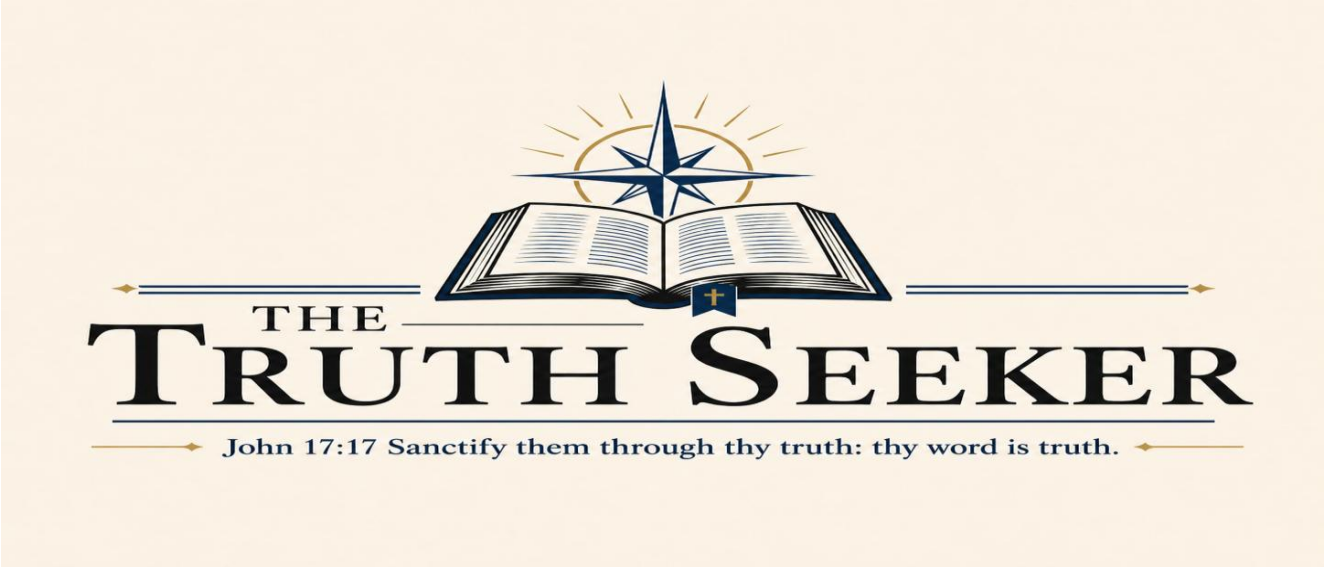
The Truth Seeker Christian Journal

Introducing The Truth Seeker - Issue No. 4

A classic Christian journal dedicated to exploring biblical truth, doctrine, and teaching.

The Honorable Life



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Welcome to this issue of The Truth Seeker, a publication dedicated to returning hearts and minds back to the absolute authority of God's Word.

This issue focuses on **The Honorable Life**, continuing our journey Through the Bible with the period of The Conquest. In our Doctrinal Spotlight, we explore The Heavy Weight of His Name, examining the third commandment and how we live it out daily, while our Giants of the Faith feature highlights the radical life of William Booth. Addressing some of our most pointed and pertinent subjects yet, my prayer is that this edition will personally challenge, encourage, and embolden you for Christ.

Theological Insights: Clear articles explaining core Bible doctrines.
Practical Guidance: Studies for living faithfully in a confused world.
Teaching Highlights: Bible lessons, word studies, and scriptural reflections.

The Truth Seeker is more than a publication - it is a call to return to the Word of God with humility, courage, and conviction.

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From the Editor

The Honorable Life

Dear Readers,

A Modern Crisis of Standard

There is a disconnect that is running rampant in the modern church world today. We find countless individuals who unashamedly name the name of Christ, yet their lifestyles, integrity, and pursuits are indistinguishable from the world and culture around them.

Tragically, this often happens with little to no conviction, and with a shocking disregard for the spiritual consequences of living a hypocritical life. Many seem to treat the grace of God like a cheap cloak or brandish the title of “Christian” yet treat it simply as a label, while continuing to walk in darkness.

To bear the name "Christian" is to carry the banner of the Creator of the universe. It is a high and holy calling. One should not cheapen His reputation by attaching His holy name to an empty, and unmeasured life.

The goal of this issue is to bring attention to the reality that taking up or bearing the name of God is so much more than simply calling oneself a Christian. It is about how we live and conduct ourselves in private and public, with family and in business, with friends as well as with strangers.

James said a fountain should not put forth fresh and bitter water. This is clearly in reference to our speech; but is this not what we do when our lives lean toward the inconsistent and hypocritical? My prayer is that we all may feel a weight and burden to search our hearts and experience a renewed consecration of life.

