

# Christ

*Life*

MINISTRIES

REPORT

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## Right-wing Flesh

*Unmasking a Seldom Suspected Culprit*

In the Bible, the word “flesh” can refer to a number of things. In some places it is used to describe the physical body. “Flesh” is also used to denote the condition man was left in after the Fall. Flesh is what Man became because of sin as opposed to what God originally created. Man was created a spiritual being with a nature that corresponded to God. Adam and Eve had the desire and the capacity to fellowship with God. But when sin entered the race, everything changed. Man’s essential character had been altered. God forewarned Adam that disobedience would bring death. And the day he sinned, he entered into the condition of spiritual death. Adam was now a fallen creature in a fallen world with a carnal nature that was opposed to God. *In going astray Man became flesh.*

The flesh can manifest itself in two ways: unrighteousness or self-righteousness. For the most part, Christians associate the flesh with the grosser, sensual sins such as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, and drunkenness. But the flesh may display itself in a less obvious and more acceptable manner. Hostility, wrangling, jealousy, wrath, strife, dissension, and spite are also works of the flesh. These self-righteous expressions of the flesh are just as offensive to God as the unrighteous manifestations. I understand that saved people are technically not *in the flesh*, but

who would deny that it is in the realm of possibility for saved people to *walk after the flesh*?

In politics and theology you have conservatives and liberals – right-wingers and left-wingers. Even so, the flesh may expose itself at either end of the spectrum. For our current purposes, let’s look at a few facets of right-wing flesh.

### Right-wing Flesh is Pharisaical

The Sadducees were the liberals in Jesus’ day. They only accepted the Pentateuch as inspired and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. On the other hand, the Pharisees were the conservatives. They accepted the entire Old Testament as the Word of God and firmly held to a literal resurrection in the afterlife.

But the Pharisees focused on the letter of the law as opposed to the spirit of the law. They were preoccupied with outward appearances instead of the inner attitudes of the heart. Though they had right views of the Bible as to its inspiration, they held wrong views as to its application.

Time and time again Jesus blasted the Pharisees. He rebuked them for their hypocrisy, their neglect of the weightier matters of the law, and their misguided zeal. They were sticklers on minor points and made major points of the things that were man-made instead of God-ordained.

If the Sadducees did not go far enough on the essentials, the Pharisees went too far on the unessential! There are two ways to destroy God’s absolutes: make everything relative, or go beyond the Scripture by making absolutes out of preferences. Either way the Word of God is distorted.

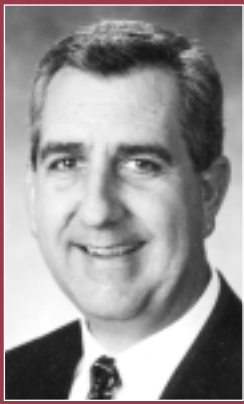
Properly held positions, coupled with arrogance and contempt, are no better than wrongly held positions. We have all heard that it is never right to do wrong in order to do right. Moreover, it is never right to be correct on the matter if we are wrong in the manner. Never forget that while men look on the outward appearance, God looks on our hearts.

Remember the Pharisee who evaluated himself purely from a performance-based mindset. He evaluated his life on an “I don’t” . . . “I do” mentality. He compared himself with adulterers, extortionists, and the repentant publican. In so doing he boasted in the fact that he was “not like other men.” He went on to justify himself by reminding God that he fasted twice during the week and gave tithes of all he possessed.

The heart of Pharisaism is an unwise comparison. When this man compared himself with other men, he rated fairly well. But if he had chosen God as his standard of comparison, he would have joined the publican on his knees in broken contrition. The Pharisee is the personification of right-wing flesh.

### Right-wing Flesh is Proud

There is no spirit in man more opposed to the Spirit of God than the spirit of pride.



## Personal Word

The prophet Ezekiel saw four living creatures and each of them had four faces. They all had the face of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle. Think about it — a single being with four faces. Even so there are many facets to what we commonly call the flesh. Pastor Roger Rosenau, in Newark Valley, N.Y., and I were chatting one day when he mentioned the concept of “right-wing flesh.” He then proceeded to expound on this theme. It really caught my attention and I began to meditate on this little-considered profile of the flesh.

The entrance of God’s Word brings light. I hope some light will be shed on this subject which will serve as a motivator to walk in the Spirit!

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## Right-wing Flesh *continued from Page 1*

Pride displays itself in three basic ways: pride of virtue; pride of knowledge; and pride of power. Virtuous pride glories, “I am cleaner than you.” Intellectual pride boasts, “I am smarter than you.” Dominating pride gloats, “I am stronger than you.” But Paul said the only thing worthy of glorying in was the Cross of Christ.

