



The Christian Courier

America's Longest Running Christian Newspaper

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California Family's Redemption Keeps Church Bells Ringing in Brandon

Hello, we are Kevin and Sharon Hickman. We are so grateful to have the privilege and opportunity to share a snippet of our journey, and the true miracle of how God works wonderfully in our lives, to strategically place people together for His own purposes. Here is the unfolding of our story, of how God placed Sharon and me together against all odds. Here is our story told from both Sharon and Kevin's perspective.

Our story takes place at a home church we both attended for 10 years back in California. The church's mission and vision statement involved spiritual and emotional growth and healing people's hearts. Within those 10 years, our leaders helped us tremendously in our emotional and spiritual growth through praying for our inner healing, counseling us in emotional growth, mentoring, and helping us with life and leadership skills. We are so grateful for what they did for us, because we wouldn't be in this current position without their help.

During the initial years at this church home group, I (Sharon) immersed myself in spiritual growth, receiving healing from a previous romantic relationship, as well as addressing childhood and character opportunities for growth. As I recall about 9 years ago, I had a very detailed dream of Kevin and I getting married on our wedding day. After the dream, I felt excited, perplexed, and surprised all at the same time. I felt from this dream that God had showed me very clearly that Kevin was to be my future husband. It was hard for me to believe at first, because we didn't really know each other well back then, and didn't really interact for many years. Over the next 9 years, my reality with Kevin in interactions didn't align with what God had revealed to me in the dream.



Kevin and Sharon with her parents Mark and Brenda

Fast forward to 2016. I (Kevin) began to reach out to Sharon via texts encouraging her to get more involved in the Thursday night growth groups at our previous church because of her increasing work hours. As I began to get to know Sharon on a more personal level, I began to emotionally bond with her through texting and phone calls. I was soon finding that my heart was falling in love with her. In 2016, our home church took a trip to Orlando, Florida, for a health conference. It was at the conference that Sharon and I spent quality time knitting our hearts together. I knew in my heart that after getting to know Sharon on this trip to Florida, that I wanted to marry her. Two days after returning from the trip, I approached my pastors for wisdom and instruction in asking for Sharon's hand in marriage. I became devastated and distraught to learn that they didn't want me marrying Sharon at that time, nor in the future.

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The Testimony of John Duckhorn

From Cornerstone Magazine, July/August 2020 Issue

On my desk is a picture of a family. The husband is dressed in a military uniform, a good-looking man, proud and smiling. But he was an alcoholic. The woman next to him is sad and unhappy. The children, a girl of seven is smiling because she hasn't seen her dad in a long while. The boy about four years old looks bewildered. He has never seen his father. This is the only photo I have of the four of us together. World War II was on, and many families were separated. The family in the photo was separated by war and a three-year old divorce. Mom worked making airplane parts. After the war, when the men came home, women were let go. She took other jobs. Soon she married



a recently divorced soldier. The man in the photo (my father) remarried but wanted to be a part of the lives of his children. My mother objected and so the battle began for the children's affections. It would be a battle that eventually led me to the Savior.

For some reason J was the designated church goer in our family. As a seven-year-old boy I was sent off to the local Catholic Church on Sundays. Both sides of my family were staunch Roman Catholics and they were pleased that "Jack" went to church. We moved around Wisconsin a lot and the first move was to the country where I made my first confession and first communion. We lived for seven years in a veterans

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Commentary



The King is Coming!

By Bob Conklin

Are you ready? It seems like every day my Bible falls opens to Matthew chapter 24. If all of what is unfolding world wide before our eyes is just the beginning of birth pains, what's next? One thing for sure it's great being among this cloud of witnesses!

Back to The King is Coming. Talk about a great and timely song. Go on YouTube, and type in the search bar "The King is Coming". Nobody sings this song quite like Doug Oldham.

We were at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, DC in the mid 90's and John Fisco pointed Doug out to me. We sat down next to Doug and LauraLee. Little did I know he was the music talent scheduled to sing at lunch that day. John leaned over and said, "Wait till you hear this guy sing ..." Doug was anguishing before having to go on stage because someone in the hierarchy wanted him to delete certain lyrics.

Doug just couldn't comply. Doug decided to let 'er rip including the words they wanted him to avoid. Needless to say he brought down the house that day with 3,000 people standing to their feet applauding and praising God.

Never heard if someone was offended about proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord. One can never go wrong doing the righteous thing!

February 9, 2021 will mark one year since John Fisco's home-going. John's timing was always good.

I'll never forget the peace that day at Froedtert Hospital when his doctor and nurses said they had done all they could to arrest the lymphoma and John said, "Well then I guess it's Heaven here I come."

John was never afraid.

On the cover of this month's edition of the Christian Courier, you will see the testimony of Pastor John Duckhorn. John Duckhorn a.k.a. "Ducky" was always near and dear to John Fisco's heart. Through an outreach at Ebenezer Evangelical Free Church, Fisco lead Ducky to the Lord when Ducky was a late teen. Fisco was four years Ducky's senior.

John was very happy a few years ago to see his family's own Ebenezer E Free Church at



John Fisco with me and David and Pam Lovett at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington DC a few years ago.

43rd & Oklahoma continue on in the hands of a vibrant Hispanic congregation.

Also on the cover, we featured the story of how God used a family moving out of southern California seeking greener pastures in Wisconsin. Fisco would have been happy to see the United Methodist church building in Brandon, a suburb of Waupun, open again after a short closure last November. Pastor Kevin's father-in-law Mark is responsible for ringing the church bell every Sunday morning. Last week he showed me the ropes ... literally and I got to ring the bell. I think they could hear us in Fairwater and Markesan!

God bless and enjoy the ride!

Each day is a new beginning. You can start fresh, anticipating what today will bring. Or you can just settle for yesterday's doubts, fears, or worries. Which road will you take? Do you take the path to the clear present or the shadows of the past? ~ Eve Evangelista



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News & More



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During our last 4 years at this church, it became crushingly apparent to Sharon and me that we would never be allowed to connect. Our leaders made it very clear to Sharon and me that we were not to talk to each



Sharon and I standing in front of the Chapel shortly after opening August 28, 2020

other and we were forbidden to text or develop a friendship in or outside of the group. This nightmare felt like it would never end. I (Kevin) remember night after night, longing to talk with Sharon. We were kept apart from speaking or getting to know each other, and this was heartbreaking. I eventually lost all hope that Sharon and I would ever get married. You might ask, why would our leaders feel so threatened with our getting together? It seems they viewed the union of Sharon and me as a threat because of the anointing and authority that God had placed upon our individual lives. It felt like they had an agenda, and the main component of that "secret" agenda was keeping Sharon and me apart. It appeared that the leaders were fearful of losing power and control over their church members. They devised a longstanding plan to derail God's plan for our lives, constantly interfering and blocking our relationship, while our Lord continued to draw Sharon and me inexorably toward each other. An-



Nicolas and Terra Mathias are a third generation family that came from the United Methodist Church that was there beforehand.

other part of their plan, was setting Kevin up with another woman constantly. Sadly, the pastors controlled multiple circumstances to accommodate their agenda and master plan. Unfortunately, our pastors were used of the

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continued from John Duckhorn, page 1

housing project in Milwaukee where I made lifelong friends, and years later, was able to lead one of them to Jesus Christ. At one point, I attended a one room schoolhouse with only eleven students while the next two schools were parochial.

I continued my religious activities during public high school. Confession and communion were weekly habits. The frequency of practicing the "ordinances" made me wonder about their effect on my life. Two things started to bother me and prepared me for the events of the next few years. My friends and I began to make fun of confession by timing the length of each other's confession. If one of us was too long, we would tease him about the length of his penance. The second matter was the devotion that both sides of the family showed to the Church, along with strong insistence that it was the only true way of salvation. Both families were rife with divorce and drinking. By this time my father was kicked out of his second marriage, lost his job, and was a hopeless alcoholic. Questions started to bother me. Was religion not to be life-changing? What good was it if I stubbornly held on to something that did little for me?

I developed good communication skills in high school and was encouraged by my teachers to pursue radio announcing. I even did standup comedy routines during the band breaks at our school dances. So, I set my future hopes on being a disc-jockey and was accepted at a communications school in Minneapolis. The summer before my senior year, God began to track me down. Two classmates went to a Bible camp that summer and one of them, a girl, came back and told me I needed to be saved, to be "born again." The other one a boy, had often previously told off color jokes with me, but now when I began to tell him one, he cut me off, saying that he was "born again." I was upset and confused. This was the beginning of the Lord working to convict me and I struggled with this during my senior year. I tried hard to understand the Roman Catholic Church with many significant things happening that year where I saw God's patience in dealing with me.

I graduated in 1959 and took a job to save money for broadcasting school. I thought I was now free from having to listen to the "Holy Rollers," but I was mistaken. I met the youth worker at the Evangelical Free Church where both the campers attended. He had heard of me and tried to get me to attend their youth meetings. I went to a couple but was more of a wise guy than a good listener.

That summer my father came back to Milwaukee. He wanted me to join him, to find work, and live with him in California. He was working small jobs and living with old drinking buddies from Milwaukee.

I took a leave of absence from my job to go with him but had little desire to be around him for very long. I went to California, not to get a job, but to get away from the stress of life in Milwaukee. While travelling to California on Route 66, on the first night there was a Bible on the table in the motel opened at John 3, which had the only verses I knew. I was curious and actually thought of taking it with me, but how could God forgive someone for stealing a Bible? At the next motel on the second night, I was shocked to see a Gideons Bible opened to Psalm 23. Although I wanted a Bible, this one said it was not to be taken from the room. We finished our trip at the end of Route 66) and we then headed north to Oakland.

We spent a day walking around a famous mission in Santa Barbara. I wanted to find literature that would answer all my questions, but I found nothing in the free literature rack. In Oakland, the Lord continued to hound me. My dad's friends were all drunks, womanizers, and lost money betting on the horses. I was not interested in being with them. One night we were in the bar below their apartment and two young women came in and talked to my dad. He came over to me and said, "It's time to try some new things kid, and grow up." He went upstairs with one of the girls, but I grabbed the car keys off the bar and took a drive. I saw a flashing sign on a church that said: "Jesus Saves." I exploded in a rage of anger, pulled the car over and began to swear at God. It was a horrible outburst of profanity, and then I suddenly stopped. I decided to take the train home the next day and find the youth worker and get his help to receive the Lord as my Savior, to be sure I did it right.

