If you can understand what keeps a Jehovah Witness a Jehovah Witness perhaps you will understand why you are STILL an evangelical. Yes, your religion is far less harmful that that of the JW, but you really do have much in common. Both of you are captive to a religion. What binds him binds you.

You both crave acceptance. Acceptance demands loyalty.... the deeper the loyalty, the deeper the acceptance. To belong has become more important than being right. Disloyalty endangers the acceptance you so diligently cultivated. The ways and means of the group have long ago become lord. 'They' have become your shepherd.

How do you escape spiritual bondage? James 1:5: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God.” Jesus taught us (Matthew chapter 7) that wisdom is building one's christianity on “these sayings of Mine”. Wisdom is forsaking the destructive “tradition of men” and embracing the Bible. Wisdom says, “Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden.” Wisdom is recommitting your life to Jesus Christ, receiving His forgiveness and starting over.

Starting over. Returning to “first love”. Recommitment. No more man-worship. No more compromise. No more Christ plus. Loving the brethren but following Jesus. Building on the rock of His sayings. Recapturing the intimacy you once had.

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

Is Jesus, “that great shepherd of the sheep”, insulted when you call another man “Pastor”? (Keep in mind that 'pastor' means 'shepherd', okay?) For those of you who are parents, I want you to imagine your children calling your neighbours 'Mom' and 'Dad'. When you ask your son and/or daughter “Why do you call Mr. And Mrs. Smith Mom and Dad?”, they reply that they asked them to. Besides, all the neighbourhood kids call them Mom and Dad. Your kids are not being bad, you realize, they just want to fit in and be accepted. They don't know the rejection and anxiety it triggers in you. What's the big deal?

But the problem goes deeper than just surface congeniality towards Mr. and Mrs. Smith. In time your kids are asking the neighbourhood Mom and Dad for advice and direction. Now you feel threatened. Should not your children come to you for advice? Isn't that what children should do?

In time your kids are actually asking the neighbours permission to do this and that and whatever. You sense their loyalty has shifted from you to them. They fully adapted the Smith's ethics and standards. They have left 'first love' to follow after another. Yes, you are still together but not together; you are strangers occupying the same house.

“Hey!” you try to reason with your offspring, “Remember us? The ones who gave you life and changed your smelly diapers? The ones who nourished and protected you all these years? The ones - the ONLY ones! - who would not hesitate to lay down our lives for you?”

But it's too late. The very identity of your children has now become Mr. And Mrs. Smith and all the adoring and submissive neighbourhood kids. They are 'first love' and you are secondary. They will continue to come to you to meet their needs, but their loyalty has been stolen by the unscrupulous Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

You know where I'm going. This analogy needs no explanation. You will get it if you want to get it, and you won't if you don't.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!!

To My Facebook Brothers and Sisters in Christ....

There are many ways to nurture and advance your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ once you decide to do so. Improvement of relationship with Lord Jesus is quite attainable. Improvement with ANYONE is attainable. It just takes work, and lots of it. Amen?

A husband decides he wants to be more firmly attached to his wife. This is quite possible but, again, it will take work. There are a list of things he could do such as: listen to her when she expresses her thoughts and opinions... vacuum the floor.... buy her flowers.... compliment her.... give her a break from the kids.... include her in life's decisions.... brag on her when with friends.... be quick to apologize.... and a ton of etceteras.

A wife, wanting to deepen her relationship with her husband, could also make a lengthy list, such as: respect him as the head of the family under Christ.... teach the kids to honour him.... esteem him when with company.... hang up the phone when he comes home.... quickly forgive.... laugh at his jokes.... and a ton of etcetera.

Much more essential, you can enrich your relationship with “that great shepherd of the sheep” anytime you so decide. Think about that. More of the “King of kings and Lord of lords” is quite attainable. But, once again, it will take work and determination. I list a number of things you can do to firm up the connection between the branch (“you are the branches”) and the vine (“I am the true

vine"). Such as....

Talk to Jesus throughout the day, preferably out loud.... frequently and fervently say something similar to this: "Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ".... when you stumble, be quick to repent.... commit yourself to the governance of the Holy Spirit.... hide His words in your heart.... speak of Jesus to others.... take His great commission seriously.... make sure He is 'first love', that your affections for others is less than your affection for Jesus.... regularly recommit your life to Him.... honour His (and your) "Father in heaven".... obey the Bible as the Spirit imparts understanding.... never make important decisions without consulting Jesus.... and a ton of etceteras.

In the body of Christ, of which you are a member, there are true worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ. You can be one. About five years ago I prayed to become a worshipper. It took years (yes, years!) but there was a time I knew I had accomplished my goal. A worshipper of Jesus is simply one who worships Jesus spontaneously throughout the day. It just pours out effortlessly. Worship is more than words; worship is obedience. Worship is living *for* Christ and *with* Christ. Worship is pursuing the One you have found. Worship is putting Him above all and every.

I once heard an old and wise saint say something like this, "You will have as much of Jesus throughout eternity as you have of Him when you die." Do you think he is right?

