

# Is a Low-Fat Diet Making You Fat?

If you're cutting back on all fats in your diet, you may be doing yourself more harm than good. That's the upshot of the latest nutritional research that concludes some fats are not only good for us, but they can actually help shed pounds.

In fact, avoiding such fats—in favor of low-fat, high-carb alternatives—can promote weight gain.

Confused? Join the club. For decades, health experts have advised choosing low-fat and fat-free foods—such as margarine, skim milk and unsaturated cooking oils—to lose weight and boost overall health. But that line of one-size-fits-all health advice is being challenged by new studies showing fat is not the great dietary evil we've been led to believe it is.

Brett Osborn, M.D., a member of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and author of the new book *Get Serious, A Neurosurgeon's Guide to Optimal Health and Fitness*, explains that not all fats are created equal. Some—such as those found in fish, olive oil, nuts, flax seed, and even certain cuts of meat—are essential for good health. And the real culprits in the nation's obesity epidemic are sugary, high-carb, refined processed foods, many of which carry reduced-fat labels.

"Eating fat does not make you fat," Dr. Osborn tells *Newsmax Health*. "Carbohydrates, on the other hand, drive insulin levels up. Insulin is an inflammatory hormone. And while we do need it to repair ourselves and to build muscle, it has very, very sinister effects and deleterious effects on our health."

In this video, Dr. Osborn, a New York University-trained board-certified neurosurgeon with a secondary certification in anti-aging and regenerative medicine, explains that there are different types of fat.

Some—such as trans fats found in baked goods, pastries and fried foods—cause inflammation in the body, which has been tied to diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer and other health problems. But others—such as omega-3 fatty acids found in fish and other staples of the Mediterranean diet—have anti-inflammatory properties and promote health and even weight loss.

“Do not be afraid to have fat in your diet, you just need to have good fat in your diet,” he notes. “So the olive oil, the omega-3s, the fish—have as much as you like and [avoid] fried foods.”

Dr. Osborne also notes that cell membranes are made of omega-3s. As a result, consuming more foods packed with omega-3s contributes to healthy bodily functions, while eating bad fats can cause cell membranes to malfunction, as well as spur inflammation in the body.

“We obviously want to error on the side of ingesting or eating as much anti-inflammatory fat—the good fat—relative to the bad fat,” he says. “So we want to squelch inflammation.”

Unfortunately, many Americans have bought into the false notion that low-fat foods are always healthier, even though they often contain lots of empty calories, sugar, white processed flour and simple carbohydrates—all of which contribute to weight gain and obesity-related ailments that cost the nation nearly \$150 billion a year in health-care costs.

“The anti-inflammatory fats, which are things like omega-3 fatty acids, which we can get from fish, supplements, walnuts, flax [and olive oil] ... are the things that are lacking in our diet and have been replaced by the inflammatory fats” along with sugary, high-carb processed foods, Dr. Osborn notes.

He adds that residents of nations whose diets are typically high in healthy fats and low in unhealthy fats—such as the

Japanese and those in Mediterranean countries—tend to have longer life spans than Americans, according to the World Health Organization.

“The Japanese have a five-year longevity, if you will, advantage over the Americans. Why? Because they eat a lot of raw food, they keep their simple carbohydrate loads down [and] they’re good-fat-to-bad-fat ratio is better than ours,” he says. “It’s all about the balance. You want to keep the anti-inflammatory fats high and the bad fats ... low.

“And again if you have a lot of pro-inflammatory chemicals in your body, you’re going to have accelerated aging and accelerated disease incidence.”

Here are a few foods containing healthy fats:

**Fish:** Polyunsaturated fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids found in fish such as salmon and fish-oil supplements, have been shown in many studies to lower the risk for heart disease, boost brain function, ease arthritis symptoms, and help prevent dementia.

**Nuts:** Natural fatty acids in tree nuts are known to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Researchers from the University of Toronto found that incorporating about two ounces of tree nuts—almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, macadamias and walnuts—into the diet of people with diabetes helped boost their heart health.

**Vegetable oils:** Olive oil and other vegetable-based fats—such as canola and palm oils—are loaded with alpha-linolenic acid, a type of omega-3. Switching to a diet low in simple sugars and high in healthy fatty oils can help people with Type 2 diabetes control their blood sugar and lower their heart-disease risks, research has shown. “Every night before I go to bed ... I have two tablespoons of olive oil in addition to tons and tons of omega-3 capsules that I take every day because I’m

not a fish eater,” Dr. Osborn says. He adds: “I usually tell my patients, my friends who ask me, avoid all non-vegetable carbohydrates because that’s going to keep your natural insulin levels low and that’s going to hopefully confer longevity and reduced incidence of age-related diseases.”

**Animal products:** Moderate amounts of saturated fat in butter, milk, cheese and even lean cuts of beef, poultry and pork don’t clog arteries and may even be beneficial in moderate amounts. Scientists once thought saturated fat raised levels of dangerous cholesterol in the blood. But the latest research shows there are two different kinds of cholesterol particles—small and dense (the kind linked to heart disease) and large and fluffy (which don’t pose a risk). Saturated fat in dairy foods and animal products raises the level of larger particles that are not harmful, but refined carbohydrates boost levels of smaller, more dangerous cholesterol particles.

