

Five Hindrances to

**Growth
in
Grace**

Kenneth E. Hagin

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

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Chapter 1

Lightness

Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? —
Galatians 5:7

It is sad but true that only a few Christians actually make a success of growing in grace. In fact, some Christians who have been saved 30 or 40 years seem to have regressed rather than progressed. I believe God wants us to grow.

In this message I will cover five hindrances to growing in grace:

1. *Lightness*
2. *Looseness*
3. *Laziness*
4. *Loquacity*
5. *Like other people*

I discovered this list while going through a stack of old sermons. It was drawn up at the turn of the century by a Methodist preacher. I was so struck by how these five hindrances to growing in grace apply to us today in the charismatic movement that I decided to use the preacher's list as a sermon outline.

First, *lightness* in the world.

Everything in this modern age seems to be light. Even furniture is built in a very light manner. It's difficult to buy furniture that's 100 percent solid wood anymore, it's all plastic. Things are not built to last. We're living in an age of lightness—and it seems that spirit of lightness has carried over into the Church and into the lives of individual Christians.

There is lightness in our reading material today. So much of it is light and frothy. If you feed upon the things of this life, which are written more or less to excite and startle people, you'll never advance spiritually.

Little is written to help us meditate and grow in God. You must realize that what will feed the flesh will starve the spirit. See to it that your spirit is fed. Leave off the light and frothy reading matter of this world.

I've never seen a truly spiritual person yet who spends all of his or her time reading novels or western stories. I didn't say it wasn't all right to read a novel

or western story occasionally. They may be legitimate. I like a good detective story myself, but I guess it's been 20 years since I read one. I haven't had time!

(We know, of course, that no Christian should touch suggestive material, pornography, or such junk in any way, shape, form, or fashion.)

We also need to realize that much of the religious reading matter today is light and frothy. Feed upon that which feeds your spirit. Feed upon that which will build your faith. Feed upon that which will help you become a better Christian. Don't waste your time on a lot of religious froth that doesn't amount to anything.

Parents need to be as careful about what their children read as they are about what they eat, yet many Christian parents pay no attention at all to the kinds of books their children read. They might as well feed them poison as allow them to read ungodly books, but they wouldn't think of putting poison in their food! Very often those little children's spirits are being poisoned by their reading the wrong material. We need to be careful along these lines.

Another area of lightness is in our singing. You know you can't sing all that worldly junk and be spiritual, but I'm talking about even supposed church music. Some of it is what I call "religious rock 'n' roll." It is designed on a light order to affect our feet and our hands. That kind of lightness does not produce spirituality.

I learned this nearly 40 years ago. After a time in God's presence, feeding on His Word and praying in the spirit, I would turn the radio on to a good Gospel singing group, which I normally enjoyed. But I found after having been in the presence of God, the songs they were singing didn't have any more meaning to me than if they had been beating on a bucket lid. The content was so light I had to turn the radio off.

Everything that goes under the name "Gospel" is not necessarily Gospel. We need to sing songs that will feed our spirits and bless us. I praise God that new songwriters are rising up today who sing the Word of God. The Word of God will bless you. Sing songs based on the Scriptures.

Closely associated with this spirit of lightness in singing is the spirit of irreverence. There is too much irreverence in our modern-day charismatic movement. We need to train our spirits to be sensitive to the Spirit of God; especially when God is moving in a service.

I've been in services in recent times when the Spirit of God was speaking to me, pointing people out to me, telling me what was wrong with them. I was

about to call them up and start ministering to them when everybody started clapping—and the Spirit of God lifted.

Yes, the Bible says in the 47th Psalm “*clap your hands, all ye people.*” There is a time to do that—but there is a time *not* to do it. There is another verse in the Psalms where God said, “*Be still, and know that I am God*” (Ps. 46:10).

There can be a spirit of reverence in clapping your hands at the *right* time—but there can be a spirit of irreverence in clapping your hands at the *wrong* time.

A “wrong time” is when people—because of what they feel—begin to clap their hands when the Spirit of God is in manifestation in tongues and interpretation, or prophecy. Nobody can hear the message.

Is the Spirit of God speaking to us or not? Does God speak to us by these vehicles, or does He not? If God is speaking, do you think we have the right to butt right in on God?

You see, what we sometimes thought was worship of God was actually an act of irreverence. If you don’t know what to do, the best policy is just be quiet. Don’t do anything. Follow the leader of the meeting. God uses men.