The next morning, I left California and thought about everything that had happened over the last few years of my life. I had slept little, smoked too many cigarettes, and ate only a couple of meals per day. Once home, I was able to contact the youth worker, and on October 7, 1959, I came to know the Lord as my Savior.

I soon decided to go to a Bible school to catch up for lost years. Although I was hoping to wait a year and first go to the school of broadcasting, I never got there. After the year of Bible study, I wanted my life to be used as the Lord willed. The Lord pursued me, in His grace followed me, and tenderly received me into His eternal kingdom.

John and Dona Duckhorn labored for the Lord in Columbia, South America from the time they were married in 1966 until 1979 when they returned stateside. They are commended by the Wauwatosa Bible Chapel in full-time ministry. They have two adopted sons. Michael and Steven.



News & More



Virginia Faith Leaders Urge Gov. Northam Not to Enforce New Law Requiring Them To 'Violate' Religious Convictions

by Brandon Showalter

Forty Virginia faith leaders have signed onto a letter urging Gov. Ralph Northam and state legislators not to enforce a new law that would require residents to violate their religious convictions.

Enacted in July, the "Virginia Values Act" requires churches, and religious ministries and schools to hire employees who do not share the same views regarding sexuality, marriage, and gender identity. Violators will face fines up to \$100,000.

Similarly, another bill that also became law on July 1, requires churches and religious businesses to include in their health care plans coverage for elective body-altering gender surgeries and bans them from offering sports, parenting classes, and Christian discipleship should they be based on the belief that biological sex is an immutable trait.

"Everyone should be free to live and work according to their beliefs without fear of unjust government punishment — regardless of whether those beliefs are religious. Our government should protect, not threaten, this freedom," the open letter from the faith leaders reads.

"Each one of us operates as an organization with core beliefs that knit our staff and volunteers together. These same convictions drive us to serve our communities with a particular mission. We are proud to live by the words of Section 16 of the Virginia Constitution's Declaration of Rights, which declares: 'It is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity toward each other.'"

State law, they said, should not interfere with their core mission nor target groups with hostility. If Virginia forces them to choose, they will have no option but to close, the faith leaders added.

Their letter comes months after Calvary Road Baptist Church, Community Fellowship Church, Community Christian Academy, and Care Net, challenged the Virginia Values Act in a suit filed earlier this year. The case, Calvary Road Baptist Church v. Herring, alleges that the law is a violation of their freedoms to live out their religious convictions.

"Our clients offer spiritual guidance, education, pregnancy support, and athletic opportunities to their communities because of the religious values that motivate them," said Denise Harle, an attorney with the Alliance Defending Freedom who is representing the Vir-



ginia churches and ministries, in a statement shared with The Christian Post.

"But Virginia's new law forces these ministries to abandon their convictions or pay crippling fines. Such government hostility has no place in a free society. Virginia ministries are committed to their faith, and they are asking that the state allow them to live and work according to their beliefs, as other Virginians are permitted to do."

Filed in late September in the Virginia Circuit Court for the county

of Loudoun, the complaint states that the Virginia Values Act violates the Virginia Religious Freedom Restoration Act and a number of provisions of the state constitution, including free exercise, free speech, freedom of association, the establishment clause, and due process rights.

In concert with the state case, ADF attorneys also filed a federal suit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia in Updegrove v. Herring, in defense of wedding photographer Bob Updegrove.

The state law now forbids the Virginia photographer from publicly explaining on his studio's website why he only celebrates wedding ceremonies between a man and a woman. Such communications are now considered legally discriminatory on the basis of sexual orientation.

"Every American, including artists, should be free to peacefully live and work according to their faith without fear of unjust punishment," said ADF Senior Counsel Jonathan Scruggs, in a statement back in September.

Scruggs is the director of the ADF Center for Conscience Initiatives.

"Because of Virginia's new law, photographers like Bob face an impossible choice: violate the law and risk bankruptcy, promote views against their faith, or close down. The government cannot demand that artists create content that violates their deepest convictions."

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a landmark case, Bostock v. Clayton County, that it was unconstitutional to fire someone on the basis of sexual orientation and "transgender status." Doing so is a form of sex discrimination that is prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the high court ruled.

JONI EARECKSON TADA SHARES COVID-19 UPDATE: 'WHAT COVID MEANT FOR EVIL, CHRIST MEANT FOR GOOD'

Just days after testing positive for coronavirus, Joni Eareckson Tada, the founder of a Christian ministry devoted to extending outreach to the disability community, shared an update on her condition, highlighting how "what COVID meant for evil, Christ meant for good."

Tada, the founder of the Joni and Friends ministry, tested positive for coronavirus after experiencing flu-like symptoms, according to a Sunday post on the "Joni and Friends" Facebook page. Tada posted an update to her

personal Facebook page Wednesday, indicating that she was in good spirits.

"What COVID meant for evil, Christ meant for good," she declared in a Wednesday morning Facebook post. "My faith has widened, my hopes are higher, my love for Jesus has skyrocketed, my appreciation for others has deepened, and God's promises are cemented further into my soul. This is how Christ meant COVID for my good."

Tada added that "my lungs are clear and my temperature is down." While she had to go to the emergency room so she could receive an antibody infusion, she took solace in the fact that her trip to the hospital enabled more people to experience the joy of

the Gospel, which her husband, Ken, shared with hospital staff.

"He was constantly giving out Gospel tracts, blessing nurses and aides in the name of Jesus, stopping to pray for them, and speaking words of Spirit-based blessed encouragement," she said. "He even did this at the pharmacy."

"Psalm 84:11 assures us that 'No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly,' and we are being showered with good courage, good endurance, good healing, good confidence in our great Savior, and really good opportunities to tell others about his great Name," she added.



News & More



4 Years of Pro-Life Accomplishments: VP Pence Hosts 'Life Is Winning' Event

By Paul Strand

Vice President Mike Pence and other members of the White House team reflected recently on the many pro-life accomplishments achieved during the Trump administration.

"I believe a society can be judged by how it deals with its most vulnerable: the aged, the infirmed, the disabled, and the unborn," Pence said.

"President Trump said early in our administration, and I quote, 'every person is worth protection, every human life, born and unborn is made in the holy image of Almighty God.' In this administration, it's always been about life," he recalled,

The Vice President mentioned how Trump stopped American dollars from going overseas to pay for promoting abortions in foreign lands and, back here in the United States, helped deal a financial blow to America's number one abortion provider.

"I had the honor of casting the tie-breaking vote in the United States Senate to allow every state in America to defund Planned Parenthood. And President Trump signed it into law," Pence said.

White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany made it personal, talking about holding her newborn daughter as McEnany accepted the job of press secretary.

"I started to cry because I was like 'I'm going to miss my little baby,' and my tears started to fall on her face," McEnany recalled. "And all of a sudden she let out what I swear was her first smile. And it was God's way of saying, 'You go do what you need to do.' And I'll tell you what this president did when he first offered me the job. He said, 'Is your daughter going to be okay?' Because he is a president that supports moms. He's a president that supports life."



McEnany spoke of watching her daughter develop in the womb through ultrasounds.

It further solidified her belief that, as McEnany put it, "Babies are babies at the moment of conception...no excuses. And it is not about a woman's right to choose; it is about a human being's right to live."

In his remarks, the Vice President also hailed the more than 200 pro-life judges and three Supreme Court justices President Trump has put on the bench. A legacy Pence said that will affect generations.

Pence recalled Trump saying as a candidate, "I will protect life and the biggest way you can protect it is through the Supreme Court, and putting people in the Court," he said, and he promised, "I will appoint judges that will be pro-life," and that's just what he's done."

Pence wrapped up his comments to a White House audience that included members of 23 major pro-life organizations, saying, "I believe what we've demonstrated over these past four years is that when men and women who cherish the sanctity of life come together, let their voices be heard...when we rally behind great leaders at every level who will stand without apology for life, we can make extraordinary progress."

"I know what all of you know as well: that He who said 'before I formed you in the womb, I knew you,' that's about life. And we do well in this movement to always remind ourselves that when we make the cause for life our cause, we make His work on this earth our very own," he concluded.

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child



This has been quite a year. When January 1st rolled around, we had no idea what lay ahead of us. But through it all, you remained faithful to your calling to serve with OCC and we are amazed at how the Lord has blessed this year. Our regional verse for this year was Hebrews 11:1, "Faith is being sure of what you hope for and certain of what you cannot see." We have done a lot of walking by faith this year. And in the end we saw shoeboxes come into our drop off sites. That happened because you were willing to see what was unseen for most of the year. You contacted churches and community groups, prayed for pastors and project leaders, contacted media outlets, encouraged each other, made adjustments to our collection methods, and prayed and trusted.

Shoeboxes are still being packed through Build a Shoebox Online, but I wanted to send you an update so that you can celebrate as we approach Christmas. After all, the Christmas Child is what OCC is all about!! Drum roll, please....

Shoeboxes collected in person: 9769
Shoeboxes packed online so far: 1122
Total: 10,891

That is amazing! In this crazy year, who would have thought that many boxes would be collected in your area? Praise the Lord!

I also wanted to take this time to let you know about a transition I am needing to make in my life. My parents are getting older and need me to be closer to them. So, after much prayer and consideration, I know that I need to step away from serving with OCC and move to Florida to take care of my parents. My last day in the office will be December 31st. I am sad to be leaving, but I am so grateful to be able to finish out this year.

It has been a pure joy and honor to serve alongside you. One of my favorite parts of the job is when I get to hang out with our volunteers and see the Lord working through you. What a blessing you are to me.

Keep your eyes on Jesus. Stay strong in the faith. Persevere to the end!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Serena Butler, SAMARITAN'S PURSE



OTHER CHURCHES INVOLVED IN THE COLLECTION:

- Life Restoration Church, Milwaukee
- The Ridge Community Church, Greenfield
- Cornerstone Church, Delafield

Boxes collected from this region were sent to Eswatini (Formerly Swaziland), Georgia, Columbia, Namibia, and "A Hard to Reach Country."



News & More



'We Wanted to Focus On People': Missouri Church Packs Over 40,000 Meals To Help Community

By Michael Gryboski



A congregation in Missouri packed over 40,000 meals for the less fortunate, with more than 500 volunteers taking part in the charitable endeavor.