The Pharisees came to Christ dragging a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. This was merely a ploy to trap Christ into contradicting the Law of Moses. Jesus quietly wrote in the sand and her accusers hung their heads in shame and walked out one by one. Maybe Jesus wrote the names of the women these men had been with, or the names of those with whom they would like to commit adultery. Whatever He wrote smote their consciences severely. Their pretended moral superiority was a sham.

An advanced moralism can be a cover for a hidden immorality. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, uncleanness (impurity), and iniquity (See Matthew 23:27-28). All of their meticulous dictates and practices were but a smokescreen to camouflage their sin.

For the Pharisees their “system” had overshadowed the substance. Their tradition-bound ideology had become an end in itself. Rigidity and inflexibility can provide a security barrier for the flesh to hide behind. The Law commanded Israel to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. Their “do no work guidelines” stipulated that no “burdens” were to be lifted on the Sabbath. The Rabbis painstakingly defined a burden as: milk enough for a gulp; oil enough to anoint the small toe of a day-old infant; ink enough to write two letters of the alphabet; anything that weighs as much as two fried eggs; or a pebble big enough to throw at a bird. The whole intent of the command had been lost in a systemic legalism which enabled them to check off the blocks and look good in their own eyes.

The quest for an air-tight systematic theology can breed a stifling intellectual pride. Jeremy Taylor said, “To be proud of learning is the greatest ignorance.”

When *logic* replaces the *theologic* as the guiding principle, beware of haughtiness. Warmness of heart will invariably vanish when proselytizing others to a particular point of view becomes primary. As someone said, “Pride is the only disease that makes everybody sick except the person who has it!”

## Right-wing Flesh is Pugnacious

A combative and quarrelsome disposition is the meaning of the word pugnacious. Peevishness and a bent toward provocation are the insignia of right-wing flesh. But Scripture warns us, “Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another” (Galatians 5:26). On the contrary, charity is the trademark of a Spirit-filled man.

Sedition, one of the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5, means disunion, dissension, or division. Paul rebuked the Corinthians for their fleshliness, “For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Corinthians 3:3). Have you considered that unnecessary divisions may be just as damaging to Christ’s cause as a moral scandal?

“Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17). Charles Spurgeon said, “Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin.” Spurgeon, for conscience sake, had to withdraw from the Baptist Union. This was only after repeated pleas and appeals to his brethren to amend their ways. He was brokenhearted at the accommodations within his group and the consequent position he was forced to take. He walked as far as he could with the Baptist Union, but ultimately it became clear he could no longer identify with the wayward direction of his group. Detachment was the last resort for Spurgeon and he experienced profound grief because of it. The spirit in which he approached that situation is a model to be emulated if it unhappily becomes necessary.

The name Pharisee means separatist.

Their strong stands and inflexibility were of such a nature that their hearts were closed to the Messiah. Their institutional rules and regulations became an end in themselves instead of an expression of their devotion to God. Think about it, those who held the highest possible view of Scripture rejected God's Son!

Biblical separation is always balanced. Someone said, "Conviction with compassion equals communication. Compassion minus conviction equals compromise. Conviction minus compassion produces contention." Those who are always eager to cast the first stone should first check their heart motives. A combative, belligerent spirit is another way right-wing flesh expresses itself.

## Right-wing Flesh is Prayerless

The engine of an intense spirituality must always be the driving force of any movement which avoids the overreaching tentacles of the flesh. Vital reality with God can only be maintained in the place of prayer because this is the only place where the flesh can be subdued. Well disciplined people can work tirelessly and continuously "for" God. One pastor from a foreign country commented how impressed he was with how much American Christians could do – without God!

Prayerlessness is the very first sign of pride. The flesh is prayerless because the flesh is proud by nature. Lack of dependency on God is one of the surest evidences of a self-sufficient, flesh-based ministry. On the contrary, prayer is a Declaration of Dependence upon God.

Orthodoxy without spiritual vigor is perversion. An orthodox iceberg can do no more to genuinely warm hearts than the false-fire of left-wing progressivism. Truth on ice *is not the truth* at all! As strange as it may seem, as paradoxical as it may be, it is possible to take a stand for truth and yet be void of its power.

Because of its predominance, many have grown accustomed to prayerless study, prayerless ministry, dead services, and dead sermons. They would never in their wildest imagination consider this style of ministry just as fleshly as the sensual charlatan on the religious television network! Guarded

restraint or wild exuberance yields the same net result *unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down*.

