

treating others. Read Romans 3:9-18. "For all have sinned and fall short of God's glory."(Romans 3:23) Sin is the fruit of rebellion. Sin is what we do wrong toward God and others. Rebellion is the heart of the matter. It is a desire within us to do it our way, not God's. From Adam and Eve until today, mankind has been motivated by a self-centered attitude to live life their own way. You are a **REBEL!** You have been a part of the rebellion against God and the evil in this world. You, like the rest of mankind, have chosen to side with the rebel, Satan, and his system of evil. Read Ephesians 2:1-3. Besides that, you have found yourself enslaved to that evil system and its habits, so that much of your free will has been lost. Jesus said, "...whoever commits sin is a slave of sin."(John 8:34) But, you don't have to be a rebel any longer and enslaved to sinful habits.

### **GOD DEALT WITH YOUR REBELLION**

God offered you and all mankind a way to turn from being a rebel and to become part of His system of love and goodness. God chose to send His own Son, Jesus Christ, to be condemned for our sinful rebellion and punished on our behalf. God proved, through the sacrifice of His Son, that He loved us and wanted us to join His family. (John 3:16) Our rebellion was condemned and payment was made in full by God through Christ's death. You have the opportunity to be forgiven by God of your rebellious attitude, turn to God, and be set free from sinful habits. Admit that you have sinned and rebelled against God. Repent, by turning away from sin and that rebellious attitude. Believe(trust) that Christ died for your sin and rebellion. Receive Christ, God's gift of salvation. (Ephesians 2:8,9)

### **GOD'S PLAN TO RESTORE YOU**

Though God allowed evil to touch our lives because of free will, His plan of "salvation" through Christ is a blueprint for the restoration of our life, the life God meant for us. While we were living as a rebel, we had chosen to side with evil. Now that we have come to surrender our lives to God, we are ready to trust Him to make our lives new. His plan of salvation has provided power to set us free from destructive habits; give us a Godly mind and self image; healing for painful memories; the fulfillment of God's love, joy, and peace; a higher purpose to live for; and an eternal hope.

(John 10:10a) God has a wonderful plan for our life, it involves forming and shaping us into the image of His Son, Jesus. (Romans 8:29) Are you making yourself available to God's restoration plan?

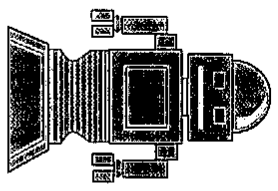
### **GOD'S PLAN TO USE YOU**

By joining God's family, we are surrendering to His way of doing things. We are surrendering to His plans, His values, His agenda, His authority for our lives. We are making ourselves available for God to use us to do good in the world and to be an instrument for helping others be restored. We are now partnering with our Heavenly Father to bring His kingdom of light, health, love, peace, and goodness to the world and to individuals. He wants to use you to share the "good news" of His salvation to others. (Matthew 28:19) He wants to use you to show His goodness to others. (Matthew 5:16). Are you willing to share God's salvation and goodness with others?

### **KNOW THE TRUTH**



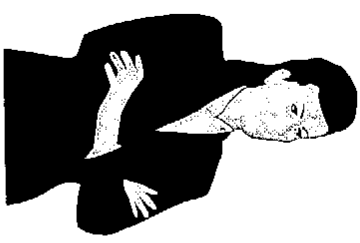
"...AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE..."



# ROBOT

# or

# REBEL



## Pastor Lynn Kern

## A HURTFUL PAST

Many people I counsel with have had hurtful and tragic experiences in their past. It may be a divorce, an abuse, a tragic loss of a family member, rejection by a family member, or some other deeply painful experience as they were growing up. People wonder why God allowed these hurtful and tragic experiences to happen to them.

## AN EVIL WORLD

Coupled with their personal experiences, they are surrounded by a world filled with human tragedy and evil. Almost every day there is news of a car bombing, drive-by shooting, gang violence, rapes, murders, innocent deaths due to political and ethnic strife, or tragedies caused by human error. And this is only the half of it. There are the more numerous, but untold daily tragedies that take place in human relationships in the home, community, work place, etc. that cause tremendous mental and emotional suffering. People wonder why God doesn't step-in and put an end to the evil and suffering in the world.

## CHRISTIANS ARE NOT EXEMPT!

We would like to think that those who have come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior are exempt from the effects of a hurtful and tragic past, or of the evil in the world. However, that is not the case. Because people become Christians, it does not automatically erase the bad experiences of their past or shelter them from the effects of evil in the world. Instead, the effects of our past and the present evil can be used by Satan(the devil) to undermine our confidence in God.

## A HEALTHY VIEW OF GOD.

Having a healthy view of God is extremely important to your faith and to maintaining a

strong relationship with God. However, there are many Christians whose view of God has been distorted and confused because of the effects of their hurtful past and the present evil world. Either they struggle to believe that God is really loving and good as the Bible says; or, they question whether He really cares about them, personally. They want to profess the right biblical truths, but deep in their heart and mind, they are angry with God and distrust Him.

Their relationship with God suffers because they fail to trust God and His promises for their life. Their prayer life is limited because they allow the shadow of past and present experience to come between them and God. Do you struggle with this problem in your Christian life? Do you wonder why God didn't stop you from experiencing a tragic and hurtful past? Do you wonder why He doesn't stop the evil in the world?

## AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND.

It would be foolish and prideful to suggest that we can fully understand how God works and why God has allowed negative things to happen in our life and in our world. However, we must attempt to understand how God set-up His plan for mankind, His involvement in that plan, and His wonderful salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. Also, we must attempt to understand our part, our responsibility as individuals in God's plan.

## GOD ALLOWED FOR EVIL

Whether it was Lucifer rebelling against God and becoming Satan (the devil) or, Adam and Eve choosing to sin and becoming sinners, God has allowed evil in the world. It appears that God allowed His created

beings to have the capacity (free will) to choose good or evil, which affected other created beings for good or evil. Satan's evil affected other angels and influenced Adam and Eve to sin. Adam and Eve's sin had an evil influence on other human beings which infected the whole human race with evil.

Through Adam's sin, Satan was given an open door to influence the world for evil, to develop a philosophy and system bent on hurt, destruction, and death. (Romans 5:12; John 10:10a)

## GOD DID NOT MAKE US "ROBOTS"

"Why did God let this or that happen to me?" Or, "Why doesn't God do something about the evil in the world?" When people ask those questions they fail to understand that God would have to violate the free will of others by preventing them from doing evil. They fail to understand that they themselves would need to be forced by God and programmed to do the same. This would make them "robots" instead of humans with free will. By making us robots, God could have prevented us from hurting one another and eliminating evil in the world. Fortunately, God did not make us "robots." He created man in His image, with the ability to know good and evil and the capacity to choose. Aren't you glad? Because God gave the human race free will, people have the capacity to be and do what they want. Unfortunately, mankind has chosen most often to make choices that harm and destroy others around them.

## YOU ARE A "REBEL"

Because God did not make us robots, but gave us free will, we are responsible and accountable for our choices. God, throughout the Bible, declares that man has rebelled against Him, His laws, and His ways of