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## Men At The Cross: Without Regret

AUGUST 02ND 2011 BY NEWS

### Men At The Cross: Without Regret

*Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.* 2 Corinthians 7: 10

The insightful best selling book *The Road Less Traveled* begins with the simple "picture window" word "Life is hard".

The French say "la vi est dieu" (the road is difficult).

This planet we live on is not Heaven. Satan wreaks havoc on this fallen planet. Man's "fall" in the Garden of Eden rendered for all mankind an existence of crime, disease, heartaches, and heart breaks.

But, the French continue the two part phrase, "me dieu est bon" (my God is good).

My good friend, Josh McDowell, says that trials will either make you bitter or better. If you walk with God, trust God in all circumstances, and hold Him sovereign in your life, hurts and difficulties always bring out the best in you. If the "stuff" and pleasures of the world are your ultimate aim, let downs and disappointments will make you bitter.

The focus of your life that moves you from a "groaner" to a "praiser" is not the size of the trial, but the shape of your heart.

If my ultimate goal is "to get to Heaven and take as many people with me as I can," trials

actually become my friend because, put simply, God uses trials to get people humbly at the foot of the cross.

My young friend, Ricky, died in a drowning accident. Seven people who knew Ricky accepted Christ as their personal Savior before the sun set that very day. Martin has had 14 major surgeries on his face from his traumatic birth defect. He called from his hospital bed yesterday to praise God for his opportunity to receive medical care. Lauren lost her leg to cancer. She majors in triathlete at our sports camp, blesses and amazes everyone by her fantastic attitude and Christ-given smile.

**QUESTIONS:** 1. Why do trials become a watershed to separate true Christian faith from counterfeit faith?

2. How can you use the trial you are now facing to make you "better" and turn your attitude into a "praiser"?

3. Hebrews 5:8 says about Jesus, Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. How do trials make you appreciate and identify with Him more?

**LIFELINE:** *Home is the "comforting place" when the trials of life wound a family member.*

**Fuel Up! Video Devotional**  
**Men At The Cross**

***Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White***

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## MY BODY A TEMPLE - Men at the Cross Devo

AUGUST 01ST 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

### MY BODY A TEMPLE - Men at the Cross Devo

*Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White*

### VIDEO OF THE DAY

#### 2 Corinthians 6:16 & 18

*16What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."*

*18"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."*

Candy Irwin was stunning as she walked slowly, softly, deliberately down the colorfully laced pathway into the picturesque outdoor chapel on her wedding day. It was without a doubt the most beautiful wedding my eyes have ever beheld. Her wedding budget was a mere one hundred dollars. Candy was a country girl and money was scarce. She had purchased the simple white gown she wore and spent all summer hand sewing beads and sequins on the gown until she produced her masterpiece that set hers far above anything

Sachs Fifth Avenue ever dreamed of. Candy had no money for flowers, but God provided majestically. The silver leaf maple trees that adorned the outdoor chapel were in a myriad of fall colors. The gentle Ozark breeze blew them onto the ground where they decorated her footsteps.

When Candy arrived at the wedding altar, I was speechless and her groom was in tears. The anticipation was overwhelming to him. He had patiently waited for the wedding day for three years while Candy sat beside her ailing grandmom each day until her hero went to her heavenly rest. The image of Candy's purity at the altar redefined beauty.

As breathtaking as Candy's wedding scene was, it pales in comparison to the wedding that is taking place in the "temple" of your heart because it is there that your soul was and is married to the Holy Spirit of God. Michael Angelo couldn't paint a more beautiful interior in a billion dollar sepulcher than the wedding chapel of your heart that God hand-crafted for His Spirit's dwelling place.

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That's why someone who loves God doesn't watch movies or television that has nudity or profanity. That's why we're selective with our music and conversation. That's why we don't pour alcohol, drugs or tobacco into our bodies. That's why scripture calls you to a high standard of holy living.

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does "your body's a temple" mean to you?
2. How do your eyes and ears allow filth into the temple?
3. How do you give your temple the housecleaning that God's spirit deserves?

### **LIFELINE:**

The home should be a reflection of a wedding ceremony with Jesus Himself.

