

The Keavy Encourager

WELCOME TO THE KEAVY CHURCH OF CHRIST!

(June 28 2026)

- Visitors: Please fill out a visitor card and grab a Visitor Welcome Kit!
- Communion is available in the front of the building on the table.
- Our website is: www.keavychurchofchrist.com, and our email address is keavychurchofchrist@outlook.com Please share this information with your family, friends, and social media pages! Services are available online at our website and on our YouTube page.
- If you would like to be subscribed to brother Mark Tabata's email list (for weekday devotionals and other Bible and Bible related studies), please let him know!

June Prayer List

Kurt And Joanne Martin, Sanders Family, Eddie Craft (Cancer), Jimmy Brooks (Tammy's cousin, cancer), Kathy Mingus (Cancer), Anne Baker (Cancer), Sandi Tabata, Bill and Mary Ruth Browning, David and Ivy Mosley, Margie Turner (Hospice), Jake Robbins (Cancer), Coy Gilliam (Cancer), Carman Carroll, Edward Young Sr., Ed Young, Harmony Mullins, Claude Humphrey (Cancer), Felicity Lanham (Cancer), Piere Daigel, People In Ukraine, Barbourville Work, Rod Hill (Cancer-friend of brother Paul), Charlene Reef (Cancer), Jimmy Turner (Cancer), Danny Day, Kathy McFall (Brother Gary Lewis' Cousin, Cancer), Lisa Hurt, Terry & Rita Wooton And Family, Amanda Clark, Keith And Kathy Bowling, Tiffany Cox And Family, Keith And Kathy Bowling, Quintin Nelton, Kenny Irvin, James Williams, Shirley Lawson, Ronnie Gregory, Tammy Sapienza, Josh Lewis, Wade Cowden, Jake Hale, James and Anne MacDonald, Krista Cox, Linda Cowden, Wayne Hamblem, Lillie Bennett, Gary Fleming, Tristen Meadors (New Christian), Kathryn Burns Family (Lost Loved Ones), Gabriel McVeigh, Cody Riley, Ashley Wilson, Dianne Joop, Jim And Donna Abell, Frankie Sheeran, Hill Family (Lost Loved Ones)

The Sad Link Between Broken Homes And Atheism

(More Bible studies available @ www.marktabata.com)

It is written:

Psalm 11:3-If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?

Some years ago, I read an intriguing reference in a book by Lee Strobel. He pointed out that some modern day studies have noted a link between famous atheists and broken homes. While interviewing Lynn Anderson, he points out:

Obviously, parents can play a significant role in shaping a child's view of God. In fact, one study showed that most of history's most famous atheists—including Bertrand Russell, John Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche, Albert Camus, Sigmund Freud, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, and Karl Marx—had a strained relationship with their father or their dad died early or abandoned them at a young age, thus creating difficulty in them believing in a heavenly Father.⁶ (Lee Strobel, *The Case for Faith: A Journalist Investigates the Toughest Objections to Christianity*, 229 (Kindle Edition): Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan)

Recently, Jana S. Harmon wrote a fascinating book that goes into greater detail regarding this matter. She documents her personal research into the lives of fifty former atheists who have become Christians.

Jason saw no need to seriously think about God because faith did not seem to make any practical difference in the lives of Christians he knew, saying, "I saw all the people around me living as if there was no God. My parents were nominally religious in that we said our prayer at night, but it wasn't meaningful to anybody. It was just what we did. That's where I decided that I didn't believe it and there was really no need for me to really think about it." General difficulties in life relationships, experiences, and events also created doubt and disbelief in God. Many decide either 'God is not real.' Or, if He exists, 'God is not good.' He is either not 'there' or if He is, is not 'fair,' their perceptions based upon certain expectations and disappointments. ¹² Emotional abuse, physical abuse, abandonment, or absence of a father has been correlated with atheism, according to Paul Vitz. ¹³ Although healthy maternal and paternal relationships (10%) contributed to non-belief for some, troubled and/ or absent relationships with mothers (14%) or fathers (28%) created resistance to belief among a minority of former atheists in the study. Jacob was raised in a loving, active Christian home, believing in God and trusting Him as 'caretaker.' He looked up to his own father, a Christian leader and teacher, until his father abandoned the family. Jacob's loss of trust in his own father transferred to his loss of trust and belief in God. He described the pain that led him to atheism: About halfway through middle school my family began to change. My family started not being as involved in the church.

