

# Living to Win

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## Stand Up for Christ

From Ronald L. Dart's *Born to Win* Notes

Cops nationwide rank methamphetamines the number one drug they battle today. It has surpassed marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, and usage is growing by leaps and bounds. It takes people to highs they have never before experienced, and then it destroys them—physically, mentally, and morally.

How fast is it growing? Take the town of Towanda, Pennsylvania—a little town of 3000 people. No one there had ever heard of the drug until a cooker/dealer set up shop there. Five years later, the police have identified at least 500 people who are using or cooking the drug in the county. And they don't know about all of them. The US Attorney says the actual tally is probably "significantly worse" than that. Would you believe one out of three people in a small American town are involved with this drug?

The drug has seduced whole families and turned them into "zombies," says Randy Epler, a police officer in Towanda, "I see walking death." As an example of what it is doing to people, a man named Terry Silvers' story is told in *Newsweek* magazine.

Silvers, 34, worked for 19 years at Shaw Carpet Mill in Dalton,

Georgia, dreaming of the day he could open his own body shop. He had a wife, three kids, and a 401(k), and he'd never missed more than a few days of work his entire life. The only illegal drug he'd ever tried was marijuana, which he'd used twice.

One day, while drinking with his buddies they talked him into doing some meth to wake him up for the drive home. "I snorted a line

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### Stand Up for Christ

from Ronald L. Dart's notes ..... 1

Would You Rob God? ..... 1

### Is Seeing Believing?

By John Klassek ..... 2

### Today's Current Events in Prophecy

..... 3

In Memory ..... 4

and within five seconds it was like I'd had 12 hours of sleep and wasn't drunk anymore."

*continued on page 3. . .*

## Would You Rob God? . . .

Would you rob God? You will probably say, "Not me! Of course I would never rob God or anyone else. I'm basically an honest person." God asks this question in Malachi 3:8ff. "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me." Since God said this, there must be a possibility that you may be robbing God. But how? God answers, "In tithes and offerings." So then, what are the consequences? "You are under a *curse!*—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me." Look around you. Is our nation being blessed? I don't know about you, but we had a horrible drought with 100+ degree temperatures for over 90 days this past summer. Would you call that a blessing? "Bring the *whole tithe* into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." Now God throws out a challenge for you to test Him: ". . .and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Are you willing to take God up on his test? If you can't trust God enough to tithe (to give back to him a tenth of the increase he gives you), then how can you trust him to give you eternal life? Is God waiting on you so he can make a difference in your life—in your finances?

# Is Seeing Believing?

By John Klassek

We had almost finished dinner at the restaurant when a man in a black suit approached us and asked whether he could perform a few magic tricks for us. I politely declined his offer.

He then quite happily made his way to the next table. I couldn't help but to curiously watch him ply his tricks there, and what he did was quite amazing. He threw a red ball into the air and it simply disappeared! The look of surprise and fascination was evident on the faces of everyone seated at that table. "Is seeing believing?" I wondered.

A friend of mine once lamented that he had never seen any miracles in his life. He implied that our belief in what really matters might be enhanced by being witness to some supernatural act. The Bible lays claim to dozens of such events. For example, we read of an axe head floating on water, oil from an empty jar, fire from heaven, seas parted, and people healed as well as resurrected from the dead. It's easy to think that our lives today are quite mundane when compared to the heroics of the past—I certainly haven't seen anyone turn water into wine!

It's easy to think that if only I could see a miracle—an irrefutable act of divine intervention that cannot be adequately explained by any natural, physical laws—my faith

would be strengthened. Well, consider: Didn't the magician do just that? He really had me fooled when he apparently made a coin disappear into his arm. Everyone gasped when he made a white dove appear out of thin air. I left the restaurant wondering how he did his tricks. Of course, I knew they were just tricks, but still I wondered how his sleight of hand so easily fooled me.

Did you know that Jesus told a story which illustrates that even the most awe-inspiring miracles are still insufficient to convince an unbelieving heart? A rich man stated his opinion that if someone were to rise from the dead, then his five unbelieving brothers would be convinced to change from their evil ways. The rich man, however, was told quite bluntly that his brothers should be listening to the words of godly teachers: "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31 NKJV).

According to Jesus, the emphasis on attaining a strong and enduring faith is based more on hearing than on seeing or experiencing. So how do we make sense of this? There are ample Scriptures that direct us toward finding a strong and true basis for our beliefs. For example, we read that "Faith comes by hearing the word of God" (Romans 10:17). The emphasis in this verse is on

hearing (as opposed to seeing).

