

BILL ZECHMANN

You Can't Stay Here:
Why God Always Calls Us to Move
FORWARD



Principles for Living

You Can't Stay Here:

Why God Always Calls Us to
Move Forward

by Bill Zechmann



Principles for Living

www.principlesforliving.org

You Can't Stay Here: Why God Always Calls Us to Move Forward

Have you ever had one of those moments which were so precious to you that you just wanted to stay in it forever?

Have you ever wanted to hold certain memories in your mind forever?

Sometimes we find reasons to stay where we are in our Christian walk, as well. Are you somewhere in your Christian walk where you have been at for a long time? Do you wish you could move on, but you just don't know how? Many of us have had bad things happen in our lives that put us in a spiritual slump. Some of us have had good things happen in our lives and we don't want to leave the zone we are in.

But is it good to stay in one place in our lives for weeks, months or years at a time?

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version of the Bible.

Principles for Living
Copyright © 2016 Principles for Living
P.O. Box 1097
Norfolk, NE 68702
(888) 881-3411
www.principlesforliving.org
info@principlesforliving.org

Published by Principles for Living

Printed in the United States of America.
All rights reserved under International Copyright Law.
Contents and / or cover may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any form without the express written consent of the Publisher.

Leaving the Lukewarm Life

Growth never happens standing still. God isn't interested in us staying the same. God wants us to grow and become more than we currently are.

In nature, there are times of dormancy – but eventually there comes a new season, and with that new season there is all kinds of new growth. It can be seen in the trees where there are new shoots that come up and extend the tree into something bigger. It is seen in the flowers that come back and bloom all over again year after year.

God expects us to move forward in our Christian lives. All too often we want to stay where we are. We become content with the status quo. But Jesus gave a stern message in Revelation that applies to all of us.

In **Revelation 3:15-16** it says,

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

What is Jesus talking about when He says we are neither hot nor cold? It means we aren't without Christ, but we aren't on fire for Him. We are Christians who are content with where we are. When He says He will spit us out, He is saying we don't have a flavor that is appealing. Instead, our flavor is appalling. It's like cold coffee. Yuck!

He continues in **Revelation 3:17**:

You say, "I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing." But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

**We don't grow
spiritually when
life becomes
all about our
comfort.**

Think about what He's saying here. Who is He talking about? He is talking about those who have become self-sufficient. They have altered their

security into a trust of self, more than a trust in God. When that happens we find ourselves not really trusting God at all. We stop moving forward by dying to self, and instead we seek life, liberty and the pursuit of entertainment.

Why is it that we think that if something isn't outright evil, then it is all right for our lives? But you see, Jesus was all about doing everything to please the Father. The Christian life was never about living for ourselves. It was never God's plan for us to be a people living the good life in a materialistic way. We don't grow spiritually when life becomes all about our comfort.

Christianity is all about Jesus – who He was, why He came, what His purpose was. And what was that purpose? It was to make a way for man to be put back into a relationship with a holy and just God. How did He do that? He died a death that wasn't justifiable. But that death opened a door for those of us who are willing to come to Him and admit our insufficiency in being able to be good enough to please a holy and just God.

In **Revelation 3:18**, Jesus continues:

I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Jesus wants us to focus on finding true riches, along with a true covering of His righteousness and a truth that opens our eyes so we can see spiritual things.

It's time for us to move on. We can't stay here. It is detrimental to our spiritual health as a people and as a country. Unfortunately, we have become more religious than Christian. When we are only religious, we find ourselves still lost in our sin. We can't be pleasing to God if we are not willing to walk away from the world and all of its trappings.

Trust and Obey

There are going to be situations we find ourselves in that require us to move on. It's what is best for us. We must learn to do more than just believe – we must obey. Obedience is the proof that we really do believe what we have heard about Jesus. Our obedience is how we proclaim it to others.

In **Hebrews 5:8-9** it says,

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

He learned obedience from what? It was learned from suffering.

People who only talk the talk think they are justified by their knowledge. But we

Going to a church building and following a liturgy or rote formality and thinking that is what Christianity is leaves us sadly mistaken.

will only accept those whose hearts have turned to Him – and our hearts determine our actions.

