



HANGING OUT?

HANGING IN?



**OR HANGING
IT UP?**

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HANGING OUT, HANGING IN, OR HANGING IT UP?

Some thoughts for members of
Generation X and Mosaic on
life and its meaning.

While you are probably committed to hanging out, I wonder if you are willing to consider hanging in, or are you about ready to hang it up? It may be that you have never found the acceptance that you have longed for and feel that the world has not given you a fair shake. Or, it may be that you are in a single parent home or a blended family where your whole world seems unsettled. And, again, your responses to the hurts you have faced may have made things worse. Would you be willing to think with me about an answer to your life that will enable you to have your needs met in the midst of a situation that you may find almost unbearable? Of course, you might be in a situation where everything is working to your advantage. In either case, let's consider the future as an outgrowth of your present way of living and see if you are satisfied with the result.

I would like to ask you to turn the clock ahead in your thinking and honestly and objectively consider whether the activities you are pursuing today and the way you are using your time will bring about the desired goals in the long term. Let's say that you are now 25 and nothing has changed in your approach to life except that you are no longer able to live at home for whatever reason. Will you have made adequate preparation to support yourself and possibly some others for whom you have taken on responsibility? Will the ways in which you are

getting your needs met today continue to be available to you? Or, will some of the activities begin to lose their importance as you are faced with providing your own food, clothing, shelter, transportation, insurance, etc.? What priority will you place, then, on the things for which you are spending your time and money that seem so important now?

Let's take a quick look at some of the things which may hold great meaning to you at the present time. It may be very important to hang out with friends and spend considerable time and money on media such as CD's, movies, TV, computer related activities, and eating away from home. Of course, this leaves very little time for meaningful interaction with your family on which you may be depending for various aspects of living, such as a place to crash, clothes (with names or emblems!), food, insurance, wheels, etc. Do you think you are contributing your share to the emotional health of the family? You want the privileges of adulthood; but are you accepting the responsibilities that go along with these privileges, or are you taking advantage of your parents? If you are working, do you use a portion of your income to contribute your fair share to the family budget to ease the load on your parents and to become accustomed to having to provide it all for yourself as you leave home?

Just what are you looking for as you hang out? Filling in time? Acceptance? Happiness? Meaning? Feeling good about yourself? Will these friends be there to supply these things when you are 25 and can no longer depend upon your family for a support base? Will they continue to show you love, acceptance and forgiveness if you treat them the way you are treating your family presently? Or, to put it another way, are the things for which you are living today sufficient to provide meaning and purpose twenty or thirty years downstream? What about eternity? Will the way you are living today prepare you to have a peaceful transition from planet Earth to the life to come? What we think and do today will be the building blocks for the remainder of our lives. Be honest now, are you investing your time or wasting it?

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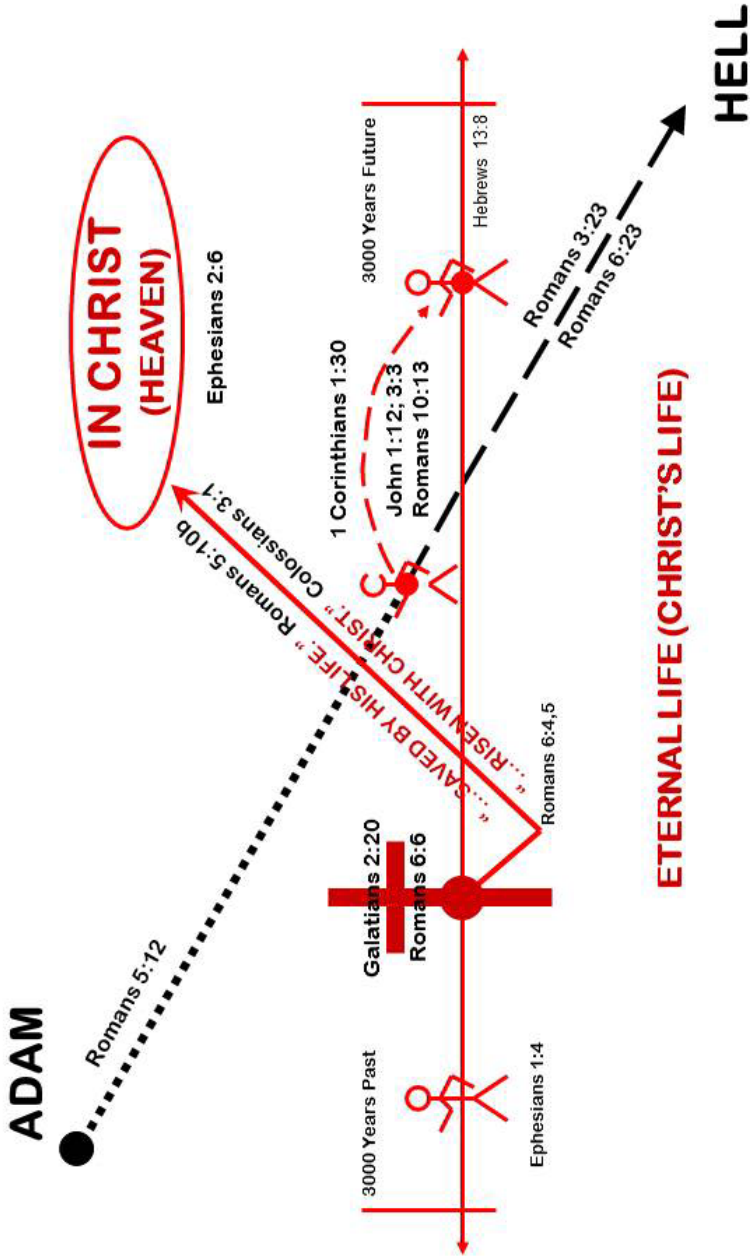
Everything we have discussed so far is based on time and people that are not dependable. Friends are wonderful while you are with them, but circumstances tend to take them away or make them unavailable as time moves along. Family may be loving and loyal, but they tend to get older and die. If we try to find meaning and identity in people and things, our life base is always subject to change without notice!

