

For The Whole *Family of God*

Christ our Compass

COPING WITH AN EATING DISORDER

There is a craziness that surrounds an eating disorder. It has to do with negative thoughts that plague the mind of people struggling with eating disorders and also thoroughly confuse and frustrate those who try to help them.

UNDERSTAND THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

People suffering from eating disorders think they are fat when they are mere skin and bones. They see themselves as ugly when they have been so beautifully created by God. If you tell them you love them, their negative thoughts assure them you would never love them if you really knew them. So it is actually these negative thoughts that won't stop and are hidden deep in the soul that need to be conquered.

UNDERSTAND THE CHAOS

The best thing you can do for yourself or someone caught up in an eating disorder is to try to understand the chaos created by negative thoughts. What you say will be wrong, nothing you do will be right, at least that is what the person with the disorder will think and tell you. You see the "craziness" of it all but cannot do anything about it. This can make you and the person with the disorder feel helpless and even hopeless.

GET HELP

The crazy reality of dealing with an eating disorder is why we should never try to help a person with an eating disorder without professional help. The person with the disorder is out of control and, very quickly, so are the people who are trying to help without the benefit of any advice or professional counsel.

DON'T WAIT!

Eating disorders can be fatal. So, don't wait to get help, professional help. It is good to seek out people who have coped with an eating disorder successfully themselves or who have helped others cope with an eating disorder successfully, not in place of but along with professional help.

GAIN CONTROL

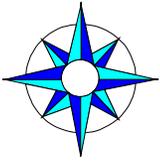
By eating or not eating, people with eating disorders are trying to gain control over a life they feel is out of their control. To help them, we must understand that as long as we try to control their disorder by making them eat, they cannot gain control. This can be scary because the person may not eat and could die. This is exactly why we need God to be in control of us, the person, and all of the people who offer their help. This is a big job, but God can do it. He heals souls when professional counselors can only deal with bodies and minds. He can make the stress management, exercise, rest, keeping track of what triggers the disorder, and whatever helps to heal an eating disorder actually work.

GIVE GOD CONTROL

As we hold God sacred and trust in Him, He will take control of us, the counseling, and the person in need of His help. He will strengthen us to share our faith and His love in ways that cause the person with the disorder to receive them. He will help us refuse to leave when the person constantly and rudely pushes us away. He can guide even unbelieving counselors to healing help, and get rid of the negative thoughts hiding in the person's soul. Above all, by His grace He will never stop His help and healing of body and mind deep in every soul.

Share This Insert To Share God's Help and Healing!

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For The Whole *Family of God*

CREATING A CHRISTIAN FAMILY BUDGET

A Christian budget is different from any other budget. It begins with prayer, asking God to guide how we spend and save the money He gives us. It holds God sacred and places Him first by both setting money aside to return to Him in thanks and considering if the way the remainder of the money is spent is pleasing to Him.

SPENDING GOD'S MONEY

A Christian budget looks at all money as given to us by God. It remembers the blessings God has given us and returns offerings generously to thank Him for all that He provides. It may or may not tithe or give a percentage, but it always gives cheerfully, with a willing and generous spirit, and it reaps rich rewards from God.

KNOWING GOD'S WILL

A Christian budget will spend money according to God's will, discerning between needs and wants. It will not spend impulsively or for momentary pleasures, but will purchase things that have value in God's sight.

The Christian budget is set up to pay bills on time. It will not allow for bad credit or bad checks. It will not pile up unnecessary bills or debt, nor will it be involved in dishonest gain. It will not cheat or fail to tell the whole truth.

A Christian budget is of great value. Those who use it develop the highest character and become wise in spending and in saving. They are never poor because they are richly blessed by God.

BE BALANCED

A Christian budget can be easier to balance than other budget because it inspires us to control spending. It will not allow us to consider, much less purchase what we cannot afford and do not need. While other budgets may guide us to control our spending, a Christian budget provides us with *God's power to be content* with what we have so that we do not overspend.

