

Questioned & Convicted Some External Questions

1 Peter 2:12

This year is a leap year...

Because our earth's revolution around the sun is almost exactly 365.25 days, every fourth year we add an extra day.... February 29th

It was on a previous February 29th that a significant event took place ...

It began a few years earlier...

On August 22, 1944 one million Russian groups that had invaded Romania broke through the borders.

By 1947 the left wing press had accused their president and leadership of so many hidden agendas that the president resigned and Communism took over with absolute government control.

The people had been promised freedom from evil tyranny with everyone becoming equal...

The Romanians soon found out that the atheistic socialism of Communism only brought in another darker evil tyranny.

In 1947, at a gathering of religious leaders, the Communists were convincing the leadership of the various religious groups of the benefits their churches and synagogues would now have under communism.

A pastor by the name of Richard Wurmbrand along with his wife, Sabina, were present at the large gathering.

They were both deeply burdened in their spirits by this wrong, but sat quietly listening.

Suddenly Sabina leaned over to her husband, Richard, and said...

"Richard, stand up and wash away this shame from the face of Christ! They are spitting in His face."

Richard replied...

"If I do so, you lose your husband."

Sabina, with deep conviction, said...

"I don't wish to have a coward as a husband."

Richard stood up, went to the podium and denounced in any way that the Lord Jesus and His Church should come under any government...

On Sunday, February 29, 1948, Richard Wurmbrand was walking to the church. On his way a car full of Secret Police pulled over and grabbed him. They handcuffed him, threw a black sack over his head and took him off to prison.

Wurmbrand was released from his first imprisonment in 1956, after 8.5 years.

Although he was warned not to preach, he resumed his work in the underground church.

He was arrested again in 1959 and sentenced to 25 years.

During his imprisonment, he was beaten and tortured. Physical torture included mutilation, burning and being locked in a large frozen icebox

In 1964 he was released after a ministry paid the Communists \$10,000.

- ***They believed Richard would become the voice of persecuted people around the world***

In April, 1967, Richard founded “Voice of the Martyrs”

- ***A Ministry dedicated to the global persecuted Church***

Richard was convicted of placing his faith in Jesus Christ over the Government’s laws...

This coming Saturday is February 29th

What about us?...

Richard said, “I had prepared myself for prison and torture as a soldier in peacetime prepares for the hardships of war. I had studied the lives of Christians who had faced similar pains and temptations to surrender and thought how I might adapt their experiences. Many who had not so prepared themselves were crushed by suffering, or deluded into saying what they should not.”

When I stand before God what will He be looking for in my life?

1 John 2:6 (NLT) — Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.

1 Peter 2:12 (NLT) — Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

Today is not a day of judgment. I am not in any way judging anyone here.

The way you are living your life is between you and the Lord.

But know this... “We will all give an account to God!”

Romans 14:12 (ESV) — So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV) — For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

ONE THING

“We must not DECEIVE ourselves into thinking we would CHOOSE to DIE for Christ during times of PERSECUTION if we REFUSE to LIVE for Christ during times of PEACE.”

“A man really believes not what he recites in his creed, but only the things he is ready to die for.”

— Richard Wurmbrand

As we approach these questions I have included with each a SCALE...

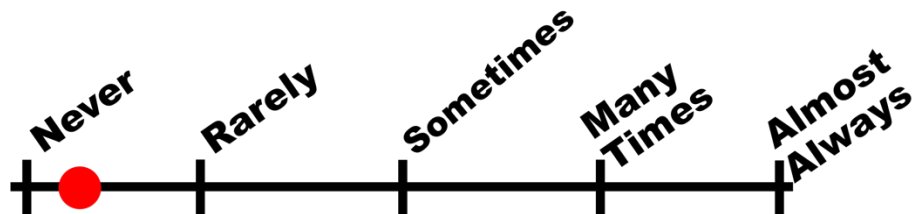
I'm calling it an HONESTY SCALE...

This morning I was reading in Mark chapter 11...

