

Crimson & White Connection

A ministry of prayer and encouragement to "High School, College, & Singles" (& others, too) on Values + Character + Relationships + the Christian Life
Resources and some old back issues available at www.CrimsonWhite.org

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Crimson & White? What's this?

It started with 37 college students. in 1998. Now, in the 25th year of issues, less than 10% of the mailing list are "students" ages 14 to 24. About 40% are ... we'll just say "over 30" in the database, including several 80+ers. About 1/3 of our over ~900 print copies go into prisons in 24 states (9/1/21 count), a direction we never expected this to go. But "the spiritual life," and values are not age or marital status or gender or life situational specific, they are universal. -- Topics are character, values, spiritual life - "walk the walk, not just talk the talk" - relationships and more ... and some fun.

The theology position is "conservative," i.e. Jesus is God's only Son, eternal, born of a virgin, sinless, crucified, died, and risen, and is the only way to eternal life. We are free to choose Him. He has told us to be holy and that includes behaviors such as: sex outside of marriage is wrong. Jesus said it comes down to 'love God and love your neighbor' (Matthew 22:37-40).

If you base your trust for entrance into Heaven in Jesus, God's Son, and His death and resurrection on your behalf, then your crimson stains are made white as wool. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. There is no other way (John 14:6). If you admit that you can not reach God's standard, are repentant and sorry for your short fall (sin) and rebellion against Him and have asked Him to forgive you, then He has forgiven you. If you are truly repentant, then there will be evidence of that in your actions, your life. - - If the "religion police" were to arrest you, would you be turned loose for "lack of evidence"? Or would the evidence of your actions convict you of being a Christian?

You WILL BE and ARE a slave! But you can CHOOSE your master! CHOOSE God today. John 3:16 is true. Accept no substitute!

If you have chosen to accept Jesus as Lord of your life, either the first time or again, we would like to know so that we can pray for you and encourage you. Write or call us.

July 17, 2023 v26n05 Choices

By Dr. Richard R. Dymmel, Ed.D., (c) 1/2007, 7/2023

I started thinking of this article on January 4th. Know what I was doing? I was mowing the lawn!! January and I'm mowing the lawn! Well, it is part of the consequences of a choice we made almost 21 years ago. Now granted, for 19 Winters so far, we do the last mow shortly after the first of December and don't start again until about the first of March. ... But honestly, it has been wet and warn, and when I looked out the kitchen window today, the back yard could almost stand to be mowed again!! ... just to keep it all neat and uniform.

In all of life we make choices. In 1985 we choose - my "mid-life-crisis" time I suppose - to change just about everything except the wife, kids, and dog... and we moved from Michigan to North Carolina. Now there have been lots of consequences to that move. I'm not going to say "good" or "bad," just that we make choices and then there will be results and consequences.

We chose to go to college or not. We chose to learn a skill or trade. That then is usually marketable, either as that specific skill, or the fact that we try and learn and follow through and in the educational process learn some communication and thinking and problem solving skills... Those are marketable qualities... And we are (hopefully) able to get and keep a job that pays better and we have a better standard of living... all other things being equal.

Or maybe, like Gabe and his little PowerWheels vehicles... (this is a really old pic, when he was maybe 3 or 4, now 19) he knows where the boundaries are... but I learned last week, after my having bragged to many how he knows the boundaries and keeps within them... I heard that he has on occasion crossed the boundary and his jeep and truck have been confined to the garage for a couple days.

With Gabe, he gets his Wheels back in a day or so and he's back driving all over the yard again. His consequences were short lived. And a lot of choices don't have much consequence ... should I choose mint-chocolate-chip or caramel swirl? Or should we go... The blue shirt or the red one? Not a big deal whichever choice I made. (Mint-chocolate-chip, Quizno's prime rib & cheese, and red is what I choose.)

But some choices have bigger results... like do you choose to drink or not. If you don't drink (I'm not referring to Pepsi or coffee) you'll never be driving and not be quite as quick to respond to something, be charged with DUI, or ever be the cause of an accident that kills because you didn't judge right because you were driving UI, or become an alcoholic, or have alcohol be the cause of family violence or any of the other things that happen around alcohol. In a high percentage of college campus rapes alcohol is involved, sometimes by just one of the persons. If you're not around it, there is a smaller chance of the things that happen around it happening to you. Or use drugs.

Sex... Choice... casual sex, for fun and pleasure (yes it is pleasurable) <-- or --> sex is sacred, special, reserved for a husband and wife. Consequences... The research says those that waited, who hold it sacred, have more satisfying sex in their marriage, have longer lasting stable marriages. Made the choice to wait? Keep with it, it pays off. If not, it's never too late to start over. Like planting a tree... 'the best time to plant a tree was 20 years



ago; the next best time is now.'