Dear Facebook Friends....

Before I confront some very harsh realities about your (beloved?) religion (evangelicalism), I want to share my heart, especially to those who oppose my (sometimes) hard-to-swallow postings. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." It is also true that out of the abundance of the heart the writer writes. My heart is far, very far, from pure. However....

However, after cross-examination of my quite defective heart, I can declare that Jesus is still my "first love". Unlike almost every person who impacts your christianity, I am not religious; I serve Jesus Christ and no man, including myself.

My determination is to be sensitive to Holy Spirit whom Jesus has sent to each one of us. I do what "the Spirit of truth" says to do, say what He wants Me to say and write what He wants me to write. (I certainly do not claim infallibility. No way. But I sure try hard to stay within the perimeters of the Spirit's guidance. Ever before me is the awareness of "the judgement seat of Christ".

So thanks for your tolerance (and prayers?). I now continue....

Evangelicalism is doctrinally unsound in every matter that makes an evangelical an evangelical. I am not suggesting evangelicals do not also have truth – they certainly do – but these truths do not

make him/her an evangelical; "commandments of men" do that.

So now.... please allow me to share some of many such "commandments of men" that have (probably?) weakened your relationship with the Lord Jesus. Okay? Just four of dozens of harmful (devastating, destructive, anti-Bible) evangelical traditions....

One. The division of Christ's church into two parts, the 'clergy' (or 'ministerial') and the 'laity'. (Said another way, pulpit people and pew-people. Said another way, the salaried and the non-salaried. Said another way, the special and not-so-special.)

Two. The awful evangelical tithe. The salaried stretch and twist and wring Scripture to convince the non-salaried to entrust ten percent of their income to them. Is there New Testament precedent for tithing one's income? No. Did Jesus ever instruct any person to tithe their income? No. How about Paul or John or Peter? No. How about the Old Testament.... is there an example of anyone tithing their income? No. Well, who gave Pastor Whoever permission to collect tithes? Evangelicalism, not Jesus, gave Pastor Whoever permission to collect tithes. I call it embezzlement.

I call the evangelical tithe 'awful' because it is harmful to one's relationship with Jesus. Jesus: "Where your treasure is, *there* will your heart be also." Where your money (treasure) goes, so goes your heart (your loyalty, your affection). If evangelicalism has captured your givings, evangelicalism has captured you. Get it, my brothers and sisters?

Three. Almost total disregard for Christ's great commission. (Mark 16:15: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.")

I ask people, "Do you know what the 10/40 Window is?" Almost always the answer is no. The 10/40 Window is a section of territory between the 10th and 40th degree north latitude which includes North Africa, the Middle East and Asia. About 70% of the world's population live there, most whom have never heard the gospel.

Question: How can it be that most evangelicals, each of whom has been entrusted with Christ's Great Commission, have never heard of the 10/40 Window where most people in the world live and have not received the gospel? Blame that on evangelicalism and the evangelical's subservience to pulpit-people.

One report I read says that as little as one percent of all funds directed toward world missions reaches the 10/40 Window. Another report says one and a half percent. That's one percent (or one and a half percent) of leftover change after church expenses. I calculated that if one put $100 into one of evangelical's millions of Sunday's collection plates the 10/40 Window would receive a nickel! Yes, I said a nickel! (But maybe I miscalculate.... maybe it's a dime, maybe even 15 cents.)

Do you agree that Jesus is always financing His Great Commission through His people? If so, where does that money go? How has *your* money been spent? Remember, you must one day give an account to Lord Jesus how you spent the money He entrusted to you. (1 Cor. 4:2: "It is required in

stewards that one be found faithful.")

Now I am going to make a statement that may shock you, so I suggest you brace yourself. Okay? Are you ready? Here it goes....

In my opinion the terrible squandering of money within evangelicalism is responsible for the damnation of millions of people. Millions are suffering (at this VERY moment!!) an indescribable anguish because evangelicals have been coerced to entrust a portion of their income to evangelicals instead of to the Holy Spirit. Is this an exaggeration? I think not. Most likely it's an understatement – perhaps I should have said billions of people instead of millions.

Four. Monetization of God's truths and blessings. The words of Jesus, "Freely you have received, freely give", are rarely, almost never, quoted. The Amplified says it this way, "Freely (without pay) you have received, freely (without charge) give." All translations from BibleGateway give similar translations. Freely means freely. But your religion (evangelicalism) sanctions the selling of everything – music, testimonies, literature, concerts, conventions and christian service.

When trying to determine what's right and what isn't I sometimes ask myself, "What would Paul do?" (Paul: "Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ.") That's a great question. Can you imagine this apostle selling his writings? Passing a collection plate after healing the sick? Sending out appeals for financial support? Demanding a salary? Soliciting funds to build a building? If Paul wouldn't, neither will I.

Paul lived by contributions (and his own labour). I can't think of one example in the entire Bible of someone selling Bible-truths or christian service. Can you? So that's it - one, two, three, four. I could go on.... five, six, fifteen, twenty. You must fully understand that evangelicalism only makes sense to the one who realizes that evangelicalism and the Bible *have nothing in common.*

Dear Facebook Friends....

