

Back to God

You've noticed that God gets badly criticized for things that he did. Especially in Old Testament times. Atheist love to talk about God as vindictive and cruel, and many Christians can't understand why God did much of what He did, back in the day.

Look at **Isaiah 30:1** – **“Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin.”**

Take a closer look at this. The people were rebellious, therefore forfeiting the protection of God. Yes, they gave up the protection that he longed to give them. They took counsel but not of God. They were covered but not by God's spirit for the purpose of adding sin to sin. They were rebellious and it was rebellion on steroids. Later in the chapter, God speaks about His children *coming back to obedience*. He was dealing with a thoroughly rebellious people. And don't miss this, that everything that He did was to **turn them back to Him**. When you look all around you, you must ask are people turning more toward God or drifting further and further away from Him? You know the answer and you can see it by all the anger, then murder and the careless way others are treated. Yes, people are turning away from God, therefore you see what you see in this world today.

We don't need to fault God, especially God's so-called people, when the heat is turned up. Maybe all that God is trying to do through adversity and pain in a person's life, is to turn them back to Him. And that is a great thing if only the people would take heed. Today, through your pain look for God and not for fault in Him and you will see His Mighty hand in your situation.

Faking It

How many of us know of a story or of someone who is living a lie or faking it to others. They try to make others believe that they are something that they are not. And for a short while, they actually get away with it.

In the Judgment there will be a lot of people found to have been faking it as Christians. You can fool the people around you, maybe even your family, but there is no way you can fool God.

In **Matthew 7:23** Jesus talks about a group of people who will salute Him with self-congratulatory stories of their own goodness. Yet Jesus will say to them, **“Then will I profess unto them I never knew you. Depart from me you that work iniquity.”**

God knows. God sees the heart. Faking it isn't going to get you anywhere. Be real in your walk with God, because He knows the truth about you anyway and you will never fool God and you don't have to try. Allow His power to help you with all that you need and then your service will be real because it comes from God.

Keeping Your Cool

No doubt you have had someone get on your nerves. When someone is intentionally trying to wind you up, that can be difficult. But what if there were someone following you everywhere you went provoking you. This is exactly what Jesus put up with on a regular basis.

Luke 11:53 - And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.

They intentionally set out to get Jesus off-focus and therefore hoping He would fail to do the will of His Father. Jesus didn't fall for it. And remember, Jesus is our example, and we don't have to fall for it either. Yes, Jesus wants you to *keep your cool*, and evidently that is possible to do. We don't have to say, "I couldn't help it." God's plan is that we display His character in our lives. Pray today for Him to do that work in you. And He will absolutely do it in you starting right now.

Deadly Poison

When radiation leaks into the environment it is very serious. Many can die and pregnant women face an even more horrible challenge of death for their unborn child.

As horrible as that may seem, there is an even deadlier poison in the air called *sin*. We should want to avoid that more than we avoid radiation.

1 Corinthians 15:34 says, "Awake to righteousness and sin not."

What are you doing to avoid sin? The wages of sin is death. With Jesus living in your heart and active in your life, you don't have to be contaminated in this world by this deadly poison. The word of God is here to guide you into all truth. When you trust in God's word, it will save you from sin's deadly grip, while preparing you for eternal life in heaven.

God is not trying to keep something good from you. He is protecting you and preserving you for His use to bring glory to His name. The devil wants to destroy you and all that involves you. You can see the horrible outcome of sin carried out in the lives of those who listen to Him and follow His deadly plan. But today you can stand for Jesus and stay true to Him through the power of His word. It will save your life here and in the life to come in heaven.

Where is Your Focus?

Is your spiritual walk where you want it to be? Is your focus in life on the right things? Where you put your focus will tell you pretty much where your life is going. What you put your focus on, the things that have your attention, have a real impact on you and your growing character. That is why **Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."**

When you look to Jesus and focus on Him, you will be like Him. If you have problems issues and hang-ups, you should look to Jesus. When you need direction, peace, and comfort you should look to Jesus. When others fail you, you should look to Jesus.

Look at Him, study Him, focus on His life and His love for you. And when you do, God's Spirit will make you more like Him and give you more of His power and peace. If you are down today or just need direction for a closer walk with Jesus, just look and focus on Jesus right now, and you will find strength to get back up again.