Dr. Osborn adds that losing weight must also involve exercise and other healthy habits, as well as a nutritious diet.

“Nutrition and training, particularly strength training—they’re both parts of the mix,” he says, recommending about 30 minutes a day at a minimum. He also advises keeping your stress levels down, making sure you get sufficient sleep, and making sure your hormone levels are balanced.

“And one other thing: Also understand that your doctor is not going to save you,” he adds. “If you are not taking full responsibility for your health, or getting serious about your health, nobody’s going to do it for you.”

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# Richard Dawkins Exposes the Immorality of His Atheism

Giving further ammunition to those who say that atheists cannot fully value all human life, Richard Dawkins has now stated that it would be “immoral” not to abort a baby with Down syndrome. Are you surprised?

It was just last week that the British scientist exposed the irrationality of his atheism when he claimed that nice, nonviolent practitioners of religion served as enablers for religious terrorism.

He first noted that, “It’s very important that we should not demonise ordinary, law-abiding, very decent Muslims, which of course is the vast majority in this country” (speaking of the U.K.).

But that was only the prelude to the punchline: “[However] there is a sense in which the moderate, nice religious people—nice Christians, nice Muslims—make the world safe for extremists.”

How so? He opined that, “the moderates are so nice we all are brought up with the idea that there’s something good about religion faith. That there’s something good about bringing children up to have a faith.”

And, since faith can’t be defended rationally (according to Dawkins), then, “Once you teach people that that’s a legitimate reason for believing something then you, as it were, give a licence to the extremists who say ‘my belief is that I’m supposed to be a suicide bomber or I’m supposed to blow up buildings—it’s my faith and you can’t question that.’”

This is complete bunk, not to mention utterly irrational.

To give one example out of millions, let me tell you the story of my Indian friend P. Yesupadam.

Raised an untouchable, he rejected his father's Christian faith and his nation's Hindu faith.

Almost dying of malnutrition as a boy, he learned to hate the caste system and, at the age of 11, he became a Naxalite, a Maoist communist. Soon he was a committed atheist (in keeping with his Naxalite philosophy), an alcoholic, and a violent man, engaging in acts of terror against the rich.

Then, in his mid-20's, he had a vision of Jesus and has since given himself to serve the poor and needy of India (and other nations) for the last 40 years--building orphanages, schools (from nursery school to junior college and nursing schools), feeding programs, homes for the elderly, training centers to teach trades to the handicapped, also bringing the message of the gospel to the tribal regions.

Of the many orphans and needy children his ministry has fed, clothed and educated over the last 25 years, some are now doctors in America, some nurses and school teachers in India, and others pastors and Christian leaders.

The accomplishments are truly staggering to the point that, when he turned 60 a couple of years ago, government leaders came to the celebration to commend him for his humanitarian work.

Following Prof. Dawkins' "logic," we would have to say that "nice Christians" like Yesupadam encourage people to strap on a suicide belt and blow themselves up, together with their innocent victims.

To repeat: This is complete bunk and a demonstration of the irrationality of Dawkins' atheism.

Now, to add insult to injury, Dawkins has exposed the immorality of his atheism, stating that if a woman knew she was carrying a baby with Down syndrome, she should “abort it and try again. It would be immoral to bring it into the world if you have the choice.”

This is not just bunk. It is utterly rancid.

Aside from his claims that the baby would feel no pain in being aborted (he’s quite sure about that?), he is doing the very thing that theists claim atheism can lead to, namely, devaluing of human life based on a survival-of-the-fittest mentality.

Really now, if you can determine that some people are not worthy to live before they are even born, surely it’s not that big a jump to determine that some people are not worthy to live after they have been born.

Perhaps the very elderly and the hopelessly infirm, especially if their lives could be terminated “mercifully”? Perhaps those who are incorrigibly violent? Perhaps those who are seriously mentally handicapped?

Why not? Or, more specifically, based on what criteria do we judge who is worthy to enter this world and who is worthy to live?

Writing on , Dustin Siggins points out that, “Although it is widely believed that people with Down syndrome are doomed to a life of suffering, in one large survey 99 percent of respondents with Down syndrome said they were ‘happy.’ At the same time, 99 percent percent of parents said they loved their child with Down syndrome, and 97 percent said they were proud of them.” (The siblings of Down syndrome children expressed similar, overwhelmingly positive sentiments.)

It is becoming increasingly clear that Dawkins is something of an embarrassment, even to other atheists (although he is still

revered by many). The only question that remains is this: Are his irrational and immoral positions unique to him, or are they the logical outcome of his Darwinian evolutionism?

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## Should Churches Openly Discuss Marital Sex?

Bragging of sexual conquests, suggestive jokes and innuendo, and sexual one-upmanship all can be a part of demonstrating one's manhood—especially for young men eager to exert their masculinity.

But how does masculinity manifest itself among young men who have pledged sexual abstinence before marriage? How do they handle sexual temptation, and what sorts of challenges crop up once they're married?

“Sexual purity and pledging abstinence are most commonly thought of as feminine, something girls and young women promise before marriage,” said Sarah Diefendorf, a sociology graduate student at the University of Washington. “But I wanted to look at this from the men's point of view.”

Studying a group of 15 young evangelical Christian men, Diefendorf learned that support groups and open discussions

about sex with trusted companions were key in helping the men during their pre-marital years. But once married, they faced trouble.