Hope City Church of Joplin held the meal-packing event on Sunday morning, with participants putting together exactly 40,218 meals during their 9:45 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. worship services.

Those involved in the effort to pack tens of thousands of meals were required to take various precautions due in part to the coronavirus pandemic, according to Lead Pastor Cody Walker.

"We had about 525 individuals pack the meals. Everyone was required to wear a mask, hair net, and gloves," Walker explained to The Christian Post.

"Every volunteer was stationed with a small team of about 10 in a specific spot while they packed the meals."

Walker also told CP that his church held the event because they "wanted to give our people an opportunity this season to impact our local community."

"In a season where it can be easy to give our attention and focus to things, we wanted to focus on people. Instead of having a typical worship gathering, we spent most of our time packing meals that will help feed hungry families," he continued.

"We know everyone needs two things: food and hope. We hope these meals will be able to provide both for people who need to know they are not forgotten or alone. Our people at Hope City know we are all in the same boat and serving others is at the heart of the Gospel."

After the meals were prepared, they were delivered to Watered Gardens Ministries, a charity based in Joplin that Hope City has partnered with for the past few years.

Casie Augustine, kitchen manager at Watered Gardens, told CP that the tens of thousands of meals will be distributed at their Mission Market and their Outreach Center.

"It helps keep our Mission Market stocked with an item we use very often and thus tend to run out of regularly," explained Augustine.

"Through providing quality food, it allows us to have regular shoppers, and build relationships with our clients. This gives us an opportunity to encourage, share hope, and pray with those we get to meet and serve."

Hope City Church was founded in 2014 as a church plant created by Christ's Church of Oronogo, Missouri, with the intention of reaching out to the unchurched.

The Tide® Radio Gospel Ministry Reaches New Believers Through Teachings of Salvation

One Local Mozambican Shares How The Tide Ministry Broadcast Taught Him About Salvation

The Tide® (www.TheTide.org) ministry, which broadcasts the Gospel message in 27 languages in nine countries using local languages they refer to as 'heart languages,' continues its life-altering ministry through radio and broadcasts in Mozambique. Through broadcasts in the local Chichewa language, The Tide ministry has been able to reach Mozambicans with the Gospel message even during COVID-19.

"Everyone around the world has faced isolation throughout the pandemic," said The Tide Director Don Shenk. "The Tide has been blessed to be able to continue its mission of spreading the love of Christ."

In partnership with native missionaries, The Tide ministry has been instrumental in bringing many around the world, including Mozambicans, into a relationship with Jesus Christ and establishing healthy, growing indigenous churches.

Local leaders in Mozambique have initiated a Bible training radio program. This indig-



enous-led initiative was initially started to overcome obstacles like economic stress, hazardous travel conditions, and political unrest that hindered the ongoing training and development of pastors through regional seminars. The pilot program began airing this year and is already receiving a positive response from listeners.

Though this program is geared toward pastors, seekers and new believers also tune into The Tide ministry broadcasts. Adelino said, "I thank because of the preaching about salvation in Ephesians 2:8-9 and John 3:16." This listener had never heard about salvation but realized because of the program

how important it is. He encouraged The Tide ministry to continue its broadcasts so others could learn of the Lord's saving grace.

For nearly 75 years, The Tide ministry has recorded and broadcast gospel programming in nine countries on three continents in 27 heart languages spoken by millions of people in multiple regions, including Albania, Bhutan, India, Kosovo, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Thailand, and Zimbabwe. With more than 7,000 languages spoken worldwide and more than 2,000 people groups yet unreached with the Good News of Jesus, the opportunities are tremendous.



News & More



A Different Perspective on Pain and Suffering

By Richard E. Simmons III

As the year 2020 comes to a close, most people are ready for this year to end and hoping the new year will bring less pain and suffering. But will that be the case?

Modern people seem to struggle with the issue of pain and suffering more than anyone else in history. For those of us in the Western world, we live in such prosperity yet struggle much more with affliction than people in other parts of the world. Author Philip Yancey says in his book *Where is God When It Hurts*:

“Books on the problem of pain divide neatly into two groupings. The older ones, by people like Aquinas, Bunyan, Donne, Luther, Calvin, and Augustine, ungrudgingly accept pain and suffering as God’s usual agents. These authors do not question God’s actions. They merely try to ‘justify the ways of God to man.’ The authors wrote with confidence, as if the sheer force of their reasoning could calm emotional responses to suffering.

Modern books on pain make a sharp contrast. Their authors assume that the amount of evil and suffering in the world cannot be matched with the traditional view of a good and loving God. God is thus bumped from a ‘friend of the court’ position to the box reserved for the defendant. ‘How can you possibly justify yourself, God?’ these angry moderns seem to say. Many of them adjust their notion of God, either by redefining His love or by questioning His power to control evil.

When you read the two categories of books side by side, the change in tone is quite striking. It’s as if we in modern times think we have a corner on the suffering market. Do we forget that Luther and Calvin lived in a world without ether and penicillin, when life expectancy averaged thirty years, and that Bunyan and Donne wrote their greatest works, respectively, in a jail and a plague quarantine room? Ironically, the modern authors—who live in princely comfort, toil in climate-controlled offices, and hoard elixirs in their medicine cabinets—are the ones smoldering with rage.”

Author Tim Keller encounters many religious skeptics in Manhattan where he works, and so many of them are skeptics because of the pain and suffering they see in life. How could a good God, a just God, a loving God allow such misery, pain, and anguish to exist?

However, Keller points out on the flip side that he has seen many people find God and transformation in the midst of pain and suffering. Adversity moves them toward God instead of away from Him. He says troubled times awakens people out of the belief that they are sufficient without God. This often leads people into a serious search of the divine.

C.S. Lewis seemed to have a good grasp on this. In his book *The Problem of Pain*, he says:

“Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasure...but shouts in our pain; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

He goes on to say:

“No doubt pain as God’s megaphone is a terrible instrument; it may lead to final unrepented rebellion. But it gives the only opportunity the bad man can have for amendment. It removes the veil; it plants the flag of truth within the fortress of a rebel soul.”

Political commentator Dinesh D’Souza speaks of Bart Ehrman, an author, scripture scholar, and former Christian who abandoned his faith because of unspeakable suffering he saw out in the world. He said, “I could no longer reconcile the claims of faith with the facts of life.” What is interesting is that Ehrman acknowledges that he personally has never experienced any real suffering in his own life. What troubles him most is the suffering of people in Asia, Africa, and



South America. Yet, ironically this is where Christianity is flourishing in the places where the suffering is the greatest.

Historian Philip Jenkins says that in third world countries, suffering turns people toward God. He says, “Christianity is flourishing wonderfully among the poor and persecuted, while it atrophies among the rich and secure.”

I love the story that a woman named Andrea Dilley tells about her life. She was raised by medical missionaries in Kenya and was exposed to a great deal of suffering and death. As a teenager, she began to question her faith and the goodness of God. When she reached her twenties she completely rejected God and Jesus. What drove her away was her anger at God over the suffering and injustice in the world.

Dilley shares how one evening she got into a philosophical discussion with a young man who, like her, did not believe in God, but also

did not believe in an absolute moral law. She found herself in a real argument with him, saying, “If morality is subjective, you cannot say Hitler was wrong. You can’t condemn evil.” It then powerfully struck her that she was arguing with him from a theistic perspective. She said:

“When people ask me, what drove me out the doors of the church and then what brought me back, my answer to both questions is the same. I left the church in part because I was mad at God about human suffering and injustice. And I came back to church because of that same struggle. I realized that I couldn’t even talk about justice without standing inside of a theistic framework. In a naturalistic worldview, a parentless orphan in the slums of Nairobi can only be explained in terms of survival of the fittest. We’re all just animals slumming it in a godless world, fighting for space and resources. The idea of justice doesn’t really mean anything. To talk about justice, you have to talk about objective morality, and to talk about objective morality, you have to talk about God.”

She logically concluded that without God and an absolute moral law, justice is a meaningless word.

What I like about Andrea Dilley is her integrity. She rejected a belief in God because of the pain and suffering that she saw out in the world. She did not realize how her new belief in atheism contradicted her everyday life experience. Her belief in the value of human life and justice came very natural to her. She recognized it to be true. She did not see the contradiction in her life until she got into a discussion with a young man who did not live with that same contradiction. He was an atheist and recognized in his worldview, morality is subjective and therefore you cannot say Hitler’s actions were evil.

To Dilley’s credit, she recognized this massive contradiction and was not willing to live with it. She knew in her heart that human beings are of great value and need to be treated with dignity and respect. So, Andrea Dilley changed her mind and embraced the Christian worldview because it was consistent with the real world in which she lives.

So how should we view pain and suffering in our life? CP Voices Contributor Anthony Costello recently wrote that “...suffering is not random, and while undesired it is yet purposeful. Within the context of God’s ultimate plans, suffering is by design. Tears exist within the broader context of God’s providence, which is the entire redemption of the world. This is our starting place as Jesus people, lest suffering appear pointless and begin to overwhelm our souls.”

Who are you clinging to in the storms of life? Where are you taking your pain? I encourage you to bring your suffering to Jesus, and let Him rescue you.

Books & More

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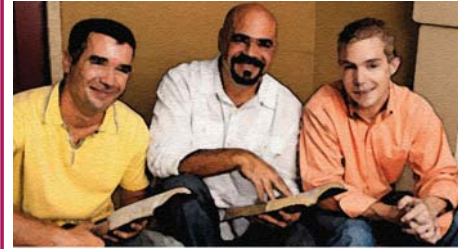
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Bob Conklin - 414-342-1550

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Tuesdays - 10201 W. Bradley Rd, Milwaukee
Oscar Johnson - 414-350-3514

7 am CBMC Bible Study
Thursdays- Meyers Restaurant, 4260 S. 76th St, Milwaukee
John Rieger - 327-6544

6:45 am CBMC Bible Study
Fridays - Chuck's Place, 406 N. Main St, Thiensville
Howard Honett - 262-618-2753

8 am Faithwalkers
Saturdays - Hillpoint Church, 2500 W. Brown Deer Rd, Milwaukee
Stan Lind - 414-305-8383

Christian Book Reviews

Faith Is For Weak People by Ray Comfort



Responding to the Top 20 Objections to the Gospel

Apologist and evangelist Ray Comfort has spent his entire career sharing the faith and answering people's objections to it. He wants you to be equipped to do the same. In this practical book, he shows you how to answer twenty objections to Christianity, including questions such as

What physical proof is there that God even exists?

