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President and Publisher: Dr. T. D. Worthington
Editor: Tiffany W. Johnson
Advertising Director: Jeremy Worthington
Contributors: Tiffany Johnson,
Connie Peters, and Sherry Worthington
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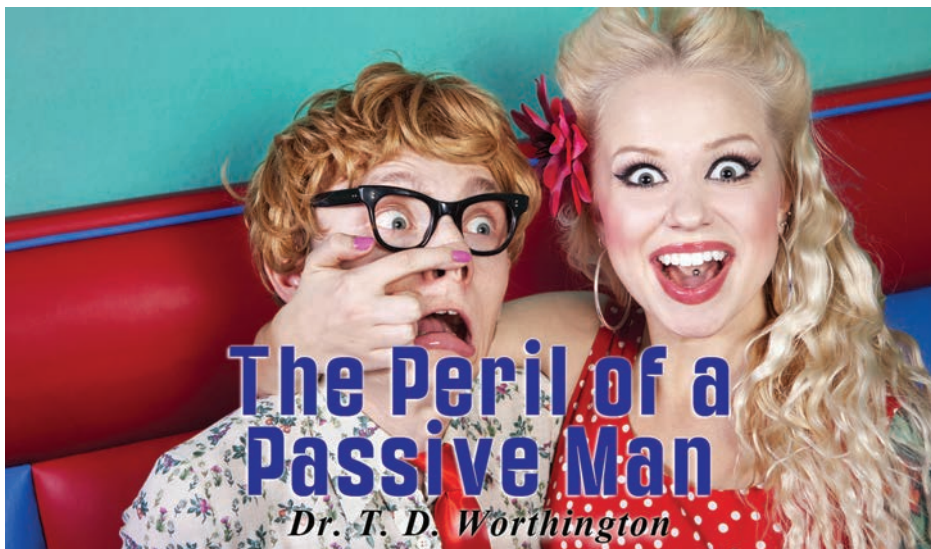
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I had never thought of myself as passive. Throughout my life, at least since I got out of school, I have always been the driven dreamer and achiever. I thought of myself as the organized one, the proactive one, the disciplined one, the visionary. I was the one who initiated the next steps, important meetings, needed changes, group plans, and challenging conversations.

And then I got married, and marriage revealed sides of myself I had never seen before. A real man does not change much by making vows and putting on a ring, but an awful lot changes for a man that day. The apostle Paul tried to prepare us: *“He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.”* (I Corinthians 7:32–33). The married me was not as put-together and proactive as the single me had been. And as the pressures rose and the cracks began to show, I suddenly saw how tempted I could be to self-pity and passivity. Even though we had a good marriage, I learned to choose battles—and keep the peace.

Over the first year or two of marriage, the role of learning to be a bit passive went from a foreign and perplexing problem to a profoundly familiar and humbling one. In some ways, vision and initiative were easier when fenced into certain parts of my life. Now, as two became one, all of life required the consideration of a partner. To a stand-on-your-own guy like myself, that wasn't always easy. Will I give myself up for her good again today (Ephesians 5:25)? Will I keep pursuing, studying, and wooing her? Will I develop and carry out a vision for our family? Will I consistently open the Bible and pray for them? Will I lead our family in loving and serving the church? Will I lean into conflict with patience and love, or will I withdraw? Will I anticipate our family's needs? Will I discipline our children, even when I'm tired? Will I bring up difficult conversations and make tough decisions? Or, like Adam, when God comes calling, will I hide and point the finger at my wife? God expects a lot from husbands. As my senses have been heightened to my own tendencies to passivity, stories of husbands in Scripture, good and bad, have come alive with greater relevance.

God often trains men to be faithful husbands and fathers by giving us great examples to follow; the faith of Abraham, the conviction of Moses, the leadership of Joshua, the wisdom of Solomon, and the heart of David. Sometimes, however, God trains us for faithfulness by showing us how wicked men can be. He trains us to love by showing us men who failed to love, to lead by showing us men who failed to lead, to fight by showing us men who refused to fight, to die for others by showing us men who saved themselves.