Instructed by the church to keep problems “in the dark” after marriage, the men reported feeling that they couldn’t discuss sex with their friends and didn’t know how to comfortably broach the subject with their wives. The newly wedded men also expressed surprise that sexual temptations continued to taunt them.

Diefendorf presented her findings Sunday at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in San Francisco.

At the start of her study, in 2008, the men were in their late teens and early 20s and part of a support group for young men who had pledged to remain virgins until marriage. The group was affiliated with a nondenominational evangelical megachurch in the southwestern United States that had about 14,000 attendees at Sunday services.

Over the course of a year, Diefendorf attended their meetings and conducted one-on-one interviews and focus-group meetings with the men.

The men talked about sex as both “sacred”—a gift from God meant for the marriage bed—and “beastly” if it occurs outside of marriage.

“To maintain this gift from God, they believe that they must control sex before marriage,” Diefendorf said. The support group is one way for the young men to explore their sexual urges, she said. Many of them opened up to struggles with pornography and masturbation, which some considered as “destructive” and a threat to their commitment to abstinence.

“People think that evangelical support groups are just about suppressing men’s natural urges, but really they are caring,

supportive and safe space that allow men to have a remarkably open and frank discussion about sexual desire,” Diefendorf said.

Besides the support group, the men sought out accountability partners to help control their behavior. One of them, for instance, had an accountability partner who would text-message him each night, “Are you behaving?” Some of them used software to track which websites they visited and shared the results with the partner.

A few years later, in 2011 and 2012, Diefendorf followed up with the men. Fourteen of them were married, and she wanted to find out how the men’s views of sex and masculinity had changed since marriage.

During a focus-group meeting in one of their homes, it soon became clear that as taboo as sexual activity had been before marriage, it was now taboo to talk about sex, because it was seen as disrespecting their wives.

“After marriage, the church culture assumes that couples become each other’s support, regardless of the issue at hand,” Diefendorf said. “There’s little support in figuring out sexuality in married life, and these men don’t know how to talk to their wives about it.”

As one of the men put it: “For me to come home from work and say, ‘Hey, did you like it last time?’ I mean that would be—that would be such a weird question for me to ask.”

The newlyweds also revealed they continue to think of sex in terms of control, and how the so-called beastly elements of sex—temptations by pornography and of extramarital affairs—do not disappear with the transition to married life.

“Before you get married, the biggest thing you struggle with, usually, is premarital sex,” one of the men told Diefendorf. “But once you are married, you can’t be tempted by that

anymore, so you get attacked by completely different things. ...Essentially Satan has to find a new angle to attack on.”

They wished for more guidance from the church, and someone in the group said he’d cheer if his pastor decided to talk more about sex.

“While the whole point of these support groups is to honor sex in marriage, these men have gotten so used to thinking about sex as something negative that they bring those concerns with them to the marriage bed,” Deifendorf said. “Once they’re married, these men struggle to manage those concerns in the absence of the supportive community they once benefited from.”

She hopes that her study leads to more positive discussions of sex and how it is healthy, especially within the context of abstinence-only sex education.

“There’s an obsession with virginity in this country,” Diefendorf said. “And we forget to have informative, successful conversations on sex.”

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## 10 Things Your Husband Hates

My husband and I spent many years in a miserable state. I’m ashamed to tell you that this list is a result of some of the ways I was guilty. Several, actually. I’d love for you to learn from the mistakes that I made over the years.

**He hates when you throw him under the bus in public.** When you point out his faults, criticize, or correct him, you make him feel like an idiot in front of others—and that’s demeaning. Don’t embarrass him in any way (especially in front of your children). Would you want him to do that to you?

**He hates when you remind him of his past failures.** It's something that was settled long ago (or maybe just last week), and you just can't seem to let it go. We've all failed. Let go of things that have already been worked through and settled. If there are unresolved issues that were never dealt with biblically, don't bring them up as a bully club, but take steps to graciously resolve them and move on!

**He hates when you unload on him as soon as he walks in the door.** One thing I can't stress to wives enough—HUG your man when he comes in from work! Greet him with a kiss and some love. Give him an encouraging word, and hold off on letting him know what a tough time you've had. He has had a long day. (I know you have as well, but I'm not talking to him. I'm talking to you.) He's been hit with challenges that you haven't faced, and perhaps he fought battles you'll never know about. Be what makes it all worth coming home to.

**He hates when you expect him to be just like your girlfriend.** He's probably not a crafter, a scrapbooker, or a fan of spending five hours at the mall. An afternoon in the nail salon is probably not his idea of fun. He's not going to communicate with you like your best friend or want to know the complete story you want to tell. Down to the Very. Last. Detail. Appreciate him for being a man, and leave the girl stuff to your girl friends.

**He hates when you expect him to read your mind.** Just tell him. Don't play those mind games where you're thinking: If he really loved me, he'd know that I want him to . . . (fill in the blank). I wouldn't have to tell him! Your husband will be so grateful if you'll ditch the mind-reading game and just have some honest and gracious communication.

**He hates when you treat him like your child.** Men know that they don't think like we do. They know that it can be challenging to measure up to our expectations or desires. When they forget to close the lid on the toilet, it's not because

they want to irritate us. When they take the long route because they forgot the right exit, it's not because they want to burn that extra gas. When we talk to our husbands in the same tone we would use with our children, it is disrespectful. And that's a sin.

