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Evelyn Waite and Kathy Webber are collaborating on this project in an effort to encourage our Christian sisters and possibly to inspire other women to participate in this effort.

The Way, Truth and Life

by Kathy Webber

*God is Holy and Righteous.
Justice He demands
But He knew without
His grace, love, and mercy
We would fail His commands.*

*So He sent us His Son
To show us the Way
Follow His faithful submission
And as He did
Just trust and obey.*

*Jesus had
Such a burden to bear
For your sake and my sake
It was the world's sins
That put Him there.*

*For sins of His own
Christ had none
But He came to Earth
To save us
And to see the will of His Father done.*

*The devil hovered close
There is an easier way
Tell them you're not God's Son--
Deny that you know Him
That's all you must say.*

*But the message delivered
by Christ is no lie
For His desire to please the Father
And His love for us
He chose to die.*

*In order to have eternal life,
Jesus Christ is the way
Confess Him before men
Be baptized in His blood
And live faithfully each day.*

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Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 14:6

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Drinking from Muddy Pools

National Geographic is one of my favorite channels on television. A recent show about animals in Africa showed life being supported by the water in a certain river. The variety of exotic animals ranged from insects to monkeys to elephants. All nature in that region was sustained by the water in that river.

As the dry season ran its course, water became more scarce. One scene showed animals walking the dry river bed searching for water. They finally came to a pool that was more mud than water, and it was infested by crocodiles. The narrator pointed out that the deer risked their lives to drink, and several were shown approaching the pool trembling with fear. Finally, one of the deer lowered its head to drink, and a crocodile attacked like lightning! The deer managed to leap away just in time to escape certain death.

Christians are sustained by the Water of Life. There is enough of it for every soul, and it never runs dry. If we experience drought, it is because we have left the Water. It never leaves us.

The deer were forced to drink of that muddy pool or die. Their survival depended on a swallow or two of the vile, murky water. Christians have a "fountain free" from which to drink at will. True, our spiritual survival depends on our drinking freely and often from it, but there is no hidden danger waiting to destroy us in the Water of Life.

Think for a moment, however, how sin affects us. So often, we know the peril of indulging in sin. We know better! Perhaps we approach it trembling with fear, just as the deer approached the muddy pool. Yet, sin's allure draws us and deceives us into thinking we must have its pleasure. We think we will be able to leap away just before its jaws snatch us to destruction.

Perhaps we think no one will ever know, so it won't hurt to indulge in a "little" sin. Even if no one else finds out, do we really think we are fooling God? "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that he will also reap," (Galatians 6:7). God's Word teaches us in Numbers 32:23, "be sure your sin will find you out." We are also told, "So then each of us shall give an account of himself to God," (Romans 14:12). Could it be that one day we will have to account to God about all those little sins that no one knows about?

Do we think we can live on the edge until just before death, then leap away to safety and security of God's love and mercy? God's word tells us that we do not know what will happen tomorrow, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." (James 4:14). Many people have dabbled in the "pleasures of sin for a season" all the while planning on repenting later. Sadly, the cruel jaws of sin and death claim many victims before repentance occurs. Some of the deer in the television show escaped, but others were destroyed when they failed to leap away in time.

Rather than drinking from the muddy pools of sin in search of pleasure, let us "lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," (Hebrews 12:1-2). He will provide for us the living water that will make us whole and free from sin.

Our God is so awesome! He provided us with The Water of Life in the person of His own Son, Jesus Christ. Through the blood He shed for us on Calvary, all those sins in our past can be wash away and remembered no more. Praise God for His love and mercy!

Evelyn Waite
January 28, 2002
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Attend a Life Group this Sunday.

You will be glad you did.

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Book Review: Tortured for Christ

Several weeks ago, a free book came to my attention. Its title is, "Tortured for Christ," by Richard Wurmbbrand. It was written in three days after the author was released from a Communist prison after having served 14 years. His crime was preaching Jesus.

The horrors he endured while imprisoned for this crime (others *died* while in prison for the same offense) are very disturbing. They are virtually unspeakable! The people involved were deeply committed to God and counted it joy to be persecuted for His sake. They risked their very lives and the lives of their families to convert others. They deserve our admiration for their commitment and their faith.

However, I am deeply saddened that the gospel they preached fell short of the gospel. I Corinthians 15 tells us what the gospel is: "Now I would remind you, brothers, of **the gospel I preached to you**, which you received, in which you stand, and **by which you are being saved**, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that **Christ died** for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he **was buried**, that **he was raised** on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve."

Paul is clear that *we must obey the gospel*. He says in 1 Thessalonians 1:7a-8: "...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."

We know that we obey by **dying to sin, being buried in water** for the remission of sins and **being raised to walk in newness of life** (Romans 6:3-4). But the gospel that was being preached in Communist countries in the 1960's was salvation through simply confessing sins and accepting Jesus into one's heart. Wurmbbrand told the story of two men in the Underground Church who pushed their way to Prime Minister Dej. They had only a few moments but used them to urge him to turn from his sins and persecution. Years later when the Prime Minister was very sick, the seed planted by those men "...bore fruit. In his hour of need, the Prime Minister remembered the words spoken to him...They cut through the hardness of his heart and he surrendered his life to Christ. He confessed his sins, accepted the Savior, and began to serve Him in his sickness." Dej died not long after that. Notice that there is no mention of his having been baptized.

In Galatians 1:8, Paul was very clear when he wrote, "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." It was such an important point that Paul repeated it in Galatians 1:9 "As we have said before, **so now I say again**, if anyone preaches **any other gospel** to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."

The book is worthy of reading because of the examples of courage and faith revealed in it and because of what may lay ahead of today's Christians, even in this country. However, read it with caution knowing that the gospel of the New Testament has been altered. Though done in all sincerity, the gospel that was being preached was incomplete.

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