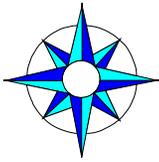
CONSERVE

A Christian budget will expect lights to be turned out when they are not used - water to be conserved - heat kept low - air conditioners set high - food not to be wasted - and clothes to be worn out before they are tossed out, and outgrown clothes to be passed on for further use. Tools and toys and everything God gives us should be kept in good repair - cars should give the best mileage - and appliances should need to be replaced not just purchased to acquire a latest model. This conservation keeps people free from debt and can help people out of debt. When it is done for the glory of God, money to pay debts and bills can show up miraculously out of nowhere to pay them.

LIVE HAPPILY WITH OR WITHOUT MONEY

What is most amazing about a Christian budget is that those who use it live happily with or without money. They do not want for anything, and they need even less than that. *This is exactly the point of a Christian budget.* Living on a budget based on trust in God that holds Him and all of His creation sacred not only pleases God, it blesses people abundantly in their bodies and lives, and most deeply and beautifully in their souls.

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THANKING THOSE WHO HELP US

Once again, it is the time of year when we think about being thankful. In past bulletin inserts over the years, we have counted blessings and thanked the Lord for many things. We have never thanked the Lord for the people He created to help us. If you have already thanked these people, it is time to thank them again.

THINK OF THEIR NAMES

Take time to not only think of all the people who have helped you, make a list, write down their names. You may not be able to thank them all during the thanksgiving season, so go ahead and spread it out through the year. Just don't forget to thank every single person on your list in words or actions. You are sure to find that *it is more blessed to give than to receive*, remembering the words of our Lord Jesus (Acts 20:35).

THINK OF THOSE WHO LOVE YOU THE MOST

The people who have helped us the most are usually the same people who love us the most. Their love for us has helped us through some very tough times. They've shared our joys and sorrows. They do not require or ask for our thanks, but they deserve it.

Don't forget the people who have loved you in the Lord; members of your family, your church, those who live near you or keep in touch across the miles who have shared their faith to keep you in the faith. To thank them stay close to God, hold Him sacred, and help all of the people around you to do the same. Sharing your faith is a precious and far reaching way to thank them and the Lord because it passes faith on for generations.

PARENTS

Parents are some of the most unrecognized loved ones on earth. They are the ones who stay up all night with us when we are sick. They work hard to provide for us. They never stop worrying about us no matter how old we get. There is only one Person living in heaven who loves us more than our parents. Yet, we continually neglect to tell our parents "thank you!"

Perhaps some of us have thanked our parents, but we can never thank our parents enough. So, here are some ways to thank parents this thanksgiving and all year long:

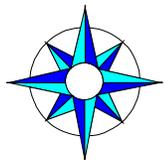
- send them a copy of this bulletin insert.
- write them a personal note to thank them. Share some things they have done that you appreciate.
- invite them to dinner and thank them face to face.
- do something special for your parents and tell them you are doing it to thank them for all they have done for you.

OTHERS

Make Thanksgiving extra special this year. Thank other relatives, friends, and co-workers who have helped you.

- remember what they did. Thank them in words or a note, e-mail, text, etc. Share what they did and how it blessed your life.
- do something to help those who have helped you. Find out what they can't do, what they need done, or what they would appreciate even if they can do it themselves and do it. Be sure to let them know you are doing it to thank them so they do not try to repay you.
- take time to visit them.
- thank God for them in prayer several times this year and let them know you are praying for them.

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RESTORING THE "JOY" OF CHRISTMAS

We may have wonderful memories of Christmas: family and friends gathering together - the fun - the laughter - the gifts - and the delight of Christmas fill us with joy! We love memories of Christmas because they are happy for us. Sadly, memories of Christmas do not fill all people with joy.

GOD'S GIFT OF JOY

In some cases, truly bad things happened at Christmas and memories of these things can make it difficult to feel joy. In other cases, people simply choose to remember only the bad things - the people that hurt them - the wrongs that were said and done at Christmas. That is exactly why we need Christmas every year. Christmas gives us one more opportunity for the joy of Christmas to be restored in those who are unable or refuse to enjoy it, whether that person is someone else or us.