**He hates when you unload the big guns at 11 p.m.** Don't wait until bedtime to bring up a topic of discussion that has the potential to put the two of you on opposite side of an all out battle until near dawn. If you need to have a conversation that has the potential for major conflict or emotion, do it early in the evening (or maybe save it for a morning when he's home). Respect his need to get some rest.

**He hates when you compare him to that "perfect guy" at church.** Your husband may not seem as "spiritual," may not treat you the same way you see that "perfect guy" treat his wife, he may not sound as knowledgeable, or seem as interested in the sermon. But your husband probably has some worthy qualities that you may be missing because you're so focused on what he's "not." Quit comparing him to other men—what good can come from you doing that? Why not ask God to open your eyes to see things that you've not yet appreciated about him?

**He hates when you give him the silent treatment.** Whenever you use the silent treatment to manipulate him, it harms both of you. The silent treatment is a hostile punishment tool. Don't make things more difficult by clamming up or stuffing your anger. If you're hurt or angry, first go to God and ask Him to search your heart to see if the anger is righteous or if there is some offense that needs to be discussed. Talk it out with your husband. Be honest and humble in your communication and remember—he's not your enemy!

**He hates when you use sex as a weapon.** The gift of sexual intimacy is to be an expression of unselfish love. It's a physical demonstration of spiritual unity. Don't withhold

yourself to punish your husband, and don't use your intimacy as a bribing technique. Honor your marriage bed as sacred, and love your husband well.

Have I sounded harsh today? I hope not, I just know how easy it is to slip into a disrespectful attitude that morphs into ugly treatment of those we love most. I'm challenging all of us today to set aside any of these things that are a common, but destructive, tendency in marriage. And they are not God-glorifying.

Do you see yourself anywhere in this list? If you do, I hope you'll spend some time seeking God. Ask Him to show you specific things you need to ask your husband to forgive you for, and share that with him.

*Taken from Kimberly Wagner's blog post 10 Things Your Husband Hates. . Used with permission.*

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## 9 Reasons to Say No to Soy

The information I posted on soy on my Facebook page in March 2013 created a big response. Many people have posted the problems they've experienced after consuming soy products. Take a look on my Facebook page.

A small amount of fermented soy is OK as long as it's organic. Avoid conventional soy; it is the largest GMO (genetically modified) crop in the United States. Here are a few more points to consider regarding soy. It should make you think twice before ordering a soy-milk latte:

1. Soy phytoestrogens disrupt endocrine function and have the potential to cause infertility and promote breast cancer in

adult women. These phytoestrogens also cause hypothyroidism and possibly thyroid cancer.

2. In infants, consumption of soy formula has been linked to autoimmune thyroid disease.

3. Vitamin B12 in soy is not absorbed. Consumption of soy actually increases the body's requirement for B12.

4. Soy foods increase the body's requirement for vitamin D. Toxic synthetic vitamin D2 is added to soy milk.

5. Fragile proteins are damaged during the high temperature processing used to make soy protein isolate and textured vegetable protein—often used in packaged foods and even the so-called “healthy” protein bars.

6. Processing of soy protein results in the formation of toxic lysinoalanine and highly carcinogenic nitrosamines.

7. Free glutamic acid or MSG, a potent neurotoxin, is formed during soy-food processing, and additional amounts are sometimes added to mask soy's unpleasant taste.

8. High levels of aluminum, toxic to the nervous system and kidneys, have been found in some soy foods.

9. Soy foods such as soy cheese and ice cream, soy milk, and tofu are so processed that few pesticide residues remain; however, several very toxic pesticides are used to grow soybeans, and 90 percent of soybeans grown in the U.S. are GMO (genetically modified). In the only human-feeding study published on genetically modified foods, seven volunteers ate Roundup-ready soybeans. These soybeans have herbicide-resistant genes inserted into them in order to survive being sprayed with otherwise deadly doses of Roundup herbicide. In three of the seven volunteers, the gene inserted into the soy transferred into the DNA of their intestinal bacteria, and continued to function long after they stopped eating the GM

soy.

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For the original article, visit .

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## **Warning: #IceBucketChallenge Could Kill Babies**

Everyone has seen video after video (on social media) of friends, family and colleagues taking the #IceBucketChallenge for the ALS Association research foundation.

The goal of which has been stated to find a cure for those suffering with neurological breakdown through diseases such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

For any who have witnessed such struggle in those we love, the sincere and desperate hope for a cure seems like a big payoff for a bit of ice-cold water being dumped on the head!

The only problem here is that—unknowingly—this very challenge is contributing to the ongoing destruction of human life—intentionally.

The ALS association is actively funding embryonic stem-cell

research and admitting that they likely will continue to do so in the future. The funding of embryonic stem-cell research means that children are created and at their earliest stages of life they are destroyed so that the stem cells (from usually the base of the brain) can be harvested to perform tests.

Embryonic stem-cell research has proven 0 percent effective in combating diseases like ALS and other neurological degenerative ailments.

Adult stem cells, which can be harvested from living humans without their being killed, have, on the other hand, proven vastly effective in making progress toward slowing down and in some cases seeing remission or reversal of degenerative defects.