Why does a "loving" God threaten eternal torture for not believing in him?

If there's an all-powerful God, why is the earth so out of control?

Don't go into the battle unarmed. Let Ray Comfort train you to be ready with an answer—not so you can be right, but so you can help bring people from darkness into light. **Baker Books \$14.99**

We Will Not Be Silenced by Erwin W. Lutzer



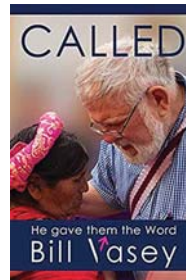
"Erwin Lutzer has given us a challenging, inspirational, and provocative work." - Dr. Tony Evans

Each day, you watch America turn further from Christian values and the core principles of liberty. It's frustrating to feel you can't assert biblical truth without facing condemnation, and frightening to witness outrage and victimhood replace respect and reason. Amidst this dissent, how can you not only stay rooted in your faith but continue to publicly testify to Jesus?

In *We Will Not Be Silenced*, Dr. Erwin W. Lutzer prepares you to live out your convictions against a growing tide of hostility. Gain a better understanding of nonbelievers' legitimate hurts and concerns regarding issues like racism, sexism, and poverty—and identify the toxic responses secular culture disguises as solutions. In the process, you'll see how you can show compassion and gentleness to those outside of the faith without affirming their beliefs.

We Will Not Be Silenced will ready you to move beyond fear and boldly accept the challenge of representing Christ to a watching world that needs Him now more than ever before. **Harvest House Publishers \$17.99**

CALLED: He Gave Them The Word by Bill Vasey



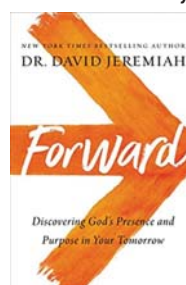
God called Bill to translate the Bible for a people group living in the mountains of Guatemala, who had no written language. He has spent 40+ years on the mission field. With courageous transparency, he tells his story addressing the topic of pain and suffering. You will be left in awe of God's unwavering faithfulness, unconditional love, and miraculous provision.

Using thought provoking questions, Bill helps you discover God's plan for you.

Born in Wisconsin, Bill Vasey lives in Cuba City with his wife Joyce, where he pastors 3 small churches. Bill returns to his beloved Guatemala whenever possible.

Self Published \$15.00

FORWARD: Discovering God's Presence and Purpose in Your Tomorrow by Dr. David Jeremiah



Your best days are not behind you! Now more than ever God is ready to use you, and your greatest moment could be only a step away. It doesn't matter who you are or what your age or your current situation may be - God will strengthen you, fulfill you, and partner with you to see great things accomplished in your lifetime.

In *Forward*, prominent author and Bible teacher Dr. David Jeremiah invites you to follow the apostle Paul in "forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead" (Phil. 3:13).

No matter what season of life you find yourself in, your brightest day can be just around the corner. Take hold of it! Let go of the past and get out of your rut. Choose to run *Forward* toward everything God has planned for the next phase of our life. **W Publishing Group \$26.99**

**Books reviewed here are available
at ProBuColls Books and Gifts at
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If God be our God, He will give us peace in trouble. When there is a storm without, He will make peace within. The world can create trouble in peace, but God can create peace in trouble. ~ Thomas Watson



News & More

SERVE GOD BY SERVING YOUR NEIGHBOR!


Mana Ministries Pastor Wilfredo and Millie Mendez served free Thanksgiving meals to the neighborhood at 24th & State. Many happy neighbors!



CONGRATULATIONS TO JIM SCHNEIDER OF VCY AMERICA!




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News & More



Operation Christmas Child Photographs



Joanie and her sister Judy. Great volunteers for this year's OCC!



Ron and Janet Eagon - big givers after all these years!



Deb from the Pallas with Jimmy.



Children love to pack!



Three boxes more!!!



Pencil packs for the OCC warehouse.



Jim and his son Joseph Lagina packed thousands of shoeboxes into cartons this year.



Carmen Martens



With her daughter, Ann Fooks (age 98) of Oak Creek Assembly dropping off boxes.



Linda Oberbrunner packs a carton.



Volunteers Joseph Lagina and Dick Peterson. Picture by Joann Harden.



Ridge Community Church Drop Off Coordinator Kelly Eger.



Volunteer Dave Oblak at ProBuColls.



Cornerstone Church Delafield Drop Off Coordinator Sue Maleski, Dick Peterson and Kevin Klandrud load the semi.



Boxes in from East Troy Bible Church.



Wimmer Brothers makes a huge OCC impact again this year.



Sarah, Rev. Harry Eisenmenger and the working crew from Life Restoration Church collection center.



Joining OCC's Serena Butler are volunteers Bob Conklin, Howard Honett, and Kevin Klandrud in Elk Grove Village.

News & More

Clark House Photographs



Our Roofer: Happy Homegoing Larry Richter! What a life!



Refugio "Lucky" Longoria at the Clark House after a challenging furnace repair.



Dickenschrauf Plumbing joins in repairs being done at the Clark House.



Ben Mohns of Mohns Construction together with Anthony of ADB prepare concrete forms.



Roman Claas helps deliver several of 80 Christmas gift bags to men in the PBC Housing ministry.



Christmas Day lunch at the Clark House.

continued from Brandon Church, page 3

enemy as master puppeteers. It also felt like they used mind control not only with us but with others in the home group, pitting members against each other.

I (Kevin) knew from my failed attempt in asking Sharon to marry me in 2016, that she must have felt anger and despair during the whole ordeal. I personally felt like Joseph from the Old Testament, like I was being thrown in the dungeon for a crime I didn't commit. Who could vouch that Sharon was supposed to be my wife? There was no one in my sphere of influence at that time to confirm what I was hearing from God, that Sharon was to be my future wife. It felt very painful and extremely lonely. Many times I would cry out of the prison of my own heart, but my cries only fell on deaf ears. I felt betrayed by my leaders. In our 10 years of attendance, we felt these two leaders in the church didn't have our best interest at heart when it came to us getting married, even though at the same time they were providing us with great spiritual and leadership skills.

One vital lesson that Sharon and I learned from this experience, is to always seek and ask God for the gift of discernment, especially with people and situations in the church. We need to see if what the Word of God says confirms what the Holy Spirit is speaking to our hearts. We also need to see if the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Truth) and the Word of God truly matches up with what our leaders are telling us. Sharon and I have both become hyper aware of control, deception, and manipulation. We are learning to discern what leaders tell us by asking Jesus, the Father, and Holy Spirit what they think of a given situation. When leaders fail to pray about every situation, they can fall prey to the enemy's plans. For example, what concerned Sharon and me about our previous



From Pancake Breakfast- September 13, 2020- Celebration of Grand Opening of Brandon House Of Worship

pastors, was that they didn't pray at all to see if we were meant to be together as a married couple. They had many opportunities in multiple meetings during our last 4 years at the church, when the topic of dating and marriage came up between Sharon and me.

We are still in the midst of piecing all the pieces of the puzzle together of what transpired during the last 4 years of Sharon and I wanting to marry each other, and all the chaos that ensued in between. We know that Sharon and I are not completely innocent. We played our part in submitting to the control and manipulation of leaders who we felt had drifted from the truth of God's Word. Sharon and I also forgive our leaders and bless them. We don't hold any offense or unforgiveness towards them. We know that with traumatic experiences, it takes time for hearts to heal, as Sharon and I peel back

each layer of the onion. We are now confident Jesus is healing both of our hearts in different areas, where our hearts suffered emotional damage and betrayal.

BUT GOD.... this story has such a happy ending with God's plan being victorious in both of our lives. The story ends with us getting rescued by two dear Christian friends that God intentionally sent to deliver and rescue us out of a church that had gone sideways. We received prayers of deliverance and private individual counseling from this dear couple. Shortly afterwards we left the church and blessed our leaders before we left. Here is the real miracle of God putting two people together for HIS purposes! After Sharon and I left the church, we had many confirmations that God indeed had called us to be a Kingdom couple who have a destiny to fulfill together. I asked Sharon to marry me on October 19th, 2019, and we were married on December 21st, 2019. After 6 months of marriage, Sharon and I felt called to move to Wisconsin. Sharon and I have now had the privilege of launching the Brandon House Of Worship in Brandon, Wisconsin, on August 28, 2020.

God moves quickly when His plans triumph over man's plans. By the time you read this article, we will have celebrated our 1st year wedding anniversary on December 21st, 2020. Thank you Jesus, and thank you for reading about our experience. To continue watching our journey unfold, please visit our website at www.brandanworship.com,

www.facebook.com/brandanworship/, or feel free to call us at 920-332-1015 to connect with us. Thank you.



News & More



Parents, Your High School Senior Should Feel Urgency to Share Gospel

By Greg Stier

Just a few days ago I posted a tweet that got a bunch of online traction. Here's the tweet...

If your believing teens graduate from high school not having Gospel URGENCY (motivation to evangelize), Gospel FLUENCY (the ability to articulate the Gospel clearly) and a Gospel STRATEGY (a plan to reach others) then you've not fully done your job as a parent or youth pastor. — Greg Stier (@gregstier)



I was surprised at the number of comments, retweets and likes it got. To me, the tweet didn't seem that profound. But, as I think about why it may have struck such a nerve, I'm convinced it's because failing to motivate and equip our teens in evangelism is a HUGE MISS in the typical discipleship strategy.

Evangelism puts teenagers in a situation where they are forced to rely on God. It also causes them to "count the cost" of being a follower of Jesus (Luke 14:25-35) because to share the Gospel, especially with a friend, could mean losing that friendship. And that very risk is a huge counting of the cost of what it means to be a follower of Christ in a post-Christian culture.

With this as a backdrop, let me give you a brief overview of what I mean by Gospel Urgency, Fluency and Strategy. Along the way, I'll point to a few helpful resources for both parents and youth leaders alike to improve in these three areas.

1. GOSPEL URGENCY

"...snatch others from the fire and save them." Jude 23

There is a hell that unbelievers are headed to and going through apart from Jesus. Teenagers need to be reminded of this. We, as believers, are the redemptive hands of God, to rescue them from the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:11-15.)