Would you be willing to consider that this life is merely preparation for the one to come? I know; you are still immortal, but one day it will dawn that you, too, will die even though that may seem light years away at this point. Are you willing to die for the values you hold dear today? Unless you have something worth dying for, it isn't worth living for.

Do you know where you came from, why you are here, and where you are going? You can know that with absolute certainty and have joy instead of happiness; and you can find acceptance that will chase away the loneliness and give you purpose at any stage of your life, without reference to fickle people.

If you are honest with yourself, you may conclude that you feel inadequate to handle the responsibility you should be assuming or you may have chosen not to do so. Or, you may feel that you deserve the same creature comforts that your parents have achieved at their stage in life. God did not create you to be independent of Him; He is willing to supply all your need (Philippians 4:19) if you come into a right relationship with Him. You can have a supply line that is out of this world!

God's Word says that Adam sinned and died; since you were in him, that is exactly what happened to you. This means that, spiritually, you were born dead; therefore, the scripture concludes that you must be born a second time (John 3:3). Unless we are born a second time, the penalty of our sin is spending eternity separated from God (Romans 6:23). You got physical life by birth, and you get spiritual life the same way. Once you have a second birth, the life of the Lord Jesus Christ is born into you; and you are born into His life. (1 Corinthians 1:30). This being the case, you enter into a life (Jesus' life) that transcends time (represented by the horizontal line); it has



Line Diagram
(See Chapter 2 of *Handbook to Happiness* for more detail)

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neither beginning nor end. Or, to put it another way, you not only get a new future; you also get a new past! This is true because the Lord Jesus' past becomes yours. Just as whatever happened to Adam happened to you; once you are in Christ, whatever happened to Him happened to you. He was crucified, buried, and rose from the dead; and you were in Him if you have received Him into your life in the forgiveness of your sin. He was seated at the right hand of God the Father where you will be seated as well—accepted and totally acceptable! (Ephesians 1:6, 2:6). Do you think you could use a new past? How about an assured and secure present and future?

The Lord Jesus came to Earth for a dual purpose—to forgive our sin and to give us life (His life); thus, we must admit that we are sinners and spiritually dead and stand in dire need of both of His provisions.

Other religions have in common that those who practice them can not be joined to the life of the founder because their founder is dead; also, they have no answer to the problem of sin. Therefore, they may substitute a good code of ethics; but it is left to the individual to fulfill the code. In other words, they are all religions that depend upon the works of those who practice them. Only in Christianity can the believer be indwelt by the Founder who is alive and Who, Himself, is committed to live the life that is enjoined by the New Testament.