God will not hold someone guiltless who drags His character through the dirt of hypocrisy. If this hits you it is time for a return to authenticity, where the life we live matches the name we claim.

Your brother in Christ,

David Elks

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The Honorable Life

Four Lives Marked by Honor and the Name of God

When examining what it means to bear the name of God in an honorable, consistent manner, the scriptures offer profound examples, both from those who maintained lifelong integrity and those whose lives were radically altered by grace. Here are four men, spanning a lifelong devotion, radical repentance, and steadfast endurance who demonstrated what it means to live a life worthy of that high calling.

1. Joseph: Uncompromising Integrity in Private and Public

- **The Mark of Honor:** Joseph carried the name of God into the highest halls of a pagan empire without ever losing his moral compass. Sold into slavery and later thrust into the service of Potiphar, Joseph faced relentless temptation. When approached by his master's wife, his response was not about self-preservation, but about loyalty to God: *"How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"* Gen 39:9
- **Bearing the Name:** Even when false accusations landed him in a dark dungeon, Joseph did not become bitter or abandon his character. Years later, when elevated to second-in-command over all of Egypt, he exerted power with great mercy rather than vengeance toward the brothers who betrayed him. His life proves that bearing God's name means refusing to compromise your standard, whether you are hidden in a prison or standing before a Pharaoh.

2. Daniel: Blameless Consistency Under Political Pressure

- **The Mark of Honor:** Daniel lived his entire adult life under the watchful eyes of pagan kings, yet his enemies could find no corruption or fault in him. When a jealous rival committee tried to trap him, they had to admit they would find no grounds for charges against Daniel *"unless it has to do with the law of his God"* Dan 6:5
- **Bearing the Name:** When a decree was signed making it a capital offense to pray to anyone other than the king, Daniel did not hide his faith, nor did he alter his routine. He went home, opened his windows toward Jerusalem, and knelt in prayer just as he had always done. His honor was found in a public and private life that completely aligned, showing that a person bearing God's name does not bow to the shifting cultural demands of the world.

3. Zacchaeus: Radical Repentance and Restitution

- **The Mark of Honor:** Zacchaeus's story illustrates that honoring God is never just about a private emotional feeling; it also requires a tangible turnaround. As a chief tax collector, he had built his wealth on the backs of his own countrymen through extortion. But the moment he encountered the grace of Jesus, the hypocrisy of his former life ended instantly!
- **Bearing the Name:** Zacchaeus didn't just apologize; he put his money where his mouth was, publicly pledging to give half of his possessions to the poor and to pay back anyone he cheated fourfold. He transformed overnight from a despised outcast into a man of integrity, proving that true redemption immediately changes how a person conducts business, treats others, and carries the reputation of God in the community.

4. The Apostle Paul (Saul): From Violent Opposition to Tireless Devotion

- **The Mark of Honor:** Few men started from a more aggressive position of hypocrisy and hostility against God than Saul of Tarsus. Convinced he was serving God, he actually spent his days persecuting believers, approving executions, and dragging families to prison. Yet, when Christ intercepted him on the road to Damascus, Saul's life underwent an incredible shift.
- **Bearing the Name:** Humbled by mercy, Paul spent the remainder of his life enduring the exact hardships, beatings, shipwrecks, and public scorn that he had once inflicted on others. He didn't hide his past; instead, he used it to magnify the depths of God's patience, living out his remaining decades with a relentless, burning passion to ensure his life honorably matched the holy name he now proclaimed.

A Journey Through the Bible: The Conquest

The Conquest Period (Joshua 1:1–24:33)
Forty years after the Exodus, Moses has passed away and a new generation has risen under God's handpicked leader, Joshua. Commanded to proceed toward the Jordan River, the obedient people watch as God parts the waters for roughly twenty miles.

Stepping into the swollen Jordan River before its waters parted was an act of profound faith, unlike Moses where God parted the water “before” they began to walk across. Here the priests were required to take a step of faith in obedience before seeing the miracle unfold. In the Christian life, living honorably before God often demands this same trust, moving forward in our responsibilities even when the path ahead looks impassable.

By building the memorial of twelve stones at Gilgal, Joshua's generation ensured that this defining moment of holy courage would be honored and remembered by the children who came after them, anchoring their identity deeply in God's faithfulness.

That same quiet, disciplined obedience continued around the towering walls of Jericho, where God dismantled a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. Many times, honorable living takes the path of marching silently around city walls day after day, trusting in God's precise instructions over human logic. When the people finally raised their voice, the walls fell and demonstrated that victory belongs to those who honor God's methods over their personal strategies.

As the conquest unfolded and the land was divided among the tribes, each tribe was charged with the sacred duty of taking full dominion over their own inheritance. This part of the Conquest Period reminds us that an honorable life does not end with a single victory; it requires the daily, persistent work of rooting out compromise and walking fully in the calling we have been given. Just as the twelve tribes formed a unified yet distinct federation under God's standard, we are called to faithfully steward our own unique sphere of influence for His glory.