ALSA states that it views the funding of both types of research as important toward finding cures. They continue to say this while recognizing the moral conflict of taking innocent human life.

This for me isn't good enough. There should be no forced taking of any innocent person's life just so that another may live longer.

That is in essence philosophical cannibalism, and moral persons should have no part in it.

Others have pointed out other criticisms of the #IceBucketChallenge. Be it that millions around the world die from a lack of clean water, while millions of Americans have now poured out tens of millions of gallons of it. Or the idea that ALS takes approximately 1.6 lives per 100,000 deaths, while hunger among orphans is taking the life of a child every 90 seconds with roughly 60 million orphans globally.

But those criticisms seem benign compared to the reality that millions of dollars raised through this specific challenge may

be used to create a child only to kill it for what amounts to fruitless experimentation.

I wish to see the suffering of those with neurological degeneration ended—be it ALS, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, dementia and others less known. And I would feel fine supporting the truly effective research using adult stem cells.

But the myth that the undefined cells of the tiniest children among us are necessary for those cures seems to be a fool's folly, and I pray and believe that God would not send us a cure that damages the innocent among us!

We can do better for the least of these!

**Kevin McCullough** *hosts AFA Today on American Family Radio.*

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## **Exploiting Medicine for the Politics of Hate**

How credible are accusations about military tactics made by medical professionals who double as political activists? Not very credible, as recent outrage directed at *The Lancet* suggests.

The British medical journal has misused its prestige as a scientific publication to condemn Israel and its defensive actions in Gaza by publishing "An open letter for the people in Gaza" this past July.

The letter—written by Drs. Mads Gilbert, Paola Manduca, and Swee Ang, all of whom are associated with highly politicized non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—accuses Israel of

carrying out a propaganda campaign that “justifies the creation of an emergency to masquerade a massacre.” It makes unfounded allegations that Israel deliberately massacred civilians and uses illegal weaponry. No mention is made of Hamas or its use of human shields. Israel’s right and obligation to defend its citizens against indiscriminate targeting by rocket fire is absent.

The article’s authors have no expertise in military law or tactics. Any sort of political, legal, or military analysis, such as an accusation of war crimes, is outside their competence. They have no evidentiary basis on which to allege that Israel is motivated by a desire to massacre civilians.

It is a wonder how anyone, let alone a highly regarded medical journal, could take these doctors as credible sources on the conflict. What we are witnessing is the “halo effect”—where NGOs perceived to promote good principles are shielded from scrutiny. Providers of medical assistance and relief enjoy an added degree of credibility, a “double halo effect,” and are rarely challenged on their biases or questioned on their statements’ accuracy.

This “double halo effect” was in full force for the letter writers, all of whom have extensive histories of acting as anti-Israel campaigners.

Gilbert, a Norwegian anesthesiologist, is a representative of the Norwegian Aid Committee (NORWAC), an NGO that has purportedly worked with Hezbollah-affiliated groups. He politicizes his humanitarian work to the point of legitimizing terror attacks, including a defense of the terrorist action on 9/11. In regard to the 2009 operation in Gaza, Gilbert erroneously stated there was “clear evidence” that the IDF was using Dense Inert Metal Explosives (DIME) munitions, admitting in a subsequent interview that he had no proof for this allegation.

Gilbert has made accusations about weaponry he admits he has no proof for, falsely accuses Israel of targeting civilians, and denies Israel its right to defend itself.

Manduca is a geneticist with the New Weapons Committee (NWC), an organization that aims to examine weapons used in warfare. NWC has made multiple unfounded claims about Israeli weaponry.

NWC accused Israel of “experimenting new non-conventional weapons on civilian populations” in Gaza. Manduca also accused the IDF of using “white phosphorus, DIME, thermobaric bombs, cluster bombs and uranium ammunitions” in Gaza and in Lebanon in 2006. None of these accusations has any factual basis.

Swee Ang is a surgeon and founding member of Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP,) an NGO that claims to be independent and non-political, but which repeatedly accuses Israel of “indiscriminate attacks” and “collective punishment.”

Given that these authors are hardly unbiased observers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it should be a given that a reputable medical journal would print never such an article. However, *The Lancet* partners with a number of anti-Israel NGOs to maintain the Lancet-Palestinian Health Alliance (LPHA), “a loose network of health researchers committed to illuminating the conditions under which Palestinians live today.” Through its partnerships, *The Lancet* publishes reports and articles, holds annual conferences, and solicits research papers and studies that specifically focus on Palestinian issues, often in an overtly political context.

*The Lancet* has published numerous additional articles unrelated to medicine about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Most egregious was its publication of Swee Ang’s introduction to her book, “The Wounds of Gaza,” on *The Lancet*’s Global Health Network website. Among many unfounded accusations and statements, she claimed that the IDF illegally

used phosphorus shells and bombs in the 2009 Gaza war with the intent of harming civilians. Published without sources, the piece was taken down a month later because of “factual inaccuracies.”

Under the editorship of Richard Horton, *The Lancet* has become a platform for intense political propaganda, particularly targeting Israel. Publishing factually inaccurate articles unrelated to medicine, it provides a scientific veneer to politicized NGO claims, promoting legal distortions unconnected to medicine and science.

