

Worship Leader Shines a Light on the Secret Epidemic Churches Don't Talk About

Pornography is well-known as a destructive temptation for many men. But statistics show that one in four women also seek out pornography—and many churches have done little to help them, treating it as a male issue. Christian singer Audrey Assad shares her own testimony and suggests how churches can become better at counseling young women on this topic.

Holiday Health Survival Tips for the Busy Believer

Yes, you actually can improve your health during the holidays. No need to wait until Jan. 1 to start making healthy changes.

Watch this video, where Michelle shares some simple, practical tips for staying healthy during the holidays.

Michelle Spadafora started *Faithful Workouts* in 2009 after 22 years in the fitness industry. She created *Faithful Workouts* to be a place where you can come and strengthen your relationship with God while you strengthen your body and mind, a place where you can find great workouts for all fitness levels, receive simple, practical nutrition information and connect with a real community who knows that the journey to better health is more about encouraging each other and less about being perfect.

This article originally appeared at .

The True Solution to the Countless Phobias Many Americans Face

According to statistics, 15-20 percent of Americans deal with a specific phobia—an extreme fear. Roughly 75% of us are afraid to speak in public, which thankfully does not come up all that often for many. But while you may not have to get up and speak to a crowd of thousands tomorrow, right now you may be experiencing fear of another kind.

Is the answer more therapy? Silently struggling with your fears while you feel the rest of the world goes on unaware?

I don't think so. I believe the answer is courage. So what is courage?

There are different types of courage, ranging from physical strength and endurance to mental stamina and innovation. Courage can be defined in many ways, but to me, it's taking risks without knowing the outcome and doing things even when you're afraid.

Courage is something most of us want. It's an attribute that encourages us to venture outside our comfort zone and embrace the possibilities. It gives us the ability to be brave, to conquer fear and despair so we can take on necessary challenges and make necessary changes.

I recently saw this message on a church marquee: "What you tolerate, children emulate." When I was growing up, it was the

boys who were taught to be strong, fearless and courageous—not the girls. This was especially true in my house. If you're afraid today, it's time to look back at what was tolerated in your home growing up. What was demonstrated to you?

That fears you experience can stop today, with you. Intentionally looking for courage and utilizing tools to make better choices is, in itself, a courageous act. It's an act I wish I had taken long before I reached the place where my lack of courage threatened virtually everything I held dear to my heart.

Kudos to you for reaching this place in your life now! In my book, *Courage for Life*, I take a detailed look at the journey of letting go of fear and instead choosing to be courageous. If you're tired of your fears and don't want to pass them on to your own children, it's time to take a stand for courage. Let's do it together!

Ann White is the founder of Courage for Life Ministries, which is particularly focused on teaching the Bible to at-risk women. Find out more at: .

'God and Donald Trump' Author Stephen E. Strang: Even More Evangelicals Will Vote for Trump in 2020

Most evangelical Christians did not support Donald Trump when he announced he was running for president in 2015. Why should they have? He had made a fortune in gambling. He was thrice

married, and he was known to use some pretty salty language at times—hardly the model politician the religious right could enthusiastically support.

But, as it turned out, says Stephen E. Strang, an award-winning journalist and author of the new book *God and Donald Trump*, most evangelicals did get behind him in the 2016 election, giving Trump 82 percent of the evangelical vote—reportedly the highest percentage ever.

“Since then, his support from the Christian community has only increased,” Strang wrote in a new op-ed originally published in *The Hill*. “When others part company with him over his latest outlandish tweet, the president has discovered that the evangelicals stick with him. And it’s well documented that loyalty is very important to this president. In fact, it seems likely that President Trump will again garner most of the evangelical vote when the 2020 election rolls around. Former Trump strategist Steve Bannon made headlines recently when he predicted Trump will receive 400 electoral votes in 2020—a boast that no longer seems so unreasonable. Even the Never-Trumpers who howled loudest about Trump’s tactics in the 2016 election are coming around: they can see that the president is, slowly but surely, making good on his promises.”

How and why evangelicals made the migration to Trump was the main reason Strang began following the campaign, he said.