Peace

There is very little peace in this world today. But the bible promises that you can have peace. **In Galatians 5:21-23 it says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance.”** There is strife on the streets, war, conflict and perhaps worst of all, lack of personal peace inside our hearts.

But evidently, peace is a pretty simple matter. Because it is a part of the *fruit of the spirit*. If you have Christ, if you have the Holy Spirit bringing Jesus personal presence to you, then you will have peace in the midst of troubles and trials. If you are not experiencing His peace, make sure you check to see if your relationship with Him is airtight. You can have peace because peace isn't dependent on outward circumstances. It is depended on Christ and your relationship with Him.

Make sure you and Jesus stay very close. And if you are close, then you will have peace, because you have Christ. It's that simple.

Room to Grow

A group of Pharisees found fault with the followers of Jesus one day and it reminds me today that people can act in that same way.

Mark 7:3-4 - For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

The Pharisees were bent out of shape that the disciples didn't follow the same rituals. People can and do become angry when others don't see everything the same way as they do. Everyone does not grow at the same rate for one reason or another. But as disciples of Christ, we are to have the fruit of the spirit operating out of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. When they rule in your heart it will give people room for the little things that they just don't get.

When we move ahead of the Holy Spirit, it can frustrate us in our evangelism for Christ. And life becomes a chore when we expect everyone to see everything the same way as we do. Today, if you are praying for someone or teaching someone, or just showing the love of Christ to someone, operate out of the *fruit of the spirit* and you will see the results Jesus is longing for in you and in them.

You Matter to God

Seasons come and go. And there are many things that happen in this world to us that are soon forgotten and deemed as not important. But there is one who will always look at you as important. You are important to God.

Matthew 10:29-31 says, “Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. “Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.”

If you are feeling down today, remember that you are not forgotten. You matter to God even down to every little strand of hair on your head. And soon one day Jesus is coming back for you, and this is love that you can trust.

Hatred for Love

What do you do when someone wrongs you? What is your default response and reaction to opposition? We know how Jesus reacted in **Psalms 109:4-5 - In return for my love they are my accusers, But I give myself to prayer. Thus they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love.**

Through all His suffering Jesus was still able to pray for his tormentors and pray that God would forgive them.

When someone crosses you, when someone is unkind, rude, inconsiderate or spiteful and these things do happen, how do you respond? You could get bent out of shape or respond with anger or you could react with love.

God is looking for people that will allow His character to be seen even under pressure. It is often then that a Christ-like response is most powerful. It is the Holy Spirit that works through a child of God to be kind and gentle at all times. Someone is going to reward evil for your good sooner or later in your life. And in that moment God will be looking to you to reveal Him to others, through your response. You are that person God is looking for, today.

Don't Be Presumptuous

There are times in our spiritual walk when we can feel that there is no wrong we can do. And it is moments like these when we feel that we are on top of the *spiritual* world, so to speak.

But **1 Corinthians 10:12** says, **“Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed unless he falls.”**

When you think you are spiritually bullet-proof, life has a way of showing you that you are not. Every person alive need to “guard” against spiritual presumption. There is an enemy firing at you and the only place you are really safe is in the arms and heart of Jesus. Make sure you are relying on Him and Him alone! Then you will be alright and your stand and walk with God will be secure in Jesus.

Don't Hide Your Light

During the Dark Ages there were times when the word of God was being suppressed and the gospel of God was being hidden. The people were fed up with the religious class as many lost their lives because of the cross of Christ. It wasn't a good time for the true children of God, as they stood for their faith.

Today, we see the same darkness at work around us, as people love darkness more than they love light. It is light that changes a life. And a life without that light will cause confusion and darkness as they love the darkness. **Matthew 5:14-16** says, **“You are the light of the world. A city that is set**

on a hill cannot be hidden. “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

The world needs the light of Jesus, and you can be that light to someone today. Don't let history repeat itself in the life of those around you who walk in darkness. You can make a difference as you use the light within you to help someone come out of the darkness. Let your light so shine so that others may see Jesus and glorify His name.