GOD'S ONLY SON

Christ is the key to restoring the joy of Christmas. We may know this, but those who do not live in His joy do not always know this. They don't realize they need Him so that they can have His joy. Even we who have His joy may not know how much our holding Him sacred brings others His joy. The truth is, we all have much to learn. We can share Christ with words, but holding Him sacred needs to come from our heart. People need to hear in our voice how much we love Him in our heart. It's not the words we use but the love in which we say them. When we share Christ with our words but not from our heart, His joy is not in us. How can we expect His joy to be in others? Restoring the joy of Christmas has to begin not only *with* us by *in* us. And that is exactly why Christ was born!

CHRIST IS BORN

The joy of the angels that first Christmas has never stopped. It lives on in us through Christ. It is the joy of Christmas God desires us to share so that it can live on in future generations. It is the joy that causes others to desire Christ and seek Him. And as they seek Him they will find Him and His joy because He says to all who seek Him, "*I will be found by you*" (Jeremiah 29:12-14) and in His presence *there is fullness of joy* (Psalm 16:11).

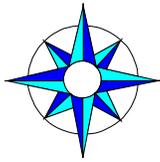
In the end, it is not *we* but *Christ* who restores the joy of Christmas in us and everyone who comes to Him. His joy comes to us right along with the peace only He can give (John 14:27). The Holy Spirit will put the words to spread His joy (Luke 12:12), but it is Jesus who has made His joy possible in us - joy that holds Him sacred - joy that people see and that reaches out to draw them to Him. It is His joy that causes them let go of past pain, live filled with His joy, and pass it on. This is how the joy of Christmas is restored in the world for generations!

GIVE CHRIST THIS CHRISTMAS

The joy of Christ is the perfect gift for us to give every Christmas. But we can't wrap it up in a box. We must deliver it personally from a heart that holds Him sacred - a heart filled with His joy and peace and love that people can see through everything we say and do every day. If we wait to only give it at Christmas, we will wait too long. More people every day are living without Him. They exist in debilitating sadness, when the joy of the Lord is their strength because *a Savior has been born!*

Share the Joy of Christmas From Your Heart!

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INCREASE THE VALUE OF LIFE

The increasing loss of lives by abortion, violence, abuse, negligence, and people not caring about themselves or others is decreasing the value of human life more every day. We see all ages wanting to die, children to senior citizens, and some are taking their own lives. It's easy to think that we are helpless to stop this growing loss of life, but we are wrong.

WE ARE CREATED

Humans, created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), are His culminating and most precious creation. We have been created and commanded by God to care for every living thing (Genesis 1:28). Caring for, not doing evil against or taking human lives is our job (Matthew 25:31-46, Romans 12:17; Exodus 20:13), and the reason God placed us on earth. He promises to be our strength to care for every living thing.

WE ARE EQUIPPED

Believers are thoroughly equipped through the kind of faith that can move a mountain (Matthew 17:20). Our faith, even a little faith, has the power to effect an enormous change in people and the world. We can increase the value of life in present and future generations. All we need to do is *have faith*. God will make changes happen through our words and actions said and done by faith.

WE HAVE POWER

Faith gives our words power. We can explain the value of life, but we cannot make people listen. Yet, when we speak about the value of life by faith, our words carry *God's power* to reach the very hearts and souls of people all around us. By God's power more people every day are coming to know the value or sanctity of human life.

WE CAN BE KIND

Faith helps us to be kind to people. People who are treated kindly feel valuable, increasing the value of their lives. When kind acts are done out of love for God, He blesses the people who do them with His love, strong spiritual love that is able to love self, and others, increasing the value of even more lives. These people are also able to love God and hold Him and every living thing sacred, increasing the value of every living thing.

WE CAN SHARE CHRIST

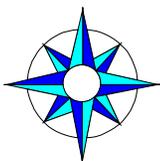
God's love for us and in us not only increases the value of life, it has the power to save earthly and eternal lives through Christ. This is why it is so important for us to share all Christ has done to save the world. Eternal lives are saved when Christ brings people to faith. Earthly lives are saved when faith in Christ strengthens people to make it through struggles that cause lives to be lost. This same faith holds God and all of His creation sacred and, therefore, works to sustain it, therefore, increasing its value.

WE CAN INCREASE THE VALUE OF LIFE

The more we proclaim the love of God through faith in Christ, the more people will come to believe in Him, be filled with His love, and love Him, themselves and others. By faith they will hold God and all of His creation sacred, increasing the value of life in and through all believers.