Jesus distinctly appealed to our capacity to listen, recorded in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, when he said, "He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." This overture is further supported in God's appeal to us when he says, "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts . . ." (Hebrews 3:7-8).

So, is there any place for the visual/experiential? An interesting "out of this world" experience occurred when Jesus took his closest disciples, Peter, John, and James, high up a mountain. He then became "transfigured" before them, shining like the sun, and talking with Moses and Elijah. Before the disciples could get a grip on what this experience meant, a cloud enveloped them and a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear him!" (Matthew 17:5 NKJV). The disciples were no doubt amazed by this visual and auditory experience, and yet the voice that spoke to the disciples distinctly told them to listen to Jesus.

According to the Scriptures, faith and understanding are obtained and established by hearing rather than by the visual. God wants us to be persuaded of his existence and his purpose by hearing his word as opposed to seeing certain manifestations.

A couple of real life examples may help. In the Garden of Eden,

*continued on page 4 . . .*

*Stand Up for Christ*  
continued from page 1 . . .

Soon, Silvers was snorting once or twice a week. Then someone taught him how to smoke it. When the thrill wore off, he started injecting it—"firing" or "slamming," addicts call it. "Golly, it's the best feeling you ever had. It's like your mind is running 100 miles an hour, but your feet aren't moving."

His weight dropped so drastically—from 180 pounds to 140—that his wife, Lisa, thought he had cancer. He grew increasingly hyperactive and began having seizures and hallucinations. When his wife figured out what the real problem was, she called the carpet mill and tried to get him into its drug treatment program. He decided to quit his job rather than get help.

Fed up, his wife confronted him one Sunday in May and told him she was leaving. "He hit me and knocked a hole in my ear-drum," she says. His daughter Heather called 911 as her father was dragging Lisa down the steps of a neighbor's house.

When *Newsweek* met with Terry Silvers, he was in Whitfield County Jail, wearing leg shackles and handcuffs. "I'm not as hardened as all this looks," said a gaunt and embarrassed Silvers, who is charged with manufacturing the drug. "I think meth is one of the plagues the Bible talks about," his wife says. She may be right, but you would have a hard time finding it explicitly in the Bible. The reasons for it are probably easier to find.

According to the report in

*Newsweek*: "On the Hill, the deputy drug czar walked into a buzz saw, as members vented their frustration over his office's level of attention to the problem. 'This isn't the way you tackle narcotics,' said GOP Rep. Mark Souder of Indiana. 'How many years do we have to see the same pattern at an increasing rate in the United States until there's something where we have concrete recommendations, not another cotton-pickin' meeting? . . . This committee is trying desperately to say, Lead!'"

Oh really? Where? How? What on earth do they expect the drug czar to do? Whatever the government is doing to fight this epidemic, it's failing. To paraphrase a bit of dialogue from the movie, *Traffic*, in which a defiant drug dealer mocks a DEA agent about the futility of the drug war: "You think you guys are making a difference?" *Newsweek's* final word? "They had better. Hundreds of thousands of lives depend on it."

Think carefully about what they are saying: How can you have much confidence in the government to do something about a drug epidemic? Remember prohibition? What did the nation learn from that? That when people wanted to drink they would find a way. There would always be a criminal element to help them, while a lot of people would be killed fighting for turf.

I am not suggesting that we legalize drugs. What I am suggesting is that it doesn't make much difference what the government does, one way or

another. That the harder we fight methamphetamines, the more people we will put in jail. Period.

This is a most serious problem, and you desperately need to hear the entire message so you'll understand what is happening and what you should do. The secularization of America is all but complete. And when they have finally succeeded, the eradication of Christianity will follow. Ron never really expected persecution of Christians in this country, but we are headed that way as fast as we can go. Christian people are rolling over for it when they don't have to. You need to understand where we've gone wrong as a people. So don't put this *Living to Win* issue down until you fill in the enclosed card to order a *FREE* CD of this sermon titled *Stand Up for Christ*. Then listen closely until it is planted firmly in your mind and you are resolved to do what you can about it.

## Today's Current Events in Prophecy

Catch the *FREE* Weekend Bible Studies online every Friday night at [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net) under the audio tab. They're new! They're relevant to you!