I. Jordan
- **The Crossing:** Waters part only after the Levites step in faith (Joshua 3:13-17).
- **Memorial Stones (Gilgal):** Twelve men take stones from the riverbed to Gilgal as a memorial of God's power for future generations (Joshua 4:8, 4:19-24).
- **Riverbed Marker:** Joshua sets up an additional twelve stones where the priests' feet stood (Joshua 4:9).

II. Jericho
- **The Strategic Gate:** A fortified oasis near the Dead Sea acting as the eastern gateway to the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10).
- **The Battle Plan:** The angel of the Lord instructs Joshua to march around the city once daily for six days, then seven times on the seventh day followed by a shout, causing the walls to fall flat (Joshua 5:10–6:5).

III. Conquest
- **Divided Opposition:** Canaanite kings are united in hatred but fractured militarily, ruling individual city-states.
- **Military Strategy:** Joshua slices through the midsection toward the Mediterranean, then systematically sweeps from South to North.
- **Timeline:** The initial defeat of Canaan is accomplished in approximately seven years.

IV. Dominion
- **Land Allotment:** Each of the twelve tribes receives a specific area by lot to form a loose federation (Joshua 14:2).
- **Finalizing Control:** Individual tribes bear the responsibility of ousting any remaining inhabitants from their individual inherited land.

Doctrinal Spotlight: The Heavy Weight of His Name

The Heavy Weight of His Name: A 2nd Look at the Third Commandment

When most people think of the Third Commandment—*"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain"* (Exodus 20:7)—their minds immediately go to profanity, swearing, or casually tossing around holy words. But when we strip away modern English assumptions and look at the text through a Hebrew lens, a far more sobering reality emerges.
This commandment is not merely a rule about vocabulary. It is a warning against hypocrisy and false representation.

The Hebrew Reality: Bearing the Standard
To truly understand Exodus 20:7, we have to look at the original building blocks of the language:

H5375 (*Nasa*): Meaning to lift, bear, or carry. In its ancient pictographic roots, it evokes the imagery of grabbing hold of a heavy load or lifting up a tribal banner/standard (*nes*) to be seen from a distance. In the ancient world, the one carrying the standard was the official representative of the king or house.

H8034 (*Shem*): Translated as "name," but representing a person's character, authority, and reputation. (Preceded by the direct object marker **H853**, which functions similarly to the Greek definite article **G3588** to point precisely to *the* name).

H7723 (*Shav*): Translated as "in vain," meaning emptiness, falsehood, vanity, or worthlessness.

Put these pieces together, and the commandment shifts from speech regulation to an identity check: **Do not lift up and bear the reputation of Almighty God (*shem*) as an empty sham (*shav*).**
To "take" the Lord's name is to claim His banner, to say you are His child, His disciple, or His follower. To do it "in vain" is to carry His identity while your heart, lifestyle, and actions are completely devoid of His substance.

Echoes Across Scripture: The Warning Against Empty Profession
This theme is not isolated to Mount Sinai; it is a golden thread woven straight through the entire Bible. Scripture repeatedly condemns those who wear the badge of God without the heart of God.

1. **The Lips vs. The Heart** (Isaiah 29:13 / Matthew 15:8)

Isaiah captured this exact disconnect centuries later, a warning that Jesus Himself repeated to the religious leaders of His day:

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men." (Isaiah 29:13)

They had the proper religious vocabulary. They used the right words and names. But to carry His name without a surrendered heart was taking it in vain.

2. **The Danger of a Professing Faith** (Matthew 7:21–23)

Perhaps the most terrifying echo of Exodus 20:7 is found in the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus unmasks the ultimate danger of bearing a false standard:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:21–23)

Notice they were invoking His name, doing works in His name, and claiming His authority—yet Jesus declares He never knew them. They were bearing a standard they had no right to carry, living a life disconnected from the reality of the King.

3. Having a Form of Godliness (2 Timothy 3:5)

The Apostle Paul warns Timothy about the spiritual climate of the latter days, describing a people who maintain an outward religious appearance while denying its actual power:

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:5)

This is the very definition of *shav* (emptiness). It is an outer shell of faith with zero internal power, conviction, or transformation.

A Modern Crisis of the Standard

This disconnect is running rampant in our modern church and world today. We find countless individuals who proudly name the name of Christ, yet their lifestyles, integrity, and pursuits are indistinguishable from the culture around them.

Tragically, this often happens with little to no conviction, and with a shocking disregard for the spiritual consequences of living a hypocritical life. People treat the grace of God like a cheap cloak—something to throw on for a label, while continuing to walk in darkness.