When you depend on education, you get what education can do. When you depend on men, you get what man can do. When you depend on prayer, you get what God can do!

## Right-wing Flesh is Profitless

Jesus said the flesh profits nothing – it is the Spirit that gives life (John 6:63). What good is it to have a lot of irons in the fire if the fire is going out? Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, "One of the greatest dangers in the spiritual life is to live on your own activities. In other words, the activity is not in its right place as something which you do, but has become something that keeps you going." When zeal for the cause supercedes fellowship with Christ, how can any eternal benefit be realized? What advantage is it to dwell in Jerusalem if you never see the face of the King?

We read in the Old Testament that the Ark of God was being carried on unsanctified shoulders just before the glory departed from Israel. Priestly work was being done by perverse men. Religious work done by unspiritual men brought judgment upon the nation. They forsook the Lord and the Lord forsook them. Self-righteous flesh is just as counterproductive to the Kingdom Cause as unrighteous flesh. The letter alone kills – it is the Spirit which gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6). God's work cannot be promoted merely by human effort – "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

The remedy for the flesh, regardless of its expression, is the cross of Christ. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Galatians 5:24). The flesh could not be satisfied; it had to be crucified. God's purpose in redemption was to get us *out of the flesh and into Christ*.

We are not in the flesh, but the flesh is still in us. Since we are not yet in our glorified bodies, we still have the capacity for fleshly activity. But saved people have the power to overcome the lusts of the flesh – even right-wing flesh!

# Prayer Advances 2003

When we depend on organization, we get what organization can do. When we depend on education, we get what education can do. When we depend on man, we get what men can do. But when we depend on prayer, we get what God can do!

The need of the hour is beyond organizational skill, intellectual achievement, and man's power – we need GOD'S POWER! God's kingdom will not be advanced by our churches being filled with men, but by men in our churches becoming filled with God.

Anointed men who carry a burden for revival will be preaching the Word. Make no mistake; this is not another seminar or lecture series. Great care has gone into inviting men who still PREACH THE WORD!

The program for the Men's, Ladies', and Youth Prayer Advances is identical: straightforward Bible preaching, heart-felt singing, individual and group prayer time, and great fellowship with like-minded people.

## Men's Prayer Advance South

Once again we will be using the Baptist Assembly on beautiful Lake Louise in Toccoa, GA. Brother Harold Peasley, of South Africa, is the featured speaker. He is an excellent preacher who delivers a gripping message. As always, men are encouraged to bring their mature sons with them. Plan now on attending February 20-22!

## Men's Prayer Advance

The Northeast and annual Virginia Advances are being combined in 2003. We will be returning February 27-March 1 to the Rock Alum Springs Conference Center near Lexington, VA. Our men were thoroughly impressed with the facilities and food last year. (Padded chairs will be provided this year!) Brother Larry Sauvageot and Tom Farrell are the featured speakers for this Advance. Many pastors use this time to get away with their men and set the course for the year. Register now to reserve your space!



Carol Trahan

## Ladies' Prayer Advance

The 4-H Conference Center on beautiful Smith Mountain Lake will be hosting our Ladies' Advance this year. This is an excellent facility situated right on the lake front. Plenty of semi-private lodging is available. Brother Denny Kenaston and Carol Trahan are the featured speakers. We are anticipating a fabulous time of spiritual refreshing and renewal at this Advance. Don't miss this unique opportunity March 27-29!



Denny Kenaston

## Youth Prayer Advance South

This will be our first venture southward with the Youth Advance. Ambassador Baptist College and their staff in Lattimore, N.C. will be hosting us August 7-9. Evangelist Jim Van Geldren is an experienced and capable "truth communicator" to young people. If you are weary of the "youth culture" ministry approach and its results (or lack thereof), then you should consider the Youth Prayer Advance.



Harold Peasley



Tom Farrell



Larry Sauvageot



Jim Van Geldren



The Virginia Men's Prayer Advance in Goshen at Rockbridge Alum Springs Young Life Camp.



Will Galkin

## Youth Prayer Advance

Camp Blue Ridge will be the site for the annual Youth Advance August 14-16. We will be meeting under the Big Tent for another great three days of preaching and praying. Evangelist Will Galkin and others will be on hand to challenge our hearts with "industrial strength" truth!



A powerful testimony from one of our foreign attendees at the Youth Prayer Advance.

## Couples' Advance

At last, another Couples' Advance is scheduled October 9-11. This Advance will be held at the Holiday Inn-Tanglewood in Roanoke, VA. Located within walking distance of the Tanglewood Mall, this full service hotel has microwaves and refrigerators in every room. Dr. Jim Binney is a widely respected counselor and speaker. He operates the Moorehead Manor in which he ministers to pastors and their families. Brother Binney is a fabulous preacher who has deep insights into the Word of God. Plan now to get away for a great weekend!



