



# ESSENTIAL VALUES

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## Dying like Voltaire !

Voltaire was in Paris, overwhelmed with the success of a new theater play he had produced. The crowd was applauding with such enthusiasm that he cried, « Do you want to make me die of pleasure? » Suddenly, Voltaire was victim of violent hemorrhaging that put his life in danger. His friends, Diderot, d'Alembert, Marmontel, ran to surround him in his last moments but, as his biographer writes, it was to be the witnesses of the most terrible death that an unbeliever could experience. Rage, remorse, blasphemy, the accusations of his conscience, all this accompanied the long agony of the dying atheist. He cursed his friends, telling them: « Go away from me, you have put me in the state in

which I am now. Go away! I could have gotten along without you, but you could not get along without me, and what miserable glory you have procured for me! »

Witnesses heard him beg and blaspheme the God he had hated during his life. Sometimes, he cried out: « Oh! Christ! Oh! Jésus-Christ ! » One day, he was seen holding a prayer book in his hand, trying to call upon God. He had fallen from his bed with convulsions of agony and lay prostrate on the floor, utterly weak, desperate, crying: « This God whom I have denied, will He not come and save me

too ? » His doctor, Mr. Tronchin, found him one day plunged in the greatest fear, crying out in horror: « I am abandoned of God ! Doctor, I will give you half of all that I possess if you can prolong my life for six months! » The doctor responded : « Sir, you do not have even six weeks to live ! » « In that case, responded Voltaire, I will go to hell, and you will go with me ! »

Mr. Tronchin told of his death in a letter addressed to a friend. It is indeed a solemn lesson for those who have thought, like Voltaire, that life and death can go well without faith. Here is what he wrote: « He finally fell into such a terrible state of despair and folly that I cannot remember it without feeling the horror of it. When he saw that all that he had done to strengthen his body had had the opposite effect, death was continually before his eyes. At that moment, rage took over his soul. My friend, if the principles by which I

live had need of being confirmed, the man whom I saw declining, agonizing and dying before my eyes shook them to the very foundation; and, in comparing

"There is a book which contains all human wisdom enlightened by all divine wisdom, a book which generations of people call the Book, the Bible... Sow the villages with Gospels, one Bible per cabin !"

Victor Hugo

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### Editorial

#### What value remains ?

« From the smallest to the greatest, all are envious of gain ». This is what the prophet Jeremiah said of his people on the eve of the great bankruptcy that they would experience.. At that time, only money counted ! There was no interest in honesty, politeness, justice or truth, just money !

It seems that our society has arrived to the same conclusion. The holiday Halloween and various games for money on television are solid witnesses of this state of mind where the desire for material gain far outweighs the conscience. What an appetite we have for money! What are we not ready to do to have some !

Why is that ? It appears that money brings happiness ! But can happiness be purchased ?

God is not convinced of it. Look at what he says on this subject : « For the love of money is the root of all evil. » We are far from this supposed happiness. There again, God is right, for violence, lying, meanness, jealousy, lusts and quarrels often find their source in this false value, money.. Money is, and will remain, a means of living and not a reason to live.

So, doesn't life have anything more fulfilling in reserve? Yes, of course! Life itself is our most precious possession. Do we but understand the value of it to measure its importance? Jesus-Christ said, « And what will it profit a man to gain the whole world, should he lose his own soul? » See that there are things much worse than losing one's money; you can lose your soul, your being, your life for eternity ! Let's remember it !

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## What is the love of God?

This event is the most terrible and touching-story that I have ever heard. It is about a young man in the America of the 1920's. His name was John Griffith, and he lives in Oklahoma. Young husband and father of a baby, he was filled with optimism for the future. But the stock market crash of 1929 put an end to all his dreams. John had to leave his region in an old Model T Ford to go to Missouri, on the banks of the Mississippi. There he found employment to feed his family. He took care of a railway drawbridge over the river. Every time a train was scheduled to come through, he threw the lever to let down the drawbridge to let the train pass

over.