To bear the name "Christian" is to carry the banner of the Creator of the universe. It is a holy calling. The Third Commandment stands as an enduring, flashing red light: **Do not cheapen His reputation by attaching His holy name to an empty, ungodly life.**

God will not hold him guiltless who drags His character through the dirt of hypocrisy. It is time for a return to authenticity—where the life we live actually matches the name we claim.

I am in no way attempting to put away or disregard the biblical instruction of refraining from the blasphemous, the casual, and or flippant use of God's holy name. Reverence concerning the utterance of our Creator and His name is a vital portion of our faith. My aim, rather, is to bring attention to the deeper reality that the "taking up" or "bearing" of the name of God is so much more than the simple guarding of one's tongue. It is about how we live, and conduct ourselves in private and public, with family and in business, with friends and with the stranger. The Apostle James exposes this danger when he asks the question in 3:11,12 *"Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?"* While this passage directly addresses the inconsistency of our speech, does it not also unmask the hypocrisy of our daily walk? Too often, our words profess holiness on the surface while our lifestyle compromises underneath, creating a contradiction where our speech says one thing and our life declares another.

This standard is precisely what Moses was speaking of when he penned the words *"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;" Exo 20:7.* Often we overlook the 2nd half of this verse *"for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."* which comes with a sober warning of divine judgment and consequence for our inconsistencies. As much as the body as a whole is in desperate need of a reformation and a return to sound biblical teaching, we as individuals are equally in need of a revival of consecration and a radical renewal of life in Christ Jesus.

Lord, grant us the grace to live honorable lives that do not merely guard our speech, but fully bear Your holy name in every hidden and public corner of our daily walk. Deliver us from the hypocrisy of a divided heart and ignite within each of us a fresh revival of consecration and radical devotion to Christ. May this generation return to the old landmarks that are clearly marked in Your word. May we step out in fervent faith and possess that same quiet, disciplined obedience as Joshua's army. May we walk fearlessly into our callings so that our families, our communities, and Your church may witness Your unshakeable power.

Giants of the Faith

William Booth: The General of the Slums (1829–1912)

"While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while little children go hungry, as they do now, I'll fight... I'll fight to the very end!"

His Early Life: William Booth was born into modest circumstances on April 10, 1829, in Sneinton, a suburb of Nottingham, England. He passed away on August 20, 1912, in London, England. He stands as one of the most radical embodiments of active, whole-life faith in church history. Booth experienced a profound religious conversion as a teenager, recording in his diary the lifelong resolve: *"God shall have all there is of William Booth."* Though initially trained as a Methodist minister, Booth grew increasingly restless with the comfortable, middle-class pew-culture of 19th-century Victorian England, which largely closed its doors to the destitute, the alcoholic, and the outcast.

The Pioneering Work: In 1865, alongside his brilliant theological partner and wife, Catherine, Booth abandoned traditional pulpits to launch the Christian Mission in the squalor of London's East End. By 1878, envisioning a relentless spiritual warfare against sin and systemic poverty, he restructured the movement along military lines. Adopting the title of "General," Booth outfitted his followers in military-style uniforms, issued ranks, and created the organization known today as **The Salvation Army**.

The Movement: Booth's philosophy was famously anchored in the pragmatic synthesis of spiritual and physical redemption: **"Soup, Soap, and Salvation."** He fiercely believed that it was practically impossible to preach the Gospel of eternal salvation to a man whose stomach was entirely empty or whose body was freezing in the streets. Under his leadership, the Army established food banks, shelters, rescue homes for women, and legal aid for the poor. His groundbreaking 1890 social manifesto, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, laid out an exhaustive blueprint for eradicating poverty and lifting up society's absolute lowest tiers. This uncompromising mission did not come easily. Booth and his soldiers faced fierce public hostility, violent riots, and organized opposition (such as the antagonistic "Skeleton Army") that pelted them with stones and subjected them to arrests.

The Legacy: Yet, driven by an unshakeable love for Christ and a profound hatred of suffering, Booth fought to his final breath. By the time he passed away in 1912 at the age of 83, his once-mocked street-corner mission had exploded into a global phenomenon, proving that the church's true power of an honorable life is found not in comfort or prestige, but in rolling up one's sleeves to serve "the least of these."

The Five Principles of William Booths life and ministry:

1. **Live for others:** Purpose comes from serving humanity rather than focusing solely on oneself.
2. **Do something:** Love must be practical, active, and hands-on instead of purely theoretical.
3. **Keep the fire burning:** Faith requires deliberate, daily tending so that inner zeal does not fade.
4. **Stay close to God:** Action remains deeply rooted in spiritual transformation and intimacy with the Creator.
5. **Finish well:** Endurance matters most, fighting for the vulnerable with dedication until the very end