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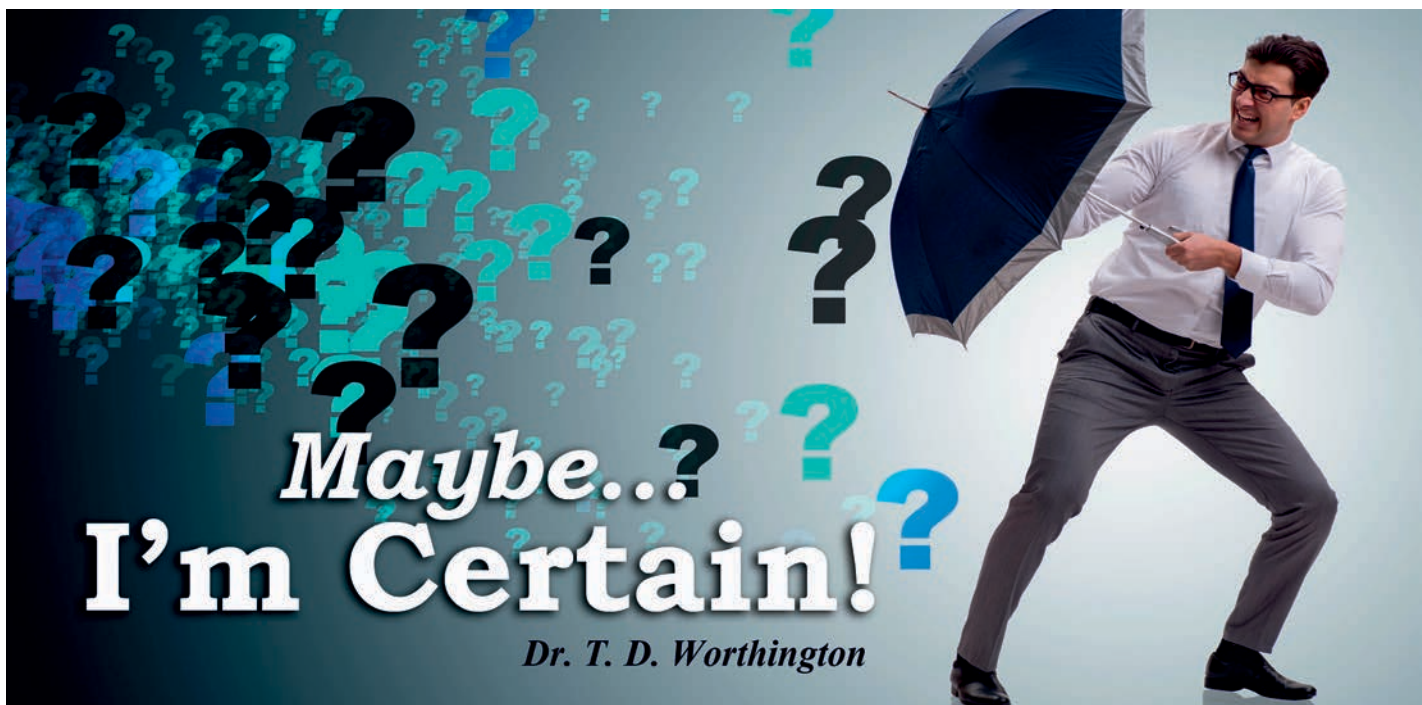
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I have come to understand that one of the hardest things for me to lay upon the altar is my human certainty. Human certainty comprises what I can see with my eyes, understand with my mind, and feel with my emotions. When you think about it, that entails a big part of life. I have always been the kind of guy who likes to analyze my decisions and calculate the most likely results of my actions. This gives me a sense of certainty. After all, most of us desire a degree of certainty and predictability in our lives.