In the natural realm—in the business world, for example—somebody is president of a bank or company, and there are others under them. In our offices, I’m President, my son is Executive Vice President of Rhema Bible Church, and so on down the line. We have supervisors over different areas.

If I wanted to get a message to one of the caretakers around our campus, do you think I’d go tell them? No! I’d go through their supervisor.

If the president of a bank wanted to deal with another bank in the same city, do you think he would go to the janitor and talk to him about it? No! He’d go to somebody in authority.

Don’t you think God is as intelligent as we are? Thank God, He’s *more* intelligent than all of us put together, and a thousand times on top of that. He’s going to work through those whom He has put in offices in the Body.

Those of us who are ministers should take time to worship God and wait on God until we know what He wants to do in a service. We should be sensitive to His Spirit as we lead the people.

We talk about services where the power of God fell—God just took over, and we didn’t even have any preaching—as if it were a surprise to us. These services never came as a surprise to me. I pastored nearly 12 years, and I always knew

ahead of time what God wanted to do in the services. Maybe I didn't know before I went to church, but at least I knew while I was there. I knew in my spirit exactly what God wanted to do, because He told me.

You say, "How did He tell you?" By an inward intuition; nothing else. I knew when it was time to change the order of the service. Sometimes the people were shouting and praising God. (Once they start, they'll keep going that direction, because they're enjoying it, but often it's time to do something else.)

There ought to be times when all of us are shouting and praising God, but that doesn't mean that's all we do every time we come to church. There may be times when we will just sit quietly in the presence of God. We need to learn to be sensitive to the Spirit of God.

The most powerful services I've been in were when the presence of God would settle down around us. There was such a holy presence that nobody moved. Nobody! We didn't have a nursery for the children in those days, but not a baby cried. Sometimes we'd sit there 45 minutes to an hour, and nobody moved. Not a child moved. Not a baby cried. You didn't want to say anything. You knew you were sitting in the presence of God Almighty. You didn't want to break that "spell", so to speak.

I'm sorry to say that in our modern charismatic move we know so little about the real deep move of God's Spirit and power. What we enjoy is real, and thank God for it, but it's been too much on the light and frothy side. Let's move on with the Lord.

I've noticed in some of our healing meetings when I've had the anointing of God upon me to minister to the sick, people began to get up and move about. This is a spirit of irreverence and it grieves the Spirit of God. He wouldn't manifest Himself anymore. (I've taught about this in the afternoon class at Prayer and Healing School, but it needs to be taught more widely.)

Friends, laying on of hands is one of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says in Hebrews 6:

HEBREWS 6:1-2

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of LAYING ON OF HANDS, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Christian people who have any spirituality at all wouldn't get up and move around, talking and laughing, while people were being baptized in water. No!

They'd sit there because they realized this is a holy, sacred rite; a holy, sacred ordinance.

The Lord's Supper is also a holy, sacred ordinance of God. Remember that Paul, in writing to the church of Corinth, said that many Christians have missed it in partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Paul said, *"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, UNWORTHILY, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh UNWORTHILY, eateth and drinketh DAMNATION to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"* (1 Cor. 11:27–29).

That word "damnation" is not actually what the original Greek means. The 29th verse should read, "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh CONDEMNATION unto himself."

People also have misunderstood verse 27: *"Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, UNWORTHILY. . . ."* They thought it was "unworthy." It doesn't say "unworthy"; it says "unworthily." There's a difference.

The blood of Jesus makes you *worthy*. In this 27th verse Paul is talking about "unworthily"—the attitude you take—how you enter into Communion—your manner of observing the Lord's Supper. That's the reason we're reverent when we partake of the Lord's Supper. It's sacred. It's holy.

In the midst of partaking of the Lord's Supper, Christians wouldn't think about moving around, laughing out loud or talking with their friends, because the Lord's Supper is sacred. Similarly, the laying on of hands is a sacred doctrine. Naturally it covers more than laying on of hands for healing, but healing is part of it (for a complete explanation see my book *Laying on of Hands*).

Chapter 2

Looseness

The second hindrance to growth in grace is *looseness*. According to the dictionary, “looseness” means without order or connection, negligent, careless, unchaste, and unrestrained in behavior.