Lead People to Christ for Faith That Holds Life Sacred.

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BE RECONCILED

People can suffer far more from the lack of reconciliation than from the problems that cause them to be unreconciled. Being unreconciled can cause people to feel badly and act badly, which can cause their whole lives to turn out badly. So, be reconciled!

WE NEED TO BE RECONCILED

We may think we do not need to be reconciled with people who hurt us deeply. Chances are they are only going to hurt us again and maybe more deeply. The truth is, they don't deserve to be reconciled with us. We do, however, need to be reconciled with them for our own well-being. Remaining unreconciled can be extremely bad for us on many levels.

PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

Being unreconciled can cause health problems ranging from mild indigestion to chronic or serious physical and emotional illnesses. Unreconciled people suffer from the hurt that caused them to be unreconciled PLUS the hurt from very real physical and emotional illnesses. In short, they suffer twice as much and more than they realize or need to.

The suffering that comes from not being reconciled can cause people to be unproductive. They can experience everything from a job loss to a complete business failure. It can destroy relationships and leave people unable to love God, themselves, or others. Being unreconciled is a far more serious matter than we may think or understand.

EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES

Not being reconciled can be an underlying cause of depression, alcoholism, eating disorders, and more. Problems that exist may be intensified in the lives of the unreconciled. These problems can also be brought on by the tension and stress it requires to remain unreconciled.

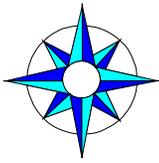
This brings us to an important point: Refusal to be reconciled actually requires a lot of effort. It can wear people out or down until they have no energy left to cope with even the smallest problems of life. If big problems arise, the unreconciled can be crushed down with no strength left to get back up. But, physical or emotional illnesses are not the worst problem that comes with being unreconciled. The worst problem carries some serious "eternal" consequences.

God commands us to be reconciled (Matthew 5:24 ESV). Being unreconciled is sin, and sin separates us from God's love and peace and joy. Refusal to be reconciled and forgive as God forgives us and commands us to forgive others (Colossians 3:13) can result in our not being forgiven and saved.

SPIRITUAL CONSEQUENCES

So being reconciled is something we do for ourselves to assure we are healthy and whole in our faith and lives. Of course, we won't know if being unreconciled caused an illness until we are reconciled. We do know it could cause problems, and when these problems are resolved after we are reconciled we will be very happy that we made the effort. We also know that being unreconciled is sin, and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and that we are reconciled with God through Christ, who gives us faith to be reconciled to each other and saved now and for all eternity.

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LAUGHTER HEALS?

Laughter is good because everything God created is good. Some say, “Laughter is the best medicine.” Research reports that laughter produces chemicals that heal the body. Most of us don’t know much about chemical reactions in the body. But we do know that laughter makes us feel good. People who feel good can heal faster. So, laughter may be good for healing, but can it heal?

LAUGHTER

If laughter can heal, bring in the clowns! Fill hospitals and homes with laughter. Share funny stories and books. Tell jokes and watch TV shows and movies that make people laugh. Make sure these are God-pleasing and healing laughter can be a wonderful blessing.

TEMPORARY

However, healing laughter is temporary. It works only as long as laughter continues. Laughter does not carry the lasting power to heal that the joy of the Lord provides.

The JOY OF The LORD

While laughter can produce belly laughs deep inside us, the joy of the Lord will *change us deep inside*. It turns our sorrow into joy (John 16:20 ESV) - and our mourning into dancing (Psalm 30:11). While laughter can delight our hearts, the joy of the Lord gladdens our souls. So then, if laughter is the best medicine, the joy of the Lord is better than the best medicine.

ETERNAL

When laughter stops, the joy of the Lord continues for every second of every day of our lives on earth and forever in heaven. We do not need to hear a joke to be filled with and blessed by the joy of the Lord. We don’t even need to laugh. In fact, we do not need to do anything. God does it all. The joy of the Lord is the effect God and His Word have on our souls, not because we read or hear it, but because God’s Spirit makes our joy complete.

Physical HEALING

Whether the joy of the Lord makes us laugh or not, it has the same effect as laughter but it runs deeper because it can help heal the body but it always heals the soul. So, visit the sick and bring them the joy of the Lord in His word and through your faith. Be sure to laugh with them too. Just know that while laughter may heal the body for a time, the joy of the Lord heals the soul in deep and lasting ways that can also heal the body if it is God’s will.

