

“Who Really Lives That Way?”
CRAZY LOVE¹ – Chapter 9
1 CORINTHIANS 11:1

THE FAITHFUL CHURCH

1. The Book of Revelation describes the seven churches:

- ◆ The **loveless** church of Ephesus who left their first **love** (v. 4) (Rev. 2:1-8)
- ◆ The **persecuted** church of Smyrna who met much tribulation (v. 9) (Rev. 2:9-11)
- ◆ The **compromising** church at Pergamos who embraced some false doctrine (v. 14) (Rev. 2:12-17)
- ◆ The **corrupt** church at Thyatira who were disgraced by ungodly worship practices (v. 20) (Rev. 2:18-29)
- ◆ The **dead** church at Sardis who walked away from the Lord (v. 1) (Rev. 3:1-6)
- ◆ The **lukewarm** church of Laodiceans who were uncommitted (vv. 15-16) (Rev. 3:14-23)
- ◆ The **faithful** church at Philadelphia who kept the scripture, sought holiness, and had not denied Christ (vv. 7-8) (Rev. 3:7-13)

2. Holiness is a description of the Father’s **character** of which Christ **shares** with all Christians (1 Pet. 1:15-16; John 6:69; 14:6).

3. Jesus comforts His disciples about their **eternal** redemption and reward (John 14:1-4).

KEY THOUGHT: What would happen in Murrieta, if the church family at Las Brisas began to **live lives** punctuated by periods of **Crazy Love** (Phil. 1:21)?

¹ **Crazy Love**, by Francis Chan; Publisher: David C. Cook, © 2008

Let's look at a few of the testimonies of men mentioned in the book, Crazy Love.

NATHAN BARLOW (Crazy Love, p. 150)

Nathan Barlow was a medical doctor who served faithfully in **Ethiopia** for more than sixty (60) years

GEORGE MULLER (Crazy Love, p. 157)

He was a man of prayer known for his faith and **miracles** that God performs regularly in his ministry. He was a founder of orphanages that housed, fed, and educated **thousands**. George Muller was known to pray for **everything** the ministry ever needed.

- ◆ Muller prayed for God's provision and received in 30 years in the mid-1800's over **\$7,500,000** for the construction of orphanages and the care of over **2,500** orphans at one time.²
- ◆ God answered over **50,000** documented prayer requests by George Muller.³
- ◆ "George Muller" can be seen online at **George Muller** (preachers of the past).

BROTHER YUN (Crazy Love, p. 159)

Brother Yun is a Chinese pastor who has been one of the five pastors used by God in the last 20+ years to bring **revival** to China. Brother Yun has been arrested over **30** times and imprisoned for more than **3,700** days.

- ◆ Brother Yun was miraculously **released** from **prison** by the power of God as was Peter from prison (Acts 12:5-17).
- ◆ Brother Yun's story is told in the book, Brother Yun: The Heavenly Man. This was the book of the year in **2003**.

² George Muller, by Basil Miller; Publisher: Bethany House, ©1941, p. 113.

³ Ibid, p. 145

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND PERSONAL GROWTH

May 30, 2010

SUNDAY: *I am comforted as a Christian that my eternal destiny is secure (John 14:1-6)!*

Jesus Himself told His disciples that they, and all believers, would have a place in heaven reserved for them when they die (John 14:1-4). Knowing that my place in heaven has been reserved upon the word of Jesus Christ really is an incredible and amazing thing. Jesus can absolutely be trusted. My salvation is secure in Jesus, the only one who can save my soul (John 14:6). The future is secure, and my focus on the present is to be effective until the Lord brings me into His presence. Every day I want to tell others about my eternal security and my wonderful life with my Lord. I want my life to be all about sharing my experience with Jesus with others. “Lord, please cure me of my natural selfishness. Help me place the salvation of the unsaved around me at least equal to my own interests.” ***May the joy of eternal security provide a launching pad for our service to the Lord and the salvation of others!***