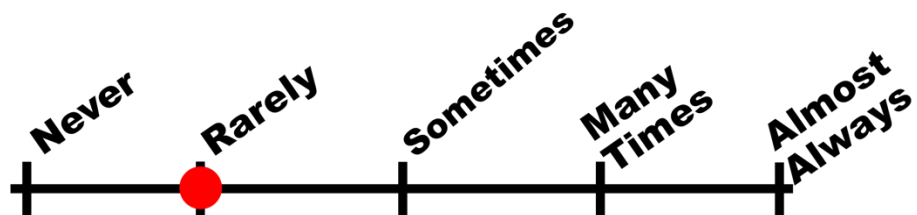
Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem from the nearby town of Bethany...

Mark 11:13 (ESV) — And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

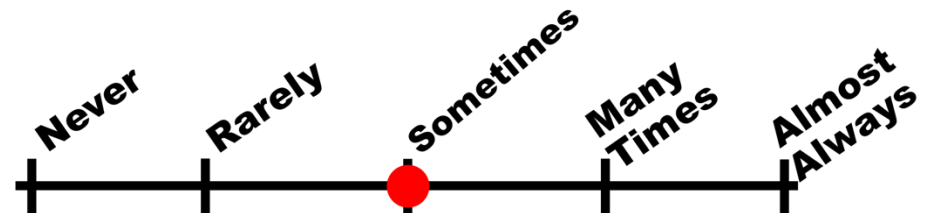
Pic 1



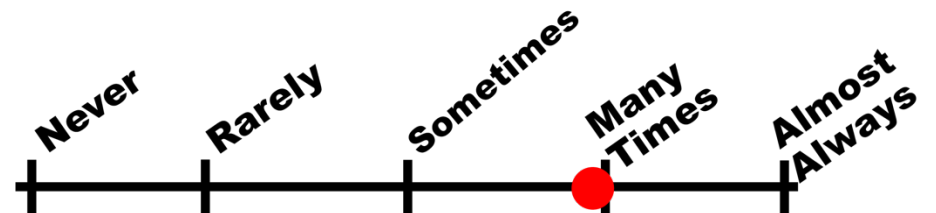
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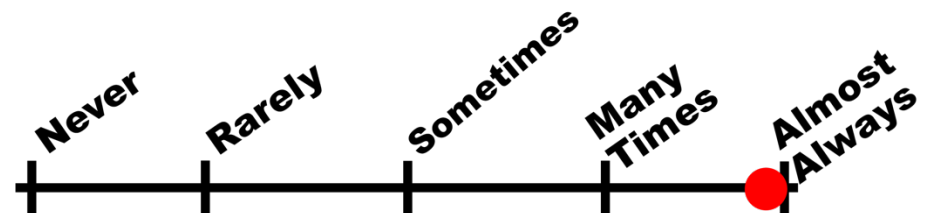
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Pic 4



Pic 5



Question #1: Am I living my life in such a way that PEOPLE feel VALUED when they are around me?

Luke 15:1–2 (NLT) — Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people – even eating with them!

➤ ***Key #1 - Approachable***

Jesus was approachable!

Parents brought their children to him to bless them...

Children were never afraid to sit in His lap...

The sinful and messed up were treated by Him with dignity...

“We must not deceive ourselves into thinking we would choose to die for Christ during times of persecution if we refuse to live for Christ during times of peace.”

Question #2: Am I living my life in such a way that the HURTING, SICK and BOUND

come to me for HELP because they know I have what they NEED?

Mark 3:10–11 (NLT) — He had healed many people that day, so all the sick people eagerly pushed forward to touch him. And whenever those possessed by evil spirits caught sight of him, the spirits would throw them to the ground in front of him shrieking, “You are the Son of God!”

The communist atheists allowed no place for Jesus in their hearts, I decided I'd leave not the smallest place for satan in mine.

— Richard Wurmbrand

➤ ***Key #2 - Anointing***

“We must not deceive ourselves into thinking we would choose to die for Christ during times of persecution if we refuse to live for Christ during times of peace.”

