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Lighted Lamp Magazine

Elaine Sneider
Photography

From the Editor

In my devotions, I have been reading from the book of Nehemiah, and I have learned a lot from the way Nehemiah dealt with opposition.

The events in this book took place after the captivity. Nehemiah heard that the Jerusalem's wall was broken down, and prayed about it. Then King Artaxerxes allowed Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall.

When he arrived, Nehemiah found that the people beyond the river did not want the wall to be built. They tried to stop the Israelites from completing it by making fun of them, conspiring to attack them, and trying to intimidate them.

Instead of confronting the enemy, Nehemiah stated his faith in God's intent to prosper the Israelites' efforts, took practical precautions, and prayed. He didn't get distracted from his purpose, and the wall got completed. When people oppose us in doing God's work, we can remember that God is sufficient to accomplish His will.

God bless,

Priscilla

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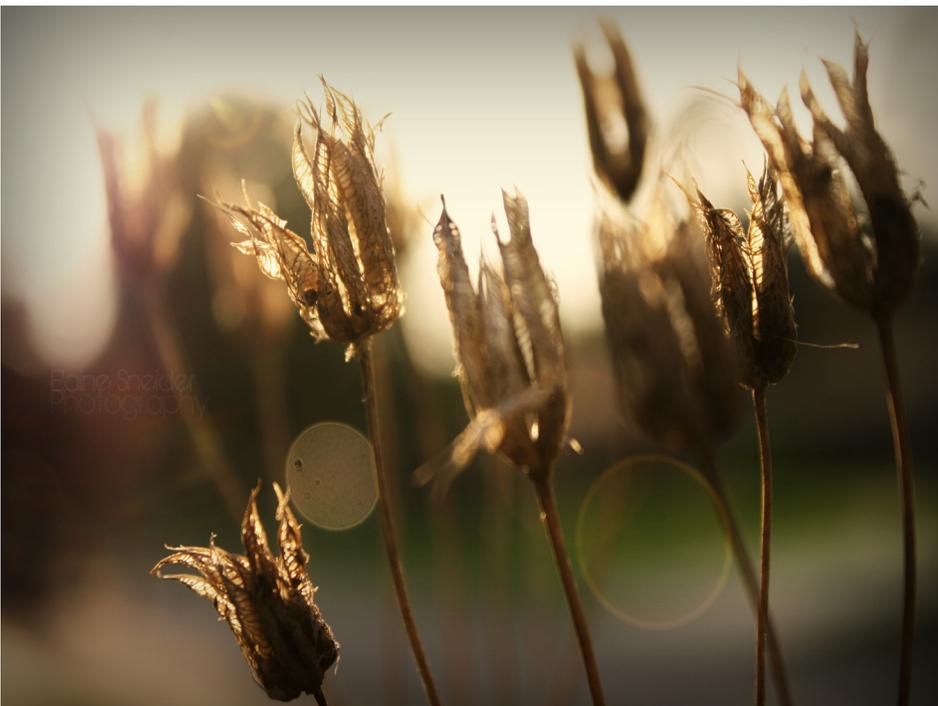
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Photography by Haley

“A man may study because his brain is hungry for knowledge, even Bible knowledge. But he prays because his soul is hungry for God.”
—Leonard Ravenhill

“A New Day” by Elaine Schnider



Mission:

To encourage and strengthen Christian teens to love and follow God with their whole hearts, souls, and minds; and to glorify God.

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Sharing Your Faith

The number one way that we can be the light of Christ to our friends is by our actions.

by Evan Miyakawa

I'm no expert, but God has placed a desire on my heart to share my faith with others. My methods or styles aren't what everyone else should do. They are just ways that God has been able to use me in reaching out to others. Jesus places a strong emphasis on sharing our faith, and calls all Christians to tell others of the amazing gift that God has given us. Do you think it is okay for us to hide this life-changing message of salvation so no one else can experience it? We have God's love in our lives, and we should tell the whole world about it! I'm not saying we should go out on a street corner and yell our heads off, but we should live so that our lives constantly show the light of Christ to others.