Isn't this the reason people don't save for retirement, always eat healthy foods, or spend hours exercising? Saving for the future is hard when there is something I want right now. I don't even know if I will live to retire, but I am certain I want that giant screen television right now. I may die tomorrow, so I am certain I would not want my last meal on earth to be lettuce. Most of my friends who used to jog the most faithfully, are now dead, so I am reasonably certain I would rather recline under the air

conditioner than sprint around the block.

Please do not misunderstand. Saving, healthy diets, and exercise, in most cases, are good for you. However, in your own personal life, you cannot be 100% certain they will make any difference at all. So, it is quite natural that our willpower flees when the outcome is uncertain. That's why scary movies always take you to a dark room or down a deserted, foggy street. The uncertainty of what is in that room or down that street sets the mood for fear and anxiety.

Most of us strive for human certainty, clarity, routine, and guaranteed results. We will even let great opportunities pass us by because they cannot promise us an absolute outcome. We either take the safe option or we just sit on the sidelines in a state of indecision, but at least we are in our comfort zone. We can become close-minded to the truth because our minds struggle to understand it. We miss the beauty in the garden because

we are afraid to leave our prison. After all, we haven't really seen the garden; we have only been told of its beauty. So, our mind paints a picture of uncertainty that keeps us locked inside.

For example, it is far easier to see that spending an evening doing something the flesh enjoys might be far more enticing than going to church. That is why many churches are curtailing their services. They can call it what they want or justify it in a dozen ways, but it still boils down to the fact that they are doing what I sometimes would like to do: something other than venturing off to church. Obviously, if they were certain they would be blessed, inspired, and rewarded, nothing could keep them away and they would never allow the church to close its doors. Human certainty says that spending your money on something other than a tithe might be more rewarding. Human certainty says that witnessing to a friend may not turn out the way you anticipate, so it may be best to just let it be. Isn't the perceived

uncertainty of an answer the reason we don't pray as we should?

Human certainty is in such demand that we spend a lot of time and energy trying to create it. We also like to project our certainty so others can see and admire our self-assurance. We avoid uncertainty whenever possible because we do not like the way it makes us feel. Now, if I seem to be projecting myself as an expert, perhaps I am. You see, I have struggled with craving certainty for much of my life. Especially before I became a Christian, I had this inner desire to be in control. I liked knowing and following the rules and then projecting a certain outcome. My "need to be sure" became the priority in almost every decision I made. It determined my career choices. I carefully researched to find that one particular job that pretty much guaranteed what I was looking for: quick promotion, job security, good money, and a degree of independence.

Socially, I chose relationships that were most aligned with my long-term goals. Even the decision to have children was rooted in my desire to ensure they would not disrupt my plans for the future, which, by this stage in my carnal life, were pretty much set in stone. Becoming a Christian changed all that, but the old man inside me still craves the safety of certainty. Perhaps it has been that way for all of us, even from the beginning.

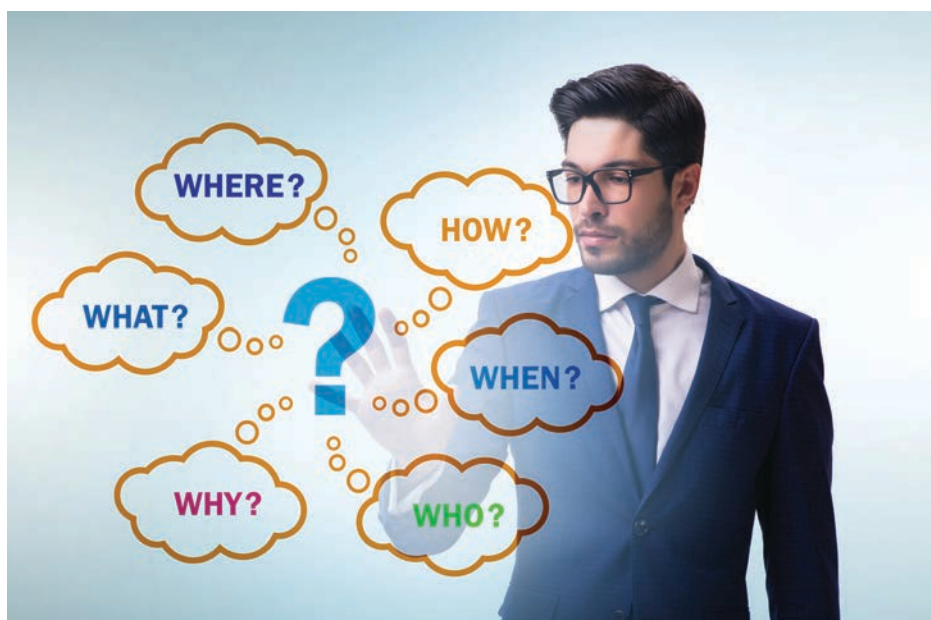
Adam and Eve were placed in the garden and told they could eat freely of all the trees except the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Why was that a command? I