With that definition in mind, I want to discuss three kinds of looseness:

1. *Looseness in thought*

Here is where sin begins: in allowing thoughts that are unprofitable or unseemly to run loose, and to dwell upon those wrong thoughts. You must discipline yourself in these areas. I can’t do anything about your thinking except instruct you. You’ll have to do something about your own thinking. That’s the trouble with us; we want somebody else to do something for us, but we’ll have to do it for ourself.

It would be interesting here to see something the Spirit of God said through the Apostle Paul:

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

8 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.

Notice that Paul didn’t say, “pray that God will help you to think on these things.” No, you’re responsible for your own thinking. You can think what you want to think or not think what you don’t want to think.

Somebody will say, “But I’m bothered with these thoughts.”

Well quit thinking them! Now, I realize you can’t keep thoughts from coming—any more than you can help who might knock on your door—but you *can* help who you invite into the living room and entertain.

You can’t keep carnal thoughts from coming to your mind any more than you can keep birds from flying over your head, but you *can* keep them from building a nest in your hair!

Don’t dwell on those thoughts. Every holy saint of God—even the most holy—finds thoughts in his or her mind at times that his heart resents. And then the devil accuses them, saying, “*You’re* a pretty Christian. You must not even be saved, thinking something like that!” But they really didn’t think it. Satan

brought it by.

Just don't entertain those thoughts. You can think on what you want to think on. Change your thinking. Start thinking about something else.

Something that helps me when the wrong kind of thoughts come is to start praising God. By praising God, I get my mind off these thoughts. Notice that the Bible says, "*think on these things*. . . ." That means you can think on them if you want to.

I always believe I can do whatever the Bible tells me to do. I don't believe God told me to do something I can't do. He would be unjust if He did.

Some people have surrendered themselves to the wrong thinking until the devil finally got hold of them, but unless you're completely taken over and have lost your mind, your will is still intact, and you can do what you want.

"Pray for me that I won't have any more trouble with the devil," one fellow said to me.

I replied, "Do you want me to pray that you'll die?"

"No!" he said. "I don't want to die!"

"Well, the only way you're not going to have trouble with the devil is to die, leave this world, and go on to heaven," I told him.

2. Looseness in habits

Thousands of Christians have ability and opportunity, but they're too aimless and loose in their habits to make a success. Very often that's true in the ministry, too.

The other day I was telling the Rhema students about the superintendent of one of the Full Gospel denominations. This man, an older gentleman, had helped many young ministers.

When I was a young man, he said to me, "Brother Hagin, I've been at this for years, and I have never missed it. I make it a point to try to visit all the pastors I possibly can in my district; especially the new ones. I don't have to attend any of their services to know what they're like.

"I like to drop by their homes at an unexpected moment. If the lawn is not mowed, I'll find the house is unkept, too. All I've got to do to tell if they'll ever make a success pastoring or not is to visit inside the parsonage, open a chest of drawers, and see if the contents are neat or just piled in.

“If things are unkept and piled up, then they’re unkept and piled up spiritually,” he said. “They’ll never make it. I’ve never seen one like that who made it yet, and I’ve been at this many, many years. Those kind of men are all out of the ministry today.”

Why is this so? Because if you are disorganized in one area of your life, this looseness of habit will carry over into your spirit being.

3. *Looseness in life*

I’m especially referring to looseness toward the opposite sex—looseness in life.

My brother and sister, the Word of God lays down in no uncertain terms proper conduct for us, both as Christians and as ministers. We are not to be loose in life in any way, shape, form, or fashion. But let our yea be yea and our nay be nay.

We are living in a loose age. We need to be careful of our children. We need to teach them to be respectful. The main thing is to set a right example for them by not being loose in our talk.

I’ve been in Christian homes and seen pictures on the wall that were not the best in the world—very loose, very suggestive. I’ve seen loose reading material on the table. These things don’t help toward spirituality or growth in grace; they hinder.

It would be better to be away over on the other side. If people want to call you “straight” or “square,” let them. *I’d rather be “straight” and “square” and go to heaven than be “loose” and go to hell!*

Remember that the Master Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, said, “*Enter ye in at the STRAIT gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because STRAIT is the gate, and NARROW is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*” (Matt. 7:13–14).

In First Corinthians, Paul wrote to the church at Corinth:

1 CORINTHIANS 5:1

1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife.

Here was a stepson or a son who evidently took his stepmother away from his father and was living with her in open sin.