And as husbands and fathers go, few were as corrupt and shameful as King Ahab. When we first meet the man, Scripture tells us, *“Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him.”* (I Kings 16:29–30). The kings before him were a group of evil, murdering, and idolatrous fools. Ahab, we learn, was worst of all.

It is also apparent that his marriage was at the center of his rebellion. *“and it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.”* (I Kings 16:31). He first mocked God by marrying an idolator, and then, as God warned would happen, he caved and bowed in submission to her and her God. The extent of Ahab's wickedness is worthy of much study, but here, I want to focus on a scene that exposes the allure and peril of his passivity.

When **I Kings 21** opens, Ahab covets the vineyard of his neighbor, Naboth, and asks to buy it from him, disregarding God's law that prevented the permanent sale of land (**Leviticus 25:23**). Naboth doesn't merely refuse because he wants to keep his land; he refuses because to do otherwise would be to disregard God. Now watch how Ahab responds, crumbling into self-pity and passivity:

Ahab went into his house vexed and mad because of what Naboth had said to him, for he had said, "I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread." (I Kings 21:4)

The most powerful man in the land curled up in a ball, like a spoiled child. He refused to eat. He pouted because he didn't get his way. As pitiful as the cry-baby king seems, many husbands will know something of the temptation he indulged. Self-pity is strangely seductive and can be equally paralyzing. It can keep a man from confessing his sin, initiating reconciliation, making a difficult decision, or taking the hard next step. As Ahab nurses his hurt feelings, what happens next compounds his shame. See how self-pity imprisons and disables him.

Knowing his wife and what she was capable of, Ahab should have stepped up to stop her, for the good of Naboth and those who loved him, for the good of the kingdom, for the good of his own soul, and for the good of his wife. A passive husband will inevitably enable

and encourage the sins of his wife. When Jezebel sees how miserable and pathetic King Ahab is, she takes matters into her own hands. She says to him, *"Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (I Kings 21:7)*. Ahab's sorry silence suggests he was all too glad to accept her offer.

So, Jezebel instructed the leaders in Naboth's city to kill him. She wrote letters in Ahab's name, saying, *"And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die" (I Kings 21:10)*.

The greed, the deceit, the robbery, the conspiracy, the murdering of a blameless man. These were the weeds of wickedness in full bloom. Jezebel was so depraved that Jesus uses her as a metaphor for unrestrained wickedness (**Revelation 2:20**). For now, however, notice how her husband's passivity kindled her peculiar sins. While he wallowed in self-pity, he encouraged her iniquity. Had he had the conviction and nerve to act as God called him to, he likely could have prevented all that unfolded here. He could have saved a good man's life.

But he stayed in bed instead. Ahab proves that sometimes a man who does nothing is as harmful as the man who does the wrong thing. A good husband cannot keep his wife from sinning, but he also will not lie on the couch while she does. A bad husband, especially a passive husband, will encourage her to sin

even more if it makes her happy and serves his own selfish purpose. In the challenging moments of our marriages, some men will lie down like Ahab, others will rise up like the prophet we meet shortly. Jezebel tells Ahab that Naboth is dead and that his vineyard is now available. *"When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab rose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it" (I Kings 21:16)*. Again, the passivity. Not, what have you done? Not, how did he die? No, *"as soon as he heard that Naboth was dead,"* he suddenly found the strength to leave his bed and enjoy another man's field.

"And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite" (I Kings 21:17). As much as I despise how selfish, passive, and evil Ahab was, I admire all the more the man who stepped up to confront him. While Naboth's innocent blood ran in the street, the prophet Elijah came knocking at Ahab's door. Notice he comes to Ahab, not Jezebel, with a word from the Lord: *"thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD" (I Kings 21:20)*.