can only assume they had no idea. They were certain of the command but uncertain of the reason behind it, because God did not reveal it to them. That is when the devil comes along and gives them his own version of God's reasoning. He tells Eve that God is withholding great knowledge from them. This was a knowledge so powerful that, once gained, it would enable them to know everything. In other words, they would have certainty. Perhaps we could argue that the real temptation that Satan presented to Eve was the temptation of attaining certainty. Is it possible that this same issue is the one that Lucifer struggled with when he initially rebelled against God? The desire for certainty is one of the strongest of emotions.

Do you know how I became a Christian? I was already under deep conviction of the Holy Spirit, but one day, this slave of certainty opened the door to allow some "maybe" into my life. *Maybe* suggests that even though we may not totally understand something, it doesn't mean that it won't work

out for our benefit. Perhaps our life is good, but maybe, *just maybe*, it could be better. When I believe I have life running in safety mode, is there a chance it isn't safe after all? When I allowed a little maybe to slip in, I began to realize that uncertainty is often a part of faith. Faith is not the absence of doubt. Faith is a choice to trust even when you have doubts. We wrongly associate uncertainty with unbelief. I think, that as we live in this tabernacle of human flesh, doubt will often be a normal part of the Christian life. That does not mean it is a desirable quality to seek; it simply acknowledges that there is a vast difference between unbelief and a deep desire to believe, even with a weak and trembling faith. Our gracious Lord does not consider sincere uncertainty to be a deliberate rebellion.

I understand that without faith it is impossible to please Him, but does that faith have to be perfect? Will not just a smoldering ember of genuine faith be honored? **Isaiah 42:3: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax**





shall he not quench.” Wasn’t this the testimony of the man in **Mark 9:24**, who expressed both faith and uncertainty in the same sentence?

“Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

Did you get that? Even as he expressed his doubt, he took it to the Lord, knowing that He would understand. Ironically, by acknowledging his doubt, he was expressing his faith; a faith that Jesus honored.

God’s grace has never depended on our perfect faith. In fact, if we had to earn our faith through complete certainty, it would no longer be a gift of absolute grace. He only asks that we turn to Him, even if some uncertainties remain as we do. Faith, by its very definition defies human understanding. It is a choice to believe what may not make any sense to the natural mind.

Again, isn’t that why death is sometimes feared by even the strongest of Christians? Even if we have faith, death still gives us a lot of unanswered questions. Could uncertainty be why we don’t use our spiritual gifts? Is it because we wonder if our service will really make a difference? Will we end up looking foolish and overextending

ourselves? We love the Lord, but the desire for certainty holds us back.

In Luke Chapter 1, the evangelist addresses his letter to a Christian named Theophilus. Notice what he says in **Luke 1:1-4**: *“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”*

Luke wanted Theophilus to know certainty! It would appear from his introduction that Luke wrote this entire letter only for the benefit of Theophilus. He apparently had no idea how far his writing would reach. Just consider the effort he went through to bring certainty to just one soul.