“There was an untold story that needed to be on the record,” Strang added. “Many leaders in the faith community would have supported any candidate but Hillary Clinton, who promised to accelerate the lurch toward globalism the country had been on since midway through the Bush years. Hillary dismissed conservatives as ‘a basket of deplorables’ during the campaign and advocated policies the faith community could never support.”

Donald Trump did the opposite, Strang said. Even before he

ran, Trump reached out to evangelicals, and he surrounded himself with Christian leaders such as James Robison, Cleveland pastor Darrell Scott, Jerry Falwell Jr., Robert Jeffress and others.

“Equally important,” Strang noted, “he kept his promise to appoint a conservative Supreme Court justice. He has championed religious liberty in the face of LGBT advocates who want not only to silence but to punish anyone who, for religious purposes, does not back their radical redefinition of marriage.”

In *The Hill* op-ed, Strang observed that even though Trump had often said he was not interested in running for public office, his demeanor began changing about 10 years ago.

“He cleaned up his act and became more serious about his public persona, and he began showing greater interest in religious faith,” Strang wrote. “He was watching televangelists such as Paula White Cain and Dr. David Jeremiah. He invited a group of pastors ‘who know how to pray’ to meet with him at Trump Tower and pray about whether or not he should run in 2012. These leaders would eventually become his earliest supporters when he decided to enter the race in 2015. These were also the core of what is now called the President’s Faith Advisory Council.”

Read Strang’s entire op-ed in *The Hill* [here](#).

In *God and Donald Trump*, Strang gives an inside look at the journey to the Trump White House through firsthand interviews and perspectives from those who were intimately involved. Strang is an award-winning journalist and successful businessman who began his career as a newspaper reporter at the *Orlando Sentinel*. He later founded a Christian publishing house and media company while interviewing and writing about nearly every Christian leader in the country over the past four decades.

For more information on *God and Donald Trump*, visit [and](#) view the book's video. Visitors to the site can also download a free chapter and order the book

God and Donald Trump is published by Frontline, an imprint of Charisma House, which has published books that challenge, encourage, teach and equip Christians, including 14 *New York Times* best-sellers.

Your One True Source of Enduring Hope

If there's one thing in short supply these days, it's *hope*. Politicians promise, but fail to deliver on their promises. Family members make commitments, but disappoint us. Terrorists strike with seeming impunity. Jobs are scarce, money is tight, and the more we wish for positive change, the less probable it appears to be. Good things seem more and more like a function of luck than anything else.

Sort of like what the nation of Israel must have been feeling 2,000 years ago. The glory days of King David and King Solomon had passed 1,000 years earlier. The Israelites—God's chosen people—didn't feel very special anymore. They lived as a conquered people for more than 700 years, first under the Assyrians, then the Babylonians, the Medes-Persians, the Greeks and finally the Romans. Four hundred years had passed since any prophet spoke the words, "Thus says the Lord." The peoples' hope had been sapped, little by little and year by year.

Still, Israel hoped for freedom from their oppressors. They hoped to hear from their God once again. Yet when God did

speak, most of them did not recognize his voice. When God sent them the Savior they needed, they were too busy looking for the military leader they wanted.

Fast-forward 2,000 years. Some of us are holding on by our fingernails, clinging to hope because there's nothing else to cling to. And along comes the Christmas season. Four weeks of stress added to already stressful lives. Decorate, write cards (personalized), cook (like the banquets pictured in the magazines), bake (perfectly shaped cut-out cookies), wrap presents (with color-coordinated bows) ... and for what?

The "for what" is *Emmanuel*—God with us. Christmas is coming, a day when we celebrate the birth of the One who has saved us from sin and from ourselves. A day when God became man.

Jesus came to earth the first time in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. His coming proved that hope in God's Word was not misplaced. His first coming proves something else. It proves that when God's Word speaks of His second coming, we can rely on this yet-to-happen event as much as if it has already occurred. It's not a question of *if* it will happen, just *when* it will happen.

That's biblical *hope*—so different from how we usually use the word hope today. Today we say things such as, "I hope it won't rain," but we have no idea whether it will or it won't. Biblical hope is a certain anticipation, a knowledge that the only uncertainty is in the timing, not in the promise. God leaves nothing to chance.