MONDAY: *Jesus Christ is my Lord and reason for living (Phil. 1:21)!*

Everything that can be done to worship God on earth can be done better in heaven, except one. Our worship would be in the presence of the Lord. Singing would be angelic, testifying to God’s greatness would be an eternal event, and proclaiming His praise would consume every moment. Yet, the one thing I cannot do in heaven is build the kingdom of God. There will be no need for evangelism and discipleship. While I am here on earth I need to be about the business of building the kingdom of God. It would be awesome to invite someone every week to worship of God and fellowship with His people. Could you imagine the joy of seeking to share about your salvation at least once a day with someone you encounter during your day? “Lord, help me to see the building of the kingdom of God as a wonderful way to show my *Crazy Love* for you!” ***May my reason for living truly become serving the Lord and building His kingdom!***

TUESDAY: *My service for Christ is not to be heralded before men (Matt. 6:1-4)!*

Nathan Barlow sought to live and demonstrate the love of Christ so he could share the truth of salvation with the Ethiopian people. Dr. Barlow loved the people of his adopted country. He invested his life in improving their physical health so he could transform their spiritual health. At no point did Nathan Barlow ever decide to trumpet his convictions and actions before men. His actions were aimed at building the kingdom of God and not impressing man (Matt. 6:1-4). Dr. Barlow had a precision to how he used his time. Why do I use my time the way I do? What is stopping me from being more precise in the use of my own time, talents, and treasure? “Lord, I need to set the things and desires of this world aside so I can bring the kingdom of God to the forefront of my life. Please do not let me settle for a mundane life that was wasted on building the temporal life of earth instead of the glory of heavenly reward.” ***May this realization of the value of the eternal over the temporal begin to flood every crevice of my life!***

WEDNESDAY: ***My future is in heaven and not in the things of this world (2 Cor. 5:1-2; Phil. 3:17-21)!*** The possession of houses, cars, retirement accounts, and other earthly treasures that captivate men's minds are a danger to my commitment to the kingdom of God. I cannot point my focus in two directions at the same time. My future is in heaven and not on earth (Phil. 3:17-21). I want to live like I am a citizen of heaven. A citizen is proud of his country and will give his life in its defense. My intention is to serve my country as a member of her military. I will follow the orders of my commander and chief and give my life for my comrades in arms. "Lord, do not allow me to wander from my duty." ***May the cause of the kingdom of God be on my mind every moment of the day!***

THURSDAY: ***My challenge is to love others enough to lay down my life for my friends (John 15:13)!*** The challenge of Brother Yun's legend is to place complete faith in Jesus Christ and lay down your life for your friends. The church in China has been terribly persecuted. Pastors risk their lives to faithfully preach the word of God, and millions have been swept into the kingdom of God. These men do not see themselves as heroes, but simply as men obedient to the call of their Lord and Savior. There is nothing in this life that is as valuable as living with a *Crazy Love* for God. If it is true for these faithful servants of God, then it can be true for me. My challenge is to love others enough to lay down my life for my friends and even for those that do not know Jesus as Lord (John 15:13). "Lord, I pray that the Holy Spirit would live through me and that my life would be used completely for the kingdom of God. ***May this decision be one that impacts other lives for the kingdom of God!***

FRIDAY: ***God is still performing miracles today (Acts 12:5-17)!*** Peter was miraculously released from prison while his friends held a prayer meeting, pleading with God (Acts 12:5-17). Do you believe that God answers prayer? Is your heart convinced that God is still performing miracles today at the answer of His children's prayers? It is my firm conviction that God is answering prayers this very minute. Furthermore, He is actively performing miracles right this very second! The struggle I have is being faithful to pray for the movement of the Holy Spirit that will advance the kingdom of God. One of my deepest convictions has become the need for longer seasons of prayer in my life every day. "Lord, thank you for the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in my life and the gift of communion through prayer with you." ***May the power of prayer become more real every day of our lives in Christ!***

SATURDAY: ***Many suffer far more than I ever have for the gospel (Heb. 11:35b-38)!*** Christians are being persecuted all over the world. They are thrown into prison with little prospect of release and without a definite sentence. Torture becomes a routine part of their day. Those that are arrested are often beaten before being released. More Christians than we know are martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ (Heb. 11:35b-38). How much am I willing to invest and put into the kingdom of God? Will I give an hour of my time each day to pray for the kingdom? Is teaching God's word to children in Sunday School worth the preparation, the relationship building, and the commitment to be present most weeks at church? "Lord, help me stop spending all my time on me and start investing my life in growing the kingdom of God." ***May my focus on the kingdom of God and my passion never diminish!***