I'll never forget a teenage girl, approaching me after I preached about the reality of hell at a Dare 2 Share event. She asked me, "Why has my youth pastor never talked to me about hell?" With tears in her eyes she explained to me that she had no clue that her friends were going to suffer God's wrath forever in the flames of hell someday unless they heard and believed the Good News of Jesus.

Although I can't answer why her youth leader never told her I can ask you a similar question: Have you talked to your teenagers about the reality of hell, the hope of heaven and the power of the Gospel to rescue their friends from the eternal consequences of sin?

But it's not just the hell they are headed to that teenagers need rescuing from, it's also the "hell" they may be going through right now apart from a relationship with Christ! Teen suicide, anxiety, drug use and depression among teenagers is skyrocketing in this pandemic.

They need to be snatched, not just from the flames of hell someday, but from pain, addiction and hopelessness today.

In Matthew 9:35 we read about how Jesus saw the crowds around him, "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." May we learn to help our teenagers see their lost peers through the eyes of Jesus!

Start with Gospel Urgency.

2. GOSPEL FLUENCY

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile." Romans 1:16

So what is this Gospel, that both we and our teenagers, should not be ashamed of? It is a simple message of hope. Somehow, this message is infused with the power of God to rescue the lost from the power and penalty of sin.

I don't know how God infused a stick (Moses' staff) with enough divine power to rescue the Israelites by parting the Red Sea, but he did. I don't know how God infused a simple message, the Gospel, with enough divine power to rescue the lost from sin, but he did.

Our teenagers must learn how to be fluent in the most powerful message in the history of humanity...the Gospel.

Gospel Fluency is the ability to articulate the whole story of the Gospel in a clear, cogent, and compelling way.

3. GOSPEL STRATEGY

"As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures." Acts 17:2

Paul had a strategy for reaching his fellow Jews and God-fearing Gentiles for Christ. He went into the Jewish synagogues and used the Old Testament to share the Gospel.

Your teenagers need a strategy too. That strategy must start in prayer, getting your teenagers to pray for their lost friends, classmates, teammates and family members by name. Then they must care for them by loving them, listening to them and serving them like Jesus. And, finally, they must share the message of Jesus...out loud with words.

At Dare 2 Share we highly recommend the Life in 6 Words app as a great way for teenagers to get started. It has a place where they can input the names of their friends into a "Cause Circle" where they can be prompted to pray for them on a regular basis.

The centerpiece of the app is a simple way for teens to share the Gospel with their friends by swiping through the G.O.S.P.E.L. sharing screens on the app and explaining each point as they swipe through it. As I often tell teenagers, "If you can swipe and read you can share the Gospel using the Life in 6 Words app." It's free on your App Store by the way!

Perhaps you have another strategy for teenagers sharing their faith. Great! Use it! The methodology doesn't matter nearly as much as the clarity of the message.

Teenagers need to have a burning Gospel Urgency, basic Gospel Fluency and a practical Gospel Strategy if they are going to be ready to make a difference now and after they graduate from high school.

TARRY ONE HOUR ANNOUNCEMENT

Tarry One Hour will be holding our monthly meeting for Evangelical Christians who have a desire to minister to the lost and plead for the lives of their babies at the Milwaukee abortion facilities. (Prov.. 31:8,9)

Date: Monday, Jan. 18th, from 7 - 8:30 pm
Location: Wauwatosa Lions Club,
7336 St. James St., Wauwatosa

We also will be holding our annual Roe v. Wade prayer and fasting assembly on Friday, January 22nd from 11:30 am til 1:00 pm. There will be

worship, prayer, and scripture reading. The location will be outside Planned Parenthood at 435 S. Water Street, Milwaukee. (If there is inclement weather, we will have an indoor location.)

For further information contact: A.B. Herron at (262) 672-3685 or Anne (414)921-8126



News & More



The Church Is Plan 'A.' There Is No Plan 'B.'

By Jason Yates



The righteous, Jesus explains in Matthew 25:35-36, exemplify their faith through outward acts: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me" (ESV).

This is one of the reasons the church has historically taken a leading role in fighting poverty, illiteracy, hunger, illness and injustice and providing a way for new beginnings for those in need.

Somewhere along the way, though, the American church started to retreat from these responsibilities, allowing the federal government to occupy the space once owned almost exclusively by local churches and faith-based charitable organizations. Today the government has its hand in nearly every sector of society — housing assistance, food stamps, foster care, medical coverage, education — and its reach only seems to grow.

I don't know exactly when the government's influence began to expand and the church's started to diminish, but the tragedy of the church relinquishing its God-given responsibilities to the government is that the state fails to offer the quality and personal attention that people of faith, living out their faith, can provide. People in crisis need a shoulder to cry on, a word of encouragement, someone to pray with and a reminder that there's always hope. They long for human relationships that affirm their God-given dignity. The Covid-19 pandemic and the riots and protests over racial injustice in our nation have shown us these longings in a real, raw way.

When Jesus gave instructions to look after "the least" among us and the oppressed, he wasn't just talking to the mayor, the attorney general, the housing and urban development secretary or even the president. He was talking to the church — to you and to me.

I think of the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 in the Gospels. When his disciples said, "Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food," Jesus responded, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." (Matthew 14:15-16 NIV)

The church of Jesus Christ is making a huge mistake when it neglects to serve those in need and those who are hurting.

If we hope to see unity, respect, civility and biblical values restored in our nation in 2021, we must stay actively engaged. We must call upon God. Now is the time to align our hearts with his.

While we pray for better policies and for elected officials who honor Scripture, we don't have to wait for someone else to fix what is broken. We need to recommit ourselves to the tasks that have been assigned to us: to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31).

Apathy has never been an option for Christians. The church is plan A. There is no plan B.



In the Kitchen With Diane

Diane Fechter, Author



ASIAN RICE BOWL

1 # ground beef
1/2 c. chopped onion
cooked rice
3 green onions, chopped
Sauce:
1/4 c. low sodium soy sauce
1 Tbsp sesame oil
1/4 c. brown sugar
3 cloves garlic, grated
1 tsp grated fresh ginger
1/4 tsp red pepper flakes

Combine beef and onions in pan and cook until meat is browned and cooked through. Drain. While beef is cooking, combine sauce ingredients in a small bowl. Add sauce to cooked ground beef and stir. Simmer over medium heat for 5 minutes. Serve over hot cooked rice. Top with green onions.

For more recipes and tips see www.recipesforafulfilledlife.blogspot.com




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PARENTS, CELEBRATE YOUR CHILDREN'S GIFTS

The Coalition for Christian Outreach: 'Discovery and Affirmation Are the Best Approaches for Your Child'

Coalition for Christian Outreach (CCO) recognizes that parents do their job best (and enjoy it most) when they consider themselves explorers, seeking to discover and affirm the unique person God designed each child to be. When a parent treats a child's unique design as a wonder, that child grows in both emotional and spiritual health.

Dan Dupee, former Chairman of the Board for CCO, explains, "If God, the Creator, is the author of all strengths, we need to be discovering and affirming those strengths in the context of our homes, beginning when our children are very young. And we need to be giving God the credit."

Even when their children are at the youngest ages, parents can discover and affirm

natural talents. According to Dupee, "This is co-shaping with God. Appreciation for the expression of a child's interests and gifts helps build confidence and a better relationship between parent and child. Talking about God-given gifts throughout childhood prepares a child to begin discerning his or her vocational direction.

"It might be difficult to talk like this to your child at first, especially if your parents didn't offer much by way of verbal affirmation," says Dupee. "Noticing what others do well and affirming them for it is like using a muscle. It may take a while to get conditioned if you have not been using that muscle much. No matter how awkward you feel at first, do not back off or give up on the habit of affirming your kid's strengths. Make yourself accountable with another mom or dad. We meet too many kids on college campuses who arrive starved for the affirmation and approval of their parents."

As kids approach their teen years, strengths-based approaches are available to help them

gain greater clarity as to how God has designed them. Such approaches can help both parent and child to be on the lookout for particular expressions of how God uniquely made each of them.

"This knowledge not only serves as affirmation and a guide to the child, it helps the parent avoid the trap of trying to mold the child into his or her image," says Dupee. "Knowing our child's gifts helps us rediscover the wonder we felt at his or her birth."

The college and university campus is the most strategic mission field in the world, with only 2% of students being reached with the Gospel. CCO partners with local church congregations to help students feel a sense of belonging. A community is formed between the CCO staff and students, who are invited into the lives of local congregations. Through this community of fellowship, CCO is able to minister to the students in a life-changing way.



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PROBUCOLLS AND BARGAINS 'N MORE



ProBuColls Bookstore continues to carry Bibles, books, gifts, and church supplies at good values. Bargains 'n More, thrift store at the east end of the building carries free clothing, as well as household items and odds & ends for purchase. Vivienne Karol has recently joined Mary Claire Jones as staff. Hours are 10 AM to 4 PM Monday through Saturday.

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News & More



THE SCHOLAR'S CORNER: As a Man Thinks (Part 1)



By Basil Jackson

**Psychiatrist,
Child Psychiatrist,
Psychoanalyst, Attorney,
AND STUDENT AND
LOVER OF THE WORD**

THINKING

Perhaps one of the most incisive affirmations in the Sacred Oracles is "as a man thinketh so is he". We all have some awareness of the validity and accuracy of this statement because we all have experienced it to some degree at some time or other.

When we saturate our minds and thinking with thoughts of a particular genre we find that our personalities eventually take on that tone, interests and desires. A sad example is what is now almost commonplace, namely, the growth of pornography into a multi-dollar commercial enterprise. Pornography is the portrayal of subject matter with the aim of increasing sexual arousal. The principal reason for the massive industry is the people think about the activities portrayed.

Another example, this time positive, is the therapeutic changes which occur when an individual maintains association/fellowship with others of similar thought. This could be a religious or semi-therapeutic group such as Alcoholics Anonymous. When an individual remains surrounded by those of similar cognition the experience eventually will lead to transformation. As might be expected the younger the participant in the nefarious addiction to pornography the more destructive will the effects be. Experience has shown that this type of abuse and perversion is gaining significant ascendancy in our culture and is the etiological basis for the dramatic increase in the epidemic of child abuse in our society. As believers it is important to consider what the Bible says about 'thinking'. Paul in Romans 12:2 tells us that renewing of the mind is a prerequisite to understanding the will of God.