It's the hope Israel had 2,000 years ago as they waited for the Messiah to come. It's the hope we have today as we wait for the Messiah—our Savior—to come again.

As we wrap the presents (or not), and bake the cookies (or not), let's rejoice that the hope for a coming Savior is already fulfilled. And He'll be back—because He promised.

That's a hope you can count on.

How has hope encouraged you this year?

Ava Pennington is a writer, speaker and Bible teacher. She writes for nationally circulated magazines and is published in 32 anthologies, including 25 *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books. She also authored *Daily Reflections on the Names of God: A Devotional*, endorsed by Kay Arthur. Learn more at [.](#)

This article originally appeared at .

Secrets to Tearing Down Division From One of Paul's Most Overlooked Letters

Tucked between Titus and Hebrews, you'll find Paul's shortest and most personal letter. It's so tiny and obscure, many people overlook it and never bother to read it. Yet, it contains one of the greatest accounts of God's grace and Christian love. It is addressed to Philemon, a convert of Paul's who pastored a church in Colossae which met in his house (Philem. 1-2). It is the companion to Colossians, written at the same time and delivered together.

The tone of the letter is very cordial and courteous, earning it the nickname "The Polite Epistle." Paul was so concerned about the content that he personally took time to pen it in his own handwriting (Philem. 19). The theme deals with reconciliation, forgiveness and how Christian brotherhood removes all social and class distinctions. Truly, in Christ, there is no black or white, male or female, Jew or Gentile,

rich or poor, slave or free—we are all one in Him.

Paul probably met Philemon in nearby Ephesus where he taught for two years at the School of Tyrannus (Acts 19:8-10). Philemon was a wealthy and generous man whose home was a haven for weary saints (Philem. 5-7). Although he was a benevolent believer, he also owned slaves including one named Onesimus who escaped, thus the reason for Paul's letter.

Slavery is an evil practice in any age among any race. While biblical truth stands in opposition to slavery, it also recognizes it was a sad reality in ancient culture. Slaves were considered and treated as property and had few legal rights. Runaway slaves were severely punished. In some cases, they were beaten, seared with a hot branding iron as fugitives, crucified, or killed by other cruel methods.

Sin is a form of spiritual slavery. Jesus said, "Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34) We've all been slaves to sin to some degree or another. The good news is "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Before salvation, we were like puppets on strings manipulated by Satan, sin and the flesh. Now, though not sinless, we are no longer controlled by sin because Christ cut the strings: "Therefore if the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Onesimus apparently stole from his master and fled to find Paul in Rome. There, in prison, Paul led him to Christ (Philem. 10). Over the next few weeks or months, he became an asset to Paul's ministry who called him "a faithful and beloved brother" (Col. 4:9b). Soon, the dreaded day came when Paul legally had to send him back home. You see, in order to be totally right with God, we must at least attempt to be right with other people (Matt. 5:23-24).

So, Paul's letter to Philemon is a tender appeal to reinstate his runaway slave. Here we see ourselves since we've all run

away from our benevolent Master. "All of us like sheep have gone astray; each of us has turned to his own way .." (Isa. 53:6).

Notice five requests Paul made to Philemon that mirror Christ's intercession for us (Heb. 7:25):

1. **Accept Onesimus back.** "I appeal to you on behalf of my son Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment, who in the past was unprofitable to you, but now he is profitable to you and to me" (Philemon 10-12). Onesimus means "useful or profitable," so Paul used a word play to say that even though he hadn't lived up to his name, he was now a changed man. How many times have we run away from God, but Jesus persuaded the Father to accept us back with open arms?
2. **Treat Onesimus as a brother.** "Perhaps this was why he departed for a while, that you might receive him forever, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother" (Philem. 15-16a). When we return to God, He doesn't treat us as second-class servants. Instead, He treats us as His sons and heirs and restores our seat at His table.
3. **Treat Onesimus just like me.** "If then you consider me a partner, receive him as you would me" (Philem. 17). Paul told him to roll out the red carpet and welcome Onesimus just as he would the admired apostle. In Christ. And we are just as accepted in the presence of God as Jesus, the firstborn Son.
4. **Put Onesimus' debt on my account.** "If he wronged you or owes anything, charge this to my account ... I will repay" (). Dying on the cross, Jesus cried out, "It is finished!" He used the Greek word *tetelestai*, an accounting term that means "paid in full." "He paid a debt He did not owe/ I owed a debt I could not pay/ I needed someone to wash my sins away./ And now I sing a brand-new song—'Amazing Grace'—/ Christ Jesus paid the

debt that I could never pay.”