They had just killed a man for refusing to sell them a vineyard. Imagine what evil they might do to a man who confronted them with their sin. While other men watched and stayed silent, one refused the pull of passivity and embraced the costs of obedience. He would rather die than sit and watch God's law be vandalized. Don't miss what God says next through Elijah. Ahab's passivity would come back not just on his own head, but on the heads of all he loved — his sons, their sons, his wife: ***“Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, ...for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel” (I Kings 21:21–23).***

Ahab's judgment is a vivid, bloody picture of how unchecked sin ruins a home. When a husband grows passive, the whole family suffers; perhaps not in judgment like Jezebel, but they will suffer nonetheless. The story circles back to where it began with Ahab: ***“But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up” (I Kings 21:25).*** This story gives us a

masterclass in marital failure. The next verse, however, is one of the more surprising verses in Scripture: ***“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.” (I Kings 21:27)***

One might think this is the man we found lying in bed, feeling sorry for himself, refusing to eat. However, in God's eyes this is not the same man. Instead of lashing out in fury at the prophet, instead of retreating into more self-pity and passivity, Ahab humbles himself in repentance. He does the hard thing. He sees his sin, hates his sin, and seeks the Lord's mercy.

“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house” (I Kings 21:27–29). Consequences remained, but something of his sin had died. The selfish, prideful, passive husband became humble, at least for a time, giving hope to all selfish, prideful, passive husbands.

It's easy to hate the passivity of Ahab. He was a king who stubbornly disregards God's calls to lead and who selfishly sets God's will below his own desires. It's harder, however, to hate the passivity in ourselves. Will we, as husbands in Christ, practice leadership even when it's inconvenient to lead?

Will we receive the mercy of God, humble ourselves before Him, lay down our pride and self-pity, and resist the enticing pull of passivity? The last thing wimpy men want to face is the fact that they are wimpy. But, many men have shed their manliness and turned themselves into a wimp, a softie. Men often convince themselves that women want a passive man who helps, gives, and accommodates. They believe life will be better for everyone if they always let the woman have her way. That may be true for some. But I think real ladies respect a man who takes charge, and will never give up until all the dragons are slain. His wife feels loved, cherished, and protected by his side.

While men have gotten softer, women have gotten tougher, and it seems that neither understands the toll this has taken on their relationship. Regarding manhood, at one end of the spectrum, there is a wimp, and on the other end is the dominating creep. Tragically, too many choose to be the wimp, thinking it is the right thing to do. However, the Bible demands that a man be strong and action-oriented. He should be a take-charge and passionate leader. However, he must also be loving, gentle, considerate, and kind. The other option is to suffer the peril of a passive man.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry nearly fifty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.

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It sometimes seems like I keep trying, but I keep failing. I keep trying to get two friends to get along, but it always seems to fall apart. I keep trying to stop that leak, but it always comes back. I keep trying to grow potted plants, but they always die. Maybe it's time to give up!

We've all had things that we wanted to see happen, but they didn't work out. We tried to start a business, lose weight, have a baby, or get a better job. We did our best, but we weren't able to do it. I understand that some things might not be God's will for you, so they may not happen. I also understand that when dealing with other people's free will, you can't always make things

work out for them. However, let me remind you that just because it hasn't happened yet, doesn't mean it won't happen. The people who reach their destiny are the people who try again.

The enemy would love you to live disappointed, dwelling on what wasn't fair, dwelling on who hurt you, dwelling on how you did your best but still failed. Yet, for every setback, God has already planned a comeback. Failure is not final unless you give up.

Proverbs 24:16 says, *"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again."* I would think it might say that a just man never falls, but just men do fall; they do fail. Apparently, they fail often. But whether they fail 7 times or 70 times, they get back up with each failure!

Will you miss something God put in your heart because you gave up too soon? God sees the disappointment. Just remember, victory will not come with just your power, intellect, and

connections. God will open doors and make things work out for His glory. Then, when victory comes, you will praise Him and proudly say, *"God did this."*

Don't go through life down on yourself. Maybe it is time to try again. Perhaps that very act of faith will enable God to do what He alone can do. Don't give up, even if you feel you are facing your darkest hour. By faith, start seeing the potential victory God has in store for you. Believe what He says and keep Him first in your life. Walk closely by His side. I can assure you, He is not walking on a pathway that leads to defeat!



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Summer Giving

The seasons are changing as summertime is just about here for 2025. With the kids out of school, family vacations taking place, and projects around the home becoming a priority with the coming of warmer weather, giving tends to decline. Summer is historically a challenging time for most ministries. We try to be good stewards and pace ourselves throughout the year to be able to balance the books, but it can be a struggle at times.