As his son grew up, John's situation became better and he was planning new projects of travel and success. In 1937, his son, now eight years old, accompanied him to his worksite. He watched with admiration as his father let down and raised the drawbridge with his lever. The passing of trains and boats fascinated him as well.

At noon, they went down to the banks of the Mississippi to eat their picnic lunch. After a long moment of conversation, John looked at his watch and

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# In your opinion, was the cardinal of Bernis a Christian ?

A biography of the Cardinal of Bernis (1715-1794) has just come out in France, and was the subject of a recent article par a literary critic. Its author, Jean-Marie Rouart, is a member of the « Académie Française ». The prelate is described as a man with great ambition who settled down and became detached from everything after a very romantic life turned toward « the pursuit of pleasure ».

Still very young, he was known for his fine intellect and vivacious conversation, he benefited from the protection of Madame de Pompadour, and became the ambassador at Venice "where he had great success, not only by being gallant" one may read. Schrewd politician, he became an expert negotiator until he later became the Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, he preferred happiness to even greater accomplishments. His political insight led him to take political stands and positions which culminated in his disgrace and exile by order of the King. Named as Cardinal to Rome, he finished his life « having no fortune, but remaining serene, even stoical and as always, a friend of the fair sex."

One small question: was he a Christian ?

Yes, some will say, since he was baptized as an infant. This is a very doubtful point of view, for in the entire Bible, God never suggests that He can be satisfied with a ritual that does not involve the person. " *Believe on the Lord Jesus-Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house* " said, on the other hand, Paul and Silas to the Philippian jailor, " *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house*" (Acts16:31-32). Therefore, " *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*" (Romans10:17); salvation comes by faith: " *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" (Mark16:16).

The spreading of the Gospel was not the predominant concern of the gallant cardinal of Bernis. That would have been known. A man of the world, he is remembered as

a great friend of the arts and of refined living... A portrait done of him later in life shows us a person of prudent asceticism, with a heavy look... » well stuffed, heavy and fat " as La Fontaine would have described him.

Where is he now? We can have legitimate concern for him. " *If the tree fall toward the south, or the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be*" (Ecclesiastes11:3b). At the moment of death, the eternal destiny is sealed forever. Did he have the assurance of his salvation? It is not the ecclesiastical garb that proves the presence of faith and guarantees eternal life. While we cannot precisely know the decision of divine justice upon the cardinal, the Scriptures do teach us the essential truths on this subject, for our own instruction. " *For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*" (1 Samuel 16:7). It is true that the cardinal was a very pleasant person, well born, enjoying life, intelligent, cultivated, refined, an interesting companion, without meanness. These are all qualities to be desired on the human level but without value in the eyes of God, for they

## Come Visit Us



**Situés au fond de la rue Brisée, entre la rue de la République et la rue piétonne Mathe, nos locaux profitent d'une atmosphère calme et propice à la réflexion et l'échange. Nous vous invitons cordialement à nos réunions.**

### Le dimanche:

à 10 h 30 : **Culte d'adoration.** Moment privilégié de l'église pour chanter, prier le Seigneur, et écouter sa Parole.

**Vos enfants sont les bienvenus.** Nous proposons une leçon pour les plus grands et une garderie pour les plus petits.

### Le jeudi :

à 20 h : **Etude biblique.** Un temps pour aborder les questions fondamentales de la Bible.

## Continued : Dying like Voltaire

*death of a good man... to that of Voltaire, I could easily see the difference between a beautiful day and a tempest, between the serenity of the soul of a wise man who ceases to live, and the ugly torments of he for whom death is « the king of terrors ». Thanks to Heaven, I did not need this spectacle! »*

He died, and his agony was such that his nurse declared that for all the treasures of the universe, she would not consent to see the death of another atheist. He who has lived without God must die without God!

The Bible, which is truly the Word of God declares: « *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!* » and again « *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.*» (Hebrews 10:31, 26-27). The Bible also declares that the Lord Jesus does not desire the death of the sinner, but that he repent and live eternally before God in His presence.

do not authorize us to enter the kingdom of heaven. " *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God Psalm 53:2*). " *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered!* " (Palm 32:1).

