

Taking Inventory of Our Christianity

by **BOB CASEY**, preacher
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Upon reading the Bible, one can clearly see that man has always been a worshipful creature. Genesis 4:3-4 says that both Cain and Abel brought offerings unto the Lord! So, the point is well taken that man has always recognized the need to worship God. But, also, take note that it is also possible to make an attempt to do this without receiving the blessing from God if the attempt is wrongly done. Thus, the offering of Cain was rejected because he had attempted to offer something that God did not authorize.

Can men do the same thing today? The answer is, 'Yes, they can and are.' Did you know that we are told to take inventory of our Christianity in the Bible. Read **2 Corinthians 13:5-7**. Here we are told to "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates (rejects)?" But Paul says, "I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates."

Take notice that he says to examine your claim to be in Christ; then goes on to say to prove your claim. How do we do this? To begin with, what did you hear to convince you that you were a Christian? Did you hear the truth? John the Apostle wrote in **1 John 4:1**, "Beloved, believe not every spirit (preacher), but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Even the Apostle Paul says in **2 Corinthians 11:13-14**, that "such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." Even saying, "no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." This is scary when one thinks about it.

So, even the seemingly best of preachers may be

advancing the kingdom of Satan by misleading people with a false concept of salvation. You may be thinking, "how can this be done?" Example of this is found in the Garden of Eden where God told Adam and Even, "every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (**Genesis 2:16-17**) But the devil said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." (**Genesis 3:4**) But he told her a lie and she believed it and one day she died.

Another example is, in order to be saved or have one's sins removed is to obey the Lord in Baptism for the remission of sins (Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-5). These verses and many other establish the fact that doing this will save one's soul and clean the conscience from sin. (**1 Peter 3:21**)

But the angels of light says that baptism is only an outward sign that grace - forgiveness has already been given through belief. This is close but simply not the truth! John also wrote in **1 John 4:4-6**, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

Sadly, one of the main reasons that men are following a false concept of the truth is: they are willingly Bible illiterate. They may have a PhD in secular education and still be dumb as a dog if they are not educated in the Holy Scriptures. Friends, make an attempt to read the Bible with a desire to know its truths; then obey them and you will not be led astray by these angels of light.

Visit with us. See if we are trying to follow the truth.

Sincerely, Bob Casey. 1-859-369-4165, anytime

Kitchen Diva

Small Diet Changes Reap Big Results

by **ANGELA SHELF MEDEARIS**

When it comes to our daily meal routine, change sometimes can be challenging. Studies have shown that it takes between two to eight months to form a new habit. You can create an eating style "habit" that can improve your health now and in the future by making small changes over time, such as eliminating sugary drinks and high-sodium foods.

Consider making healthy changes that reflect your personal preferences, culture and traditions. Think of each change as a "win" as you build positive habits and find solutions that reflect your new healthy eating style. Use the tips below courtesy of My Plate (www.choosemyplate.gov/start-small-changes) to find little victories that work for you!

Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Veggies

* Focus on whole fruits more often than drinking 100 percent juice.

* Snack on fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits instead of cookies, brownies or other sugar-sweetened treats.

* Offer whole fruits without saturated fat, sodium or added sugars as dessert.

* Vary your vegetables to include green, red and orange choices.

* Add fresh, frozen or canned vegetables to salads, side dishes and recipes.

* Prepare your vegetables without sauces, gravies or glazes to lower the amount of sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

Make Half Your Grains Whole Grains

* Choose whole-grain foods more often than refined grains. Make at least half the amount of grains you eat each day whole grains.

* Find high-fiber, whole-grain foods by reading the nutrition facts label and ingredients list.

* Some common whole grains include oatmeal, whole-wheat flour and popcorn.

Move to Low-Fat and Fat-Free Dairy

* Choose low-fat or fat-free milk and yogurt.

* Buy low-fat or fat-free cheese more often than regular cheese.

* Regular cream cheese, butter and cream are not in the dairy food group because they have little or no calcium. They also are high in saturated fat.

VARY YOUR PROTEIN ROUTINE

* Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans, nuts, seeds, soy, eggs, lean meats and poultry.

* Select seafood twice a week, including fish and shellfish.

* Add beans or peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, and soy in main dishes and snacks.

When planning your daily meals, try healthy new ways to prepare family favorites. This recipe for Greek pork chops with mixed veggie rice incorporates fresh fruit and juices into savory dishes and mixes grains and vegetables.