My father began to not come home as often. Eventually my parents divorced and that certainly hurt my faith, not perhaps at that moment but more so gradually without the leadership, the guidance on a daily basis. I didn't see him for about six years. I didn't understand why it could have happened or why it would have happened, why someone or parents who were so involved in the church, why this could have happened to them. That was very groundbreaking for me. I prayed for the relationship that they would not divorce, and then it did. So, I felt very unheard. 14 Jennifer recalled the troubled relationship with her father that distanced her from belief in God: I grew up not trusting fathers as I had been abandoned by mine . . . My father was in and out of our lives. He was gone quite a bit. And when he did show up, he was very difficult or violent or despondent or what not. So, by extension, I wasn't going to trust a father, and certainly not an eternal father . . . I was working several jobs and supporting my family. My dad was in and out of my life. The road of my adolescence with him was rocky. This informed my distrust of any spiritual father, by extension. My mom was a single mom raising us and she was drinking at night. I was putting her to bed after she was drinking, and I was working through college. I was so busy surviving. Among those surveyed, prolonged negative life experiences prompted atheism in two-fifths (40%). Broken and depressed, David's parents divorced when he was 14. An incident of perceived Christian hypocrisy was the final straw leading David to "give his life to Satan": Some of it was personal experience with Christians. There was a time after my mom had kicked my dad out of the house and after they had been divorced. There was a mission fieldworker who came over to our house. I thought, 'Whatever, that's cool.' I had some friends over for my birthday party. I was 15 or 16. At some point, I went to ask my mom something. I couldn't find them. They were in the bedroom. I knocked on the door and walked in and they were naked. That left a bad taste towards Christianity. As a child, Gary was raised in a family that mocked and dismissed God and religion, saying, "We didn't go to church at all. We didn't pray. We didn't acknowledge God as creator. At home, faith in God did not exist. We didn't talk about it. We didn't respect others who did. We didn't respect them. God was mocked and He wasn't relevant at all. It was like a big bag of nothing." Compounding his view of an absent God was the reality of an emotionally absent, abusive father. He recalled, "We grew up socially going to church. The primary influence to get them out of it was my dad's alcoholism. He was drunk every day. He wasn't this loud furniture breaking alcoholic. Fifteen minutes after dinner, he would be asleep on the couch drunk. He was just absent. My dad never really addressed me, never really engaged me. I think when you are doing that and living that way, church doesn't make any sense at all." After a disturbing episode of sexual abuse at the hands of a neighbor, he admitted, "life got very dark for me," and he began to seriously reject God, reflecting, As I started

to get a bit older, I made a decision to reject God through these painful experiences. People would say, “Oh, God loves you.” Those messages might creep in and I thought, “If He loves you, there is no way this happens. This is ridiculous. These people are just dense. The idea that God loved you or cared about you. There’s no way in hell that that could be true.” I was so sad and shipwrecked underneath. When you have an alcoholic parent, it’s not a safe place to talk about what’s true. You don’t do sadness. You have to be tough and handle things on your own. So, the idea that there is this loving heavenly Father, it didn’t compute at all for me. At age 12, Adam’s parents divorced, undermining his sense of security. This experience along with perceived ‘trouble in the world’ made him feel disillusioned about life, prompting him towards distrust of authority figures who were viewed as uncaring, absent, or irrelevant. These experiences also paved the way towards his disbelief in God. He recalled, It appeared like every authoritative structure seemed to be failing me—whether it be my parents or the government or the church. They all seemed to be failing and so I thought it would be better for me to make up my own version of truth. I don’t think I made a conscious decision to do so until well after the fact. It seemed better to me to base things on my experience rather than to base things on failing institutions. (Jana S. Harmon, *Atheists Finding God: Unlikely Stories of Conversions to Christianity in the Contemporary West*, 45-47 (Kindle Edition): Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books)

It is very encouraging, however, to read of the many accounts of the persons interviewed by Harmon who eventually turned their lives to Christ.

The purposes of this book are many. Altogether, this comprehensive research provides rich mixed-method data from which to understand individual perspectives and stories within the larger context of emerging patterns and integrated influences throughout the process of religious conversion. This inclusive approach provides broad insights as to why and how former atheists rejected belief in God, became open to consider the possibility of another perspective, and how they came to believe and live as if God exists and Christianity is true. It also stands as a counter-narrative to prevailing negative voices that belief in God is not intellectually and existentially plausible, attractive, relevant, and good. Rather, it shows that belief can be and is held by intellectual, educated people, even by those who would have never considered it possible. This investigation into the lives and language of former atheists provides a unique and fresh understanding of atheism and religious conversion with implications for the researcher, the professor, the apologist, and the evangelist who seek to understand belief formation and change between nearly opposite worldviews in a more

integrated, holistic, and practical way. (Jana S. Harmon, *Atheists Finding God: Unlikely Stories of Conversions to Christianity in the Contemporary West*, 151--156 (Kindle Edition): Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books)

Some things here are worthy of notice.