Here are some different ways I have shared my faith:

Friendship.

We all have friends. Some people have a lot of non-Christian friends, and some might not have many, but the point is that we all interact regularly with people who have not accepted Christ as their Savior. At times, it's pretty hard for me to go up to one of my friends and share the gospel on the spot. That doesn't usually work. But

God has called us to reach out to these people. The number one way that we can be the light of Christ to our friends is by the way we act. Words don't matter as much as our actions. Most friends probably won't think much if we say they need God or that God is in our lives, but living it out opens so many doors. I was on a soccer team with a bunch of unsaved guys, and I knew more than half of them at the start of the season. My coach was a Christian, and I asked him if I could pray with the team before practices and games (that moment was really scary, but God gave me the strength to do it). I made it a priority not necessarily to start by talking to the guys about Christ, but by being a big encouragement to them on the field and just being the example of Christ. They all knew I was a Christian, but no one made fun of me for it because I wasn't being a jerk or pushing anything on them. At first, I wasn't able to get into their lives very much, but after lots of praying (that's really important too), by the end of the season I had shared the gospel with one guy, and had led a team worship service. Another guy (who I had thought would end up being the team jerk) told me at the end of season that "It's not often that I meet a special guy like you." I had not imagined any of this at the beginning of the season, but because I was praying a lot for the team at home and because I tried to act like

Christ, God worked in big ways.

Street witnessing.

I bet this seems like a scary idea for a lot of you. It was for me when I first was asked to do it. I thought street-witnessing was standing on a street corner and preaching to people as they walked by, but I was mistaken. There are different methods of street evangelism, but I found out that after getting over the initial hump of nervousness, it gets really fun. One of the easiest ways of street evangelism is passing out gospel tracts. They can usually be purchased cheaply in large doses. You go to a busy place or a mall and just start giving them to people as you walk by. I like to say “Here you go” or “Have a great day” as I give out each tract. Some people take it. Some people stop and ask what it is. Some say no thanks. Some just flat out ignore you. But guess what? All of these responses are good. If they take it, great. If they want to know more about it, fantastic. If they reject you, awesome, because it says in Matthew 5:11-12, “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.” So every time you get rejected you gain rewards in heaven. When I get rejected, I like to say “Cha-Ching.” Handing out tracts is an easy way to spread God’s Word to lots of people. I was with a group of about 20 people who handed out about 5000 tracts in one hour. It was awesome!!!!

Conversations.

The other way of witnessing on the streets is having conversations with people. This usually works in a place where there are lots of people, but they’re not in a rush. Instead of just handing

them a tract, strike up a friendly conversation. You don’t have to talk about the gospel right away. Make them feel comfortable. I like to go up to people and say, “Hey, man, how’s it going? What’s your name?” If they have an interesting shirt, comment about it. Ask them what they’re doing. Try to connect with them. Then you can steer them to spiritual things. I usually like to ask a question like, “So if you died tonight, what do you think would be on the other side?” or “Do you think you’re a good person?” Ask them lots of questions and try to have them open up about what they believe. It works a lot better than laying a sermon on them. It gets them thinking about what they believe. After they have talked for a while about what they believe, then you can share from your heart. Remember to be very kind and loving. People hate it when you smash them with the gospel. When I talk about sin, I love to use myself as an example, saying that I’m a sinner, because then they see that I’m not a holy person looking down on them. Throughout the conversation, don’t feel too nervous about what you’re going to say next or that you’ll mess up. Just listen to God’s voice and go where He leads you.

I’ve never had anyone get converted when I talked to them. The point is to plant a seed in their heart. They might seem closed off when you talked to them, but you got them thinking, and that’s what’s important. That night they might re-think about the conversation and say “I really don’t know what my life is about. That worries me.”

