

Four paths to spiritual growth



- Passion for God
- Moral discipline
- Submission to authority
- Kosher community

Four paths that can be spiritually toxic



- Passion for God
- Moral discipline
- Submission to authority
- Kosher community

Warning signs of toxic virtue

- 1. A life that confuses zeal with spirituality.**
- 2. A life that confuses faithfulness with faith.**
- 3. A life that confuses passivity with submission.**
- 4. A life that confuses personal cultural preferences with God's will.**

Romans 10

“¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and m prayer to God of them is for their salvation. ² For I testify about them that a they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge”

Challenge #1

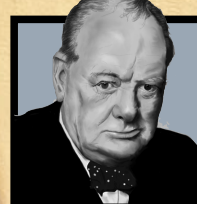
Passion for God

Zeal without knowledge

ZEAL

**REFLECTS
COMMITMENT
NOT CORRECTNESS**

Winston Churchill



“A fanatic is one who can't change his mind and won't change the subject.”

NOTE: This is a passion for God not just the Law or Tradition.

The hidden dangers of zeal for God.

- 1. It is often mistaken for spiritually inspired power.***
- 2. It tends to dull our hearing and nullify our discernment.***
- 3. Passion rules when all other authority is discredited.***

What did the Jews fail to understand?

Vs.4 “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

Vs.8 “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,”

Vs.13 “for “Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.””

“3 For not knowing about God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. 5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness, which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.”

Challenge #2

Moral discipline

Man’s righteousness without God’s righteousness



is a response to our salvation not a means to it.

Charles Spurgeon



“Holiness is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way to holiness. Better still, Christ is our holiness.”

NOTE: The prodigal son’s older brother in Luke 15.

The hidden dangers moral discipline.

- 1. Defining the law in manageable ways.***
- 2. Pride in personal merit.***
- 3. Confusing the Old and New Covenants.***
- 4. Blindness to spiritual need.***

“6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down), 7 or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).” 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,”

Challenge #3

Submission to authority

Deferring to others without personal responsibility

“6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down), 7 or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).” 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,”

Deuteronomy 30

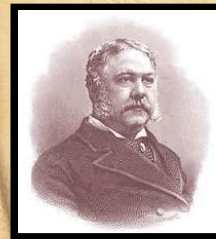
“11 For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.”

SUBMISSION DOES NOT ABROGATE



RESPONSIBILITY

William Arthur Ward



“We can choose to throw stones, to stumble on them, to climb over them, or to build with them.”

When does submission become a cop out?

- 1. When we passively let other people control us.**
- 2. When we make excuses for our spiritual condition.**
- 3. When we expect God to anoint our circumstances, not our response to them.**
- 4. When we rely on external signs rather than internal wisdom.**

Paraphrase of Romans 10

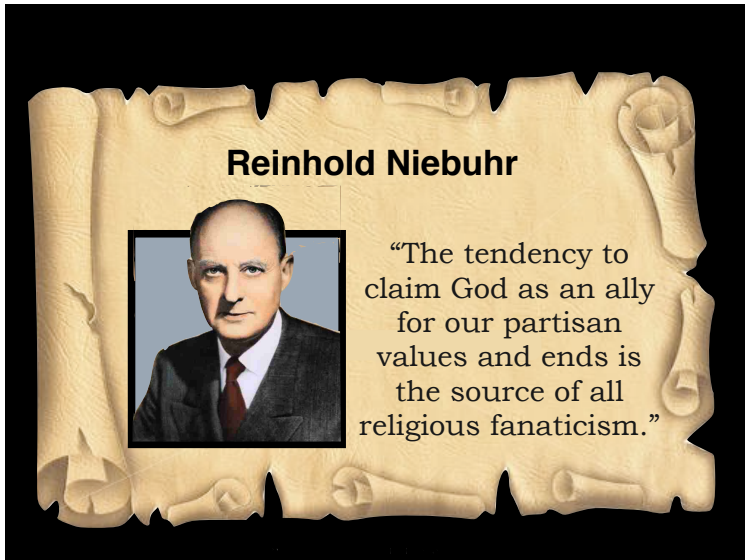
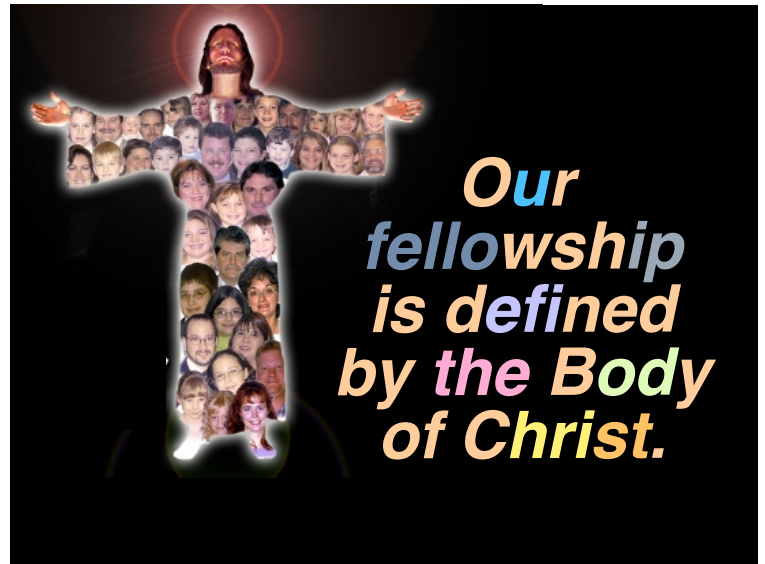
I pray for my fellow Jews who love God but misunderstand the Gospel in that they are trying to establish their righteousness apart from faith in Christ, who put an end to hope in obedience to the law. Those who put their hope in the law will not experience God’s salvation. Just as the law was within their reach so now Christ and faith are accessible to their heart, making salvation available to Jew & Gentile alike for any and all who take responsibility to call on the Lord in faith.

“⁹ that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “*Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed (shamed).*” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; ¹³ for “*Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.*””

Challenge #4

Kosher community

Jews without Gentiles



How do Christians fail to identify and respect the boundaries of the Kingdom?

1. *They remove all boundaries from the Body of Christ.*
2. *They confuse personal preferences with God's will.*
3. *They tolerate toxic zeal and legalism.*

Four paths to spiritual growth

- Passion for God
*with knowledge
- Moral discipline
*with the righteousness of faith
- Submission to authority
*with personal responsibility
- Kosher friends
*with God's grace

Four challenges from Rom.10:1-13

- Let knowledge dictate your passions.
- Ground your righteousness in Christ.
- Take responsibility for your life.
- Let God's Spirit define your social boundaries.