Consider the various type of thinking which mandate our personal choices every day.

NEGATIVE THINKING: PURE AND SIMPLE REJECTION OF THE REALITY OF OR THE IDEA OF GOD.

Keep in mind that an atheist cannot exist unless he or she already knows everything which can be known. On the other hand an agnostic simply and honestly admits that he or she does not know.

"And even as they not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do [and think] those things which are not convenient. Being filled with all unrighteousness, [anything which

Is not conformable to what is right], wickedness [evil nature, delightful in evil, malevolence], covetousness, [desire to have more, advantage, plans of fraud and extortion], maliciousness [meanness, evil in nature, full of envy], murder [taking a human life, fetal or adult without permission of a living human] and deceit [intentional dishonesty]".

In ancient times prevailing immorality was directly related to the character of the pagan gods which were worshipped. The younger gods who ruled from Olympus were criminals and usurpers who had murdered the older gods and were full of sensuality and injustice. Using the mechanism of identification, it is not surprising that men found it easy to emulate and imitate the behavioral example of the gods.

RENEWED THINKING: BACKSLIDING TO FORWARD SLIDING

How can I renew my mind? It must continually be made new, pointed in a different direction and readjusted. Our minds have been corrupted by sin and are narcissistic, self-serving and selfish. My cognitive activities must be changed by the continuous filling of the Holy Spirit, God's power, and by continuous saturation of my thinking in the Divine Word. My constant aspiration must be to remain in contact with the mind of God.

"When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your life will produce evil results, sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure." NLT

Therefore Paul makes an appeal to every Christian to demonstrate complete devotion to God. This plea/entreaty:

- a. is based on the "mercies" of God;
- b. calls for a life of sacrificial "service" or "worship";
- c. involves daily living worshipping God or contemplation on His worth;
- d. is accomplished by "transformed" individuals who are molded by the Gospel;
- e. is designed to demonstrate to the world the will of God.

CONTROLLED THINKING

"For the arms of our warfare [are] not fleshly, but powerful according to God to the overthrow of strongholds; overthrowing reasonings and everything that lifts itself up against the knowledge of God, and leading captive every thought into the obedience of the Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5.

Paul now gives an ultimatum to his critics as he confronts the criticisms and ridicule of his opponents who had accused him of being cowardly in face to face confrontations. However, when courage is required Paul is prepared with weapons not of the human kind but those using God's divine energy and power.

Using a bold figure Paul here likens his and our spiritual life to pulling down the defensive forts of an enemy and capturing all his military, including cognitive enemies, and subjugating them in captivity. In his ongoing warfare the most powerful weapons are not material but spiritual.

TRANSFORMATIONAL THINKING: MY DAILY DETERMINATION.

"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Psalm 119:59

"For the rest, brethren, whatsoever things [are] true, whatsoever things [are] noble, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] amiable, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue and if any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8.

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he". Proverbs 23:7. (JND).

There is good reason to concentrate about good things, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he". Proverbs 23:7. (AV)

FOCUSED THINKING

"For consider well Him who endured so great contradiction from sinners against Himself, that ye be not weary, fainting in your minds". Hebrews 12:3

At times we all tend to be scattered brained and show spiritual Attention Deficit Symptoms. Our aim in thinking should be to experience a concentrated focused worshipful consideration of the Master, based on focused thinking. This is a therapeutic experience and requires hard work!

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ~ Ecclesiastes 3:11



United States Takes Action Against Violators of Religious Freedom

Save the Persecuted Christians Applauds the Designation of Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern

In a recent statement, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo said, “Religious freedom is an undisputable right, and the foundation upon which our free American society prospers. Today, the United States – a nation founded by those fleeing religious persecution, as the recent Commission on Unalienable Rights report noted – has once again taken action to defend those who wish to exercise this essential freedom.”

Pompeo stated that the United States is designating Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, Nigeria, the DPRK, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Countries of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, as amended, for engaging in or tolerating “systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom.”

“The U.S. Department of State has rightly designated these countries as some of the world’s worst violators of religious freedom and human rights,” said Dede Laugesen, executive director of Save the Persecuted Christians (STPC), a leading international human rights advocacy group that works on behalf of hundreds of millions of persecuted Christians worldwide. “Save the Persecuted Christians is especially gratified that Nigeria has finally moved up the scale from last year’s Special Watch List designation to the report’s highest level—a Country of Particular Concern—this year. STPC and our coalition partners have labored long and hard to expose religious-based violence in Nigeria, described as genocide by Greg Stanton of Genocide Watch and among the most horrific and pervasive in the world today.

“Our coalition will continue to press for India to join the list of bad actors next year. Religious minorities in India are daily harmed for their faith and persecution perpetrated by RSS Hindutva militants and encouraged by the closely related BJP party of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Considerations for trade and regional geopolitical tensions serve to muddy the waters on holding India accountable for appalling religious freedom violations.”

According to Pompeo’s statement, the United States is also placing the Comoros, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Russia on a Special Watch List for governments that have engaged in or tolerated “severe violations of religious freedom.”

Additionally, we are designating al-Shabaab, al-Qa’ida, Boko Haram, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, the Houthis, ISIS, ISIS-Greater Sahara, ISIS-West Africa, Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin, and the Taliban as Entities of Particular Concern under the Frank R. Wolf International

Religious Freedom Act of 2016. Said Pompeo, “We have not renewed the prior Entity of Particular Concern designations for al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Khorasan, due to the total loss of territory formerly controlled by these terrorist organizations. While these two groups no longer meet the statutory criteria for designation, we will not rest until we have fully eliminated the threat of religious freedom abuses by any violent extremist and terrorist groups.”

Added Laugesen, “Obviously, more must be done to curb the spread of Sharia-supremacist ideology through force and terror. We are grateful these groups have been so designated. The rapid spread of ISIS-linked groups across the Sahel, as a consequence of the administration’s victory against al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Khorasan in the Middle East, makes it imperative these terrorists are pursued and defeated in every land. They must have no safe refuge and no impunity.”

The statement also included positive developments: Sudan and Uzbekistan have been removed from the Special Watch List based on significant, concrete progress undertaken by their respective governments over the past year. Their courageous reforms of their laws and practices stand as models for other nations to follow.

Save the Persecuted Christians is working to raise awareness about the plight of over 300 million Christians facing extreme violence and injustice in countries around the world. The organization—an informal, national coalition—began in February 2018 and reorganized as a formal charitable organization in December 2018.

The mission of Save the Persecuted Christians is to save lives and save souls by disseminating actionable information about the magnitude of the persecution taking place globally and by mobilizing concerned Americans for the purpose of disincentivizing further attacks on those who follow Jesus.

With so much of the world’s Christian population being imprisoned and/or harassed for their beliefs, such as Christians in Nigeria, the need has never been greater for the sort of grassroots campaign STPC’s SaveUs Movement is working to foster. Its efforts are modeled after a miraculously successful one that helped free another population suffering from heavy persecution—Soviet Jews—by penalizing those in the Kremlin responsible for such repression. Through this movement, Save the Persecuted Christians endeavors to provide American policymakers with the popular support they need to effect real change worldwide and alleviate systemically the suffering being experienced by so many of those following Christ.

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE BY DAVID OBLAK: A TRIBUTE TO PASTOR D. STUART BRISCOE

As God would have it, I had the rare and highly valuable privilege of being a member of Elmbrook Church from the mid-1980s through the late 1990s.

Now, I have been a committed believer in the Lord Jesus since 1976. I have attended and visited many churches in my 44 years as a believer and have made it a point to read through the Bible cover to cover more than 20 times.

As the Scripture tells me I endeavor every day to make the most of every opportunity because I believe the time is short and the days are becoming increasingly evil.

One of my greatest earthly longings is to find a local fellowship of believers that have the same dominant, sweet spirit I experienced in



my many years at Elmbrook Church. Every day I benefit from the powerful teaching I received under Stuart Briscoe. As a couple, Stuart and Jill helped lead the way in growing Elmbrook into an assembly that was rare.

I look back with fond memories when I think of the God honoring and exalting events like Bethlehem Marketplace, Majesty and the Milwaukee Symphony performing the Hallelujah chorus. The Christmas Eve services at Elmbrook were the highlight of the Christmas season for me and my family.

One of the principles that was both taught and caught was to stay in God’s Word. Stuart often said, “Don’t lay your head on the pillow at night if you haven’t had it in the book during the day.” Another principle was “Always study for yourself what the sermon is about.” Another of my favorite phrases that Stuart uses is, “When you take the text out of context you are left with a con.”

I appreciate Stuart being so available, taking time to reply to my emails and giving me his response like that of a strong loving father and big brother.

I salute you Stuart. You are a true man of God. By your life, teaching and example, you have set the bar, the standard of excellence high and you continue to make me want to “Go for it.”

Thank you.

With love and great respect, David Oblak



News Shorts



OVER 40 TOP LEADERS AND ATHLETES TEAM UP WITH COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL AND FILL THE STADIUM TO HELP STRUGGLING CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

Fill The Stadium has a clear goal over the next 12 months: to provide aid to 70,000 children in Compassion International's programs who missed out on relief this year due to gaps of support created by the COVID-19 crisis. The target of 70,000 is the average capacity of pro-football stadiums in America. Fill The Stadium leaders hope that fans who normally would have spent money on professional sports games this year—but couldn't—choose instead to support kids and their families.

Already in leadership roles for Fill The Stadium efforts are such standout professional athletes as Nick Foles, professional football MVP quarterback; Alyssa Naeher of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team; Carson Palmer, former professional quarterback; Chris Davis, first baseman of the Baltimore Orioles; Devin and Jason McCourty, defensive backs of New England; Nate Solder of the New York Giants; Brock Huard, former professional quarterback; Nick Ahmed of the Arizona Diamondbacks; Jacob Slavin of the Carolina Hurricanes and many others.



THE SUPREME COURT AND YOUR FREEDOMS

Last week, SCOTUS gave temporary victories to a Colorado church and New Jersey religious leaders that challenged their respective state coronavirus restrictions on the number of people allowed at prayer services, vacating lower court rulings and calling for the cases to be reconsidered after the court shot down similar prohibitions in New York.

In response to these rulings, iVoterGuide president Debbie Wuthnow stated, "Our founding fathers recognized that God is the source of our freedoms, and therefore religion and morality are cornerstones of a free society. Because a person's beliefs dictate his actions, religion is a key component to securing a stable society. In contrast to our founders, many elected officials today only pay lip service to religion, while consigning it to a lower tier of protection. The Court's opinion affirms why freedom of religion is the first right listed in the First Amendment."