First, the importance of building a home upon God's Word cannot be overstated. What is needed more than anything is for husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, to lay a solid foundation for their relationships upon the Word of God. It is when homes are built upon the Bible that they have the ability to reach the fullness of joyful potential that God desires for His people.

Second, it is also reassuring to notice that even though broken homes can be a factor in lack of faith in the world, we are still able to see the grace of God exhibited. It is encouraging to remember that the Word of God contains many examples of what we would call "dysfunctional homes." In fact, as one Bible scholar has noted, this seems in many ways to be the norm especially in the Book of Genesis!

Genesis is filled with human drama that touches and helps every one of us on a personal level. For example, every family in Genesis is what we today would call dysfunctional. I regard this as a divine gift. If your family is dysfunctional, the fact that all the families in Genesis are dysfunctional should provide you with some solace. I think the Bible is telling us that family dysfunction is a normal—though not necessarily inevitable—part of the human condition. Indeed, all of Genesis is a statement of how troubled the human condition is. The rest of the Bible, especially the next four books, provides solutions to the troubled human condition. To put it in medical terms, Genesis describes the patient's (the human being's) pathology, and the books that follow offer the wisdom and moral instruction necessary to cure the patient. (Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Genesis*, 15-16 (Kindle Edition): Washington, D.C.: Regnery Faith)

If you are reading this as a parent or spouse who has failed in some way, yield yourself to the grace of God Who is still working in the world and Who loves you and can work in your family and situation in ways that you may not fully understand. None is perfect except the Savior, and He came to this world to bring salvation for sinful and "dysfunctional" persons.

1 Timothy 1:15-This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

*Mark 16:15-16-And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **16** He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*

Third, these facts remind us that there is often far more to atheism than intellectual bias. Indeed, the facts demonstrate that children are born with an understanding that there is a Creator. It is often the events that occur in life which bitter us against the Lord.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH on children's developing minds and supernatural beliefs suggests that children normally and rapidly acquire minds that facilitate belief in supernatural agents. Particularly in the first year after birth, children distinguish between agents and nonagents, understanding agents as able to move themselves in purposeful ways to pursue goals. They are keen to find agency around them, even given scant evidence. Not long after their first birthday, babies appear to understand that agents, but not natural forces or ordinary objects, can create order out of disorder. Before children start school, they see the natural world as purposefully designed—even in ways that religious parents would not teach or endorse. This tendency to see function and purpose, plus an understanding that purpose and order come from minded beings, makes children likely to see natural phenomena as intentionally created. Who is the creator? Children know people are not good candidates. It must have been a god. Gods are not just humans with the ability to make mountains, trees, and butterflies, however. Early default assumptions about minded agents make it easy for children to understand gods as having full-access knowledge, superperception, superpower, immortality, and perhaps moral goodness. In fact, on some of these dimensions, children show the capability of reasoning in a theologically accurate way before being able to reason accurately about human beings on the same dimensions. This collection of religious ideas is among the features of what I call natural religion. In this chapter, I describe natural religion and also how it deviates from theological beliefs. Though children have strong natural tendencies toward religion generally, these tendencies do not inevitably propel them toward any one religion. They still have a lot to learn. (Justin L. Barrett, *Born Believers: The Science of Children's Religious Belief*, 135-136 (Kindle Edition): New York, NY: Free Press A Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.)

Belief in God and His Word is far from anti-intellectual. True faith is based upon the evidence of His Being all around us: for in Him, we live, and move and have our Being (Acts 17:26-28: cf. Romans 1:18-20).

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

Announcements

- Please continue to remember Roger and Sandra Frazier in your prayers as they continue to suffer with various health struggles.
- We express our condolences to the Hill family for a recent death in their family. Please remember them in your prayers.
- Brother Gary Fleming continues to have many health problems as well. Please remember him in your prayers.
- Sister Joanne Martin recently had a bad fall and has been in the hospital. Please remember her and brother Kurt in your prayers.
- We are thankful for all of our Bible class teachers! Starting in July, we will begin a three month teaching rotation for the Sunday School teachers for the children. Sisters Phyllis Sanders and Kristina Helton will help teach from July-September. If you would be willing to help in these endeavors, please contact brother Mark.
- Please stay for our church dinner after Sunday morning services today!
- Mark Your Calendar! Our Vacation Bible School will be July 19-22. 6-8 PM every night. The theme will be, "Superheroes Of The Bible." There will be classes for all ages (including adults). If you are willing to teach there will be a signup sheet in the entryway. There is also a signup sheet for help with food every night and volunteers for decorating the building and other activities.
- Regularly Scheduled Events; Sunday Bible Class All Ages (Every Sunday @ 10:00); Sunday Worship (Every Sunday @ 11:00 AM And 5:00 PM); Wednesday Evening Bible Class All Ages (Every Wednesday @ 5:00); Keavy Ladies And Supportive Saints (K.L.A.S.S. Every First Sunday Of The Month After Evening Service); Keavy Support Group And Youth Group Meeting (Every Tuesday @ 6:00); Keavy Fellowship Meal (Every Last Sunday of The Month After Morning Service)