Some choices you make can affect a lot of people. You choose to marry a "loser," or at least someone of less than great character. Maybe they are even a "good person" ... except maybe they drink. (I know, I hold a "super-high" standard of zero, maybe your standard is slightly less than that, that's your choice.) Refer back to the paragraph above. That marriage decision affects multiple families. And if the marriage ends and there are kids, remarriage and step-parents multiply the people affected by the choices.

What about church? Attending church ... I was going to say something definite, but as I write, I'm thinking, "No. No guarantees." Going to church, doing a Bible study, attending InterVarsity, belonging to a Sunday School class, singing in the choir... all that stuff doesn't make you a Christian. It doesn't make you a "better" Christian. What it might do is encourage you to "stay the course." What it might do is draw you closer to God. It might help you learn just what He expects as you hear, read, listen, and study His Word. What it might do is get you excited about being in the presence of God as you praise Him. - I was next to someone last week that doesn't express a lot of excitement for singing choruses in church. But they were singing. Know what that did? It encouraged me to sing even more. We were singing together. Unity. There is an encouragement in worshipping together. I like to sit near the front, then I have all those voices behind me and the sound coming toward me and

we are a "multitude" praising God together. - Choice... sleep in on Sunday or get to church. Hebrews 10:25 in the New Century Version reads, "You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing, but you should meet together and (or to) encourage each other" (my emphasis added there). The encouragement goes both ways, get and give, sometimes by your just being there.

Choices... There are so MANY areas in which we make choices. Some will have little lasting effect (unless you choose too much mint-chocolate-chip instead of salad and vegetables and protein), and some decisions will last a lifetime, like sex and marriage partners (even if you separate it will affect you because it forms parts of who you are), and there are some decisions that affect you for eternity. -- Make sure you are at least trying to make the best choices possible, with a look to the consequences of the choices you make. Think about the consequences.

In Christ, Rich

Do you have a relationship with God where you know He has accepted you just as you are? A relationship like with a loving father? If not, call me at 336-908-3652. Or call 1-888-NEED-HIM. Or call a Chaplain or Pastor. --

With God, you have never gone too far away to come home. --

Campus Life, November/December 2006

Good Advice

FAITH Q&A Who Needs Church?

Answer by Marshall Shelley

Q. Do you really need to belong to a church to be a Christian? Faith is a personal thing, so why can't you just have an individual relationship with God?

A. Lots of people wonder about that, usually after a bad experience with Christians. The best answer I know is in the story of a fourth-century Egyptian soldier named Pachomius.

Determined to grow in his faith, Pachomius did what many serious believers did in those days. He became a hermit: living by himself in the desert, fasting, praying and having visions.

But after a while, Pachomius began to question this approach:

How can you learn to love if no one else is around?

Can you learn humility living alone?

Is it possible to learn patience, kindness or gentleness in isolation?

He realized that developing spiritual fruit requires being around people. Pachomius quit the hermit life and formed one of the first monasteries. "To save souls," he said, "you must bring them together."

Let me take it a step further. Building spiritual strength requires other people, but not just people you *choose* to hang with. God's kind of love is best learned when we have to be around people we haven't specifically chosen as friends. Living around people we like is fairly easy. Doing life with just anybody is more challenging and forces us to grow. We have no choice about who our parents or brothers or sisters will be; yet we are expected to love them. Neither can we choose who will or will not be in our spiritual family. Anyone who professes "Jesus is Lord" is to be welcomed in the church, where we encourage and challenge each other to grow in the faith. Living in this challenging but rewarding environment helps us grow and learn about love, humility and the very fruits the Lord calls us to produce (Galatians 5:22-23).

The Bible says Christians are each a different member of a body (Romans 12:4-8). Can you be an eye without a neck, or a foot without a knee? I suppose it's possible to be a disconnected member without a body, but that's hardly what God had in mind for you (Hebrews 10:24-25). You won't function right. Being a Christian means contributing to the body, letting it contribute to your life, and submitting to the teaching and correction of others.

Can you be a Christian without the church? I suppose so. But what kind of Christian would you be?

Marshall, a former pastor, is editor of Leadership, a magazine for pastors. Copyright © 2006 by the author or Christianity Today International/Ignite Your Faith magazine. "This article first appeared in Ignite Your Faith November/December 2006, Vol. 65, No. 4, Page 8. Used by permission of Christianity Today International, Carol Stream, IL

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your new address. If “home” moves, or if you move, please
remember to tell us.