Question #3: Am I living my life in such a way that FAMILY and close FRIENDS think my CHRISTIANITY is FANATICAL?

Mark 3:21 (NLT) — When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him away. “He’s out of his mind,” they said.

There was once a fiddler who played so beautifully that everybody danced. A deaf man who could not hear the music considered them all insane. Those who are with Jesus in suffering hear this music to which other men are deaf. They dance and do not care if they are considered insane.

— Richard Wurmbrand

➤ **Key #3 - Abiding**

Question #4: Am I living my life in such a way that RELIGIOUS PEOPLE become JEALOUS and MALIGN me?

Mark 3:22 (NLT) — But the teachers of religious law who had arrived from Jerusalem said, “He’s possessed by Satan, the prince of demons. That’s where he gets the power to cast out demons.”

2 Timothy 3:12–13 (ESV) — Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

➤ **Key #4 - Authority**

Matthew 7:28–29 (ESV) — And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

It was strictly forbidden to preach to other prisoners. It was understood that whoever was caught doing this received a severe beating. A number of us decided to pay the price for the privilege of preaching, so we accepted their [the communists'] terms. It was a deal; we preached and they beat us. We were happy preaching. They were happy beating us, so everyone was happy.

— Richard Wurmbrand

→ Some Quotes by Richard Wurmbrand ←

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I have seen Christians in Communist prisons with fifty pounds of chains on their feet, tortured with red-hot iron pokers, in whose throats spoonfuls of salt had been forced, being kept afterward without water, starving, whipped, suffering from cold - and praying with fervor for the Communists. This is humanly inexplicable! It is the love of Christ, which was poured out in our hearts.

A flower, if you bruise it under your feet, rewards you by giving you its perfume.

My wife and I were present at this congress. Sabina told me, "Richard, stand up and wash away this shame from the face of Christ! They are spitting in His face." I said to her, "If I do so, you lose your husband." She replied, "I don't wish to have a coward as a husband.

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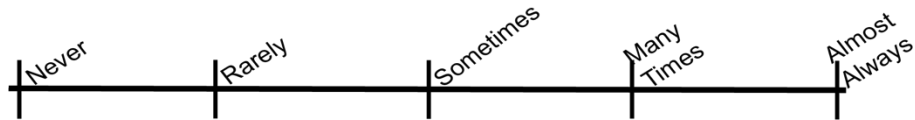
The Communist torturers often said, 'There is no God, no hereafter, no punishment for evil. We can do what we wish.' I have heard one torturer even say, 'I thank God, in whom I don't believe, that I have lived to this hour when I can express all the evil in my heart.' He expressed it in unbelievable brutality and torture inflicted on prisoners.
—Richard Wurmbrand

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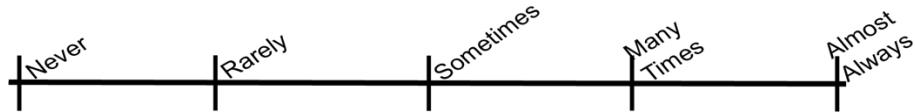
Questioned & Convicted
Some External Questions
Romans 14:7-12

*"We must not _____ ourselves into thinking we would
 _____ to _____ for Christ during times of
 _____ if we _____ to _____ for Christ
 during times of _____."*

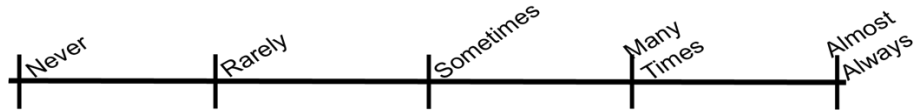
**Q #1: Am I living my life in such a way that _____ feel
 _____ when they are around me?**



**Q #2: Am I living my life in such a way that the _____,
 _____ and _____ come to me for _____ because
 they know I have what they _____?**



**Q #3: Am I living my life in such a way that _____ and close
 _____ think my _____ is _____?**



**Q #4: Am I living my life in such a way that _____
 _____ become _____ and _____ me?**