In street witnessing, you almost never see the results. The results might be a week later, or even 5 years later. The point is that you shared, planted a seed in their hearts, and allowed God to work in them. ☺



Above: Photography by Haley

Below: Photography by Isaac Swanson





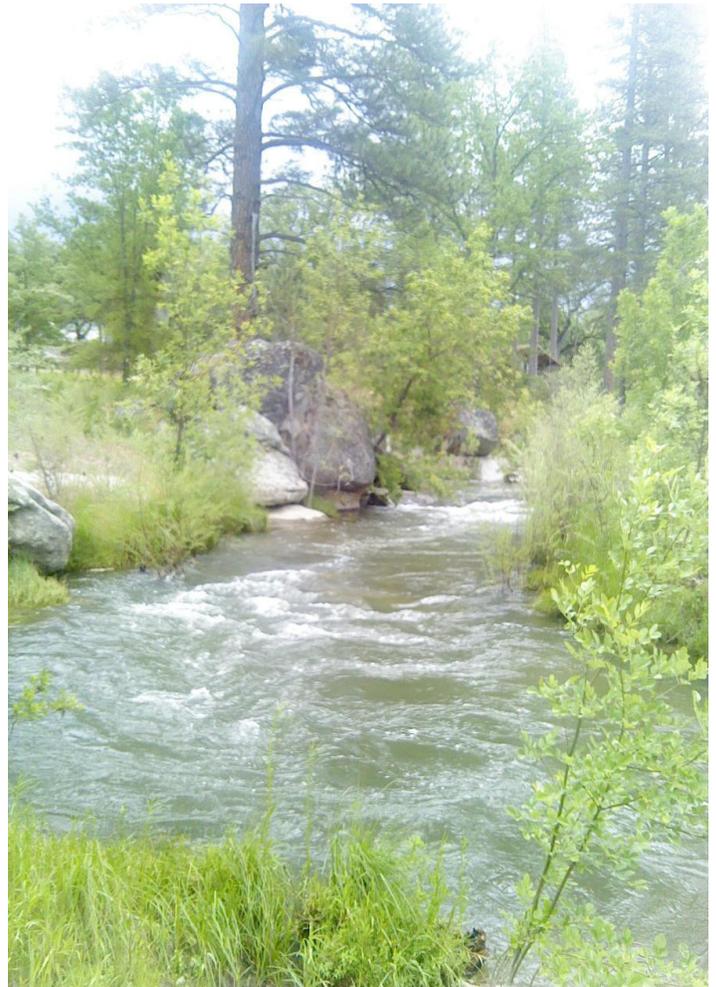
Above: Photography by Isaac Swanson

Below: Photography by Haley

Here I am

Joy B.

So here I am, Lord
You've broken down all my walls
Coaxed my pain from its bitter hideout
And whispered "You'll live,"
And told me to take a chance
So here You are, Lord
I fell, didn't I?
Didn't I say I'd change?
Didn't I want something better?
Beneath the surface, did I?
Did I?
So here are my choices
Can you carry me?
Can I face the things I did?
Do the things I fear?
But not on my own and not alone-
Could You stay near?





Proverbs 2: 1-5 says, “My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God.”

God wants us to learn wisdom, and the key is in these verses. In order to get wisdom, we must desire it and seek it with all our hearts.

Being willing to receive God’s words is the first requirement, and often one of the hardest. We want our selfish desires to be fulfilled and sometimes shut out or ignore God’s word on a particular subject, but if we truly want His wisdom and understanding, we must acknowledge His rightful place as the King of our lives. We can’t pick and choose the situations that we want to follow God in. All areas of our lives need to be under His authority.

Commands seem an unlikely candidate for a

treasure, but that is exactly the way we should view God’s commands. They were given for our good, to protect us from the dominion of sin. Just like parents’ commands that their children should look both ways when crossing the street are motivated by love and the desire to protect their children, so are God’s commandments to us. That makes them a treasure indeed!