"The restrictions at issue here, by effectively barring many from attending religious services, strike at the very heart of the First Amendment's guarantee of religious liberty," the court's ruling in that case said.

YOUTH FOR CHRIST ALASKA MOTTO FOR PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS: REPLACE NOT CANCEL

Youth For Christ (YFC, www.yfc.net) is continuing its work during the challenging times of COVID-19, using novel methods such as outdoor gatherings, virtual meetups, and much more. YFC has kept its commitment to juvenile offenders and teens living in under-resourced families in order to truly make an impact in their lives.

Youth For Christ Alaska, located in Anchorage, has not allowed the troubling times of the pandemic to stall their mission of bringing the message of Jesus to local teens. YFC Alaska is committed to the students and has a "replace not cancel" policy when it comes to their programs and scheduled events. Throughout the year, YFC Alaska has hosted special events to celebrate their youth, and to strengthen their devotion to God.

Most notably of these special events was the Class of 2020 drive-in baccalaureate service that YFC Alaska held for graduates in the Palmer, AK area. To make this special event happen, YFC Alaska partnered with other local ministries: the Crossing Church, Alliance Christian Fellowship church, Community Covenant Church and Young Life. Held outdoors, graduates had the opportunity to gather, pray and celebrate – and even walk across a stage to the sound of applause and cars honking – all at a safe social distance and donning masks. It was a beautiful way to bless this community of teens.

In Alaska, we have been relying on Christ to provide flexibility while not becoming discouraged as we replace and not cancel our evangelistic efforts during Covid-19," said Autumn Person and Chris Gatch, YFC Alaska program directors. "Without community support, local businesses, other youth ministries and volunteers, YFC Alaska would not have been able to replace ministry efforts to continue to reach lost 11–19-year-olds."

In addition to the drive-in baccalaureate service, YFC Alaska has participated in virtual concerts, Giving Tuesday, Zoom clubs, and more.

MINISTRIES DIRECTORY

MILWAUKEE (AREA 1)

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Christian Faith Fellowship Church East

724 S. Layton Blvd.
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Wed Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
www.cffceast.org

Cornerstone Church Milwau- kee

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414.395.7777 or
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9741 W Beloit Rd
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414.321.0730

Eastbrook Church

5385 N Green Bay Ave
Milwaukee 53209
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Sunday Worship 8, 9:30, 11AM
414.228.5220

Grace Christian Fellowship

9900 W Capitol Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53222
Sunday Worship 9AM, 10:45AM
Wed. Youth Programs 7PM
414.464.9220

Greater St. Lukes

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Milwaukee, WI 53210
11 am Sunday Worship
9 am Sunday School
414-264-8040

Holy Cathedral COGIC

2677 N 40th Street
Milwaukee 53210
Sunday School 10AM
Sunday Worship 8:30, 11AM, 6:45PM
414.447.1966

Hope Lutheran Church

1115 N 35th Street
Milwaukee 53208
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
Sunday Bible Study 9:15AM
414.442.0471

Kingdom of Heaven Christian Min.

9235 W Capitol Dr Lower Level
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414.393.1500

Lakeshore Church

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414-273-2850
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Friday- Bible Study 4 pm

New Beginnings Seed Faith M.B.C.

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Pastor Annie Smith
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Newport Missionary Baptist Church

2237 N. 11th St.
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Sunday School: 9:30am
Service: 11am
Wed Nite Bible Study: 7pm
414-265-5881
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4949 West Villard Avenue
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Pastor Ernie Oby
Sunday Service: 10:30am
Wednesday Service: 6:30pm
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Ministries

SOUTH SUBURBS (AREA 2)

Cedar Hills Church

6911 S 20th St
Oak Creek 53154
Sunday School 9:30AM
Worship Service 10:30AM
414.761.1880

Cornerstone Bible Church

11321 St. Martins Rd.
Franklin, WI 53132
Sunday Bible Study 9:30AM
Children's/Jr Church 10:30AM
414.232.3158 or
www.cdrfranklinwi.com

Faith Christian Fellowship

A Family Church
11010 W. St. Martins Road
Franklin 53132
Sunday Worship 10:30AM &
6PM
Wednesday Bible Study 7PM
414.425.5880

Harvest Community Church

6612 S Howell Ave
Oak Creek 53154
Worship Service 9AM, 10:45AM

Jubilee Christian Family Church

3639 W Ryan Road
Franklin 53132
Sunday Worship 10AM
Wednesday Bible Study 7PM
Mon-Fri AM 1340 12:45PM
414.423.0700 or Jubilee-Christian.org

Milwaukee Victory Church

2110 W National Ave
Milwaukee 53204
Sunday Worship 10AM
414.645.7496

Life Restoration Church

2422 W National Ave
Milwaukee 53204
Sunday Worship 10AM
414.383.2280

Oak Creek Assembly of God

7311 S 13th Street
Oak Creek 53154
Sunday School 9:30AM
Worship Service 8, 10:30AM
Sunday Evening 7PM

St John's Lutheran Church

4850 S Lake Dr
Cudahy 53110
Call for times 414.481.0520

Southbrook Church

11010 W. St. Martin's Road
Franklin 53132
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
414.427.1929

WEST SUBURBS (AREA 3)

Beloit Road Baptist Church

8337 W Beloit Rd
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Brookfield 53005
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262.784.1125

Calvary Bible Church (see ad)

1459 S 81st Street
West Allis 53214
Call for times 414.778.2253

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Brookfield 53045
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262.786.7051

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West Allis, WI 53219
414.216.FPWC (3792)
Worship Sundays 10AM
Wednesday 7PM
www.fpwcenter.org

First Baptist Church-New Berlin

3800 S Casper Dr
New Berlin 53151
Sunday School 9:15AM
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
Wednesday Bible Study 7PM
262.782.7775 or
www.fbnewberlin.org

Honey Creek Church

8200 W. Bluemound Rd.
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
(414) 475-1234
Sunday Worship - 10:30 am
Honeycreekchurch.org

Lifeline Church

3285 N Calhoun Road
Brookfield, WI 53005
262-783-2900
www.vilonline.org

New Beginnings Fellowship Intl.

8650 W National Ave
West Allis 53219
Sunday Prayer 8:45AM
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
Sunday Praise 6PM
Wednesday 7PM
414.543.0603
NewBeginningsInternational.net

Faith Christian Church

4800 S. Calhoun Rd,
New Berlin
Worship Services
Sundays 11:15AM & 6:00PM
Wednesday 6:30PM
414-423-5241

A Mighty River Ministries

5933 W National Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214
Sunday Prayer 4:30PM
Sunday Worship 5PM
Friday Bible Study 6:30PM
414-306-5672

New Song Church

2323 S 109th St.
West Allis, WI 53227
Sunday 10AM

New Vintage Church

6626 W. Beloit Rd.
West Allis, WI 53219
Sunday 10AM
Wednesday 7PM
414.400.8320
www.newvintagewi.org

Northtown Church

A multi-ethnic church
7000 N 107th St
Milwaukee, WI 53224
Sunday Worship and Bible
classes 10 am
414-353-5588
www.northtownchurch.org

Pipeline to Jesus Church

13400 W Beloit Rd
New Berlin 53151
Sunday Worship 10AM
Tuesday 7PM
414.525.0000 PipelineToJesus.org

Poplar Creek Church

17770 W Cleveland Ave
New Berlin 53146
Sunday Worship 9:30 Traditional,
9:00 and 10:45 Contemporary
Wednesday 6:45PM
262.782.1777
PoplarCreekChurch.org

Reformation Hope Church

915 Adelmans Ave., Lower Level
Brookfield, WI 53045
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
Family Bible Hour Sunday
1:00PM
www.reformationhopechurchministries.com

RightWay Church Ministries

POBox242232
Milwaukee, WI 53225
Meeting at Comfort Suites
10831 ParkPlace
Milwaukee, WI 53224
Sunday School 9am
Worship Service 10am
414-369-3359
rightwaychurchministries@yahoo.com

Risen Savior Bible Church

8556 W National Ave
West Allis 53227
Sunday Worship 9AM
414-617-0347 or
RisenSaviorBibleChurch.org

Saviour Assembly of God

201 N 121st St,
Wauwatosa 53226
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
Thursday Eve Bible Studies 6PM
414.259.1228

Showers of Blessing

8544 W National Ave STE #28
West Allis, WI 53227
Sunday School 10:00AM
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
414.502.7584

Wauwatosa Bible Chapel

2200 N 67th Street
Wauwatosa 53213
Sunday Lord's Supper 9AM
Family Bible Hour 10:30AM
Wednesday 7PM
414.771.1030 or
WauwatosaBibleChapel.org

WeatherStone Church

1500 S. West Lane
New Berlin 53146
Sundays 9am & 10:45am
weatherstonechurch.org

REGIONAL (AREA 4)

Berean Family Worship Center, Inc.