Listen very carefully: Going to a church building and following a liturgy or rote formality and thinking that is what Christianity is leaves us sadly mistaken. If it looks merely religious, it probably is merely religious.

must also walk the walk. It's amazing to me how many people there are who claim to be Christians, but don't really know what it means to be a Christian. We don't become Christians by our mental choice only. God

Christianity is about death to self and obedience to the teachings of Jesus above everything else. If we won't die to self we can't be transformed into what God intended for us to be transformed into.

In **James 1:22** it says,

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

So in a nutshell what does the Bible say? It says we need to be like a seed. In **John 12:24** Jesus said,

“Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”

Do you get that? Like a seed, you must give up yourself so that new life can grow from within you. You can't be transformed

**Like a seed,
you must give
up yourself so
that new life
can grow from
within you.
You can't be
transformed and
eternally secured
if you refuse to
die to yourself.**

*himself, goes away and immediately forgets
what he looks like.*

We read the things that we are commanded to do in the Bible. In all of our zeal, we say we are going to give God our lives. But what happens to so many of us is, we get into the next day or two and forget what we said we were going to do. It's just like looking into the

and eternally secured if you refuse to die to yourself.

In **James 1:23-24** it says,

Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at

mirror and forgetting what you look like. It doesn't take very long to say one thing and quickly forget what we said. We end up once again being a forgetful hearer and not a doer at all. Don't we understand that when we give God our lives that our bodies are supposed to be His? We are supposed to be a living sacrifice.

James 1:25 goes on to say,

But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it – not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it – they will be blessed in what they do.

We can't keep thinking we are all right just as we are. Why are we so complacent when we're not really living the way God wants us to live? Living for God means we are occupied with the work of our Father, God, instead of spending our time living for temporary, worldly things.

James 1:26-27 says,

Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Refresh your Soul with Scripture

Are you unpolluted from the world?

Many people think when the Bible is talking about “the world,” it is talking about alcohol, drugs, illicit sex, and things like this. But the world includes so much more.

Our minds are dominated by making money and what we can do with it in order to have more so-called “Good, clean fun.” I’m talking about watching sports and looking forward to the next big game more than looking forward to quiet time with God. I’m talking about looking forward to going out to eat more than we would look forward to fasting and spending time in prayer.

In **Hebrews 5:12** we read,

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the

elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

If we can't see that the world and its ways are keeping us from growing in truth, maybe it's because we haven't eaten the meat of the Word. These elementary things should be known by a mature Christian. Unfortunately, many of us have allowed ourselves to justify our connection with the world that God says we are to abandon.

In **Hebrews 5:13-14** it says,

Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Why does water become stagnant? It's because it doesn't have fresh water flowing into it.

Listen, we can't stay here anymore. We must graduate, so to speak, if we want to see our world brought back to God. We must move away from prostituting ourselves to the world. We shouldn't need to be told what is right and what is wrong – we should already know.

Our lives can be like a pond of stagnant water. We know that stagnant water is fouled and can be very dangerous. Why does water become stagnant? It's because it doesn't have fresh water flowing into it.

I like to think of Mary and the newborn Child to remember this point. In **Luke 2:7** it says,

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. (KJV)

There wasn't any room for Jesus. That is what is going on in our world today.

In our Christian walk, we may find ourselves not having any room left for anything fresh, because we allow the world to take up all the time in our day – then wonder why we aren't victorious in our daily living.

It is so important that we move on in life. Those of us who have kids of our own know what it means to move on. We want to raise our children to be fine, young, Christian adults. But a time comes for them to move on. We tell our kids that they can't stay here with us any longer. We know that moving forward is a must in life.

In **Proverbs 1:32** it says,

For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.

When we get complacent, we allow ourselves to be satisfied with where we are. We are happy with the achievements of our lives and say to ourselves, "I have accomplished much. What more do I need to do?" But that's where death reigns.

In **Luke 12:19-21** the rich man said,

".. You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.