We cannot gain understanding without listening to it. No matter how willing we are to obey, and no matter how much we treasure God’s commandments, unless we know them, they will be ineffective. God has blessed us with the Bible, which contains all the knowledge we need, so we should not neglect to read it.

Prayer is another key factor. James 1:5-6 says that God will give us wisdom if we ask Him in faith.

When understanding the fear and knowledge of God is our main priority, these verses offer the great assurance that our we will understand. We will not be left lacking. God wants us to have His knowledge. We just have to use the key.🔑

Quiz: Names of God

1 Adon Adonai Tseva'ot

- a. The God of our fathers
- b. Lord GOD of hosts
- c. The LORD our Righteousness
- d. The LORD my God

2 Hakohen Hammashiah

- a. The Jealous God
- b. Savior
- c. Jesus the Messiah
- d. The Anointed Priest

3 Adonai

- a. Father
- b. Lord, master, owner
- c. My God
- d. All-Merciful God

4 Ben Elohim

- a. Son of God
- b. God of Truth
- c. The Way
- d. The Lion of Judah

5 Elohei Mikkarov

- a. Prince of Peace
- b. The Mighty God
- c. God who is near
- d. My God

6 Elohei Kedem

- a. The God of Forgiveness
- b. Eternal God
- c. The Living God
- d. Living Water

7 Elah

- a. Awesome One
- b. I AM THAT I AM
- c. Rock of Ages
- d. The God who hears

8 El Shaddai

- a. Alpha and Omega
- b. God of Israeal
- c. The Everlasting God
- d. The All-Sufficient God

9 Immanuel

- a. God is with us
- b. The God of Truth
- c. Teacher
- d. Redeemer

10 Hakkadosh

- a. The LORD our Maker
- b. Shepherd
- c. The Holy One
- d. Lamb of God

Source: Hebrew4christians.net.



Photography from Public-Domain-Photos.com

Spreading the True Gospel in the Midst of False Teaching

by Ben Mordecai

The gospel is the greatest news in the universe with no exceptions. This astonishing news declares that while we were yet sinners and enemies of God, the Father sent his son Jesus into the world. Being in the form of God he humbled himself to become one of the lowliest of human beings: a servant. He walked with his

Father under the anointing of the Holy Spirit and lived a life of stunning perfection, yet he suffered under the temptation of the devil and the persecution of others. He was falsely accused, condemned, and crucified. The sins of the world were placed on his head such that whoever would believe in him would find full forgiveness, imputed righteousness, and adop-

tion into the loving family of God. Jesus rose victoriously from the grave and ascended to the right hand of the Father in order that he might send the Holy Spirit to indwell those whom he calls brothers. Finally, he will one day return in glory to judge the world, perfect his Church, and reign over everything forever.

The gospel produces faith in unbelievers, and faith alone brings about salvation from sin, condemnation, and Hell. The gospel is so wonderfully beautiful, powerful, beneficial, and true that it is positively crucial that we get it right.

For this reason it should break the hearts of all believers to hear that this message is being distorted, denied, or just falling out of fashion by those who claim to be in the church. Jesus warned us about false teachers, saying, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:15-16, ESV). Jesus has given us a command in this passage: beware. As a command, we must understand that it is not optional. Likewise, when we consider Jesus’ limitless love we can be certain that this command was issued for our good.

To expound on Jesus’ analogy, God has a sheepfold that is very attractive to wolves. This fold represents the universal Church composed of all believers. Some are hearty and mightily trust God, while others are sickly and slow to believe his promises, but the wolves are hungry and they will take whatever they can get. To make matters worse, these wolves disguise themselves as sheep and walk among us. They profess faith in Christ, but yet they teach heresies and all manner of false doctrine.

So how should a Christian fight false teaching? It is never with violence (John 18:36). It is without malice, deceit, hypocrisy, or slander (1 Peter 2:1). It always leaves the wrath to God (Romans 12:19). To put it plainly, fighting false teaching requires discernment.

