

# A Love that Transforms



Amazing Facts  
Study Guide

## Amazing Facts Study Guide 26 - A Love that Transforms

Being in love changes everything. For instance, a young lady was reading a large book for her university's English literature course. She found the whole thing very boring and could barely stay focused when reading it. But then she met a striking young professor on campus, and they quickly fell in love. Soon after, she realized her beloved was the author of the book she had struggled with. That night she stayed up and devoured the entire book exclaiming, "This is the best book I have ever read!" What changed her perspective? Love did. Likewise, many today find Scripture boring, oppressive, and unappealing. But that all changes when you fall in love with the author. See how in this heart-warming Study Guide!

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### 1. Who is the author of Scripture?

"The prophets have enquired and searched diligently, ... Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

**Answer:** The God of the Bible (even the Old Testament) is virtually always Jesus Christ. Jesus created the world (John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:13-17), wrote the Ten Commandments (Nehemiah 9:6, 13), was the God of the Israelites (1 Corinthians 10:1-4), and guided the writings of the prophets (1 Peter 1:10, 11). So, Jesus Christ is the author of Scripture.

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### 2. What is Jesus' attitude toward the people of earth?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

**Answer:** Jesus loves us all with an indescribable, unfailing love that passes understanding.

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### 3. Why should we love Jesus?

"We love him, because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8.

**Answer:** We should love Him because He loved us enough to die for us--while we were yet His enemies.

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### 4. In what respects are a successful marriage and the Christian life similar?

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." 1 John 3:22.

**Answer:** In a good marriage certain things are imperative, such as faithfulness to one's spouse. Other things may not seem major, but if they please a spouse they are necessary. If they displease, they should be discontinued. So it is with the Christian life. The commands of Jesus are imperative. But in Scripture Jesus has also outlined for us principles of conduct that please Him. As in a good marriage, a Christian finds it sheer joy to do the things that make Jesus, the One he loves, happy. He also avoids things that displease Him.

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### 5. What does Jesus say are the results of doing the things that please Him?

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; ... These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." John 15:10, 11.

**Answer:** The devil claims that to follow Christian principles is drab, dull, demeaning, and legalistic. But Jesus says it brings fullness of joy (John 15:10, 11) and a more abundant life (John 10:10). Believing the devil's lies brings heartache

and deprives people of life that is "really living."

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## 6. Why does Jesus give us specific principles for Christian living?

**Answer:** Because they:

- A. Are for our own good always (Deuteronomy 6:24). As good parents teach good principles to their children, so Jesus teaches good principles to His children.
- B. Set for us a safeguard from sin (Psalms 119:11). Jesus' principles protect us from entering the danger zones of Satan and sin.
- C. Show us how to follow in Christ's footsteps (1 Peter 2:21).
- D. Bring us true happiness (John 13:17).
- E. Give us an opportunity to express our love for Him (John 15:10).
- F. Help us be the right example to others (1 Corinthians 10:31-33; Matthew 5:16).

## 7. According to Jesus, how should Christians relate to the evil of the world and to worldliness?

**Answer:** His commands and counsel are clear and specific:

- A. Don't love the world or the things of the world. The things of the world that are not of God are: (1) the lust of the flesh, (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life (1 John 2:16). All sin falls into one or more of these three categories. Satan uses these three avenues to lure us into love of the world. When I begin to love the world, I become an enemy of God (1 John 2:15, 16; James 4:4).
- B. I must keep myself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).

## 8. What urgent warning does God give us regarding the world?

**Answer:** Jesus warns Christians, "Be not conformed to this world." Romans 12:2. Phillips translation puts it: "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould."\* The devil is not neutral. He presses every Christian constantly. Through Jesus (Philippians 4:13), I must firmly resist the devil's suggestions, and he will flee from me (James 4:7). The minute I permit the "squeezing" of any other factor to influence my conduct, I imperceptibly begin slipping into apostasy. Christian behavior is not to be decided by the feelings and conduct of the majority, but by Jesus' words from Scripture.

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## 9. Why do we need to guard our thoughts?

"As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7.

**Answer:** We must guard our thoughts, because thoughts dictate behavior. God wants to help us bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5. But Satan desperately wants to bring "the world" into our thoughts. He can do this only through our five senses--especially sight and hearing. He presses his sights and sounds upon us all and, unless we consistently refuse to look at or listen to what he offers, he will direct us into the broad way that leads to destruction. The Bible is clear. We do become like the things we repeatedly see and hear (2 Corinthians 3:18).

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## 10. What are some principles for Christian living?

"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." Philippians 4:8.

**Answer:** Christians must separate themselves from all things that are not true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. They will avoid:

- A. Dishonesty of every kind—cheating, lying, stealing, being unfair, intent to deceive, slander, and betrayal.
- B. Impurity of every kind. This includes fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, perversion of all types, pornography, profanity, filthy conversation, off-color jokes, social dancing, degenerate songs or music, and most of what is shown on

television and in movie theaters.