***Eliana Trink** is a research intern with the Jerusalem-based research institution NGO Monitor ().*

*For the original article, visit .*

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## **Rekindle the Fire of God in Your Life**

Stephen Thompson played defensive tackle for the New York Jets during the heyday of Joe Namath. He even has a Super Bowl ring and flashes it occasionally if someone tries to intimidate him. But tackling the problem of staying in the **river of God**—the current flow of His Spirit—proved to be an even greater challenge than tackling football superstars.

After his days as a pro football player Stephen and his wife, Starla, entered the ministry. He became pastor of a church near Seattle in the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, a Pentecostal denomination founded by Aimee Semple McPherson, the famous woman evangelist of the early 1900s. The denomination’s Pentecostal roots, however, did not seem to

prepare the members of Stephen's church for the current **move of the Spirit**.

Stephen and Starla realized they needed a **fresh touch from God** and made their way to the **outpouring** in Toronto. There they were overcome with the presence of God. He touched them in such a powerful way that they determined never again to do things at church the way they had always done them.

Once back home they instituted a Friday night **renewal** meeting, which people attended to enjoy the blessings God was pouring out. Many of their members dived into the river, eager to experience all God had for them. Then the trouble began.

Dissenting factions started to oppose the leaders of the church, and within a year the church was facing a full-scale split. "It seemed as though everyone was leaving," Stephen recalls. And those who stayed were grieving over the loss of their friends.

Although the church had problems before the renewal started, the focus of gossip about the turmoil quickly became the church's participation in the renewal. Stephen's ability to lead was called into question, and within a few months more than half their 830 members left.

At that point Stephen and Starla were so discouraged they let go of the renewal. They stopped the Friday night meetings and tried to return everything to the way it had been before **the outpouring** started, working to please God with a good church program.

"We began to question everything we had seen," Stephen recalls. "When the church split started, we wondered if we were seeing bad fruit. Why had all this happened when the Holy Spirit was supposed to create unity in the fellowship?"

As time went by, however, the people who remained with them remained loyal to the renewal, too, and Stephen and Starla

grew hungry again. They made another pilgrimage to Toronto. When they saw that God was still moving and that He had no intention of withdrawing His love and blessing, the Thompsons desired revival more than ever. But they wondered how they could ever bring their flock back into the river.

Stephen invited his friend Brad Davis, another Foursquare pastor, to speak at their family summer camp. Brad's church in Fresno, California, has been flowing in the renewal since 1994 and has become a watering hole in central California.

Brad began to preach about the kingdom of God and exhorted Stephen's church not to try to go back to the way they had been before renewal. The power of God broke out again at the camp. People who had come for "camp as usual" went home on fire. They began to experience a renewed love for Jesus. It seemed that God was dressing the wounds left by the split.

This time Stephen talked with Brad about how to get back in the river and keep the blessing. He never wanted to lose it again. Brad gave him several pointers that are applicable to all of us who share Stephen's desire to regain and retain the blessing of revival.

**Welcome the presence of God.** First, Brad encouraged Stephen and Starla to welcome the presence of God. So they returned to the deeds they were doing when the river first came to their church—spending time in God's presence, waiting on Him and absorbing His love, watching Him initiate acts of power and then cooperating with Him. They began by restoring the Friday night renewal meeting.

They also invited the Holy Spirit to move any way He wanted upon the congregation. Many people had lost heart because of the church split. Stephen began to pray for them, asking the Holy Spirit to renew and touch them.

God came powerfully. He touched the people with healing miracles and renewed their spiritual strength.

Stephen may not have realized it, but he did what Jesus said to do when you realize you have left your first love: "Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent [which means 'go back'] and do the things you did at first" (Rev. 2:5, NIV). By far the principal "thing" is lingering in the presence of God and enjoying His love.

**Start soaking again.** Brad told Stephen, "You have to start soaking again in God's presence and teach your people to soak, too." As Stephen and Starla started soaking and experiencing the love of God again, they wanted everyone in the congregation to feel God's love. And people began to respond.

This, of all the evidences of revival, has meant more to Stephen and Starla than anything else. Stephen says that the sense of God's love is greater now that they have gotten back into the river than it was the first time they experienced revival. The congregation is growing in its love for God, which is the true purpose of church and ministry in the first place.

All this newfound love for Jesus is producing fruit, including the ministry of helping take the river to Africa. Stephen says: "Intimacy with God is the cause of fruit production. We are in transition from being a program-oriented church to a Presence-oriented church."

**Set love as a priority.** Last summer Stephen and Starla took a three-month sabbatical. His assistants took over the responsibilities of the church; by this time they were too busy soaking in the glory to notice that their pastor and his wife were taking some needed days off!

During this time, the Lord spoke to Stephen about rearranging his priorities. The first thing God said was not surprising: "Love Me first." The Lord gave specific instructions concerning how He wanted to be loved: He told Stephen to give Him his mornings.

Prior to this, Stephen and Starla's mornings had been a rush to get to the church and start handling the details of the day. The Lord told him that during these mornings with Him they were to spend time personally soaking in God's love, doing nothing but letting God touch them and enjoying Him. Out of their renewed communion with God, they began to fall in love with Jesus and with each other all over again.

Then God said, "Love your wife until she feels loved." Like many husbands he thought he was already doing that, but the key was "until she feels loved." After all, Stephen thought, what good is revival unless it is happening at home? Stephen started treating Starla the way he did when he was courting her. A river of new love started pouring into their marriage.