2 Peter 2 is a great starting point for learning about false teachers. While you read, it you should see the following points in the text:

Peter says there will be false teachers among you. It is going to happen.

- ❶ They have destructive heresies that tear down the faith of the hearers.
- ❷ Some will even deny Jesus.
- ❸ They will have many followers, and therefore you may find yourself alone.
- ❹ They will be sensual.
- ❺ They will not be spared from God’s destruction.
- ❻ The Lord rescues the righteous from that destruction.
- ❼ They do not tremble as they blaspheme.
- ❽ They have hearts that love sin.

Then, you can visit Jude for additional instruction:

- ❶ False teachers creep in unnoticed.
- ❷ They rely on their dreams.
- ❸ They defile the flesh.
- ❹ They reject authority.
- ❺ They blaspheme.
- ❻ They cause divisions.
- ❼ They are devoid of the Holy Spirit.

So we watch for wolves like shepherds knowing that they will come. But what then should

we do when they arrive? The good shepherd attacks. We never do so with physical violence but with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God (Ephesians 6:17).

The first task in dealing with false teachers is to expose them. Consider something that they have said on the record, preached in a service, or written down and compare it with the word of God. If their teaching does not agree, prayerfully and strategically confront them personally. This takes courage! Ask them questions and make sure that they really mean what they said. If their actual problem is just sloppy vocabulary, then rejoice and encourage them to rephrase so that they don't inadvertently combat the gospel.

If you find that their error is more substantial and hits at the heart of the gospel, bring them to the word of God. Make them take their stands and commit to their interpretation of the scripture. Once they have taken their stands you can bring the relevant passages to bear and show what interpretations are necessary in order to be faithful to the scripture. If they do not even believe the scripture, get them to admit it outright. This way when interacting with those who are listening to the teachers you have the ability to tell them honestly "he told me that he does not believe in scripture" and the sway of their arguments loses a lot of weight.

The next task is to look to the believers who take instruction from the false teacher. We want to help guard them, but it takes discernment to understand how to do so without slander. Apart from being sinful, it really ruins your credibility! Ask them what makes this teaching attractive to them. Often times, believers have been hurt by an excess or oddity in their religious upbringing and swing back the other way even

harder. If you can sympathize with their pain and love them, you can find a way to show that their concerns are valid but that the real solution lies in the real gospel. One common example is legalism. Christians who grow up in a strict fundamentalist upbringing often come to a point where they are worn down from living with a guilty conscience and react by finding liberal preachers who deny the reliability of the Bible, find the morality of the Bible to be very flexible, and believe that almost no one will ever be condemned. For this person, it is helpful for you to sympathize with the pain of legalism but show that the answer is the free grace found in the gospel, not in the faithlessness of liberalism.

If you set your mind to the scripture and your heart to loving people, you will find yourself wielding the word of God as a weapon to ward off false teachers and you will find that some of your brothers are saved and the wolves will flee. Tragically, the wolves still do get their prey sometimes. Your effort will require perseverance, patience, and prayer but, like all labors of love, it will always be worth it. ☺

Prayer Page



Pastors have an important role in spreading the good news. As Romans 10:14-15 points out, people can't hear about Jesus unless someone tells them about Him, and while all Christians should be a witness to what He has done in their lives, pastors are always sharing and explaining God's word to people.

written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"¹

This month, please pray for pastors, that God would bless their ministry as well as their own lives and their families.

Romans 10:14-15 (NKJV)

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is

STRONG IN WEAKNESS

FOREIGNERS SERIES

by Priscilla Carsten

When I think of the word “strong”, I first think of someone with a lot of muscles. But that’s just physically strong. Mathematicians are mentally strong. Dictators are politically strong. But there is only One in the universe who is strong in every situation.

Exodus 13:9(NKJV) says, “It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD’s law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.”