**C.** Places where we would never invite Jesus to accompany us, such as nightclubs, taverns, gambling casinos, racetracks, etc.

Let's take a few minutes to enlarge upon the dangers of popular music, dancing, television, videos, and the theater.

### **Music and Song**

Many types of secular music (rap, country, pop, rock, heavy metal, adult contemporary, and dance music) have been largely captured by Satan. The lyrics often glorify vice and destroy a desire for spiritual matters. Researchers have discovered some interesting things regarding the power of music:

- (1) It enters the brain through the emotions, thus bypassing reasoning powers.
- (2) It affects every function of the body.
- (3) It can alter pulse, breath rates, and reflexes without the person realizing it.
- (4) Syncopated dance rhythms alter moods and create a mild hypnosis in the listener.

Even without lyrics, the music itself has power to debase a person's feelings, desires, and thoughts. Secular rock musicians openly admit this. Rolling Stones leader Mick Jagger said: "You can feel the adrenalin going through your body. It's sort of sexual."<sup>1</sup> John Oates of Hall and Oates stated that "Rock 'n' Roll is 99% sex."<sup>2</sup> Would such music please Jesus? Converted pagans from overseas tell us that our modern secular band music is the same kind they used in witchcraft and devil worship! Ask yourself: "If Jesus came to visit me, what music would I feel comfortable asking Him to listen to with me?" Any music you are not sure of should be abandoned. (For an in-depth analysis of decadent, secular music, we recommend *Notes on Music* by Carol and Louis Torres, which can be purchased from Amazing Facts.) When we fall in love with Jesus, He changes our musical desires. "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Psalms 40:3. God has provided for His people plenty of good music that inspires, refreshes, elevates, and strengthens the Christian experience. Those who accept the devil's degrading music as a substitute are missing one of life's choicest blessings.

### **Dancing**

Dancing inevitably leads away from Jesus and spirituality. When the Israelites danced around the golden calf, they forgot God (Exodus 32:17-25). When the daughter of wicked Herodias danced before King Herod, John the Baptist was beheaded (Matthew 14:2-12). Notice these shocking statistics: A Catholic priest in New York said that three-fourths of the girls who have confessed adultery to him put the blame on dancing. Other priests have said that three-fourths is too low; they estimate nine-tenths. Remember, if Christ can participate in an activity with you, you are safe. If not, stay away from it.

Dancing always leads away from Jesus and spirituality.

### **TV, Videos, and the Theater**

Do the things you watch on television and videos or in the theater appeal to your lower or to your higher nature? Do they lead you into a greater love for Jesus, or for the world? Do they glorify Jesus, or satanic vices? In our day even secularists and non-Christians are speaking out against many of the TV and film productions. Satan has captured the eyes and ears of billions and, as a result, is rapidly turning the world into a cesspool of immorality, crime, terror, and hopelessness. One study said that without TV "there would be 10,000 fewer murders per year in the United States, 70,000 fewer rapes, and 700,000 fewer assaults."<sup>3</sup> Jesus, who loves you, asks you to take your eyes off Satan's thought-controllers and put them on Him. He says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." Isaiah 45:22.

<sup>1</sup> *Newsweek*, "Mick Jagger and the Future of Rock", Jan. 4, 1971, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Circus* magazine, Jan. 31, 1976, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Newsweek*, "Violence, Reel to Reel", Dec. 11, 1995, p. 47.

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## **11. What clear-cut list does Jesus give us that we could use as a guide for watching television?**

"Anyone can see the kind of behaviour that belongs to the lower nature: fornication, impurity, and indecency; idolatry and sorcery; quarrels, a contentious temper, envy, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, party intrigues, and jealousies; drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who behave in such ways will never inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21, NEB.\*

**Answer:** Scripture is too clear to misunderstand. If a family should ban all TV programs that exhibit or condone any of the above sins, there would be very little to watch. If Jesus came to visit you, what TV shows would you feel

comfortable asking Him to view with you? All other shows are probably unfit for Christian viewing.

\*(C) The Delegates of the Oxford University Press and the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, 1961, 1970. Used by permission.

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**12. In this day of determined, independent thinking, many feel totally capable of making spiritual decisions without input from anyone, including Jesus. What does Jesus say about such people?**

**Answer:** Listen to Jesus' unequivocal statements: "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes." Deuteronomy 12:8. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 16:25. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." Proverbs 12:15. "He that trusteth in his own heart [mind] is a fool." Proverbs 28:26.

**13. What solemn warnings does Jesus give us about the example and influence of our lives?**

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matthew 18:6. Let "no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Romans 14:13. "None of us liveth to himself." Romans 14:7.

**Answer:** We all expect leaders, people of influence, famed athletes, and other widely known figures to set a good example and use their influence wisely--to pay a so-called "debt to society". But in today's world, we are often disillusioned at the repugnant and irresponsible actions of prominent individuals. Jesus clearly states in Romans 1:14 that Christians, who represent Him and His kingdom, do indeed owe something to others. And He solemnly warns that Christians who disregard their influence and example, and thereby lead people astray, will not enter His kingdom.