Life is a journey. We can settle and stay where we are, or we can move on to the next place that God wants us to go to. God has a life for us that will continue to unfold as it moves along. We will see more and more of what God has for us if we will just keep moving forward.

Throwing Off Complacency

I will always remember when I became disillusioned with my Christian walk.

I had been taught some doctrines that *seemed* to be backed up by Scripture. After a couple of years, I became aware that what I had been taught was not true and was no more than a counterfeit of God's truth. I eventually had to remove myself from the people who were teaching those doctrines.

When I removed myself from that group of people, I didn't know who I could trust and eventually quit going to church altogether. I chose to go it alone with only the Holy Spirit to help me in my search for truth. It was a time of searching and learning more on my own with God's help instead of trusting people to bring me the truth.

Eventually, I had to move on. I couldn't stay there, in that world of wondering what was true, and what wasn't. I had to

I couldn't stay there, in that world of wondering what was true, and what wasn't. I had to grow up.

for a selfish agenda of mine. I wanted to hear His Voice so I could benefit from His discernment of truth. In **2 Timothy 2:15** it says,

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV)

I needed God to help me. I began to understand what Jesus meant when He said He would send us a Helper. I began to trust the Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth in the Bible. I just needed to

grow up and learn to trust that I could hear the voice of the Holy Spirit by myself.

The voice of the Holy Spirit wasn't something that I wanted to use

make sure that I was willing to wait for His interpretations of the Bible. If I didn't understand something, it meant I would have to wait for Him to reveal it to me sometime in the future, or maybe not at all.

If someone else would come along and tell me what they thought certain Scriptures meant, I would not believe them unless my spirit was enlightened by the Holy Spirit and zealous about the teaching. The interpretation needed to bear witness with my spirit before I would claim it as truth.

What I have learned, more than anything, is that when we die to self, it will change us in bigger ways than we would ever imagine. When the world comes to us with its fun and fascinations, we won't be impressed. If it doesn't identify with Christ, we want nothing to do with it.

The Christian walk should not be about how much of the world we can hang on to and still be used of God. It should be

about making sure that Christ is all to us and that we are all for Him. There isn't any room for us to mess around and merely say we are devoted to Jesus and His cause.

How can we do that and have a clear conscience? I know I can't.

We must learn to sacrifice our bodies to Him on a daily basis. When we are willing to sacrifice our bodies daily, we will be able to begin to understand what true commitment and devotion to a life in Christ is like. He must be our all in all, always!

When I decided to move on with my Christian walk, I knew it would be a battle to stay in the spirit.

The flesh has so much power. We have been serving it all of our lives – it doesn't want to roll over and die. Strong servants of Christ have died to self. They have found out how to move beyond the

flesh and move ahead with a walk that is directed not at ourselves, but at Christ; not at our own lives, but at the life to come.

Jesus knew there would be people who would get excited about the things of God only to run for the hills when persecution came to their door. The excitement was there to start, but waned over time. In **Matthew 5:13** Jesus told us,

*You are the salt of the earth.
But if the salt loses its saltiness,
how can it be made salty again?
It is no longer good for anything,
except to be thrown out and
trampled underfoot.*

We don't want to lose our effectiveness as Christians. If we are to be what we need to be, we must be willing to confront those that oppose our beliefs. We must be willing to say things that have a sting to them. If we are afraid of offending someone with our beliefs, our beliefs are useless. Fearful

beliefs are so useless that Jesus said they weren't even fit to be trampled on.

In **Matthew 5:14-16** He continues,

*You are the light of the world.
A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Why would Jesus say these things? It's because He knew there would be many Christians that were afraid to stand up for what they believe. So, He poses the question, asking why would we have a light and then hide it so nobody could see the light or take advantage of its benefits.

We can't live our lives in such a way that doesn't challenge those around us.

As Christians, we believe we have something that is worth dying for. That's how we can die to ourselves and all that the self represents – by putting Christ at the helm of our lives. It also has to be a conviction that says, no matter who challenges us, we are willing to suffer and die for the Gospel.

