

## “How can I help you?”

The best thing anyone has ever said about this ministry is: “I can’t believe how much just knowing this truth has affected every area of my life.”

The thrust of Pentecostalism is not to give you peace, but to give you physical advantages. Some Pentecostal-type churches claim the ability to rid you of a headache, heal your broken leg, or put a nicer car in your driveway. Even if they could do this, how enduring are these so-called blessings?



Paul’s gospel is one of peace and assurance in Christ. A peaceful person assured of his or her own celestial destiny is able to endure all manner of physical ill. And yet the physically advantaged person cannot be assured of the peace and security of Christ.

I thank God for those whose skill in this life helps them mend broken bones. But happy are the feet of those who bring an evangel of good. ■

# Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

“If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong” --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

## Loving my neighbor as myself; sorry neighbor

Our Lord said that I am to love my neighbor as myself. I’m not sure my neighbor is up to that. Let me give you a few examples of how I love myself.

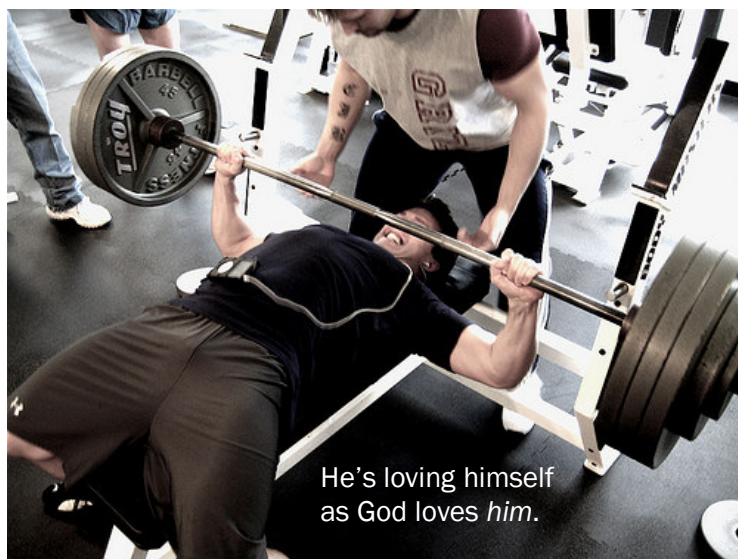
I get up at five o’clock in the morning. Why? Because I love myself. Pre-dawn is the most creative time of the day for me. I can put words to paper much better in the a.m. darkness, while the world slumbers. If I oversleep, I wake up disappointed that the world has gotten the jump on me. The rest of the day seems shot.

To get up at 5 a.m. requires that I go to bed reasonably early. Here is another way I love myself: I make myself go to bed before I really want to. Part of me wants to stay up late like everyone else. When I say “late,” I mean 11:00. 11:00, to me, is living on the edge. Some nights I do stay up this late, living on the edge by watching ‘70s rock bands on YouTube. I always feel bad the next morning when my body forces me awake at the hour previously mentioned.

I am to love others as I love my own body. For who, at any time, hates his own body? Let me tell you how I love my body: three days a week, I hit the road for ten 50 yard sprints. I hate these sprints. I used to walk 8 miles a day, which is easier than pretending you’re running from a fire. But I’m into efficiency nowadays; the sprints are painful but short.

A photo of my face in the middle of these rapid ambulatory excursions would suggest to an onlooker: “This guy is dying.” Not at all. In reality, this guy is loving himself. He is loving his body enough to exercise it so that it can be stronger and carry him through the rest of his life with relative ease. It’s called discipline. It’s hard in the short run, but easier overall—easier than disease, that is.

At home they call me the Food Nazi. They call me the Food Nazi because I try to keep refined sugar and fatty foods out of my life. Do I do this



He's loving himself as God loves him.

because I hate refined sugar and fatty foods? No. I love refined sugar and fatty foods; I don’t have a sweet tooth, I have 32 of them. I could eat pizza for breakfast, lunch and dinner. I avoid this stuff because I love my body. Refined sugar and fatty foods will cause me great pains in this life, now and later. Therefore, I eat 8-grain cereal, almonds, whole-wheat bread, tuna, ground flaxseed, and light soups.