Perhaps, just like I was fifty years ago, you are strongly considering accepting Christ as your Savior,

but the need for absolute certainty is holding you back. In that regard, certainty will come. **I John 5:13**: *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”*

However, before that happens, you will likely have to allow a little “maybe” into your life: *“Maybe what the preacher says is true. Maybe Christ did really die for my sins and rise on the third day. Maybe I can be saved today by simply calling upon the Lord.”*

Like the man in Luke, you can say: *“Lord, I believe, but I have some uncertainty. Holy Spirit, show me the truth, and reveal to me the answer.”* I am confident--*I am certain*--that He will, because that is what He did for me. Suddenly, I was certain. Now, I have since been uncertain about many things in life, but regarding my salvation, God gave me a certainty that day that has not wavered for fifty years. Your uncertainty may be strong, your maybes may be many, and your mustard seed faith may be weak, small, insufficient, and almost nonexistent. But God requires nothing more.

Bring Christ your doubts, uncertainties, and maybes. Those things coupled with a small grain of faith is something Christ can work with. Of this, *I am certain*.



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

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We all know it. Is there anyone who doesn't realize that, assuming there are no underlying health issues, the key to getting in shape is to eat better and exercise more? Or that the secret to taking that dream vacation is to plan ahead and spend less while saving some money for the trip? It might a while, but eventually, you'll probably succeed. We all understand how this works. The problem isn't that we lack knowledge. The problem is that we seem to lack the power to do what we need to do. Likewise, we want to grow as Christians, and we know how to grow; we just aren't disciplined enough to do it.

We all have the potential to live productive lives, but we can also lead ineffective and unfruitful ones. When we forget who we are in Christ, we stop pursuing what belongs to us in Him. We seek meaning and purpose in worldly things because we're not drawing our identity from the spiritual;

as a result, our spiritual life begins to decline. Here's what Peter says: *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Peter 1:3).* Another way of saying this is, *"God has already given us everything we need to live a victorious and godly life on this earth."*

If you remember this in your marriage, your job, and the challenges of life, it will make a huge difference in how you live. You'll begin to see new and surprising results, and you'll be used by God to help others remember who they are. The statement that God, *"... hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness,"* shifts the focus from needing to ask for more to actively using what has already been provided through our relationship with God. Our Lord has given each of His children everything needed for life and godliness. Yet, why do many believers find life challenging? It's because there is a process to access the provisions God has made. You have them, but you must follow the second part of the scripture. It states we attain this power, *"... through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."*

Don't miss this! Through knowledge of Christ, God has given us everything

we need to grow in every part of our lives. We don't have to earn it. It's available to everyone. We don't need to rely on our own power; we need to rely on God's power because it will provide us with everything we need if we are willing to use it. Peter tells us that when we pursue these qualities, we won't be unfruitful in our relationship with Jesus. He then warns, *"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (II Peter 1:9).* When we lack these qualities in our lives, we become blind to our true condition and may be overwhelmed by our failures, forgetting that Jesus has cleansed us from sin. Although we may know that our eternity with Jesus is secure, we must also remember that we are well-equipped to live an abundant life right here on earth.



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We are so blessed to have **GoMix Christian Radio** on the air. God has given us such a great tool to minister to His people using radio and internet streaming. With the help of our listeners, we are reaching thousands every day with the Good News of the Gospel. That help comes in many ways. Our Faith Partners, Business Underwriters, and prayer warriors have been vital to the success of this ministry over the years.

Recently, there has been another way our allies have come through for us again. We have several people that have allowed us to place **GoMix** signs on their property. We would like to say a big thank you to Allan Harper at Land Pro, LLC in Stantonsburg, NC; Pastor Brick Crowder, Horace Lovett, and the congregation at Snow Hill First Baptist Church in Snow Hill, NC; Michael and Lynn Aycock at Aycock Transmission

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If you have a property on a busy road in our listening area and would be willing to place one of our signs, we would love for you to contact us. Or, if you would like to give a special gift to help us purchase the materials needed, that would help as well as our budget is limited and the cost is around \$200 per sign.