ON CHURCH IN TWO CITIES
N112 W17655 Mequon Rd
Germantown, WI 53022
Sunday 11 am
Tuesday 6:30 pm prayer, 7 pm service

Blessed Hope BIC Church

4949 State Highway 38
Franksville, WI 53126
Sunday at 9:00 am
(262) 822-HOPE (4673)
http://www.blessedhopebic.org

Christian Life Church of Port Washington

403 W. Foster Street
Port Washington, WI
Sundays starting March 12th at
2:30 pm
262-643-4602
clcfport.com

Cornerstone Church Lake Country

354 N. Oakwood Ave
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
Sunday Celebration 10am
Wed. Catalyst Youth Group 7pm
262-569-0001
cornerstonelakecountyrn.com

Covenant Connection Fellowship Church

2841 Emslie Drive
Waukesha, WI 53188
Worship: Sunday at 10am &
Wednesday at 7pm
www.covenant-connection.org

Delavan Christian Reformed Church

850 Oak Street
Sunday Worship 9:30AM 6PM
262.728.6801

Eagles Wings Nazarene Fellowship

609 Sandy Acre Drive
West Bend, WI 53090
262-334-7124
www.wbnaz.com
Sunday School 9:30 am
Morning Worship 10:45 am
Monday Ladies Bible Study 10:30 am
Wednesday Service 6:30 pm for adults and children

Faith Christian Fellowship

1200 Racine St.
Racine 53403
262.637-6220 or RacineFCF.org

Faithlife Victory International Church

Sunday worship 10:00am
(Temporarily meeting at the
Kenosha Woman's Club)
6028 8th Avenue & 60th Street
(use west entrance) Kenosha WI
53143 www.faithlifevictory.org

Foundational Biblical Baptist Church

6224 22nd Ave.
Kenosha, WI 53143
Sunday School 10am
Morning Service 11am
Main Service 6pm
262-654-4665 www.fbckkenosha.org

Family Chapel

N25 W23050 Paul Road
Pewaukee 53072
Sunday Worship 10AM
FamilyChapel.org

Grace Bible Chapel

3917 59th Street
Kenosha 53144
Sunday Lord's Supper 9AM
Family Bible Hour & Sunday
School 10:30AM
Wednesday Prayer 7PM
262.654.9631 GBC-Kenosha.org

Hillside Community Church

593 W30580 County Rd NN
Mukwonago 53149
Sunday Worship 9AM
Call for Bible Studies
262.363.8025 or Hillsidecmuk.org

Journey Church Burlington

740 Center St.
Burlington, WI 53105
262-767-3649
Sun. 9 & 10:45
Wed. 6:30

Journey Church Kenosha

1000 75th St
Kenosha, WI 53142
262-694-3300
Sat. 6pm
Sun. 9 & 10:45
Wed. 6:30

Lake Country Bible Church

N45W32481 Watertown Plank Rd
Nashotah, WI 53058
Sunday Bible Study 9AM
Worship 10:15AM
262-369-8777 LakeCountryBible.org

Northbrook Church

4014 Hwy 167 West
Richfield 53076
Saturday 4:30PM
Sunday Worship 8AM, 9:30AM,
11AM
262.628.3142

Oconomowoc Faith Bible Fellowship

25 McDowell Court
Oconomowoc 53066
Sunday Lord's Supper 10AM
Family Bible Hour 11AM
262.567.7234

Open Door Church

3420 County Road LL
Port Washington, WI 53074
Sat Worship Service 5:30pm
Sun Worship Services 8am & 10:45
Sun School/Adult Bible 9:30am
262-284-0711
www.ODBport.org

Orchard Hill Assembly of God

N9590 County Rd ES
Mukwonago WI 53149
Sunday Worship, 9:30am
Wednesday, Family Night &
Youth Ministry, 6:30pm
(262) 363-5443
http://www.orchardhillag.com

Praise Fellowship Church

W195 S9912 Racine Avenue
Muskego, WI 53150
Sunday Worship Service: 9:30
a.m.
Wednesday Service: 6:30 p.m.
www.praise-fellowship.org

Summit Harvest Church

888 Thackerway Trail #209
Oconomowoc 53066
Sunday Worship 10AM
262.560.0765
SummitHarvestChurch.org

Terrace Shores Ev Free Church

W3278 County Road K
Markesan 53946
Sunday Worship 7:45, 9:15,
10:45AM
920.398.2734

Transformational Ministry

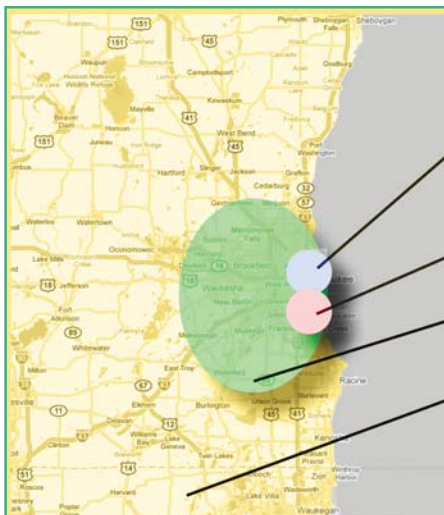
1123 Center St.
Racine, WI 53403
Sundays Worship: 2pm
224.656.1803

Watertown Community Church

106 E Madison St
Watertown 53094
Sunday Worship 10AM
Call for other meetings/studies
920.206.0599 or
WatertownCommunityChurch.org

Zion Christian Assembly

Zion Chapel 319 Cedar Street
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085
Sunday Lord's Supper 9:30AM
Bible Ministry 11:00AM &
6:30PM
Wednesday 6:30PM
920.458.4137
920-889-7064
believers@ZionChristianAssembly.org



Color-coded Church Locations in Directory

- Area 1 - Metropolitan Milwaukee
- Area 2 - Southern Milwaukee County
- Area 3 - Western Suburbs
- Area 4 - Region Beyond Greater Milwaukee



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News & More



America, We've Been Warned

American Pastors Network President Sam Rohrer Points to 6 Old Testament 'Woes' for Israel That Align with America Today

In a day where false alarms, exaggerated warnings and intentional scare tactics are used by a deceptive culture, it's sometimes difficult to separate true warnings from deceptive false alarms.

So, asks the American Pastors Network (APN), how can Christians differentiate between the two?

Sam Rohrer, president of APN, the largest national network dedicated to equipping pastors to be a voice for truth in the public square, and host of APN's "Stand in the Gap" radio and television programming, says that Old Testament woes and warnings directed toward Israel have timely significance for America today.

"In the Bible," Rohrer says, "the word 'woe' or warning is used nearly 100 times—98 to be exact," he said. "The Old Testament prophets used it. Christ used it many times Himself. The word occurs in the Book of Revelation in final judgment. In nearly every case where a woe is given, the warning of judgment is certain, and God's punishment imminent."

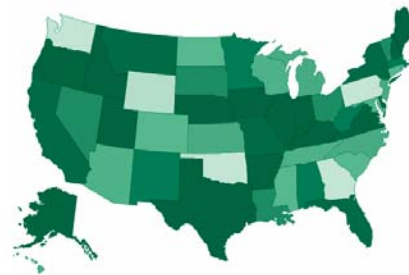
As an example, Rohrer said, Noah warned the people for 100 years of a coming flood. The people heard, considered, rejected then died, illustrating that God gives His people warnings that they might live. Then in Isaiah Chapter 5, God's prophet pronounced six specific warnings of imminent judgment against identified national sins.

"These woes were sobering, the sins specific and God's judgment certain," Rohrer said. "The message was to Israel, but the application is for America. When God warns, it's real, and we'd better sit up and take notice."

WOE #1: The sin of materialism. After God blessed the nation with security, wealth, houses and productive land, the people turned their back on Him. The result? God withheld His blessings, removed His protection, allowed rebellion within and threats of attack from without. Rohrer asks: Does this sound anything like America today?

WOE #2: The sin of hedonism. Consumed with an intoxicating addiction to alcohol, drugs, entertainment and partying, the nation willfully rejected God and the consequences of evil choices, as depicted in Isaiah 5:11.

WOE #3: The horrible practice of literally promoting sin and evil. As told in Isaiah 5:18, without regard for God or moral truth, the nation



dreamed of evil, sinned without remorse and even belittled God by profaning His name and His truth.

WOE #4: The sin of moral relativism. Even more dangerous is when a nation redefines moral truth into moral evil, as outlined in Isaiah 5:20. This is accomplished by discarding the Ten Commandments as dangerous, killing the unborn through abortion, redefining marriage between two men or two women and much more. "Have these redefinitions been made in America?" Rohrer asks. "Yes—all have!"

WOE #5: The sin of arrogance and corruption. God hates pride because it embodies the sin of satanic defiance against God, Rohrer said, pointing to Isaiah 5:21. Through pride, mankind pronounces himself to be God, which results in the rejection of God and eternal life.

WOE #6: The sin of corrupted leadership. The prophet warned: Woe unto the political and military leaders who through addiction become bribed and incapable of sound judgment.

"What is the result of continually ignoring God's true warnings?" Rohrer said. "Isaiah 5:24 says that God's love will be turned to anger, His blessings will turn to judgment, murder and death of the people will increase, enemy nations will threaten to attack—suddenly and overwhelmingly—and all trusted defenses will fail. It happened to Israel. It will happen to America if we don't soon change our ways. It's past time to look to God, repent and beg His mercy."

"The similarities of the six woes in Isaiah Chapter 5 and how they relate to America today are astounding," Rohrer concluded. "What will we do to heed God's warnings? Will we claim ignorance and say we were never warned? While God is full of mercy, His justice will prevail. When God warns, we'd better listen because time eventually runs out. God has been warning America, but America doesn't seem to care."

Reflection, Contemplation, & Appreciation

By Linda Oberbrunner, Author of "Mercy Extended"

The wisdom of God and the marvelous detailed word pictures of His creation are intentionally revealed in the latter chapters of Job where I have purposefully camped out for the past two weeks. Reading these verses, and then re-reading them again raised even more questions in me. Reflection was followed by contemplation. In addition, a new appreciation grew for the unseen works and divine order God effortlessly masterminds throughout creation all around each of us daily. Yet, He never tweets about His feats nor brags of His accomplishments or conquests.

In Job 37 & 38, various verses specifically describe the crystals of moisture encountered at this time of year particularly in the colder climate of the Midwest. In Job 37:5 & 6 we discover, "God thunders wondrously with His voice; He does great things we cannot comprehend. For to the snow He says, 'Fall on the earth...'" and in Job 37:10. "By

the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen fast."

While writing this article, these verses became a reality overnight in our rural community. The forecast called for possible frozen fog. What could that be? The result was both rime ice and hoar frost. Wow! It was as if God artistically stayed awake all night creating a wintry sight beyond words. The rime ice formed intricate patterns of ice-needle designs while the hoar frost settled on every surface as a frozen dew-coating. It was God's natural pure and untainted sparkly frosting of the ground, plants, shrubs, trees, power lines, and bird feeders. Spectacular to behold and admire and then capture some photos (only if you were dressed warm enough).

God's WORD is living and relevant and contains treasures like these but also information, warnings, and foretelling of things to

come. Simply stated, there are three main focuses for the Bible 1) knowledge — about the nature of God, 2) equipping — for all spiritual battles small and great, and 3) encouragement — to remain steadfast as believers in these challenging times when trials and testings will increase.

We are reminded what was written years ago is even more pertinent today, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

In these first months of 2021, acquaint yourself with a very Good Book that is definitely worth your time and attention. The Bible, God's written WORD, will impact, influence, ignite, improve, instruct, and inspire you today for all your tomorrows.