

## ABOUT MICHAEL

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### Loving God (One Man's Journey)

By Michael Didier



I asked Jesus into my life as a child more than 40 years ago. My family never opened a Bible or even went to church. For me, in those childhood and teen years, my faith consisted of doing what "I thought" was the right way to conduct my life; I had no examples of the way I should go.

Shortly after HS graduation I fell in "infatuation" with a young lady that loved me and, I believe, I loved her to the best of my ability. Through her influence I started smoking marijuana which I would never have done except for the love and respect I had for her.

But there was emptiness in my life that I could not explain, something was missing. So at the age of 19 I started searching. Associating with others who were involved in the drug culture led me in a way that did not provide many answers.

I met some people who were involved with Transcendental Meditation and studied that; while never forgetting that I was committed to make Jesus my Lord. However His lordship meant nothing to me at this point in my life, and would not for many years. When I considered my future, at this point in my life, I would wonder how I could raise children and still smoke pot.

The Commons was a city park near my home. I met a young gal named LeAnne there one day who was very despondent and perhaps suicidal. The only advice I could offer her as I passed her the joint we had both been sharing was "you need Jesus in your life." Well, several months later I saw LeAnne and another friend Donna. They had changed! The LeAnne that I saw leave that park that day was not the same gal that stood before me now; nor was Donna the same. They said they had been born again and found a wonderful church; they asked if I would go with them the following Sunday. Since I had not ever attended a real church service before (I, my brother and two sisters had been sent each Sunday for years on a bus we kids called "the Sunday school bus.") I accepted their invitation immediately and enthusiastically.

The service that week was just for me. The pastor put up a diagram that day that most of us have seen upon occasion. God was on one side, man on the other; the gulf between us was "sin" (the things we did that God said we should not do) and it separated us from him. Each time the pastor put up a new part of the diagram I said to myself "yah," "yah," "yah," I knew all this. Then he bridged the gap with Jesus who paid for our sins with his life. Again I said "yah." That night I recommitted my self to the king of kings and his Father.

It was only a short time before I realized that I now had people who really did care about me; unlike my drug buddies who knew I pretty much always had a joint to share. I had to tell these old friends that I still cared about them but I was not going to be going their way any longer, but if they wanted to come with me they were welcome to join me. They, however, never came. Within weeks of my re-commitment I went for a drive and claimed the blood of Jesus over my life and threw out more than a pound of marijuana as I drove. I was free.

Many months before I had been sitting by a lake and thought about what I need to "get by" in this world. The answer at first was food, water and clothing (warmth); but there was something even more important than those, which I identified as "truth." With it (truth) I would always be going in a positive direction in my life; "truth" must be sought!

Armed with this knowledge I returned to school, which I swore I would never do, I was never what anyone would call a "good student". The next three years were spent at a two-year community college while I also worked part-time. To my surprise I was now a very good student, and even more surprising I became a leader of the Campus Christian Fellowship. There were six of us when we began and over 60 when I left to attend Wheaton College in the next town over.

Contrary to my time at the community college where every one of us had to fight for our faith and appreciated what we had; the two years I had at Wheaton College

were much more difficult as many students there seemed to take their faith for granted. I was still a good student but most students there were much more capable than I. As a resident advisor I was able to get my room and board paid and influence the students on my floor at the same time.

During these five years of college I realized that I could have a positive effect on the lives of the students, so I decided that I wanted to become a dean of students as I had great respect for the Dean of Students at Wheaton .

That summer I had to do a practicum for my bachelor degree in Christian Education. Honeyrock Camp was a facility maintained by Wheaton College in the North woods of Wisconsin. It was there that I met the woman who I would love a lifetime; her name was Judy. She said that I was different from others in that I liked to talk about things of God. Judy was correct, that has always been important to me.

There were two places in which I could do my masters work in College Student Services Administration, one was in Oregon (close to Judy) the other was in Michigan (far from Judy). I came to Oregon and after my first year there Judy and I were married.

We lived and ran a dormitory during our first year of marriage. Becoming a Dean of students never became a reality for me as I was entering the workplace at the beginning of the equal opportunity era and had many say that they would hire me if I were a minority or a woman. Since Judy was a teacher we took a team position running a small dormitory in central Oregon. Because of those two years and two prior, I decided that I really did not enjoy working with students that did not want to grow.

We heard about a church in the Seattle area that was starting a school and decided to visit. It was an exciting place filled with people who loved God and wanted to serve Him (at least as best as they knew how). Judy got a position as a teacher and we decided to move there. I was still unemployed but we decided I would volunteer at the school until they got on their feet. The next ten years I went from volunteer, to the Assistant to the Principal, to Assistant Principal and was even the Elementary Principal for several years. Unfortunately, or maybe thankfully, while I loved the children, the parents, and the teachers, I have never been very good at playing "the system" and left the school to be an entrepreneur. Now I only had to satisfy myself and my customers. My biggest loss in leaving the school was not being able to work with my bride. Judy and I had been working together each day since we were married 11 years before; for me that was my greatest loss but it was also a start of a new adventure.

Judy and I have never lacked for anything, been cold, or gone hungry; our Father in heaven has always proved Himself faithful. I believe this is so because we have always served Him as best we knew how.

My desire for "truth" has never failed. The friends Judy and I had over the years were for the most part teacher friends. Their husbands were my friends because they came with their wives or they taught with my wife. I have never been interested in baseball, basketball, football, fishing, etc.. The conversation topics that interested me were political, social, family issues and of course issues regarding my faith in the Creator and His son.