If you study history, you will find that Corinth was one of the most licentious, immoral cities of the ancient world. That same spirit of immorality—that same spirit of licentiousness—got into the Corinthian church. And, my friends, I’m afraid that spirit of looseness and immorality in the world today has crept into the modern Church.

There are only two institutions in this world that God put His approval on: marriage and the Church. Both of them are sacred institutions. We must not enter into marriage lightly. Too often today young people think, “If she doesn’t suit me, I’ll just get another one.” And that same kind of spirit enters into the Church.

Young people need to be taught that marriage is not something that they can jump in and out of when they want to; *marriage between Christians is a lifetime proposition.*

Chapter 3

Laziness

The third hindrance to growth in grace is *laziness*. Some people are actually too lazy to grow in grace! The flesh dominates them. They do whatever their body wants to do.

They say, “I’ve got to get my sleep.” They couldn’t wait on God and pray even if Jesus appeared to them in person and told them, “Spend the rest of the night in prayer.” Their body rules them.

Paul said, “*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*” (1 Cor. 9:27).

Yes, the Bible talks about crucifying the flesh. We call it self-denial sometimes, but I think the better expression is “crucifying the flesh.”

You see, you do have a fleshly nature. Your body is not redeemed yet. Even though your spirit may be born again, your body will want to keep doing the things it used to do. You—the man on the inside—must take over and be boss.

Notice Paul didn’t say, “*God keeps my body under. . . .*” Paul said, “*I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection. . . .*” He calls his body “it.” (“I” is the man on the inside—the real Paul—the inward man who has become a new creature in Christ Jesus.)

Instead of letting the body dominate his inward man, Paul dominates the body with his inward man. “I bring it into subjection,” he says.

Now notice what Paul says later on in this verse: “. . . *lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*” The margin reads, “I myself should be disapproved of God.” Wouldn’t that be sad? Yet I’ve seen it happen.

Laziness prepares the way of licentiousness. Idleness and self-indulgence have slain their thousands.

It’s not a popular message today, but the Bible still teaches self-denial!

The Bible still teaches “keeping the flesh under.”

The Bible still teaches “crucify the flesh.”

The Bible still teaches, as Jesus said, *“If your right eye offend you, pluck it out.”* No, He didn’t mean for you to run your thumb in behind your eyeball and pull it out! He is speaking figuratively. There may be things the flesh desires and seeks after that offend you; if so, cut them off.

YOU cut them off. God isn’t going to cut them off. It hurts, but YOU cut them off and He’ll heal them up.

We make such an issue over things sometimes when actually all we’ve got to do is accept a gift from God. Praise God, deliverance is a gift. Jesus has set you free. He already has done it. Accept it.

I remember years ago when I was pastor of a church in North Central Texas, there was a lady who came about once a month. She wasn’t a member of my church.

In those days we usually closed out the service with a time of prayer. Everybody came around the altar to pray.

One night, after we had finished praying, this woman yelled out loud, “Take it away from me, Lord! Take it away from me! I don’t want it!”

I didn’t pay much attention to her at first, because I was in the back of the church talking to some people. The altar service was over; she was up there praying alone. Every now and then she would yell out loud, “Take it away from me, Lord! Take it away! You know I don’t want it!”

Finally I went up to the altar, and knelt down in front of her, across the altar. I said, “Sister, open your eyes. I want to talk to you.”

Instead of opening her eyes, she yelled, “Lord, take it away!”—and she unknowingly spit right in my face. “You know that I don’t want it!” she yelled.

I said, “Sister, hush. Open your eyes and look at me. I can help you. Open your eyes.”

She didn’t open her eyes. She yelled out again, “Take it away from me, Lord! Whooooo!” (She sounded like a freight train going through a tunnel.) She began to scream and holler, “Take it away from me! You know that I don’t want it!”

I reached across the altar, put my hands on her shoulders, and shook her until her teeth rattled good. I said, “Shut up! In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, hush! Now open your eyes and look at me!”

She opened her eyes.

“Now,” I said, “What is it that you want? What is it that you are trying to get the Lord to take away from you?”

She said, “Brother Hagin, that ol’ snuff.”

I didn’t know that she dipped snuff. Like I said, she wasn’t a member of my church.