We can't live our lives in such a way that doesn't challenge those around us. If we believe the truth that God is found in Jesus Christ, we must be willing to tell the other religions they are wrong. In **John 14:6** Jesus said,

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Either that's the truth or it isn't. If it is, then we need to be much more dogmatic about

what we believe. At the same time, we need to understand that we aren't to try and convince anyone to come to Christ. We simply tell them the truth and let the Spirit of God do the drawing of people to Him. Jesus often said if people had ears to hear then they should here. Most people's ears and hearts aren't open to the truth and they will not be born again because their hearts aren't right with God.

We don't come to Jesus on our own terms. God is the one that gives new birth to those whose hearts are right with Him. If our hearts are such that we think we will decide when we want to come to God, we are sadly mistaken. No one knows where the wind comes from and where it is going. The Bible says that is how it is with everyone that is born of God.

May God be glorified today, tomorrow and forever.

OUR MISSION



At Principles for Living, we seek to help others come to know the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We also want to help Christians grow in their knowledge and faith in their Christian walk. Our teachings include a mixture of secular psychology and Christian practicality.

If this booklet has blessed you in any way, and you want to learn more about our ministry, our faith, or about the transforming love of Jesus Christ, visit us on the web at principlesforliving.org.



REACH OUT TO US



Principles for Living

www.principlesforliving.org
info@principlesforliving.org

P.O. Box 1097
Norfolk, NE 68702
(888) 881-3411



Bill Zechmann
President & Founder
Principles for Living



A COMMITMENT TO BIBICAL TEACHING

Bill Zechmann was born in the rural Foster, Nebraska. At the age of eighteen he committed his life to Christ and felt God's call to teach practical Biblical principles. Principles for Living was founded in 2010. His calling was inspired by James 3:1-2:

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. (NASU)

Bill spent decades studying the doctrines of different Christian denominations to help him understand and teach the Bible more effectively. He holds B.A degrees in Biblical Studies and Human Resources Management. Bill professes that his greatest joy

in life comes from helping others find the love of Christ in their lives. The goal of his teachings is to help others find freedom from the clutches of sin.

A MISSIONARY AT HOME AND ABROAD

In 2010, while serving as a missionary in the Philippines, Kenya, and Liberia, Bill ministered to crowds of 5,000 people and has seen hundreds come forward to receive Christ. At home in the United States, Bill conducts personal growth seminars and evangelistic crusades. His teachings are focused on helping the lost find Christ and seeking a positive change in their lives.

STRENGTHENED BY ADVERSITY

Bill's teachings have been molded through many of the experiences he has had throughout his own life. Overcoming adversity became a source of strength. Despite health problems and the loss of their second-born child, Bill and his wife Jane persevered together and grew as Christians. Regardless of the hardships they have had to face, Bill and Jane maintain that their lives continue to be strengthened by Christ's love.

ZECHMANN FAMILY

Bill and Jane have been happily married for more than 30 years. They currently reside in Norfolk, Nebraska.

OTHER PFL BOOKLETS AVAILABLE!

- Can Others Make You Angry?
- Remove the Choice of Choosing
 - Be Anxious for Nothing
 - Getting Control of Yourself
 - Giving Up Freedom
- Judge the Cause, Not the Person
 - Overcoming Our Flesh
 - Walking Close to God
- Are You a Sympathy Seeker?
- How to Eliminate the Sin of Pride
 - The Power of Fasting
 - Running the Race
- The Righteousness of Jesus
 - The Perseverance of Love
- Overcoming Our Brokenness



Request Your Free Booklet Today!



Principles for Living

www.principlesforliving.org

info@principlesforliving.org

P.O. Box 1097
Norfolk, NE 68702
(888) 881-3411

Are you stuck in a spiritual rut?



The Bible refers to the Christian life as a walk with God – so why do we feel stagnant in our relationship with God?

Remember, God is always calling you to keep moving forward. Inside, we'll discuss:

- **How to know if you're a lukewarm Christian, or truly on fire for the Gospel.**
- **Why Obedience to God draws us closer to the person He wants us to be.**
- **What it means to die to ourselves and find true life in Christ.**



Principles for Living
with Bill Zechmann

www.principlesforliving.org