*Is Seeing Believing?  
continued from page 2. . .*

God told Adam and Eve not to touch or eat of a certain tree. Notice how Satan then used visual appeal to deceive Eve: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate” (Genesis 3:6 NKJV).

Satan used the same ploy, thousands of years later, when he tried to tempt Jesus. He showed Jesus stones and suggested he turn them into bread. Jesus resisted, relying on the strength of God’s word: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). Satan then showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth, a temptation embellished by a dizzying, heightened experience, to which Jesus again responded: “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve” (v. 10).

Satan knows how to utilize our visual references to completely fool us. One of Jesus’ disciples, John, warned about the “lust of the eyes” (1 John 2:16)—the risk of placing undue emphasis on physical and desirable “things.”

Knowing and understanding come from hearing. Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27 NKJV). An intelligent, cognizant relationship with Jesus is not based on visual experience alone, but on hearing,

listening, and weighing those words. God appealed to an ancient people who cherished and valued materialism over the value of really listening: “Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you . . .” (Isaiah 55:2-3 NKJV).

The question remains, do we know what it is to really “listen”? How much peace and quiet exists in your busy, multimedia-enhanced days? Have you ever switched off the radio or television, put away the headphones, and just sat on the verandah to enjoy the setting sun with nothing more than the song birds in the trees? Have you ever allowed yourself total silence—where you are comfortable with your own thoughts and meditations?

Do you really want to find and know God? The secret is in “listening” for him. Take quiet time every day. Learn to pray. God will listen to you, for God hears our prayers.

Words are powerful. Apparently we’ll be judged for every idle word we speak (Matthew 12:36-37)! James exhorts us: “So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak . . .” (James 1:19).

Of course, not everything we hear should be denied common sense scrutiny! The secret is in listening, and knowing that our eyes fall prey too easily to deceit.

So, if you happen to meet a magician making red balls disappear into thin air, or pulling rabbits out of hats, or predicting the future with a pack of cards, count yourself lucky if he later confides in you that “Looks can be deceiving.” His words will be truer than his art.

## *In Memory*

Christian Educational Ministries gratefully acknowledges the very generous offering made in memory of Charles Hunting who was Ron Dart’s mentor and very close friend when they lived in England. He was an Evangelist in God’s church, a Bible teacher and business manager for the college in Bricket Wood, England. He died peacefully in his sleep in Florida. Mr. Hunting was preceded in death by his wife, Veryl Hunting. They had three children, Chris, Sydney, and Paul, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He had a profound influence on many people and will be greatly missed.

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proficient and equipped for  
every good work.*



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***When the World Tomorrow is Called the World Today*** by Brian Bettes – At the Feast of Tabernacles, we come together and get a sense of what is in store for us. When Jesus, King of Kings, returns, our adversary will be out of the picture, and we can enjoy a world of peace, love, and plenty. Catch the vision! **11F2**

***We Are One Body*** by Ray Wooten – Jesus Christ used his physical body while he was among us to do the Father’s work. We are the body he is using today. We are lights scattered throughout the world that shine everywhere. This message of hope will inspire you. **11F3**

***You Have to Trust in Something*** by Richard Crow – We are living in troubled times that make us look forward to the fulfillment of God’s promises. This is where we place our trust. The Apostle Paul had his share of trouble, but he was steadfast in faith. Explore God’s great plan for you and learn to have confidence that he will make it all work for your good. **11F4**

***Unfinished Business*** by John Klassek – Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a place for us. We are to do his work until his return. But as we make our way through the wilderness of today, what does God promise us? Renew your faith and hope with this message. **11F5**

***The Symbolism of Tabernacles*** by Hugh Buchanan – Our body is our “tent,” our “tabernacle” on this earth. Our days are numbered, and there is work to be done. Learn how you can recognize your gifts and put them to work for God. **11F6**

***The Mountain of the Lord*** by Rick Hoot – There will be a time when all people will seek God, and Jerusalem will be the capital of the world. But we are called to seek God now, and we need to do the work to prepare for the coming Kingdom of God. God is not slack concerning his promise—what do you need to be doing now? **11F7**

***Youth Day Service*** – Available only on DVD, this service includes congregational singing, youth choirs, special music, testimonials, and Scripture readings. The service was coordinated by Hannah Klassek and presented by the children and teens. **11F8**

***Understanding More About the Last Great Day*** by Mardy Cobb – The Last Great Day is all about more. Gain understanding about God’s solution to human death, a day of fearful and joyful things. Understand your role in the rescue mission. **11F9**

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