“Well,” I said, “the Lord is not going to take it away from you. What would *He* want with it? He doesn’t dip snuff. He’s not a snuff dipper—or a cigarette sucker either. What would He do with it if He had it? He doesn’t want it.”

I told her what the Bible said to do, “*If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell*” (Matt. 5:29).

I explained that I couldn’t quit dipping for her. I couldn’t cut it off or pluck it out. It was up to her. I said, “Sister, just stop it. You cut it off, cut it out, and God will heal it up and bless you then.”

“Oh!” she gasped. She got up from the altar. I stayed there and watched her. She went back to her pew in the second row, reached under the seat, picked up her snuff can, and said, “Well, I couldn’t give up good ol’ *snuff*!”

Bless her heart. It would be funny if it weren’t so pathetic.

I know some of you who don’t have the snuff habit or the tobacco habit are hollering, “Amen!” Yet you goody-goody folks have the worry habit—and that’s worse!

More than one doctor has said to me, “Worry has put more people in the grave and in the insane asylum than any other one thing.” People get sick over worry. Worry will kill you prematurely. (Tobacco will just half kill you; you’ll stink while you’re dying.)

The Bible teaches self-denial.

The Bible teaches crucifying the flesh.

The Bible teaches keeping the body under.

The Bible teaches presenting your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Rom. 12:1).

The Bible teaches God wants transfigured bodies and transformed minds. You can’t grow in grace without it.

Chapter 4

Loquacity

The fourth hindrance to growth in grace is *loquacity*. Do you know what loquacity is? It's talkativeness. Talkativeness is a great hindrance to growth in grace.

In the Book of Proverbs, the Bible says, "*In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin*" (Prov. 10:19). You show me somebody who is always talking, and I'll show you somebody who is always sinning! This is a little blunt, but it's in there. Again, the Bible says that a fool is known by the simplicity of his words (Eccl. 10:14).

The Bible teaches us to study to be quiet. The Bible says, "*let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath*" (James 1:19). I am of the opinion that most Christians practice that verse in reverse: They're quick to wrath, quick to speak, and slow to hear. In fact, when you start talking to them, they'll tell you right away, "Now, you can't tell me anything. I already know it all."

"*Let every man be swift to hear. . . .*" I learned years ago that you can learn a lot more listening than you can talking.

Study to be quiet. Few Christians know the value of solitude and meditation. Few Christians today know the value of long seasons of waiting on God.

In Pentecostal or Full Gospel circles, we used to have what we called "tarrying" meetings. (To "tarry" means to wait.) The only problem with these meetings was the people waiting to be filled with the Holy Spirit. (What you need to do is be filled with the Holy Spirit first and THEN wait on God.)

On the other hand, there was a great benefit from those services. We would spend a lot of time "tarrying" or waiting on God collectively as believers. And in that kind of atmosphere, God can move.

Remember, in the 13th chapter of Acts it says, "*Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers. . . . As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*" (vv. 1–2).

As these five men were waiting on God—as they were tarrying in His presence—the Holy Spirit *said* something. This is the reason a lot of people never hear what He is saying: They never get quiet enough to hear Him. They

never spend enough time to hear Him.

People want to know, ministers want to know, Bible school students want to know the will of God. They feel a call in their spirit. “What is God’s will for me?” they ask.

If you don’t know God’s will for you, the only way you’re going to find out is take enough time to wait on God until you do know. And it may take days, or weeks, or even months.

I know. I always follow this policy myself. I shut myself in with God. I wait on God all I can. I carry on the necessary duties of life, but, at the same time, I spend every possible moment in His presence.

When I was a pastor, I’d get up in the night and go next door to the church. Many has been the time when I still was walking up and down the aisles of the church waiting on God, talking to Him about my future ministry, as the sun came up the next morning.

I sensed the call of God on me. I sensed things in my spirit I’m doing today. That was 33 years ago, but I wasn’t ready for them then. It took time to get ready, and I had to get headed in the right direction. If I hadn’t taken the time to wait on God—sometimes it meant all night long—I wouldn’t have been ready when my ministry fully matured.

I remember one morning, just as the sun was coming up on the eastern horizon, I was walking down the aisle of that old church auditorium and the voice of God spoke to me. To me it was just as real as if somebody had been standing in the room talking to me. He said, “This is the last church you’ll ever pastor. I didn’t call you to pastor.” I heard from heaven.