We would like to thank each of you so much for your continued giving. We depend on every single gift that comes in throughout the year. Our **Faith Partners** and **Business Underwriters** are a vital part of helping to keep *GoMix Christian Radio* on the air. So, as you plan out your summer budget, please consider helping us with ours by sending in

a gift today or at anytime throughout the summer. As always, we greatly appreciate your prayers as we continue doing the work the Lord has called us to do.

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Dr. Sherry Worthington

I never knew how much this special lady would impact my life. When I met her, she didn't have much to say, but she became an integral part of my life. Our relationship began slowly, but it became an endearing one.

My friend serves in many areas for our Lord. Connie Peters is retiring from Pathway Christian Academy after thirty-three years of loyal service. The journey has not always been easy, but she has been faithful through thick and thin. Connie's main ministry is to her husband and two children, and she also serves as our church pianist and treasurer. Besides all of that, she is my dear friend. The type of friend the Bible

speaks about in **Proverbs 18:24**. *"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."*

We had no idea how we were going to open a school when we were led to begin *Pathway Christian Academy*. A few families got together to found the school, but we needed teachers. Connie agreed to teach our elementary classroom. In our first few years, the teachers worked for their children's tuition. Connie volunteered her time to help start a dream to help children. As the school grew, her hats changed, but she was always there. Most of her years of service to Pathway

Christian Academy were spent in grades 5-12. We worked as a team, leading our classroom. Connie taught many classes, such as Constitution, Creative Writing, and even Science Lab. Still, her favorite thing to do was to help with math. The students joke that Mrs. Peters knows everything. They are not far from the truth.

The academy was flooded by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence. Matthew was devastating. The building had 32 inches of water in it, and the damage was great. Our staff was there helping to clean the building and go through everything to see what we could salvage. Connie was there right beside us.

When COVID hit, we had to find a way to have school. Connie was there! In the good and the bad, Connie has always been there for support and never minded getting her hands dirty.

Connie has also been very supportive and a loyal member of ***Pathway Baptist Church***. She was there when it began, too. She played the keyboard in one of the family's homes. Connie has played the piano for our church for over thirty-three years now. She is also a loyal supporter of ***GoMix*** and, as you know, a contributor to ***Pathpointe*** magazine.

The most special thing for me personally is our friendship. We have become very close friends. Each year, we seem to get a little closer. She is the type of friend who knows what I am thinking. She knows how to anticipate what I need and almost what I am thinking. It is honestly a little scary. Connie accepts my faults. I can't tell you how many times I have apologized for something; her response is always the same. *"I don't know what you are talking about."* Basically, she had already forgotten and forgiven. True friends know each other's hearts, so they will not be offended easily and will always support each other. We have that type of friendship. Of course, I am sure she gets frustrated with me, but I never know it. I am so thankful for my dear friend.

The thing I am most thankful for about Connie is her Christian testimony. Her walk with God has been consistent throughout the years I have known her. She has been a beautiful role model for



my children and grandchildren. Connie has never wavered in her relationship with our Lord. I can count on her to pray for me and the rest of my family. I know she holds my husband, her pastor, up in prayer daily. She has prayed for the simple and the serious. I always know I can share anything with her, and it will go no further. She loves our Lord, and it showed at church and at school.

Connie will be missed at the academy. The students had a special party for her. They made a book of endearment for her, sang a song, and made her feel special. You see, some of our students have had Mrs. Peters as their teacher for six or more years. She touched their lives. I feel certain she will