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**14. What are Jesus' principles of conduct regarding clothing and jewelry?**

**Answer:**

**A. Dress modestly.** See 1 Timothy 2:9. Remember that the world is brought into our lives through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). Immodest dress involves all three and is off-limits for a Christian.

**B. Lay ornaments and jewelry aside.** "Pride of life" is the big problem here. Jesus' followers should look different. Their appearance witnesses and sends light to others (Matthew 5:16). Jewelry draws attention to and exalts self. In the Bible, it is a symbol of backsliding and apostasy. When Jacob and his family rededicated their lives to the Lord, they buried their jewelry in the earth (Genesis 35:1, 2, 4). When the Israelites were about to enter the promised land, the Lord commanded them to remove their ornaments (Exodus 33:5, 6). In Isaiah chapter 3, God clearly says that in wearing jewelry (bracelets, rings, earrings, etc. as listed in verses 19-23), His people were sinning (verse 9). In Hosea 2:13, the Lord says that when Israel forsook Him, they began to wear jewelry. In 1 Timothy 2:9 and 1 Peter 3:3, Paul and Peter both inform us that God's people will not adorn themselves with gold, pearls, and costly array. Please notice that Peter and Paul did speak of the ornaments God wants His people to wear: "A meek and quiet spirit" (1 Peter 3:4) and "good works" (1 Timothy 2:10). Jesus sums it up by symbolizing His true church in Revelation 12:1 as a pure woman clothed with the sun (Jesus' brightness and righteousness) and the apostate church as a harlot bedecked with gold, precious stones, and pearls (Revelation 17:3, 4). God asks His people to separate from Babylon (Revelation 18:2-4) and all it stands for--including the jewels that draw attention to self--and instead clothe themselves with the righteousness of Jesus. When we fall in love with Jesus, it is a sheer joy and pleasure to live His lifestyle.

**15. How do conduct and obedience relate to salvation?**

**Answer:** Obedience and Christian conduct are the proof, or evidence, that I have been saved by Jesus Christ (James 2:20-26). The fact of the matter is that unless one's lifestyle changes after conversion, the conversion most likely was not genuine. A converted person will find his greatest joy in discovering Jesus' will in everything and in joyously following where He leads.

**Beware of Idolatry**

The first epistle of John talks of Christian conduct. At its close (1 John 5:21), Jesus warns us through His servant John to keep ourselves from idols. The Master is referring to anything that interferes with or lessens my love for Him--such

as music, fashion, possessions, adornment, evil forms of entertainment, etc. The natural fruit, or result, of a true conversion is to follow Jesus happily and adopt His lifestyle.

**16. Should we expect everyone to look with favor upon the Christian lifestyle?**

**Answer:** No. Jesus said that the things of God are foolishness to the natural man because they are not spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14). When Jesus refers to conduct, He is laying down principles for those who are seeking to be led by His Spirit. His people will be grateful and will joyously follow His counsel. Others may not understand or approve.

**17. How would a person who rejects Jesus' standards for Christian conduct view heaven?**

**Answer:** Such a person would be miserable in heaven. He would complain that there were no nightclubs, no liquor, no pornographic material, no prostitutes, no sensual music, no lewd books, no profanity, and no gambling. Heaven would be "hell" for those who have not formed a true love relationship with Jesus. This is why Christian standards make no sense to them (2 Corinthians 6:14-17).

**18. How can I adopt and follow these Bible guidelines without appearing pharisaical, judgmental, or legalistic?**

**Answer:** Everything we do should be with one thought in mind: to express love and esteem for Jesus (1 John 3:22). When Jesus is lifted up and shown to people (John 12:32), they will be drawn to Him. Our one question should always be, "Will this honor Jesus? Would I listen to this, sing this, do this, watch this, drink this, buy this, read this, say this, or go there if Jesus were here, in person, with me?" Jesus is with you and me (Matthew 28:20), and He sees everything we do. I must sense Jesus' presence in every facet and activity of life. When I consciously spend time with Him, I become like Him (2 Corinthians 3:18). Then when people are with me, they will respond as they did to the disciples of old: "They marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13. Christians who live like that will never become pharisaical, judgmental, or legalistic. In Old Testament days, God's people were in almost constant apostasy because they chose to live as their heathen neighbors rather than follow the distinctive lifestyle God outlined for them (Deuteronomy 31:16; Judges 2:17; 1 Chronicles 5:25; Ezekiel 23:30). It is true yet today. No one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). Those who cling to the world and its lifestyle will be slowly molded by Satan to adopt his feelings and desires and, thus, be programmed to be lost. Those who follow Jesus' principles for Christian conduct will be changed into His image and prepared for heaven. There is no middle ground.

**19. I want to love Christ so much that to follow His principles for Christian living will be a joy and delight.**

**Answer:**