### Happiness is fleeting; love endures

Is this always fun? No. I watch other people eating pizza and cookies and I always want some. These other people seem to be loving themselves because they look happy. Is happiness the same as love? It most definitely is not. Happiness is fleeting; love endures.

I really love myself by drinking 12 glasses of filtered water every day. And yet, this is the hardest thing in the world to do—harder than everything else I have described thus far. I mean, yuk. But because the body is 75% water, and the cells need water desperately, hydration is the key to health. Almost everyone in the world is dehydrated. The greatest blessing in Israel was to have a well. I have read that

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## ...loving my neighbor

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drinking sufficient water is the #1 most important thing one can do for the body *and* the mind. Leave it to God to make ideal health a



matter of something so simple and inexpensive as drinking water. Yet hardly anyone one does it. Are they loving themselves or hating themselves?

I take this so seriously that I chalk up my daily glasses on my calendar. People think I'm strange for being so fastidious. In reality, it's the dehy-

drated people who are strange. All they have to do is drink water. Their body cries out for it by the day and by the year. Most of their health issues, if not all of them, can be traced to a lack of water. All they have to do is

drink the stuff. And yet they do not. Instead, they drink diet Coke. Or nothing. They think they are loving themselves because they seem happier without self-discipline. Are they? No. Me? I'm loving myself by being hard on myself. I'm not always "happier."

Howdy, neighbor. Are you sure you want me to love you as I love myself?

Let us love one another as God loves us. How does God love us? Review your own personal trials in the past 30 days, and you will know how much God loves you.

**"My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord, nor yet faint when being exposed by Him. For whom the Lord is loving He is disciplining, yet He is scourging every son to whom He is assenting. For discipline are you enduring. As to sons is God bringing it to you, for what son is there whom the father is not disciplining? Now if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, consequently you are bastards and not sons. Thereafter, indeed, we had the fathers of our flesh as discipliners, and we respected them. Yet shall we not much rather be subjected to the Father of spirits and be living?" (Heb. 12;7-9). ■**

## The title of this newsletter is a laugh and a half. *Get it?*

I'm not sure everyone appreciates the humor behind the title of this newsletter, so I'm here to set the record straight.

Because I am a defender of the truth and believe that bringing folks this truth is the most important thing I can do for them—in the long run—people have accused me of being unloving. It's easy to see how this can happen.



To enlighten someone is to necessarily dispel the error he or she holds. Most of the world holds theological error—in case you haven't noticed. To undo this requires black and white pronouncements of truth.

Today, however, black and white pronouncements are politically incorrect. For instance, it's just not loving—or politically correct—to say to

someone: "I'm right, and you're wrong." Not only is this country moving toward political socialism, it is moving toward theological socialism as well. In this age of enlightenment, it is simply deemed "not fair" that one person should be right and another wrong, especially about God. Therefore, we will redistribute the wealth of knowledge. We will take from the correct person and give to the incorrect one—truth be damned. No one will be right, but everyone will be "happy." The correct person is shot down in his correctness, and the incorrect person is emotionally buoyed in his or her error. The result? Everyone dies of ignorance. But who cares? At least it's "fair," and the theologically lazy feel better about themselves.

In this day of hearts, flowers, and misplaced self-esteem, "love" is almost ex-

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## Q&A

### DOESN'T MY CHURCH KNOW WHAT REAL LOVE IS?

*My church doesn't "correctly cut" (rightly divide—KJV) the truth, as you like to say, but at least we love each other. Which is more important: teaching the gospel correctly, or helping my neighbor when he's down? —A.P., Schenectady, NY*

Even heathen know how to help their neighbors when they're down. What is the purpose of your church? To herald Christ crucified, or to make sandwiches for one another? First things first. The first thing is to distinguish the gospel of God's grace from everything that would water it down and destroy it. This was so important to the apostle Paul that he wrote in Galatians 1:8—

**"But if ever we also, or a messenger out of heaven, should be bringing an evangel to you beside that which we bring to you, let him be anathema!"**

The definition of "anathema" is "cursed be you!"