Deuteronomy 2:36 says, “From Aroer, which [is] on the bank of the River Arnon, and [from] the city that is in the ravine, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us; the LORD our God delivered all to us.”

Joshua 23:9 says, “For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but [as for] you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day.”

No matter what enemy fought against the Israelites in the Old Testament, the Israelites were never defeated if they had been following God. God only allowed them to be defeated when they had turned away from Him and He wanted to remind them that He had given them their blessings and that they had not earned those blessings by their own might or ability. He wanted to turn them back to Him.

Isaiah 27:1 is a verse that tells just how strong God is. “In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; And He will slay the reptile that is in the

sea.” Satan is a very strong force in this world; we can see what he has done all around us. It is impossible to hide from the sin that rules this world. No man is sinless. In fact, have you ever tried not to sin for an entire day? Once, when I was little, I decided to try. I didn’t even make it until breakfast. Satan is so powerful! But in this verse, God says that He will defeat Satan “with His severe sword, great and strong,” and Satan isn’t called “the prince of this world” in this passage; he’s called “the fleeing serpent”. There’s no contest. All of the struggles that we have but can’t overcome sin will be over. God will punish Satan, who will flee!

So when 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”, we know that He is strong enough to take care of us, even though we are weak.

2 Chronicles 16:9a says, ““For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.” That is a great verse, a comforting verse. God looks for opportunities to show His strength on our behalf. Isn’t it a good feeling to be loyal to Him? Just think about the terror that will belong to those that hate Him. That’s who we would be if it wasn’t for His grace.

Mark 14:38 says, “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”” Jesus said this in the Garden of Gethsemane to Peter, when he was sleeping instead of watching with Jesus. It is always sad to read about this experience, because

to Peter and the disciples, it was just another night. They had no idea what was going to happen, but it became such a tragic night for their Friend, and they were not there for Him. I wonder whether if Peter had prayed in the garden he might have been more loyal to Jesus at His trial. The way Jesus worded it almost makes it sound that way.

What a lesson to us. It is so hard to pray. Other things- work, wandering thoughts, and sometimes even sleep- interrupt our prayers. It is so easy not to pray. But might we be missing something important, like Peter? Peter had no idea what would happen that night. All he knew was that Jesus wanted him to pray. Think of all the things that we might be forgetting to pray about. Peter didn't know what the issue at hand was, and we often don't either. What should Peter have prayed about? Well, he could have prayed not to fall into temptation, being Jesus had mentioned it. What should we pray about? Even when I know who I want to pray for, I often don't know what to pray about, so I've started collecting requests Paul says he's praying for in his letters to various churches. And we can always pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

Have you ever wondered why God chooses followers who are weak? Or why He doesn't make the people He chooses to be strong? I Corinthians 1:27-29 has the answer. "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." If we were strong of ourselves, the world would see what we do and think it is because of our own strength. When we are weak, the world stops and wonders, because we could never do the things God helps us to do without God. ☮

One Strong Man

by Victoria L A.

It's the 11th of September, people scream and flee and cower.

A plane has gone off course and crashed into one of the twin towers!

Across the world the news is spread of a terrorist attack.

Did they crash those planes today attention to attract?

No, they mean to hurt our nation by killing those so innocent

And hurting families everywhere who will lose their loved ones from it.

But now thick flames engulf the towers, escape attempts just fail.

And others trapped in rooms and halls cry out in unheard wails.

Soon sirens sound, firefighters come to stop this giant blaze.

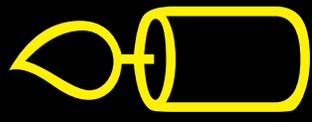
While most look on as the tower falls, there's one strong man who prays.

The fire dwindles, the smoke now fades into a misty smog.

Then out come few who found escape and that man gives thanks to God.

Though towers fell, families destroyed, brave men whose lives they gave.

We should still give thanks to God for those whose lives He saved.



ILL Magazine

Matthew 5:16