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Just Trust Me

Dr. Sherry Worthington

Summer always flies by for me. At the academy, we are all busy wrapping up the previous year and preparing for the new one. Paperwork never ends, and we are painting, cleaning, and repairing, so the building can get messed up again. Just like our homes, we have to clean them up so we can mess them up. I also have projects I want to get done at home, and I want more time with my husband and family. However, it never feels like enough. I guess I need to remind myself that most people have the same schedule year-round, and I am very lucky to have a change.

I truly cherish the ministry that the Lord has entrusted to me. My husband, family, students, and friends are all part of this wonderful gift, although most of my time is spent at the academy. During this time of year, we have new students starting at the school. Each one has a different reason for coming. The younger children are just beginning school, and Mom

and Dad are looking for a suitable place for their precious child to start. Others come because they are seeking a Christian school, need academic support, or have had a negative experience elsewhere and are looking for a safe environment.

When we interview the families, we give them a tour and try to make them feel comfortable. For students, the idea of talking to the principal can be intimidating. I try to put them at ease. One of the common things I say to those who seem especially nervous is *"I promise I don't bite, and if I did, I have had my shots."* I usually get a smile, and by the end of the interview, most of the young people seem less tense.

One step in the enrollment process is for students to be academically tested. During this time, we try to talk to them and help them feel comfortable before we begin. We ask about their families and hobbies. Usually, we start the test with their favorite subject. We realize that

every interaction with a student is an opportunity to build trust. A strong teacher-student relationship relies on trust. Students need to believe that the teacher has their best interests at heart. There will be times when a student doesn't understand a teacher's actions. Ideally, if trust has been established, the teacher will be given the benefit of the doubt. I understand that some teachers may not deserve trust, but they should not hold the title.

Trust is very important in every relationship. Without it, the bond between two people cannot grow. At the academy, I sometimes see students fussing or upset. Once, a student told me that her friend was talking about her. I looked at her calmly and said, *"But weren't you talking about her yesterday?"* This friendship clearly needed some work. The two students should have talked to each other about their problem instead of involving a third person. Naturally, the gossip had spread, so several people knew

about the issue. We worked it out and had a lesson on friendship. A true friend can be trusted to love us enough to have difficult conversations. **Proverbs 27:17** states, *“Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”* A friend is willing to love you enough to make you mad. They will try to help you grow in your character and point out your weaknesses, never being haughty or arrogant, but doing so through love. Trust is essential!

Trust is also crucial in marriage. Couples share everything—living in the same home, taking on shared responsibilities, raising children together, managing bank accounts, and confiding secrets. Of course, I understand that not all couples are fortunate enough to have complete trust in their spouse. Sometimes trust is broken by betrayal, and at other times, a selfish spouse refuses to do their part. But in a healthy marriage, trust remains key. I am fortunate to have a loving husband. In our relationship, we both know that if one hurts the other, it’s never intentional. There have been times when each of us has said to ourselves, *“I know he or she didn’t mean what was said,”* because we trust their heart. Other times, we have tough conversations because we don’t want anything to come between us. We must always be able to trust each other.

Trust in every relationship is important, but trusting my Heavenly Father is the most important of all. If we don’t trust our Lord, it will be difficult to have a healthy relationship with anyone else. When my youngest brother died at age 33, as expected, my parents were having



a very hard time. I went to breakfast with my father, and we talked for a long time. My dad was sharing how hard it was to understand. My brother, Scott, was the father of two beautiful girls and the pastor of a thriving church. I reminded him of a time in my childhood when I did not understand something he had done. I went to my room and cried. My father came in and reminded me of how much he loved me. I am sure he left the room sorrowful because I was inconsolable. I was about 9 years old then, and I pulled myself together. I wiped my eyes and sat on the side of my bed. My dad was the apple of my eye and could do no wrong. He could leap tall buildings in a single bound. I reminded myself how much he loved me. I also knew he would never hurt me on purpose and that his decision must have been for my good. I went back into the living room, where my father was in tears, and put my arms around him to let him know I loved him. I basically told him, Daddy, I trust you.