So long as your identity is wrapped up in friends, activities, and possessions, it is not permanent and must change with time and circumstances. Identity in the Lord Jesus Christ will not change for time or eternity and is equally meaningful and effective in both. Love, acceptance, and forgiveness have been purchased for you by His blood. You can have a life that is independent of your performance and that is not maintained by your strength. Coming into that life and receiving all of the blessings and benefits of having Deity, the Lord Jesus, live out His life in you means that you must be willing to give up your life as you define it today in exchange for His. You must be willing not only to accept His death and resurrection for you but to deny yourself the right to rule and reign in your own

life and claim by faith your death and resurrection with Him. In so doing, He accepts the responsibility to live out His life in you. In other words, you can hang up your hang-ups at the Cross and live in Heaven on the way to Heaven since you will be living in Him there instead of in yourself here! Just think, you can hang out with Him 24 hours every day and know love, acceptance, and forgiveness which result in peace, joy, and freedom for the rest of your life here and in the life to come! How about it? Will you give up your life based on people, performance, and possessions in exchange for the life of the Lord Jesus who loves you and gave Himself for you (Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 2:24, Galatians 2:20)? If so, yours will be a life of peace, purpose, power, compassion, and acceptance which will replace the loneliness, rejection, and search for meaning and happiness that probably occupies many of your waking hours. If you are ready to make that step of faith, the Spirit of God will radically transform your life. He says in John. 1:12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." You might pray something like this:

Dear God, I can see that I am a sinner and that I have sinned against you and others. I believe you sent the Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, to die in my place for my sin. I now turn from my sin and receive the Lord Jesus Christ into my heart by faith and ask you to forgive my sin and give me your life. I do hereby give up on myself and deny my right to rule in my own life and accept my death and resurrection with Christ as You seat me at Your right hand in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am trusting You to transform my life as You see fit and live Your life in and through me that You may receive all the glory for the changes that You make. Thank You for saving me from my sin and myself for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Now that you know Him in the free pardon of your sin and have lost your life in exchange for His, you can be certain

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that He can handle your need in time and eternity and equip you to be a fully functioning person. Also, He can use you to bring hope and help to those around you who are yet depending upon themselves and others to make their lives work. May God bless you as He changes you and uses you to change your world which is in desperate need.

IDENTITY

Not what we do
But who we are;
What we have
Does not empower.

Not where we are
Or where we've been—
What's of self (Rom. 7:18)
Is surely sin.

Not what we gain
But what we lose— (Rom. 6:6)
'Twixt God and self
Is ours to choose. (Rom. 6:11)

To live is Christ; (Phil. 1:21)
Self is but loss.
Identity in Him— (Col. 3:4a)
Ours through the Cross.

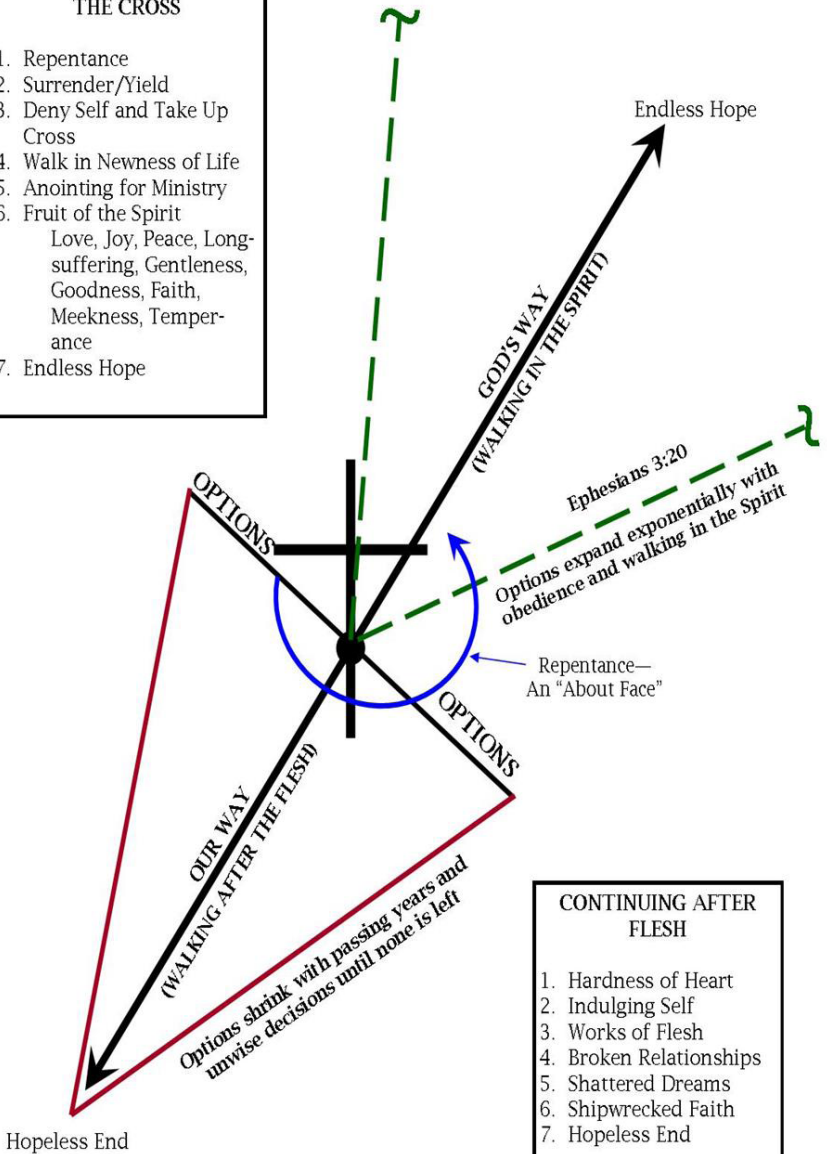
Our life lost (Gal. 2:20a)
His life begun; (Gal. 2:20b)
As in Him
All is done. (John 19:30)