Spiritual HEALING

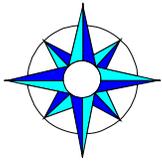
With so many people suffering physically and spiritually, we should not keep the joy of the Lord and its healing power to ourselves. As children of God, we have much to rejoice about and even more joy from our God to share. Every day and with great joy tell people all that God has done for you. Let them know your joy comes from Him and that they can have His joy too. Then lead them to the God you hold sacred so He can fill them with the joy only He can give, the joy of the Lord they need to turn their mourning into dancing and hold Him sacred too.

The STRENGTH of the LORD

The joy of the Lord is also our strength(Nehemiah 8:10). It fills us up and causes our faith to increase and grow stronger so that we can not only rise above struggles but be strengthened by them. It gives us the ability to rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for us (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17). His will is good for us and as He gives us strength and His joy we will when we want to cry, turn our hardships into blessings, and lead others to Him for the strength and joy to do the same.

Share the joy of the Lord by sharing this insert.

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WINNING SPORTSMANSHIP

Sportsmanship in the past was all about being honest and showing respect. Wining or losing was important, but what mattered most was playing the game well - as a team - for the honor of the team and the sport.

Today, sportsmanship has turned into a fierce competition. Pride and honor have gone out the door. Some games appear to be more about revenge than winning. Those who do play with respect and honor could get seriously hurt.

The violence allowed in or called a part of a sport has risen to dangerous levels. Add to the violence, a strong push to break records and require demanding, endless practices, and we see a kind of sportsmanship emerge that has the potential and ability to destroy players and sports.

PUT the "Spirit" BACK INTO SPORTSMANSHIP

It is definitely time to put the "Spirit" into sportsmanship, God's Spirit. He can protect players more than equipment. His love will not allow them to hurt themselves, their team, or the opposing team. Coaches, players, and fans with God's Spirit in them will not yell derogatory remarks to cut players down. Rather, they will build them up with words of encouragement. They will also work hard to make sure people around them do the same.

God's Spirit brings honor and respect back to the game. Not every game will be won, but there is a lot of winning for faith and lives that comes along with showing honor and respect in sports, and this honor and respect also flows into lives.

DON'T LOSE

Teams and players who are dishonest and disrespectful may win games, but they lose the respect of others and their own self-respect. Consequently, they lose who they are and even who they can become.

WIN!

Those who play honest and respectful games win honest and respectful lives. And honesty and respect win far more just a game for players. Their lives are filled with all the strength and good things that honesty and respect produce: joy, happiness, peace, etc. And the take these home for their lives and the lives they pass them on to for generations. Good can be passed on just as well as evil.

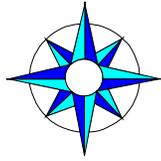
In His Word, God encourages us to run the good race so that we might receive the crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:7). This passage helps those who hold God sacred to run for Him and play for Him with respect and honor, and receive the endurance to always play well even when others do not. Their faith will not allow them to give up during any game or in any situation or difficulty in life.

Try These Winning Sportsmanship Guidelines:

- Use good language that lifts up players and shares your faith.
- Show respect especially to the disrespectful by faith.
- Win all the good things that faith-filled honesty and respect produce: joy, peace, and strength from the Lord for you life and to pass on for generations!

To share how to win at sports and life share this insert.

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KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER

The family who prays together stays together” was a well-known saying when I was growing up. Some families today still follow its advice and pray and stay together. Sadly, the number of families who do not pray is growing. On top of that, there are families who no longer eat or spend any time together - or communicate - or even connect with each other. Instead, they are falling apart. The world sees this and offers the solution: “Eat together!”

EAT TOGETHER

Eating together is a good. Families who eat together will tend to communicate and get to know each other and help each other with problems and are likely to “stay together.” But this does presuppose that families will communicate and that what they communicate is enough to hold them together.

COMMUNICATE

Time has proven that families who communicate and solve problems together grow stronger. The communication that holds families together, however, needs members who enjoy each other or members with very good communication skills. And it takes more than eating together to keep families from falling apart today.