Then God said, "Love your children and your grandchildren until they feel loved." Stephen wondered how many details would have to be set aside at church to accomplish this, but he knew that obedience to God would be worth more to Him than sacrifice, so he decided to do this, too.

"If you do these things," God told Stephen, "by the time you are 70 years old, you will be going 70 miles per hour!" Stephen is in his 50s now. Before he got back in the river he had felt internally weary, drained of any motivation to continue. After six months of obeying the Lord, he knows he has found the secret of continuous personal revival: soaking in God and obeying the simple things He tells you to do.

**Go into the river together.** In addition to pursuing the presence of God personally, Stephen took more of Brad's advice: "Don't try to go it alone."

Brad told him to join others who are soaking constantly in the river and not to be bound by denominational lines. This would encourage Stephen and his staff that they were not in this alone, that other pastors all over the world love the river of God's presence, too. It would also "stoke the fire" that God

was re-igniting in the congregation, providing another form of validation for those who were learning to trust and open up to the Holy Spirit.

Stephen invited members of the Toronto itinerant team and other pastors whose churches are being revolutionized by what God is doing to come to Seattle. Their congregation sets aside special weekends to focus on the renewal.

As congregants hear testimonies and teaching from other ministers who are also soaking in the presence of God and encouraging their congregations to do so, they realize the value of what God is sending. Signs and wonders have begun to increase in the congregation, causing deeper hunger for God.

Stephen's church is rediscovering the secret of the early church's ongoing revival. There is a direct correlation between being in awe of God's presence and continuing to see Him work: "Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles" (Acts 2:43, emphasis added).

Stephen says today: "We'll never go back to the way we were before. This is just too wonderful. It's about continually experiencing the Father's love. Before, I thought it was about seeing the outward manifestations. Perhaps I focused too much on seeing outward signs and whether or not there was enough fruit. Now I'm being drawn by His love. It's the most important thing."

People sometimes ask me, "Whatever happened to the Toronto Blessing?" Simply by asking the question those individuals show that they have walked away from the river. Maybe, like Stephen and Starla, they left out of discouragement when the presence of God brought a church split or division between friends. It is easy to understand.

But there are people like the Thompsons all over the world who are taking another look and finding the courage to return. And

God will come and come more powerfully than they ever imagined because they have learned the difficult lesson of stewardship of the presence of God, and they will never let go again.

If you were once in the river but have gotten out for some reason, you can go back. Being humble enough to admit your need is the first step. Then take Brad's advice and commit yourself to welcoming the presence of God, taking time to soak in it, setting love as a priority and going into the river with others who are hungry for God.

It isn't easy, but Stephen and Starla did it and so has everyone else who began to long for what they let go of. They are finding where they set God down and returning to the blessing of a lifetime.

Read a companion devotional.

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## **Once Gay, Always Gay? Not Necessarily**

People who struggle with gay feelings are usually told they should simply accept their homosexual identity. Many psychologists believe it's wrong to suggest that homosexuality could be or should be treated as a problem. *You're gay. Big deal. We accept you. Have whatever kind of sex you want.*

But what about people who struggle with same-sex attraction

and yet genuinely want freedom from homosexuality because they believe it violates Christian morals? These people face a triple dilemma because (1) some Christians are prejudiced against gay people and don't really care; (2) many churches just aren't equipped to offer counseling; and (3) our mainstream culture believes that once you're gay, you're always gay.

But this didn't stop my friend William Dobson from abandoning the gay lifestyle. His story needs to be considered.

William was a sensitive boy. So when kids his age started calling him "sissy" and "queer," he was emotionally scarred. He gave his heart to Jesus at age 12 and found safety and security in a world of bullying. When he was filled with the Holy Spirit as a college student, he admitted to a pastor that he struggled with gay feelings. He found a measure of freedom after being honest about his secret. He began pursuing God.

William became a successful architect in Tampa, Florida, and served as a volunteer worship leader for many years. But he suffered shipwreck in his faith at age 44 after a pastor he trusted experienced a moral failure. William quit church, and his anger grew to the point that he stopped resisting his unwanted sexual impulses. He threw himself headlong into a gay lifestyle.

He went to gay bars, dated men and became fully immersed in Tampa's gay community. He also got hooked on Internet pornography and lived with his gay boyfriend for three years. But he never found true satisfaction, and he always knew deep down in his heart that he was running from God.

"I had no peace at all during my time in the gay lifestyle," William told me last week. "My coping mechanism was alcohol. But even when I would get plastered, I could still hear the still small voice of Jesus calling me back to Himself."

William sought help and ended up at a Methodist church in

Tampa. But the pastor who offered counseling told him it was OK to be gay and encouraged him to accept the lifestyle instead of offering an exit strategy.

Says William: "I never bought into that [pro-gay] teaching. First Corinthians 6:9-11 is clear that those who practice adultery, idolatry, drunkenness, stealing or homosexuality will not inherit the kingdom of God. That same scripture also declares that to believe such practice is acceptable is deception."

William struggled for a while. But one day while driving to work he began to sob while listening to the song "You Are Holy" on a Hillsong recording:

*Here in Your courts /*

*where I'm close to Your throne /*

*I've found where I belong.*

"In that moment, I made the decision to break up with my partner," William says. "I decided I would not yield any longer to my sexual passions, and I acknowledged that God had a calling on my life. I had walked away from that calling. I had been living for myself, and that life had left me empty. I begged God to lead me away from my own derailed life of bad choices and back to Him."

