
Words of Truth

Don't Get Into The Pool

By: Brian A. Yeager

When Trevor was about five years old we were visiting some fellow Christians. This family had a swimming pool that had a shallow end and a deep end. We were eating and visiting out by the pool, so we allowed Trevor to get into the shallow end of the pool and play. (*Note: Trevor was not wearing immodest apparel in the pool. He was wearing modest shorts and a t-shirt. This was not the normal, immodest setting, often prevalent in public swimming areas.) Trevor was bouncing around and having a blast. Trevor was being watched closely. Yet, in a very brief period of time, Trevor had bounced himself into water that was too deep. He was beginning to take water into his lungs. At that point in his life, he did not know how to swim. He had to be rescued. We would have been wise if we had never allowed Trevor into that pool. We learned a hard lesson.

This article is not going to be about swimming in water. Rather, we're going to discuss swimming in grief, sorrow, and anxiety. Like Trevor in water, many people like to get into grief, sorrow, and anxiety without realizing the dangers surrounding them. Before you know it, the shallow thoughts lead to deeper and darker waters. Then, all of a sudden, you find yourself drowning in the deep end. That deep end is clinically called depression. The Scriptures show us that these negative mindsets are spiritually dangerous.

Caution: You'll Drown In These Waters

Notice these inspired warnings: "**Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad... A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones... A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken... So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow... For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death**" (Proverbs 12:25, Proverbs 17:22, Proverbs 15:13, II Corinthians 2:7, and II Corinthians 7:10).

Think about a heart that is stooping, dry bones, a broken spirit, being swallowed up with sorrow, and spiritual death. Those terms are not positive in any way. No one, in their right frame of mind, would want those mental and spiritual conditions to exist in their lives. Yet, those thoughts can quickly overtake us. That is why we have to avoid everything that leads us down those paths.

Avoid Those Waters Altogether

The word of God instructs us to abstain from all appearance of evil (I Thessalonians 5:22). A wise servant of God closes their eyes from seeing evil (Isaiah 33:15). We are aware, through the

Scriptures, that sorrowful thinking is dangerous. So, what does that tell you that you should do? You should avoid, **when possible**, any and all situations that will present these mental dangers. Remember, you may be in good shape spiritually, but that does not mean you can overcome all of these physical challenges without falling away (Matthew 26:41 and I Corinthians 10:12).

I know that there are situations that are unavoidable. We live in the world and sometimes we cannot escape the things we see and hear (I Corinthians 5:9-10). Living in the world will certainly bring about certain sorrows in our lives. For example, we cannot escape the fact that we'll know many people that are going to spend eternity in Hell. That knowledge brings about an unavoidable sorrow (Romans 9:1-3).

Yet, some of the things we sorrow over are avoidable. Many Christians are facing mental anguish because they're sorrowful over things they shouldn't be concerned with. For example, why worry about material things when the Lord tells us not to (Matthew 6:24-34)? As another example, single Christians worry too often about finding godly mates. While finding a godly mate can be a good thing (cf. Proverbs 18:22); you will not perish if you cannot find that godly mate (I Corinthians 7:6-8). If heaven is your ultimate goal, finding a mate here on earth won't matter much then anyway (Matthew 22:30). I know, we need help sometimes and marriage is certainly one way for that to be accomplished (Genesis 2:20). However, there are other companions that can help us in this life as well.

When We Need Rescued

When Trevor was drowning in that pool, my brother in Christ dove in to save him. Mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, husbands, wives, etc. may not always be there for us (Genesis 3:1-19, Genesis 4:1-10, Genesis 37:17-28, II Samuel 16:11, Micah 7:5-6, Matthew 10:26-37, Mark 13:12, and Luke 21:16). When we need real help, when we need rescued; we CAN depend on faithful Christians to be there (Galatians 6:1-2 and I Thessalonians 5:14; cf. John 15:12-13).

When Trevor was sinking in that pool, he could not scream out. Brethren, herein is another lesson for us. Sometimes our brethren are in trouble and they cannot scream out. While we cannot read minds, we have to know one another well enough to recognize signs of trouble in each other's lives. Remember, we are family (Ephesians 3:15).

Conclusion

As a father, I learned not to allow my children in potentially dangerous situations the hard way. As a brother, I don't want to see those I love jump into worldly sorrows and become entangled. Often, people die spiritually in the depths of depression. Therefore, don't even get started by allowing your mind to step into the waters of grief, sorrow, and anxiety. Let your mind be on better things. Swim in safer waters. Consider this in closing: *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **think on these things**"* (Philippians 4:6-8).