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## Amy Winehouse & The '27 Club'

JULY 29TH 2011 BY NEWS

Amy Winehouse & The '27 Club'

*By Kelly Boggs*

ALEXANDRIA, La. - The "27 Club" is not an en vogue New York City venue where the rich and famous gather to party. Rather, it is a designation given to a collection of music artists, primarily those of the rock 'n' roll genre, who have all died at the age of 27.

The most recent inductee into the inauspicious club took place on July 23 when British singing sensation Amy Winehouse was found dead in her London apartment. While the cause of death for the multiple Grammy Award winner is yet unknown, her untimely demise came as no surprise to family, friends or fans.

Winehouse's lifestyle had for some time been out of control. Dominated by alcohol, drugs and eating disorders, she had been in and out of rehab numerous times. So destructive was Winehouse's lifestyle that a website appeared in 2007 asking people to predict when she would die.

No doubt Winehouse's untimely death is tragic, especially to her family. However, it is intriguing to note that she died, as have so many other rock performers, at the young age of 27.

In fact, so prominent is the number of singers and musicians that have died at the age of 27 that a book was published in 2009 exploring the subject. Written by Eric Segalstad and illustrated by Josh Hunter, "The 27's: The Greatest Myth of Rock & Roll" examines the lives and deaths of 34 musicians who each died at the age of 27.

The word "myth" in the title of "The 27's" is a bit misleading. Rather than referring to something that is fictitious, "myth" is to be understood as a story that explains a social phenomenon.

Among the more prominent members of the "27 Club" are: Brian Jones, founding member of the Rolling Stones; Jimi Hendrix, pioneering guitarist; soulful singer Janis Joplin; Jim Morrison, lead singer of The Doors; and Kurt Cobain, lead singer of Nirvana.

One thread that is common to the vast majority of celebrities who have died at an early age is they pursued with wild abandon what some call "the rock 'n' roll lifestyle." Simply put, they practiced unbridled hedonism. They did what they wanted, when they wanted and without any regard to negative consequences.

Are there lessons to be gleaned by examining the lives of the members of the "27 Club?" I think so. One is that fame and fortune are poor substitutes for meaning and purpose. It seems, in the end, that celebrity and wealth are empty pursuits.

Amy Winehouse, like other "27 Club" members, had it all. She was famous, wealthy and her talent was celebrated. Yet, it is clear that "having it all" did not quench a yearning in her soul. Something was missing.

I am convinced that a life that is void of meaning seeks to find purpose and fulfillment in experiences. And for too many members of the "27 Club" the experiences they pursued were self-destructive.

Another lesson is that the so-called "rock 'n' roll lifestyle" is simply unsustainable. A human body can only take so much abuse and then it breaks down -- physically, mentally and emotionally. A person running on a hedonistic treadmill succumbs, sooner rather than later, to drugs, disease or despair.

Many rockers who have escaped untimely deaths did so by leaving the rock 'n' roll lifestyle behind. While many still perform, their off stage hedonism has become nothing more than a memory.

"The No-No Song" sung by Ringo Starr sums up well the sentiment of celebrities who have changed their self-destructive ways. In the song the former Beatle turns down the offer of drugs and alcohol by singing, "No, no, no, no, I can't take it no more. I'm tired of waking up on the floor. No thank you, please, it only makes me sneeze, and then it makes it hard to find the door."

Young people would be wise to look past the fame and fortune heaped on members of the "27 Club" to the reality they experienced. Rather than lives of meaning, significance and serene success, their private pursuits reveal souls that were writhing with unrest.

While members of the "27 Club"

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may have gained the whole world, they seemingly lost their souls. In the end their lives were, as Jesus indicated in the Gospels, personally unprofitable. And that is beyond sad; it is tragic.