It takes understanding that families who eat together do not automatically learn to communicate. Communication is something that needs to be initiated and nurtured. Family leaders need to plan questions to ask and think of subjects members will enjoy discussing. And, the best planning cannot assure family members have relationships that allow talking to each other. This is exactly why families need the Lord and why holding Him sacred is so important for their faith and their family stability.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

God created families and He knows how to help them stay together. In His Word, He says, “Love one another.” (John 13:34). It’s a concise command with powerful results. Families can become united and reunited by loving God who helps them to love each other. He knew families needed His love, and to make sure they received it, He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth out of His great love.

SOUL FOOD

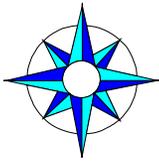
Jesus is the Bread of Life (John 6:41-51), the food that keeps families together in their souls or spiritually. While good food and good questions can help families communicate on an emotional level, spiritual or soul food helps them connect on the deepest level. So, along with good food and meaningful conversation, give your family a healthy portion of God’s love in Christ by partaking together of His Word and Sacraments, and praying together without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The following can help families provide spiritual food for the soul:

- Read a Bible passage and discuss together how this passage can help your family or individual members of your family.
- As a family, plan ways to put Christ into your individual and family lives every day and carry out your plans.
- Read God’s Word for guidance and power from Him to love Him and each other.
- Every day pray as a family as well as for each member of your family.

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For The Whole *Family of God*

Christ our Compass

MARRIAGE BUILDERS

ROMANCE

God created romance to be a vital part of marriage and romance can include intimacy. Yet, the kind of romance that helps to build strong marriages has less to do with intimacy and more to do with growing to love each other *intimately*.

Romance that builds strong marriages does not take for itself. It gives completely - unselfishly - with no thought of gain. It thinks and does what displays and proves deep love and commitment for the other person.

While there is never thought of return, romantically intimate love once established *out of love for God* returns all that is given and more. Married couples blessed by it come to know and love each other more intimately because God binds them together as one (Mark 10:8) and blesses their bond of love abundantly.

RENEWAL

One of the best marriage builders is love for God that loves as He commands and has loved us (John 15:12). This is the kind of love that places the needs of others above our own. It is romantic love that goes out of its way to renew or bring new life into a marriage relationship.

- some kinds of renewal help to keep marriage partners excited and surprised, like love notes. Put them in unexpected places - even in a favorite food, etc. Have fun being creative and full of surprises.

- to give your marriage renewal repeat your marriage vows. Even create new vows recommitting yourselves to God and to each other.

- basically make a list of things that will help to renew your marriage and do them. When you have done these things, make another list and continue to be renewed over and over again.

REPENTANCE

Repentance is a strong marriage builder couples often neglect. Married couples can drive each other crazy with the little and big annoying things they do. Sometimes they don't realize it. Other times they do realize it and desire to annoy their partner. This is what sin does and why couples need to repent.

True repentance desires not to sin again, not just to be sorry for sin. It is hard to repent but the best thing we can do for us and for our marriage. For the strength and desire to say we are sorry to each other and not hurt each other again, we need to repent of all our sins before God and hold Him sacred. Then, He will forgive us in Christ, who will empower us through the Spirit to feel sorrow over our sins against God and each other.

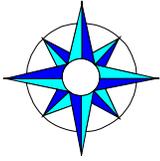
It is possible that more marriages have fallen apart due to lack of repentance than for any other reason. It is also very probable that more couples will stay married when they repent of their sins to God and each other. Repentance is not only a strong marriage builder, it is a powerful marriage saver.

RESTORATION

The wonderful thing about all marriage builders is that the more married couples use them, the stronger they and their marriage will be. Also, as others see what God does in them, they may desire to build up their marriage through the strength God gives them and even more marriages will be saved..

Share this Insert to Help Build Strong Marriages for Generations

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HONESTY, Still the Best Policy

DISHONESTY HURTS

I've been told that it is alright to be dishonest as long as you don't hurt anyone. Some people honestly do not realize their dishonesty hurts "them." People may not know they are dishonest. They may think they can live with their dishonest actions, but they make them look bad in their own eyes and one dishonest act makes it very easy to do another. Also, the consequences of dishonesty can increase and become more than they bargained for. Eventually, they can hurt many others.

