

# The Forgotten Christians

## *The Church's mismanagement of believers*

The "Church" today looks a lot like other organizations who are wanting to show and demonstrate growth and success by adding to their numbers and adding to their affluence. Although unadmitted, church success is often measured by numerical attendance, size of buildings and campuses. And like human organizations, our Sunday services are often judged by "performance excellence" standards. But I hasten to say, despite these humanistic flaws, God still uses us. And for the record, I am a supporting member in a large church. I'm not just airing a grievance; I'm praying with all my might that this book will shine a very bright light on a huge, missed opportunity for a large segment of everyday church attendees.

It is understandable that that we are obsessed with encouraging attendees to make a personal decision to accept Christ and become a baptized believer, the more the better! It is in the Great commission. Here is how Jesus worded it:

*"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"*

So, it is very plain that the church must be evangelistic and bring the world to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. And we rejoice with the angels in heaven every single time it happens.

But it's in the very next verse that it identifies the forgotten Christians whereof I speak. Here is that all too often missed command.

*"teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV)*

See how Jesus worded it? First, get people saved, then second, get people mature (grounded) in their new faith. This is what theologians call "sanctification." The one-two punch of the great

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commission is Salvation immediately followed by Sanctification. And to be theologically complete, Sanctification is followed by Glorification (Think heaven ready.) But it is that second phase where the “forgotten” Christians reside that has my heart’s attention. Yes, they celebrate the grace of God being saved, but then what? Our churches are filled with hurting and depressed people. Their divorce and suicide rates are little better than people of the world. Often, they are joyless people saying anemic prayers with little to brag about in the way of answered prayers and victorious lives. Why? Where is their bold sacrificial love, the contagious joyfulness, the more-than-conquerors army of God? Why isn’t the world clamoring at the doors of the church crying out, “let me in, I want to be like you and have what you have?”

I know these people all too well, for I was one of them for the longest time. I was saved and then promptly deserted and forgotten. It wasn’t because people didn’t care about me, it was because the church has not seen the essential relevance of making sure every believer has these core truths to having Emotional and Spiritual health. I was left on my own to figure out how to apply salvation’s grace to my daily life. There are numerous reasons for the church’s miss management of an entire segment of the church’s population. This book is focused on only one of them. This segment of Christians was and are weak because of this one primary reason, they were saved but were never given the core foundational truths on which they could grow. The Bible predicts what will happen if this strong and solid foundation is absent.

*“If the **foundations** are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” Psalm 11:3 (ESV)*

Many people in the church are suffering from the world’s destruction of our spiritual foundational truths, as was myself. This book (entitled, ***Life’s Joy Killers and Joy Makers***), and my earlier book (entitled, ***Untangling the Seven Desires of your Heart***), are dedicated to these foundational truths on which strong and vibrant Christian lives can be built and flourish. Most, if not all, of our emotional and relational problems can be directly tied to one or more of these grounding biblical principles. The existence of these two books are completely dedicated to Christians who are living a sub optimized spiritual lives. As you read this new book, let this promise of Jesus become yours:

*“These things I have spoken to you, **that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.**” John 15:11(ESV)*

To make this an everyday reality within the body of Christ (Church), our prayers and goals must be identical to those of Paul regarding his prayers for the Ephesians where he said:

*“that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts*

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through faith—**that you, being rooted and grounded in love**, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and **to know the love of Christ** that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” Eph. 3:16-19 (ESV)

Once again, the Bible emphasizes the absolute importance of having that foundation of love where Paul expresses it this way, “**being rooted and grounded in love.**” Paul knew precisely what he met by saying this in his prayer, for he was “loved” out of his sinful pride and murderous lifestyle. He had his guilt and shame completely removed by the redeeming love of Christ. He knew what it meant to be humbled into brokenness then being rescued and empowered by the love of God. He had experienced personal transformation by the hand of God.

Sin is not a popular word in today’s lexicon, but when we dilute the awfulness of sin, we automatically dilute the beauty and power of God’s Love and cheapen Christ’s pain on hill calvary. Until each of us experience the matchless experience of being loved out of our failures of living and experience the overwhelming healing of God’s love, we do not have the foundation upon which Christ can build a courageous and victorious life capable of bold love and abundant Joy. To this end, my books have been written.

This communication is focused on sharing why I wrote ***Untangling the Seven Desires of Your Heart*** and, ***Life’s Joy Killers and Joy Makers***.

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