***Kelly Boggs is a weekly columnist for Baptist Press and editor of the Baptist Message of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.***

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# UNEQUALLY YOKED - Men At The Cross Devo

JULY 29TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

## UNEQUALLY YOKED - Men At The Cross Devo

*Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White*

### VIDEO OF THE DAY

#### 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

*14Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."*

Imagine, as crazy as it sounds, that you are an ox named Bill. You live in ancient Istanbul and your job is to pull a cart with the beloved king of Turkey riding in it. You are sound, wise, and dedicated. You love the king you are assigned for life to serve. Unfortunately, somebody puts Sam on the other side of the yoke of this two-oxen cart and although Sam is big, strong, and handsome and seemed great the first time you met him, he is lazy, rebellious, and stubborn when the work begins. The king becomes frustrated with both oxen because you cannot work together and puts you out to pasture. Because of your sincerity, your heart is broken.

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Oh, I know oxen don't have names or "people hearts" that can be broken! But that's the context of this terrific metaphor.

The teen letters I've received are many that tell the same story.



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"Joe, my friends told me that getting high would make my problems go away. That wasn't true at all. First we tried speed, then pot, angel dust, and LSD. Although I only tried LSD once, it was an experience I'll never forget." -- 15-year-old.

"Joe, he told me he loved me and like all the rest we'd get married some day. He talked me into sex and then we broke up. I was crushed. I felt like I had two hundred knives go through me." -- 16-year-old

"I began to hang out with the wrong friends. They were always partying and drinking. Before long, they took me down with them." -- 17-year-old

"The worst mistake I ever made was building a business partnership with \_\_\_\_\_ (an unbeliever). I'll be paying for it (literally) for years to come." - A Christian businessman

A Christian must be a witness to the lost, no doubt. But a true, sincere Christian is solemnly warned not to be friends, partners with, or to date or fall in love with someone who is not a truly sincere Christian. This passage is a clear warning from God that if you don't listen, like Bill the ox, your heart will be broken.

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What do you think God is saying to you personally about not being unequally yoked?
2. How can the desire for love or friendship or the desire for money blind you?
3. If you find yourself unequally yoked today, what do you need to do?

### **LIFELINE:**

Keep the yoke of family equally growing and growing strong.

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## METAMORPHOSIS - Men at the Cross Devotional

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JULY 28TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

### METAMORPHOSIS - Men at the Cross Devotional

*Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White*

### VIDEO OF THE DAY

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#### 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

*14For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 16So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

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There's not a scientist alive who can explain the miracle of metamorphosis. They can name it, they can report what happens during the process, but none have ever begun to explain the "why" and the "how" of the transformation. If an evolutionist is honest, the scientific method has never proven nor does the fossil record show one species mutating into a higher species. Radiation and mutation expert, Dr. [images/Blog Images/show/ujft](#) H. J. Muller, in the "Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists", said *"...extensive tests have agreed in showing the vast majority of them (mutations) detrimental to the organism . . . good ones are so rare that we can consider them all bad."* Dr. Pierre-Paul Grosse, former President of the French Academie des Science said, *"No matter how numerous they may be, mutations do not produce any kind of Evolution .... There is no law against day dreaming, but science must not indulge in it."*

How much more difficult based on naturalistic processes is it to somehow transfer one's entire biological makeup from a lowly creepy caterpillar into a majestic butterfly that can fly from deep in the heart of Mexico to the northernmost parts of the United States to the exact tree where this butterfly's ancestors lived without a map or anyone telling him where to go! God is supernatural. He is unexplainable. He is un-provable.

[images/Blog Images/show/ujfs](#) If that's not amazing enough, who but God could take a senseless murderer and turn him into a soft, gentle, tender-hearted minister to other murderers behind prison walls? Or, who could turn a "hopeless" alcoholic into a trustworthy husband and caring father.

Last week a seventeen-year-old boy with the kindest eyes came up to me after I spoke to a youth rally and said, *"last year when you spoke here I was a heroin addict, but I became a Christian a month later, my drug habit has ended, and now I've been called to be a pastor some day."*

I, too, have failed in this life, way too many times to count, but I (like the caterpillar) crawled into the "cocoon" of grace and like millions before me was born again into a true child of the living God.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does it mean to be a "brand new creature"?
2. What do you have to do to go through spiritual metamorphosis?
3. Describe the butterfly that Jesus has made you today?

## **LIFELINE:**

Try to always forgive the "caterpillar" each family member has left behind and look for

the "butterfly" in everyone around you.

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