Clothed in purple and furs, the cardinal of Bernis reminds us of another person who probably existed, described in the Gospel of Luke: " *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day* " (Luc16:17). This person is traditionally called "the bad rich man" because he lived without thinking of God or others, and only looked for earthly satisfaction. He was not a mean man either; he was probably an honest citizen, paying the heavy taxes of that time, respecting the laws of the Sabbath, well considered by society. At his death, there was doubtless an elaborate funeral ceremony with musicians, weeping women and an imposing funeral convoy. Prayers had probably been recited for the dead man

## Upcoming events

Contemporary themes in the light of the Bible.

### Conferences at 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 13 « **Christmas - Materialism or Spirituality?** »

Saturday, January 3 « **God: in the 21st century?** »

### Special Christmas Program

Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 p.m.

**free entry and a warm welcome!**

over his tomb, and each one had gone away, if not comforted, at least satisfied that all the requirements of the sacred texts and tradition had been carefully met for the peaceful rest of his soul... How many around us could say the same of themselves, and have the same eternal future ! His riches, probably acquired in a lawful manner, only gave him a false assurance, while giving him the means of having an easy life. But his riches were not the determining element of his eternal condemnation. In fact, to act like him and to know the same condemnation, it is not necessary to be rich at all; all we have to do is adopt the priorities of the world and not those of God. Bernis and "the bad rich man" are people we see today. In many ways, their philosophy is the same as that of our generation: materialism, individualism, a moral code, desire for gain and hedonisme <sup>(1)</sup>. " *He who is not with me is against me, ...* " said Jesus (Luc11:23a). Bernis was a disciple of Epicurius <sup>(2)</sup> and not of Jésus-Christ.

Modern gourous are legion. Whose disciple are you?

**And what do you conclude ?**

" *... I have placed before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Choose life, that ye may live, ...* " (Deut.30:19).

(1) - Hedonisme, term from philosophy. A system that makes pleasure the goal of life. (Littré 1878)

(2) - Epicurius, a greek philosopher, born in 342 B.C., denied that the gods exercised providence, explained that all things came from the random formation of atoms and said that happiness is in voluptuous actions, done with reason and moderation. (Littré 1878)

J.L.B

**Need to talk ? Tel : 05.61.88.70.03**

Pastor Tim Knickerbocker  
is ready to listen

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## God does what He says :

### *He promised that:*

He would send His Son (Psalm 2:7 Isaiah 5:5)

The Son would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:1)

He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)

He would die on a cross (Psalm 22: 15-19)

He would rise from the dead (Psalm 16:10, Matthew 16:21)

### *He did it !*

### *He promised that*

He will come back again (John 14:3)

He will judge the world (Acts 10:42)

He will create new heavens and a new earth (Isaiah 65:17 Revelation 21:1)

He will save those who believe in Jesus Christ (John 3:16 & 36 John 5:24 1 John 5:10-13)

### *He will do it also !*

## **Believe it**

**You would like to read the New Testament !**

**Write us : We offer it free!**

## « You may visit us, or we can visit you »

■ We desire to bring the reassuring answers of the Word of God to our generation. Therefore, the pastor is present at the church on Thursday afternoon from 3:30 p.m.

■ He would like to present the Bible answers to the various spiritual and moral questions that you may have.

■ **« Si vous souhaitez que je vous rende visite à votre domicile ou bureau, n'hésitez pas à m'appeler pour un entretien, sans engagement de votre part. »** Prenez contact avec lui par téléphone au **05.61.88.70.03** ou au **06.13.49.80.21** ou encore par courriel: **tim.knickerbocker@wanadoo.fr**

# What We Believe

Baptist churches do not pretend to have in themselves the way of salvation or to hold the truth to the exception of all others.

« *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord* » (2 Corinthians 4:5)

We announce that **Jesus Christ is the only Way to go to God, the Truth that gives reason to our existence, and eternal Life** (John 14:6 1 Peter 3:18).