Spiritually, dishonesty separates us from God because it is sin. It separates us from His peace and joy and love. All sin affects the world eventually when it is allowed to grow because it is unforgiven. This is why honesty is always the best policy for us and for the whole world..

HONESTY BLESSES THE WORLD

In a completely honest world, people could not be hurt by dishonesty. Wherever any dishonesty reigns, people cannot trust or feel secure. They live in fear of things like identity theft and losing everything.

Knowing how good life could be if people were honest makes it difficult to understand why people aren't honest, until we remember sin is real and the devil can make dishonesty look good. This is why the world needs to hold God sacred. He guides and strengthens us to be honest in and through His Word. Read the passages on the back of this insert and read God's Word to find more. Use them to guide and strengthen yourself and all of the people around you to the honest and pure lives that bless you and the world.

A SCRIPTURE GUIDE TO HONESTY

Constantly pray: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. Romans 16:19

But solid food [God's Word] is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. Hebrews 5:14

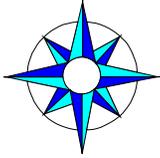
And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

Philippians 1:9-10

PRACTICAL STEPS TO HONESTY

- **study God's Word** diligently. It draws a clear line between honesty and dishonest clear.
- **ask God for strength** and for guidance to be honest and help others act in honest ways.
- **evaluate** what you do and say according to God's Word.
- **repent** each time you fall into dishonesty. If you do not repent, you will be more likely to repeat the transgression.
- **accept responsibility** for your dishonesty. Confess to those involved and make any wrongs your dishonesty caused right.
- **If you question** whether what you are doing is dishonest, don't do it. It is better not to do it than to be dishonest in any way.

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For The Whole *Family of God*

BE PATIENT

"God grant me patience, NOW!" is an age-old prayer of impatient people. We can laugh at the irony, but only because we have prayed the prayer. Oh, we may or may not have prayed the words, but impatience has been in our minds and hearts more than we care to admit.

SEEK DELAYED GRATIFICATION

It's hard to accept that we are better off waiting for what we want. Yet, those who work hard and wait for what they want appreciated it more, and those who have everything given to them appreciate it less. The "good feeling" that comes with working and waiting is "delayed gratification."

Unfortunately, we live in a world where impatience rules hearts and lives. Sin tells us it is silly to wait for what we can have now, even or especially if it is good for us to wait.

RECOGNIZE THE BATTLE

Impatience is a form of unbelief. It happens when our faith is weak and we fail to trust in the wisdom of God's timing and guidance. We must fight for patience, and our battle can be anything from a little skirmish over a long wait, to major combat over a circumstance that knocks out half our dreams, and anything in-between. What we battle is not as important as the patience we need to win - the patience that comes from God through Christ.

Whatever our battle, it is important to recognize it has been planned by God especially for us. The sooner we realize what God is doing in us and for us to make us patient, the sooner we will see patience as not only a gift from God but the strength God gives to those who love and obey and hold Him sacred.

DEPEND UPON THE LORD

Winning the battle to be patient requires asking God to stop us when impatience arises, and to remind us of how good patience is for us and for the people around us. He knows our lives are busy and we need to be places and do things, and He will help us be patient and get to where we need to be. He will help us slow down, let go, and let Him fill us with patience that others will see and desire to receive from the God we hold sacred. Our patience can lead others to Christ and patience that can both be passed on for generations.

The first step to being patient is admitting that we need to change. As sinners, we have no desire or power to change. We need the Lord. We need His grace that chooses us to be His own people (Romans 8:14-17), and His power to change, power we receive through His Word and Sacraments and as we pray. In short, we need to ask Him to fill us with His patience every time we ask - every time we are impatient, and He will do it because it is His will that we be patient (1 John 3:22).

HE WILL ACT!

As God works patience in us, we become patient often before we realize it. We may even wonder how or when we became patient. It had nothing to do with how hard we worked to be patient, and everything to do with our God working in us and changing us and filling us with His power to be patient. The God who has chosen us and who commands us to be patient, gives us the strength of faith to be patient.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Colossians 3:12

Share this Resource to Help Generations Become More Patient

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