Dr. Jim Binney

Brochures on each Advance are available upon request or may be viewed and printed from our web site:

[www.christlifemin.org](http://www.christlifemin.org)



A sweet time of prayer at the Couples' Prayer Advance in West Virginia at Canaan Valley Resort.



The Ladies' Prayer Advance in Virginia, coming to a new location in 2003 at the Smith Mountain Lake 4-H Camp.



The Chorale from Georgia singing at the Youth Prayer Advance in Montebello, Virginia at Camp Blue Ridge.

# New Publication!

## Time With God

**W**ould you like to read through the entire Bible in just one year? Are you interested in a tool that will assist you in organizing your Bible study? Do you desire to help your family develop the daily discipline of studying God's Word?

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, then **TIME WITH GOD** is the answer. **TIME WITH GOD** provides you with a reasonable reading schedule that will get you through the Scripture in a single year. It also will assist you in contemplating the Word by furnishing space to record your thoughts each day. Accountability is another great benefit when the entire family is working through the **TIME WITH GOD** diary. Family members can use **TIME WITH GOD** for personal devotions in the morning. Then you have a ready-made family worship for the evening as each member brings their Bible and notebook to relate how God spoke to them in their quiet time. The attractive four-color cover makes this spiral bound volume both appealing and practical. It has 206 numbered pages.

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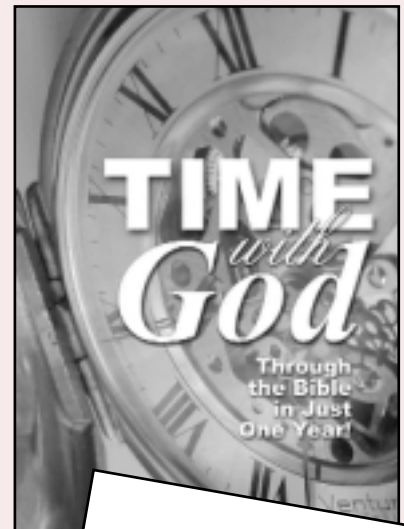
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## 2003 Prayer Advance Schedule

Men's Prayer Advance South, Feb. 20-22

Men's Prayer Advance, Feb. 27-Mar. 1

Ladies' Prayer Advance, March 27-29

Youth Prayer Advance South, Aug. 7-9

Youth Prayer Advance, Aug. 14-16

Couples' Advance, Oct. 9-11

## Prayer Advance Testimonies

"What a great weekend with the Lord! I cannot find the words to thank all of you for your ministry to us at the Men's Prayer Advance. It ranks as one of the highest points of my spiritual life!" - Maryland (Men's Prayer Advance)

"One of the greatest blessings I still treasure is the last service. I have not gotten over the invitation, hearing men weeping over souls. This is America's only hope - men weeping over souls and for Revival...Since the Prayer Advance, we have seen the Lord's hand in our church." - Pastor, North Carolina (MPA South)

"God has cleansed me. I was bitter for many years and lost my joy. I finally realized why. I



The Men's Prayer Advance South at Georgia Baptist Conference Center in Toccoa.

begged God for forgiveness and He graciously gave it to me." - Pennsylvania (Ladies' Prayer Advance)

"The YPA has renewed my weary spirit; it has reproved my proud heart; it has revived me!" - Georgia (Youth Prayer Advance)

"This time together and the knowledge we as parents and partners have gained has saved our family and our marriage. Thank God for His Word, His way, and His disciples." - Virginia (Couples')

# *Spiritual* **LIFE** **Crusade**

## **January 1-3**

Impact 21  
Independence, MO

## **January 12-17**

Wakefield Valley Bible  
Church  
New Windsor, MD

## **January 19-22**

Family Bible Fellowship  
Woodstown, NJ

## **January 26-31**

Heritage Baptist Fellowship  
Vinton, VA

## **February 10-11**

Ambassador Baptist College  
Lattimore, NC

## **February 20-22**

Men's Prayer Advance  
South  
Toccoa, GA

## **February 27-March 1**

Men's Prayer Advance  
Goshen, VA

## **March 6-9**

People's Fellowship  
Baptist Church  
Rocky Mount, NC

## **March 16-19**

Colonial Baptist Church  
Blue Ridge, VA

## **March 23-25**

Berean Baptist Church  
Lynchburg, VA

## **March 27-29**

Ladies' Prayer Advance  
Wirtz, VA