William's deliverance didn't come overnight. His journey was slow, but God proved to be patient. A breakthrough came three years later when William worked up the courage to leave his network of friends in Tampa and isolate himself for a while. During that time, he asked God to help him break free from his porn addiction.

"I was addicted to internet porn for years, even for some time prior to me diving into the gay lifestyle," admits William. "Today I am completely free of that addiction. I no longer

search the internet for the videos and photos of naked men that at one time gripped and fed me. I have no desire for that any longer. I have been free of that addition for more than a year now.”

William did not find his freedom alone. He called a local Tampa ministry, New Hearts Outreach, and spilled his guts to a man who understood his struggle. He joined a support group, enrolled in counseling, and started spending time with God every day. Today he no longer identifies himself as gay. He traded his old life for a new one—in Christ.

“My relationship with Jesus is more intimate than it has ever been,” says William. “I’ve connected with a ministry that has offered real tools to overcome my misplaced sexual identity. I have found leaders who love Christ. And I have found within myself the very Spirit of the Living God, who calls, leads, teaches, confirms, loves, affirms and accepts me.”

William does not fit the stereotype of a narrow-minded Christian who wants to force his beliefs on gay people. He’s not “homophobic,” and he doesn’t stand in the streets holding signs condemning gay marriage. He still loves his gay friends and even stays in contact with his former live-in boyfriend.

But this story raises an interesting question: If our culture demands that we accept homosexuality in the name of freedom, should we not also respect the rights of people like William Dobson if they want to leave the gay lifestyle? The answer to that question might prove whether or not all the talk about “tolerance” in our culture today is actually a smokescreen for intolerance.

**J. Lee Grady** is the former editor of Charisma. You can follow him on Twitter at [leegrady](#). He is the author of *10 Lies Men Believe* and other books. If you’d like to talk to someone about a struggle with sexual identity, you can go to or . These websites list local ministries that offer counseling and

*small-group support.*

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# Prophetic Words For the Discouraged and Downtrodden

I was driving down the highway just as content as I could be when the Holy Spirit started talking to me about discouragement. I listened closely with my spiritual ears, as I always do, but my natural mind didn't understand why my Friend would bring up the topic while I was driving down the highway just as content as I could be.

"The enemy wouldn't bring discouragement to your heart if you weren't doing something he didn't like. He's trying to get you to quit doing what you are doing by making it look like you're not making a difference," the Holy Spirit whispered to my heart in that still, small voice. "Don't be discouraged."

I thought to myself, "What a great topic for an article. I know how discouraged so many people are." Of course, I usually have to walk through things before I can write about them with any authority, and this discouragement business was no different. Within hours of the Holy Spirit sharing those words with me, a flood of discouragement raged against my soul like a Category 5 hurricane.

## **The Danger of Discouragement**

Discouragement is a dangerous weapon in the enemy's arsenal. Merriam-Webster defines "discourage" as "to make (someone) less determined, hopeful, or confident; to make (something) less likely to happen; to try to make people not want to do (something); to deprive of courage or confidence; to hinder by

disfavoring; to dissuade or attempt to dissuade from doing something.”

That about sums it up, doesn't it? The enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy (see John 10:10), and discouragement is often part of his strategy to steal your confidence so that you won't do more damage to his dark kingdom through your obedient acts of service to God. The devil uses discouragement to kill your hopes and destroy your dreams with circumstances that make you want to give up and quit.

Discouragement comes in many forms, from unanswered prayer, to financial pressure, to health problems, to feeling like nothing you do ever works, to feeling unappreciated, to all manner of natural adversity and spiritual warfare. Discouragement is dangerous because it distracts your heart from God's purpose, causes you to blame others for unpleasant circumstances, robs your confidence, leads you to make unwise decisions, makes you critical, angry, or depressed—and ultimately makes you want to give up and quit.

### **Overcoming Discouragement**

When that discouragement came at me like a Category 5 hurricane, it knocked the wind right out of me for a minute. For more than a minute—more like a day. I didn't sleep well. My mind was wandering through scenarios. I was definitely looking for someone to blame and felt like giving up and quitting. Ultimately, I had to grab hold of my mind, which is the primary battlefield in spiritual warfare. I had to go back and remember what the Holy Spirit told me and draw more from His heart. Let me share it with you again:

“The enemy wouldn't bring discouragement to your heart if you weren't doing something he didn't like. He's trying to get you to quit doing what you are doing by making it look like you're not making a difference,” the Holy Spirit whispered to my heart in that still, small voice. “Don't be discouraged. You

are making a difference to God. Be faithful. Keep doing what you are doing. Your reward in heaven is great.”

We’re not called to walk in discouragement. We’re not called to give up and quit. We’re not called to look at the world with natural eyes. We’re called to encourage ourselves in the Lord, to press in and press on, and to walk by faith and not by sight in the face of anything and everything the devil throws at us.

Don’t look at things with your natural eyes, but see things through the lens of Father’s promises to you. Whatever God has called you to do, let this Scripture encourage your heart: “Look, the Lord your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not fear or be discouraged” (Deut. 1:20-22). Amen.

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