Photo credit: Depositphotos.com

GREEK PORK CHOPS WITH VEGGIE RICE

1 pound pork cutlets (or 4 boneless pork chops)

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1/2 cup orange juice

2 teaspoons soy sauce

1 tablespoon dried oregano

2 cloves garlic (peeled and minced)

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper

4 (1/4-inch-thick) orange slices

1. Make a marinade for the pork by combining 1 tablespoon of the oil, the orange juice, soy sauce, oregano and garlic in a glass bowl or re-sealable plastic bag and mix well. Add pork chops. Cover bowl, if using, and refrigerate the pork chops for at least 4 hours or overnight.

2. Remove pork chops from marinade; discard marinade. Sprinkle pork chops with salt and pepper.

3. Place a large skillet on the stove over high heat. When hot, add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the skillet. Add the pork chops to the pan, waiting about 30 seconds between each addition.

4. Cook about 3 minutes on each side until crispy. Set pork chops aside on a plate. Add the orange slices to the pan and cook on each side about 30-seconds. Serve the pork chops over a bed of the Mixed Veggie Rice and top with the orange slices. Serves 4.

MIXED VEGGIE RICE

If using leftover, already cooked vegetables, add them to the hot, cooked rice immediately, cover and let them come up to temperature for 3 to 5 minutes before serving.

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 cup uncooked long-grain rice

1/2 onion, diced

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 teaspoons dried oregano

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground black pepper

2 cups water (or 1 cup water and 1 cup low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth)

2 cups frozen mixed vegetables or 2 cups fresh, diced vegetables.

1. In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, add the oil. Add in the rice, onion, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes to toast the rice.

2. Pour in the water and/or the broth. Stir and bring the rice to a boil. Add the vegetables; return to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and cover pot with tight-fitting lid. Do not remove the lid during the cooking process!

3. After 15 minutes, turn off the heat and let the rice sit, covered, for another 5 minutes to steam. Fluff rice and vegetables with a fork and serve immediately. Makes 4 to 6 servings

Angela Shelf Medearis is an award-winning children's author, culinary historian and the author of seven cookbooks. Her new cookbook is "The Kitchen Diva's Diabetic Cookbook." Her website is www.divapro.com. To see how-to videos, recipes and much, much more, Like Angela Shelf Medearis, The Kitchen Diva! on Facebook. Recipes may not be reprinted without permission from Angela Shelf Medearis.

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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

Leah, Naomi, Bilhah, Zilpah

4. Of these, who stole idols from her father? Elisabeth, Martha, Rachel, Deborah

5. In Acts 22, what famous Rabbi was Paul's teacher? Hillel, Turkel, Zakkai, Gamaliel

6. From Genesis 4, who invented farming? Adam, Cain, Abel, Jubal

Answers on bottom of Page 11

Now available by Wilson Casey! 2017 Bible Trivia box calendar loaded with daily teasers from TouchPointPress.com

1. Is the book of Tamar in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. 2 Kings 19 and which other book's chapter are almost alike word for word? Deuteronomy 7, Isaiah 37, Jeremiah 50, Job 16
3. From Genesis 29, which of Jacob's wives was first to bear children?



It is difficult to face the uncertainties of life wondering when there will be some final resolution to the issues that surround us and threaten us constantly. We are troubled when we see injustice and feel deceived. We want to be free from the fear and threat of terrorism and enjoy the reign of peace and joy. We hear of wars and rumors of wars. We are forced to face the fact that conflict and crises pervade our world and disturb our lives. And the peace that the leaders of this world promise us, never comes.

Most of us have a memory or two of family trips we took when we were children. Excitement filled our hearts as we began the trip. Then, after a while, boredom and restlessness would set in and everyone became anxious and angry and wondered why we ever left home. No matter where we were going or how long it took, someone would ask the question, "Are we there yet?" It is a question that is handed down from one generation to the next and one family to another. It's part of every journey.

And the answer was and still is the same: "Almost" or "Not yet." It reminds us of the fact that life is indeed a journey and we are never sure where or when it will end.

So we call on God and ask, "Are we there yet? Is it time for Your return?" And He answers, "Almost. Not yet. My time has not come. You and I still have work to do."

As we Christians have His light in this darkness and His hope in the midst of despair, we must share this gift of light and hope with others so they can pray with us.

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BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

JAMES 1:12

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

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Find the bolded/underlined words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

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Peter and John Threatened, Released (Acts 4:15-17)

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. 17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

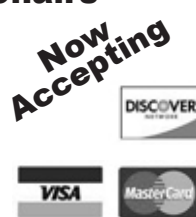
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