I was sharing with my dad that we don’t know the whys of this world, but we must trust our Heavenly Father. I need to learn this lesson too. We put ourselves in many situations, and many of

our circumstances are the result of others' sins. We live in a sin-cursed world, so until we reach Heaven, we will face problems. We can’t blame God every time a crisis comes our way. Instead, we must live beyond our circumstances and let them help us grow.

In all things, we must trust that God has us in His hands. No one can pluck us out if we are His children (**John 10:28**). Just as in our own children’s lives, we desire to have their trust. Hopefully, they all know that everything we have done is born out of love. The hard lessons we teach them are meant to help them develop character. They will always be our children, whether they trust us or not.

If we have accepted Christ, we will always be part of His family. Isn’t it time we stop doubting our Heavenly Father? Can’t you hear Him saying, *“Just trust me, my child?”* We desire to be trusted. Isn’t it time for us to trust our Lord?



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

IDENTITY

Dr. Glenn Mills

When describing ourselves, we often use different titles, labels, positions, places, events, and activities. To identify means to estimate or indicate who or what someone or something is; to assign or describe oneself as belonging to a particular category or group. Most always, how we identify ourselves determines how we live, think, behave, and conduct ourselves. **Proverbs 23:7a** says, ***“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:...”*** To think means to reason, have ideas, and have beliefs. The heart is the place we make decisions. Simply put, what we think about in our minds and decide in our hearts, we are or soon become.

When someone says, *“I’m just a dirty, rotten sinner, saved by grace,”* they are. Their focus is on the dirty, rotten sinner and not the saved by grace part. A dirty, rotten sinner is what we once were. Grace declares who we are now, born again children of God by the shed blood of Jesus. We are now set apart as saints because we are now saved by Jesus and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. So, we either identify with the life of a sinner without Christ, or as a Believer by the grace of God. So please allow me to ask, who do you belong to and identify with?

If I ask you to tell me who you are, what or who would you identify to explain yourself? Allow me to be an example. I could tell you my gender, age, place of birth, parents and siblings, schools I attended, work and jobs, hobbies I enjoy, positions I held and hold, and the things I like or don’t like. And while these things are not bad, they are not my foremost identity. A load of men in this world may have similar things they identify with as well. Many of the things I could identify with, others who grew up like I did could relate. But there is one word that changes the meaning of my identity, and that word is “Christian.”

God has stirred me to remind the Body of Christ that we are in this world, but not of this world. Way too many Christians identify themselves with the things, views, and positions of this world. As I have said many times, focus is extremely important. Focus means an act of concentrated interest or activity on something. A Microsoft study revealed the average human attention span has gone from 12 seconds in 2000 to eight seconds in 2020. That should tell us a lot about the world we live in today. Our conversation is a sure giveaway on what we are focusing on. So, what is it you talk about the most, my friend? Is it people, places, events, material things, drama, or politics? Not that these are not things we think about in daily living, but they should not be our main focus. How we view these areas affects how we live and think.

Our focus **MUST** be on the Kingdom of God and His way of doing and being. As born-again believers, we are now “Christian.” One who has repented of their sin, received Jesus into their heart as Lord and Saviour, and who is following Him with the instruction of God’s Word and the help of the Holy Spirit. As a Christian, my life is now totally committed first and foremost to the teachings, standards, principles, and instruction of God’s Word.