Bible Class And Sermon Notes

A.M. Sermon: Questions And Answers About Christian Zionism

P.M. Sermon: The Restoration Movement

Questions And Answers About Christian Zionism

(More Bible Studies Available @ marktabata.com)

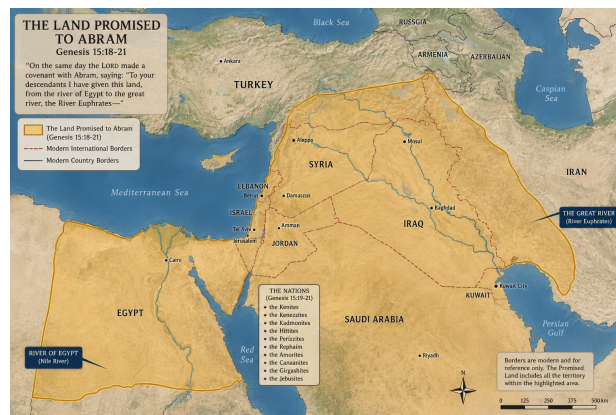
Who Are The Jews?

Genesis 10:21-And *children* were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder.

Genesis 12:1-3-Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. **2** I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

What Land Did God Promise To Give To Abraham And His Descendants?

Genesis 15:18-21-On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—. **19** the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, **20** the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, **21** the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."



Did God Ever Fulfill Those Land Promises?

Joshua 21:43-45-So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. **44** The LORD gave them

rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. 45 Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

Nehemiah 9:7-8-You *are* the LORD God, Who chose Abram, And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, And gave him the name Abraham; 8 You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him To give the land of the Canaanites, The Hittites, the Amorites, The Perizzites, the Jebusites, And the Girgashites—To give *it* to his descendants. You have performed Your words, For You *are* righteous.

1 Kings 8:56-Blessed *be* the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses.

Did God Say That The Jews Could Retain The Land Of Canaan Unconditionally?

Joshua 23:14-16-Behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed. Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the LORD your God promised you, so the LORD will bring upon you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the LORD your God has given you. 16 When you have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you."

Were There Land Promises Made After These Events?

Babylonian Captivity

Joshua 30-33

Ezekiel 36-37

1948 Return

Ezekiel 4:4-6-Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. *According* to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. 5 For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days,

three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. 6 And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.

“ $360 \times 7 = 2,520$ prophetic years; $2,520 \times 360 = 907,220$ days 907,220 days on the modern calendar is 2,483 yrs & 285 days $2,483 \text{ yrs} \times 365.25 = 906915$; $907200 - 906915 = 285$ days August 3, 537 BC + 2,483 yrs = August 3, AD 1946 Add 1 year (no 0 Year) = AD 1947; Add 285 days = May 14, AD 1948” (Ken Johnson, Th.D., Ancient Prophecies Revealed, 206 (Kindle Edition): CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform)

NOTHING IN SCRIPTURE SUGGESTS THAT THE JEWISH PEOPLE WOULD RETAIN THE LAND OF ISRAEL UNCONDITIONALLY! GOD FULFILLED EVERY LAND PROMISE!!

Did The Original Land Promises Foreshadow Something Else?

Romans 4:13-For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Hebrews 11:9-10-By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

Hebrews 11:13-16-These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Who Are God's People Today?

Galatians 3:26-29-For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 6:16-And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

A common interpretation equates the two categories, the xa(before EJt[tov 'topar]X tov 9EOV being treated as epexegetic. 'They who pursue these things [the 'new things of grace']', says Chrysostom ad loc., 'shall enjoy peace and amity, and may properly be called by the name of "Israel": This is in agreement with the position which is taken up explicitly as early as Justin Martyr, that the Christian church is 'the true, spiritual Israel' (Dial. 11.5). This interpretation is defended by N. A. Dahl, 'Der Name Israel: Zur Auslegung von Gal 6, 16', Judaica 6 (1950), 161-170. There is a continuity between the older Israel and the church in that the church is a community of both Jews and Gentiles; thus U. Luz equates the Israel of God with the church of Jews and Gentiles (Das Geschichtsverständnis bei Paulus [München, 1968], 269). (F.F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians (New International Greek Testament Commentary (NIGTC)), 4925-4929 (Kindle Edition): Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company)

The church is God's chosen people today, the "true Israel of God."

Ephesians 2:14-16-For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, **15** having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, **16** and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Are YOU a member of Christ's church?

Acts 2:38-Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Are you a FAITHFUL member of His church?

1 John 1:9-If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.