Jesus said to the Father, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." Tell me, what "word" was Jesus referring to? What “word” sanctified then and sanctifies today? Has the Father's (your Father's) words changed?

Jesus said, "Whoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man." Christ's words were the Father's words. The wise build their christianity on those words. The foolish build their christianity on substitute words, "tradition of men".

In your religion, there are many words that cannot be found in Scripture. Search the Bible for such words as 'denominations' or 'membership' or 'reverend' or 'board of elders' or 'evangelicalism' or

'church family' or 'home church' or 'senior pastor' or 'salary' or 'church service' (and many etceteras) and you will not find them.

Who gave the Adders and Subtracters permission to add to or take away from God's word? How can added and stretched and twisted words sanctify (purify, consecrate) God's people? Is it the “wise man” who builds on these words or the foolish man?

Just asking.

Dear Facebook Friends....

Jesus said to the Father, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." Tell me, what "word" was Jesus referring to? What “word” sanctified then and sanctifies today? It's important to know what words are the Father''s words and what words are creations of religion. Amen?

Jesus said, "Whoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man." Christ's words were the Father's words. Our Teacher taught us the wise build their christianity on His words. The foolish build their christianity on substitute words.

In your religion, there are many words that cannot be found in Scripture. Search the Bible for such words as 'denominations' or 'membership' or 'reverend' or 'board of elders' or 'evangelicalism' or 'church family' or 'home church' or 'senior pastor' or 'salary' or 'church service' (and many etceteras) and you will not find them.

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Just asking.

Dear Facebook Friends....

Jesus said to the church of Ephesus: "I have this against you, that you have left first love." Jesus was their first (primary) love, and then He wasn't. Jesus sat on the throne of their lives and then He was deposed. The Ephesians started off as followers of Christ and soon became followers of each other.

Now.... examine YOUR heart; could Jesus say those same words to you and yours: "I have this against you, that you have left first love"?

Now brace yourself because I am going to make another hard-to-swallow statement. After fifty years of observation (I was born again in 1972) I have come to this conclusion: As much as *ninety-five percent* of North American born-again christians – not including young converts less than one or two years old in the Lord (who have yet to surrender to a religion of one sort or another) – have abandoned Jesus as "first love"!

Yes, evangelicals (etcetera) certainly love Jesus, but they have come to love something or someone more. And this certainly includes pulpit-people and public renowns; their speech gives them away.

The most important question you can ask yourself is, "Is Jesus MY first love?" If you cannot say an emphatic yes, then I suggest you do exactly what Jesus told the Ephesians to do: "REPENT". And.... by an act of the free will God has given, RECOMMIT your life to Jesus Christ with no less fervour and with much deeper understanding then when you first embraced Him. And.... then REFORM your life. Commit yourself to the Bible. No more shadowing religionists. From now on you build your christianity on the Father's sanctifying words, His Bible. (Jesus: "Sanctify them by Your truth.")

Dear Facebook Friends....

You are a New Covenant christian, a covenant ratified by "the blood of the Lamb". (John: "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!") How does a New Covenant person live? A New Covenant person lives by the teachings/standard/guidance revealed in the New Testament through Jesus, Paul and others. Amen?

Please hear me. Before you is a better life. You may not achieve that better life but it is there for the overcoming christian. Again, a better life than the one you are now living is available for you. And before the overcomer is a gratifying celebration at the judgement seat of Christ. (2 Cor. 5:10: "We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.") It is so-o-o-o important that you get this.

You can have a new start, a fresh beginning! You will become a soul-winner. Not a few people, but many. (Jesus: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.") You will influence your friends to follow Christ instead of religionists. (As religionists beget religionists, so disciples beget disciples.) Your entire eternity will be much, much richer. (Jesus: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.") Above all, you will become much better acquainted with the very Son of God!.... the very center of heaven!.... the "Lord of lords and King of kings"!

And now, one more thing. I heartily invite you to regularly feed on my library of books and articles, and listen to my videos. Why? Because if you make a sincere decision to return to "first love", if you

place yourself under the direct lordship of Jesus Christ, if you are determined to fully shed the religious paraphernalia that binds evangelicals to evangelicalism, you just might encounter strong disapproval of evangelicalism's many officers. My material will strengthen and encourage you, and help you stay focussed on Jesus. (Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.")

Question: What are my qualifications to speak into your life? Answer: I imitate Paul, no not fully but progressively more and more. (Paul to the corinthians – and thus to you and me: "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.") Unlike perhaps every preacher/teacher in your christianity, I am not attached to a religion. Like Paul, I daily pursue Christ. ("That I may know Him.") Like Paul, I don't want your money. ("I kept myself from being burdensome to you.") Like Paul, I do not monetize my material. Like Paul, I do not seek a following. ("Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?") Like Paul, I preach and exalt Jesus Christ. ("I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.") Like Paul, I believe in "one another" ministry. ("Teaching and admonishing one another.")