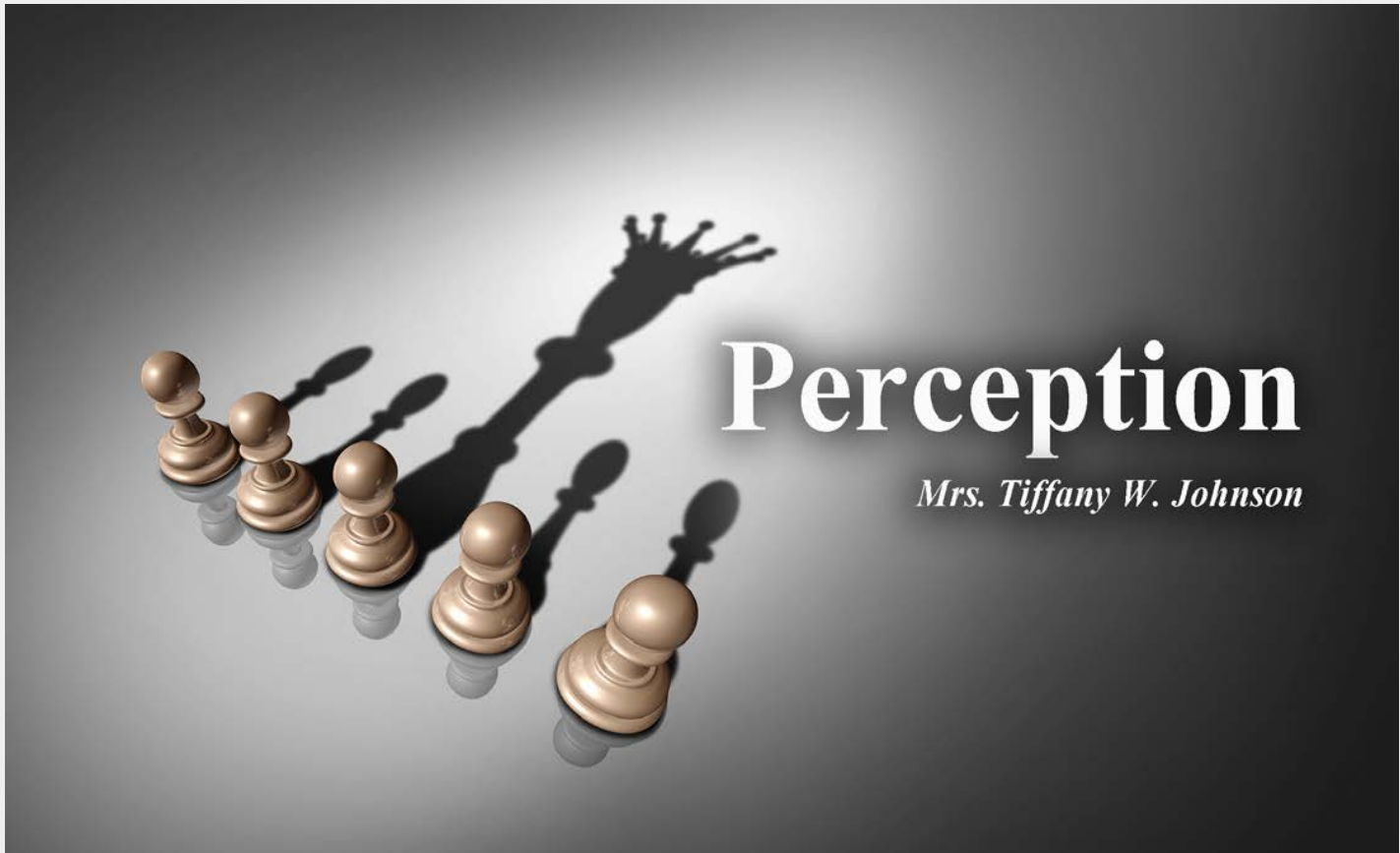
be stopping by and filling in when needed. It has been an emotional week. I cannot imagine teaching without her by my side, but I will continue as we pass the baton.

I am happy for Connie as she enters a new stage of life—I do know this! She will continue to serve the Lord in whatever she does, and I am excited to see what each new day will bring for her.

I love you, Connie!



Dr. Worthington has five children and twelve grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



Perception

Mrs. Tiffany W. Johnson

I have always loved home improvement shows. I grew up watching *This Old House* with my dad, and I still enjoy watching it to this day. As a small business owner, I try to learn ways to help my business by watching shows where the host helps redesign failing businesses, giving the business owners the education and tools they need to operate a thriving enterprise.