We have the Holy Spirit to guide, comfort, teach, empower, strengthen, and discipline us. Being Christian should overshadow, determine, and influence every area of our lives. That means the spiritual, physical, social, financial, emotional, and even political parts of our lives. If at any moment or decision we can set the values and standards of God’s Word aside, it is at that moment we have stepped into disobedience and sin. When we choose how we feel, what we think, and how the world views things above God’s Word, we are in rebellion against Truth.

Because God is our Creator and knows ALL things, His ways, plans, purposes, will, and thoughts are perfect and without flaw. God does not lead us in a good way, but in the best way. Sadly, many have been deceived by Satan into thinking they know more than God, if they even acknowledge God at all. It is more than high time that Christians wake up and realize who they are in Christ and Who they belong to as God's children. Our identity must begin with being a Christian; one living, loving, and leading like Christ. Our Christian values must lead in all our decisions, conduct, and behavior. I'm a Christian man, husband, father, neighbor, writer, friend, and so on. I must daily adjust any and everything that in any way contradicts my being Christian first and foremost.

True Christianity is not wearing a cross, but spiritually hanging on one so Jesus Christ can be Lord of our lives in every area. That will determine how I live, work, think, behave, love, treat others, and yes, even how I vote. Allow me to insert this thought about voting. We are not Christian Republicans or Democrats. We are Christ-followers who vote for those best representing the Truth found in God's Word. As my sweet wife Kim says, when someone shows you who they are, believe them. When a political party boldly proclaims they support killing babies in and out of the womb (*murder*), homosexuality (*sexual immorality*), gender denial (*rebellion*), same sex marriage (*abomination*), and the rejection of God and His Word; believe them! Please hear me; God will not only judge those who allow such things, but also those who support it with their vote.

Allow me to close with this Scripture. **Joshua 24:15** says, ***"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other***

side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

I pray this message challenges your heart. I pray you make being a born-again, Spirit-filled, and empowered Christian first and foremost in all you say and do. It is only when we truly live a Bible based, Holy Spirit led, Christian life, will those in darkness see who Christ is in us, and desire to know Him as their personal Saviour and Lord.

The list could go on of how we focus on our wants and desires while neglecting God is answering prayers daily. His presence is always with us and the more we acknowledge that He daily meets our needs, we also acknowledge His presence with us.



Dr. Glenn Mills is a long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio and a full-time Evangelist with Glenn Mills Ministries. More information is available at www.glennmillsministries.com



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God Is Still Working

Have you ever experienced one of those moments when you knew that God had a message especially for you in that particular moment when you needed it the most?

Recently, I was extremely burdened over something for which I had been praying for many years. I had been hopeful for a breakthrough and I had even manipulated circumstances to make the breakthrough come easier, at least from my perception. I was faithfully expecting a victory. My hopes were crushed when I realized that my manipulations were not productive. I had been praying for years, and the answer had not come.

To make things worse, I was on my way to serve in a ministry. My focus should have been on preparing my heart to meet those ministry needs. But instead, I was burdened and doubtful about God's supposed non-answer to my prayer. As I drove and poured out my burden to the Lord, I passed a church sign. It was one of those lighted signs that changes the message every few minutes. Just as it changed, I noticed the message that read, *"God is still working"*. I knew immediately that that message was God's Word to me for the exact moment that I needed it. He still heard my prayer, and He was working on getting the answer to me. Gratefully, I thanked Him for the message. My perspective changed, my faith was restored, and my focus was changed to the ministry I was about to engage in.

Do you have a burden that you don't see a possibility of resolution? Have you prayed for something for years, and it doesn't seem any closer to being answered? Have you tried to help God answer your prayer with manipulations? Like the father who prayed for healing for his child, do you tell the Lord that you believe, but ask Him to help your unbelief?

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

Mark 9:24

Remember that God understands your need, He hears your prayer, and most of all, He is still working! Ponder that!



Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. Now retired, she formerly served as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.

After Glow
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