Ours to labor
To enter rest; (Heb. 4:11)
Found in Him, (Col. 2:9,10)
Lives truly blessed.

C. R. Solomon

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- THE CROSS**
1. Repentance
 2. Surrender/Yield
 3. Deny Self and Take Up Cross
 4. Walk in Newness of Life
 5. Anointing for Ministry
 6. Fruit of the Spirit
Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance
 7. Endless Hope



- CONTINUING AFTER FLESH**
1. Hardness of Heart
 2. Indulging Self
 3. Works of Flesh
 4. Broken Relationships
 5. Shattered Dreams
 6. Shipwrecked Faith
 7. Hopeless End

TO GENERATION X BELIEVERS

The time for you has come
To begin to make life's choices;
Will you listen to the Lord
Or to a million other voices?
On the answer to this question
Will hinge your future peace;
Will the world dictate to you,
Or will joy in Him increase?

Young people all around you
Are seeking meaning to life;
Since our country's lost its way,
They are finding only strife.
God is looking for faithful ones
Who are willing to put Him first;
As their lives reflect His power,
Others for Him will thirst.

Now in your life, as never before,
There is pressure to conform;
Whatever others are doing
Very quickly becomes the norm.
Will you look to others
In attempts to meet your needs,
Or allow the Lord to set your course
That others may follow your lead?

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You have some precious time
Which you can waste or invest;
Elect to use it wisely,
And you will be doubly blessed.
When you honor your parents
For their sacrifice for you,
You can claim God's promise
Of blessing your life through.

The temptations that you face
Are more powerful year by year;
Without the Lord's resources,
They'll be more than you can bear.
The world would have you think
There is not a coming judgment day;
But the Bible is very clear —
Jesus died for our sins to pay.

As you find your meaning in Him,
You'll be free to chart your course;
The fads of the world lose power
When Jesus is your source.
Set your sights on eternal goals
And your walk in life won't waver,
And, at journey's end, you'll hear,
"Well done", from your Lord and Savior.

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RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM GRACE FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

Books by Dr. Charles Solomon:

Handbook to Happiness
Ins and Out of Rejection
Rejection Syndrome and the Way to Acceptance
Handbook to Happiness & You
Handbook for Christ-Centered Counseling
Handbook for Soldiers of the Cross
For Me To Live Is Christ
The Wisdom of (Charles R.) Solomon - 3 Volume Poetry Set
The Romans Road
Let Us Rise Up and Build...the Church
Completing the Reformation
Through Whom Shall He Then Live?
Discipling the Desperate
From Pastors to Pastors
The Dynamic Step in Discipleship
Conquering PTSD
Handbook to Happiness for the Church
Gems & Jargon
Wheel & Line Tract

Books by Dr. John Woodward:

Man as Spirit, Soul, and Body
Blessed Reassurance

Media Materials:

The Invisible Wall Audio Tape
Conference Audio CDs
Conference DVDs
Conference Notebook

Hanging Out, Hanging In, or Hanging it Up?

Book by Dr. Phil Jones:

How To Exchange Your Life For A New One

Books by Dr. Lee Turner:

Grace Discipleship Course #1

Grace Discipleship Course #2

Book by Captain Reginald Wallis:

The New Life

Book by John Stevens

Suicide: An Illicit Lover

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