In 1 Thess. 1:8-9, Paul says that those "who are not obeying the evangel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (that is, who are not obeying Paul's distinct message, as opposed to that of the Circumcision), will "incur the justice of eonian extermination from the face of the Lord."

Wouldn't it be loving for the pastor of your church to point this out to folks? I have heard people say, "We don't



discuss doctrine at our church because it causes arguments." This is the height of immaturity. While it seems loving, it is the opposite.

Love is patient and kind, yes, but one can patiently and kindly point out to another that their "mixed-bag" gospel of law and grace will doom him or her to eonian extermination.

It is much easier to ignore doctrine, make sandwiches, and hug people. But is it better? I conclude that your church is founded on emotional love, not true love.

Do you still love me, even though I tell you this? ■

# Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur (Philippians 2:14). Therefore, I shall rant.

## Oh, how we hated Coach Carroll

**M**y mom pulled the car up to the fence, and we watched the sixth-grade football team run past. All my buddies were sweating and gasping for breath. My mom said, “Are you sure you want to be one of them?” For some strange reason, I said “yes.”

I was a chubby kid back then; my mother thought the training table of champions included Pop Tarts and Cap’n Crunch cereal. I knew that joining this team would be hard on my flesh, but there was something about the camaraderie of people suffering together that called me forth. That, and all the girls liked football players.

“Here comes Coach Carroll,” said my new teammates the following day. “Zender, you will soon learn to hate that car, and the man inside it.” How right they were. Coach Carroll was a fireman, and would pull up to the practice field in a teal Chevy with a little siren on top. Pavlov’s dogs leaned to drool when they heard the bell; we learned to vomit when we saw that car.

Coach Carroll’s favorite drill was called, “The Monkey Roll.” I could never get the hang of it. Three players were



supposed to jump and roll over each other in some sort of organized fashion. I could never quite discern the fashion.

*Whistle!* “Zender! Can’t you do a simple Monkey Roll?”

“No, sir. Not being descended from primates, I find myself quite unable to—”

“Zender, take a lap!”

That bastard made me take so many laps that I lost 15 pounds before Thanksgiving.

Thank you, Coach Carroll. ■

### ...the title of this newsletter

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clusively defined emotionally. In other words, I can only love you if I’m petting your head and telling you how right you are—even if you’re wrong.

The apostle Paul says in the King James Version: **“If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong.”**

Since love is now defined emotionally rather than scripturally, the evangelist who loves people enough to unseat their error and bring truth (“faithful are the wounds of a friend”) comes across as thoughtless and arrogant. Is he really this way? No. He only comes across this way when contrasted with today’s milquetoast world; “milquetoast”: *easily dominated; extremely mild; ineffectual; namby-pamby; wishy-washy.*

Such an evangelist is not only “unloving,”

he is “arrogant” as well; a know-it-all. He has studied God’s Word and he knows that he knows that he knows stuff. This used to be a good thing, but it’s a liability in the day of theological socialism.

Shall I hand you a sugar cookie with sprinkles—or shall I bring you a pure evangel that will usher you into eonian bliss? I am one of the most loving people I know. Unfortunately, I love others according to how I love myself. And you have already seen—from my lead article—how much I love myself.

With the title of this newsletter, I am merely getting the jump on my detractors. If they’re going to think of me this way, I’ll just go ahead and own it and answer them according to their folly:

“You’re right. I have *no* love; none at all. But fortunately, I know all mysteries, and I have *all* knowledge. The result is that I am a clanging gong, that’s true. But take

advantage of it. If you want love, listen to a Beatles album. If you want to know everything there is to know—I’m your man.”

The sad thing is, there are actually people who believe this of me. ■