It is men and women who hear from heaven who bring heaven’s blessings down on people here. I don’t mean they hear from heaven in the Word of God; I mean they hear from heaven in their spirit.

Remember what the Bible says in the Book of Isaiah? “*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength . . . they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*” (Isa. 40:31).

Hallelujah! I want to teach people something about those old-time waiting meetings. This modern charismatic move knows nothing about them. I want us to have some old-fashioned, old-time, Holy Ghost waiting meetings.

Chapter 5

Like Other People

The fifth big hindrance to faith is trying to be *like other people*. I'm not talking about spending time in legitimate fellowship with fellow Christians—but sometimes God calls us away from ourselves. We need to take time to get away from ourselves.

I think the area in which we are most likely to fail is in this area of trying to be like other people: trying to be like the world—and even trying to be like other Christians. No, you be the Christian God wants you to be. And in the ministry, you be the minister God wants you to be. Don't go out and try to be me or somebody else.

Do you remember what the Bible says about being like the world? In First John 2:15, the Spirit of God said through the Apostle John, "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*"

You can become so worldly minded that you are not good enough for God's work. You can get so tangled up, even with legitimate things, that those things can come before spiritual things and hinder your spirituality and growth.

Get your priorities straight. Put spiritual things first. Ask yourself: Is this activity adding to my spirituality, or taking away from it? Is it causing me to be a blessing to my fellow man, or is it a stumbling block and a hindrance?

Love should be the ruling factor in our lives. Paul said—motivated by love—"if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth" (1 Cor. 8:13). He was talking about meat offered to idols. He knew there were no other gods; God is the only God. But he also knew that weak brothers might be offended by his actions. We need to consider others (but we don't need to order our lives after some heretic or fanatic). We need to ask ourselves what kind of an influence we are leaving on them. On the other hand, there is a middle-of-the-road position.

"*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*" Let's not become entangled with the things of this world: right or wrong. James said, "*whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God*" (James 4:4). I don't want to wind up as God's enemy, do you?

You needn't go into a life of open sin in order to have fellowship with the world and be in harmony with the spirit of the world. I don't know about you,

but I'm not in harmony with the spirit of this world.

It's little things that show which way the wind is blowing. You don't look at a classroom building to see if the wind is blowing; you look for a little piece of paper or a few leaves blowing across the lawn. They'll tell you exactly which way the wind is blowing.

There is a text in the Old Testament that says, "*the little foxes . . . spoil the vines*" (Song of Sol. 2:15). It isn't the big things; a lot of times it's little things—things of the world: entertainment, pleasure, and sports—legitimate things. If you're not careful, you'll get taken up with the spirit of this world and lose your effectiveness to preach and pray—and the light goes out.

I believe we're living in the end times. I believe we're living in the last days. I believe Jesus is coming. I don't believe it's time we play church anymore. I believe it's time to go all out in full dedication and full consecration unto God, do what He wants us to do, and be what He wants us to be.

It's time to be sensitive to the Spirit of God; get alone; wait on Him; and let Him talk to us

A Sinner's Prayer to Receive Jesus as Savior

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to You in the Name of Jesus.

Your Word says, “*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*” (John 6:37), so I know You won’t cast me out, but You take me in and I thank You for it.

You said in Your Word, “*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Rom. 10:13). I am calling on Your Name, so I know You have saved me now.

You also said, “*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*” (Rom. 10:9–10). I believe in my heart Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe that He was raised from the dead for my justification, and I confess Him now as my Lord.

Because Your Word says, “*With the heart man believeth unto righteousness,*” and I do believe with my heart, I have now become the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21) . . . And I am saved!

Thank You, Lord!

Signed_____

Date_____

About the Author

Kenneth E. Hagin ministered for almost 70 years after God miraculously healed him of a deformed heart and an incurable blood disease at the age of 17. Even though Rev. Hagin went home to be with the Lord in 2003, the ministry he founded continues to bless multitudes around the globe.

Kenneth Hagin Ministries' outreaches include *The Word of Faith*, a free magazine; Rhema Bible Training College; Rhema Alumni Association; Rhema Ministerial Association International; Rhema Correspondence Bible School; and the Rhema Prison Ministry. Rev. Hagin's son and daughter-in-law, Kenneth W. and Lynette Hagin, co-host *Rhema Praise*, a weekly television broadcast; *Rhema for Today*, a weekday radio program; and *Living Faith Crusades* held around the world.

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