In one episode I watched a while back, the host was helping redesign a restaurant. In doing so, he brought in a simple dining chair. He compared it to the chairs the owner already had in his establishment. He asked the owner what he thought about the new style of chair. The owner grinned and said something to the effect of, *“That looks like an expensive chair! It’s thick and heavy but really looks classy.”* The host asked the owner to sit in both chairs at one of the dining tables and express his thoughts. Again, the restaurant owner said, *“This new chair is so much sturdier. Sitting in it makes me feel like I’m in a nicer place, and I’ll get a good meal!”*

After that, the show host said something that really stuck with me. He said, *“That’s just it. It’s all about perception.”* You see, the new chair only cost about \$8.00 more than the “cheaper-looking” chair, but its solid appearance gave a different view (or perception)

to the test subject. He pointed out that some visitors would subconsciously pre-judge the meal and service they would receive based on the “perception” they formed by looking at the dining room and even sitting in a chair.

We live in a time where, unfortunately, many Christians don’t seem to worry about the perception others have of them. We dress like the world, act like the world, go to the same places as the world, watch the same television shows as the world, and even talk like the world. I was thinking even more about it this past resurrection season.

At the end of **Matthew 26**, we have the story of Peter’s denial of Christ just before the crucifixion. If you remember the story, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times. The first two times, Peter was confronted by two different girls. Just before the third time, someone else accused him of being a disciple, **“Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.”** **Matthew 26:73.**

His speech betrayed him. The way he spoke gave away his position, meaning that he must have spoken like a follower of Christ, even through the denials.

As the story continues, what happens next is interesting. Peter then begins to talk like those around him. ***“Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man...”*** **Matthew 26:74.** Did you catch it? Even through the first two denials, he must have had a different look and way of talking that gave others around him the “perception” that he followed Christ. He was different. He was set apart. Then, once the small crowd pointed it out, Peter began to “curse and to swear” to give the “perception” that he really didn’t know Christ, as he denied Him for the third time. It wasn’t just the denial that separated him from other followers of Jesus; it was his speech. He began to speak, cussing and swearing, just like the world.

God’s Word has so many verses about how believers should control their tongues and guard what speech comes from their mouths. I am not here to debate whether some words are a sin to use or worse than others, but I am here to point out that others are always watching us and listening to us. According to God’s Word, our speech can be a good portrayal of the things in our hearts.

“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.”

Luke 6:45

What perception do others have of you? Do you portray the image of Christ? Do your lost friends see something different in you? Does your speech bewrayeth thee? Friends, we are here to be a light and to point others to the true Light. Guard the things that enter your heart. Be careful what you watch, what you listen to, and what you are influenced by. If you are a true follower of Christ, let your speech confirm it.



Mrs. Tiffany W. Johnson serves as Editor of PathPointe Magazine. She and her family reside in Snow Hill, N.C. where they own and operate The Bark Park Resort.

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Living the Christian Life

Living the Christian life in this world can be difficult. We face temptations all around us. Interacting with other sinners; searching for acceptable entertainment; battling our own wants; and avoiding any form of pride, worry, or fear are all begging for us to succumb to their illusions. It is no surprise that for most of us, Satan rarely has to mount an attack. When we fall, we do so of our own accord.

Perhaps we can find examples of people in the Bible that lived pure Christian lives. But when we look at most saints of old, we see triumph and failure. David and his adultery and murder, Abraham and his unbelief, Moses and his murder and temper, Peter and his fear and lack of self-control are just some of the examples of failures of the saints of old. There are very few people in the Bible who do not have recorded failures, and my guess is that their failures are just not recorded.

God is as interested in the process of growth as He is in the finished product. He uses our experiences to help us to grow and become more like His Son (**Romans 8:28-29**). Charles Stanley said, *“Becoming more like Christ is a lifelong endeavor that involves advancement as well as setbacks.”* Like the beautiful butterfly that struggles to escape from its chrysalis, we must go through struggles to emerge like the Son of God. God sees the end result of what we will become while we are struggling to grow. Living the Christian life is a series of failures, repentance, forgiveness, and victories along the way until we are finally free from sin when we dwell in His presence.

If you are discouraged by your failures and you feel that your life will not count for the Kingdom, remember the failures of saints that God has used in history. Remember that God is seeing you through righteousness of Christ, that Jesus is interceding for you, and that the Holy Spirit is leading you in the right direction. Knowing that God forgives our current failures as we repent and that He sees our final outcome gives us the freedom to walk the Christian life in His love. Ponder that!



Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. She serves as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.

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