As our children grew (we had three – two boys and a little girl) I, like most dads, attended practically every sporting event my children were participating in. In addition I became a Boy Scout leader and required each of the boys (Wes and Jonny) to participate until they made First Class Scout. Fortunately, at least that is what I thought at the time, they continued and went on in there scouting endeavors and became accomplished in many areas. Beginning around the time of the new millennium I began to search the scriptures much more seriously than I ever had before. After I had read through my Bible two times I began to see many things that we did, and things that were spoke about in church, which had no Biblical basis or were in fact contrary to the scriptures.

One of the first inconsistencies I saw was; if Jesus died and was in the earth for three days and three nights, how come we celebrate Easter and say He died on Friday at evening and rose on Sunday morning. At best, according to that tradition, He was in the earth a day and a half, but that is not what the Bible says. Upon doing more research I found out some very disturbing things concerning the origin of the Easter celebration. ([Meet Easter](#))

Next I read two books which speak about the political and social aspects of our faith as it relates to the Kingdom of God and the systems of the world (the state). One was called "[Christian Patriotism](#)" written at the turn of the 20th century and the other "[Covenant of the gods](#)", was written by a man who is a historian, Bible

scholar and lawyer.

**I started to ask myself some very difficult questions:**

- What makes us God's people? And "Which nation is under God?"
- If the fourth commandment says Saturday is the Sabbath and we should keep it holy, why do we worship on Sunday and ignore holiness altogether?
- If Jeremiah 10 forbids Christmas trees why do we do it? Well that opens up another whole can of worms. (Again see [Man's Holidays or God's Holy Days](#))
- Is saying I believe in Christ enough? What does [repentance](#) have to do with [salvation](#)? And what did we repent of anyway? Should we still be doing what we repented of? Would that be true repentance?
- What really is faith anyway? ([Precept 10 – Faith](#))
- I began to ask myself, "Is there was anything that I had been taught in my Romanized Christianity that had any solid Biblical foundation?" ([Introduction to Precepts](#)) The answer, precious little!

Needless to say, but I will, the more questions I asked the more "friends" I lost. First I was asked to leave the Boy Scouts by the pastor (I did not want to say the pledge of Allegiance to a flag of a corporation), Then I was asked to leave the church by my wife who did not want me to ask the pastor the sincere questions which I had. Then I was commanded by the court to leave my home, my wife (of 24 now 28 years as of summer 2008) and my three wonderful children. I fought the court against separating what God has brought together and stopped the divorce proceedings for 4 years but ended up with a ten-year restraining order which the judge put in place even though my own wife said I am "a kind and gentle man."

The title of this article is called Loving God, for me this has been a process. The first commandment says:

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3)

(Strong's #430 elohiyim – gods, defined this word as "law-makers or judges," – Brown, Driver, Briggs Hebrew Definitions)

This commandment must be pretty important since our heavenly Father put it first.

In Deuteronomy 6:1-5, the chapter immediately following the ten commandments it says:

"Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which YHWH (most Bibles say, "the LORD") your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou might fear YHWH thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as YHWH God (Ruler and Judge) of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that flows with milk and honey."

Jesus (Yeshua) picked up on the next two verses in Deuteronomy 6 when he was listing the first of the two most important commandments of YHWH saying:

"Hear O Israel, you shall love YHWH thy God with all your heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27)

In my mind, **all** is a lot! "All" is what Jesus did. He was our example of how we should live.

Between the second commandment and the third we are told by YHWH:

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." (Exodus 20:5-6)

His commandments, as opposed to their commandments? Who are these "false images, these false gods" that we are not supposed to serve? Answer: Any other Elohim (law makers or judges) but YHWH! It appears that loving YHWH our Elohim

עלויים (law-makers or judges) but תחנך: it appears that loving תחנך our עלויים and obeying Him go hand in hand and that not loving Him by continuing in sin is the converse. But let's see what the New Testament has to say about loving God.

Yeshua (Jesus) said:

"I and my Father are one." (John 10:30)

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." Joh 14:24

"He that is of God, hears God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." (John 8:47)

Loving YHWH our Elohiym and obeying Him are intimately related. In other words we are not doing the former unless we are doing the latter also. (See [Loving God 101](#)) John, the one whom Yeshua loved, echoes the same opinion.

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth (Who defines light and darkness, the Father or the state?): But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:5-10)

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that says, I know him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that says he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John 2:3-6)

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:2-3)

The second of the two greatest commandments which Jesus referred to was this:

"And the second is like it [the first], namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:31, Leviticus 19:18)

People love to quote this verse "you shall love your neighbor as yourself," but let's take a careful look at it in context from which it is quoted. How is this verse "like the first"?

"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God. 'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the LORD. 'You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD. 'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. 'You shall keep My statutes." (Leviticus 19:9-19)

In context we see that even loving our neighbor is not possible unless we are following YHWH's commandments, judgments and ordinances which tell us how we

are to love them. I said at the beginning of the article that "I (thought) had no examples of the way I should go." Of course, I was wrong. Yeshua (Jesus) was our example of the way in which we should go. He demonstrated the "narrow way" for us. Which is why Paul said:

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Yeshua was our example of how we are to love YHWH our Elohiym with all out heart, soul and strength and our neighbor as ourselves. Let's follow Him and His example.

"He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (1 John 2:3-6)

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