We have discovered that He answers and meets our essential needs, that is, to be loved, to be forgiven, delivered from evil, be guided, to be fulfilled and to be comforted...

We believe that one becomes a child of God by the new birth spiritually at the moment of conversion. (John 3:36).

We seek holiness, shown forth in the character of Jesus Christ in us, when we obey His Holy Spirit and His Word.

We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which are verbally inspired of God, without error in the original writings and providentially preserved. They constitute the sovereign and final authority for our faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16).

We believe in one God existing in three co-eternal persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (1 Timothy 2:5 ; Luke 3:21-22).

We believe that Jésus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, that He was born of the virgin Mary, and that he is true God and true man. (Luke 1:30-35).

We believe that man was created in the image of God; that all have sinned and consequently are separated from God and need (except small children) to be reconciled with their Creator by conversion and faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our

sins, his sacrifice was accomplished in our place. All who believe in Him are justified through the blood He shed (Romans 3:19-26).

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the lost, in the eternal happiness of the redeemed and the unending punishment of the unbelievers (Matthew 7:13-14).

We believe in the eternal security of the believer; it is impossible for he who is born into the family of God to lose his salvation. (John 10:27-29).

## The prayer that you can pray to God:

« *Heavenly Father, I realize before you that I am a sinner. I ask your forgiveness for all the evil I have done, in word, thought and action by which I have offended you. Today, I come to submit myself to you. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross and that He shed His blood to wash away my sins. I believe that He did rise from the dead. Heavenly Father, save me today and for eternity. Enter into my life and take possession of it. I give it to you in the Name of Jesus Christ. Thank you for making me your child, and teach me how to walk with you in order to please and serve you. Amen.* »

## Continued: What is the love of God?

saw that it was already 1:07 p.m. and that the train from Memphis was about to arrive. He knew he must scramble quickly up to his cabin to let down the bridge. Not wanting his son to panic, he told him to stay there and wait for him. He ran to the cabin to lower the drawbridge.

As he looked down the river to make sure no boat was approaching and that no one was near the bridge, he saw something that made his blood run cold: his son was under the bridge, right beside the enormous hydraulic jacks that supported the bridge. Maybe the son had wanted to join his father and had erred near the bridge. Horrified, John Griffith saw that his son was trapped between two enormous teeth of the hydraulic wheel and that his leg was bleeding.

At that moment, the greatest test of a conscience that a father could know came to John Griffith ; in a few seconds he must choose : keep the drawbridge up to save his son, and see the train crash against the bridge, or let down the bridge and crush his own son and save the hundreds of passengers in the train....

Those seconds seemed like hours. But the only possible solution came clearly to his soul : he must let the train go through or there would be hundreds of dead on his conscience. Can we imagine what was happening inside him? He knew his duty, but his hand could not bring itself to lower the lever. He would have preferred that anyone else do it, but not him! It was the far-off smoke of the locomotive that forced him to act. Seized by infinite pain, he pushed down the lever. The cries of his son were soon covered by the noise of the approaching train.

The face bathed in tears, with haggard eyes, his heart totally

broken, John Griffith watched the train's passengers pass by as if nothing had happened. One man was reading his paper, a woman was looking out the window. None of them had any idea of the horrible drama that had played out under them. They did not know that an eight-year-old child had known a horrible death so that they could go over that bridge. They did not know that a father had sacrificed his only son for them. No one in the train had even looked. No one had heard the cries of pain of the child and the desperate cries of his father. No one had paid any attention!

This terrible story is but a pale illustration of what our Creator did for us. He gave His only Son to pay for the sins of each of us and to offer to whosoever the eternal salvation of his soul: « **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 While John Griffith and his son were victims of their own neglect, God Himself decided to give His life for us. Can we remain as indifferent as the passengers of the train, and refuse to see the eternal suffering undergone by Jésus Christ on the cross in our place as the expression of His love for us?

**Car Dieu a tant aimé le monde qu'il a donné son Fils unique afin que quiconque croit en Lui ne périsse point, mais qu'il est la vie éternelle.** » Jean 3:16