

# WHAT'S YOUR "COVER"?

A man went for a walk through the countryside and came upon a lovely cottage. The striking thing about this cottage was the vibrant green ivy that grew up the walls. It was so thick that in many places you could not even see the bricks that the cottage was made of. The ivy was pleasant to look at, and seeing the cottage gave the man a peaceful, happy feeling.

Continuing his walk, the man soon came upon an old estate surrounded by a high wall and a formidable gate. The walls of the estate were also completely covered, only on this house it was with dark, twisted vines. The vines grew thick and were tightly woven, and covered the wall and part of the wrought-iron gate that barred entry to the estate. Contrary to the feeling of peace and joy that the man had when viewing the ivy-covered cottage, the vines covering and almost choking the wall of this estate were dark and gloomy. The man quickly went on his way, not caring to stay in the presence of something so overrun by the ominous vines.

Consider the cottage and the estate to be like the house of your spirit. You can choose what type of covering you would like for your life and spirit. It can be a covering that is godly, and, like the ivy, warm and welcoming. Or it can be a covering of shadow and gloom, like the dark-looking twisted vines.



When your life and spirit are full of God's Spirit and His goodness, then you are a better reflection of Him to others. People see good qualities that you have developed through building positive, godly habits. Because you are full of God's Spirit, that is what emanates from you and causes a good reaction in others.

But if you choose to fill your life and heart with things that are gloomy or harmful to your spiritual and emotional well-being, then, like the dark and twisted vines surrounding the estate, this becomes the image of your life—one covered in shadow and darkness. People can't help but have a hesitant or negative reaction. It's not because they don't love you, but like with the estate, they might not even know how to get close to you because of the thick vine-covered walls and the heavy, wrought-iron gate.

What you take into your heart and mind shows—it's what "covers" you. Will you cover yourself with the vibrancy of God's Spirit so that others can see this light and joy and want to be a part of it? The choice is yours.



"You are the light that shines for the world to see. You are like a city built on a hill that cannot be hidden. People don't hide a lamp under a bowl. They put it on a lampstand. Then the light shines for everyone in the house. In the same way, you should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14–16 ERV).