5. **Prepare a place for me.** “But, in addition, prepare also lodging for me, for I hope that through your prayers I shall be graciously restored to you” (Philem. 22). Sounds similar to Jesus’ promise, “I am going to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.

Onesimus made the long trip back to Philemon’s house with knots in his stomach. I imagine when their eyes met, he bowed his head, fell on his knees and said, “Before you say anything or do anything, Paul said, ‘Read this first,’” and handed him a scroll we call the Epistle of Philemon. The merciful master and the pardoned slave embraced as brothers in Christ. According to legend, Onesimus was later granted his freedom and became the bishop of Berea. {eoa}

Ben Godwin is the author of four books and pastors the Goodsprings Full Gospel Church. To read more articles, visit his website at [and take advantage of his 4-book bundle for \\$.](#) This offer also includes a free DVD of Ben’s interview with Sid Roth on It’s Supernatural and the dramatic reenactment of his miracle testimony.

Solar Resources Can Change Education in Developing Nations

Children in developing nations are lagging behind their peers in developed countries. Without education, the fight against poverty cannot succeed.

According to the World Bank, this learning crisis is widening social gaps instead of narrowing them. Young students who are already disadvantaged by poverty, conflict, gender or disability reach young adulthood without even the most basic life skills, reports the United Nations Centre.

World Bank found that it was a combination of corruption and poorly paid and trained teachers that are hindering students in developing nations such as Africa and Asia.

In countries such as Indonesia, Jordan and Peru, students in the 75th percentile in maths barely meet, or even lag behind, the 25th percentile in OECD countries, reports the *Financial Times*.

The report shows that income inequality also plays a role. Uruguayan students in the lowest income quintile were five times as likely to lack math proficiency as those in the highest quintile. Despite several years in school, many students in developing regions cannot read. Without primary and secondary education, young people will face lost opportunities and lower wages later in life.

Aldelano Solar Cold Chain Solutions seeks to aid developing nations by providing necessities such as clean water, solar power and cold storage to raise the standard of living and make more possible. Nonprofits working in these regions can provide teachers and schools with greater solar resources that will operate in remote areas with little to no maintenance.

The Aldelano Solar WaterMaker can create clean water from moisture in the air. By providing fresh water, students are less likely to miss school due to water-borne illnesses. The Aldelano Solar PowerPak delivers stable solar power in remote areas and developing nations that lack power grids. Electricity has the potential to revamp the learning process to assist teachers with more skills and create more resources for students. The Aldelano Solar ColdBox provides cold storage

for food or medicine. Food and medicine storage raises the standard of living for villages so young people can focus on education rather than the struggle for survival.

The World Bank Report says that world leaders must make learning a priority for all. Great change takes time. Our solar solutions allow nonprofits to make a significant impact now, without waiting for a political shift that may take years. Aldelano Solar Cold Chain Solutions are mobile, come ready to use and are the most robust solar solutions on the market.

Our ADOPT-A-BOX program can help your organization take off-grid and mobile resources to communities in need. We have everything you need to raise money for the Solar ColdBox, a robust, industrial-grade cold storage solution that can be used to store food or medicine.

For more information:

Donnan, Shawn. "World Bank Warns of 'Global Learning Crisis.'" Financial Times, 26 Sept. 2017, .

"Global 'Learning Crisis' Threatens Future of Millions of Young Students – World Bank." United Nations News Centre, 26 Sept. 2017, Bank Warns of 'Learning Crisis' in Global Education." World Bank, 26 Sept. 2017,

**This May Be the Most
Important Question You Could**

Ever Answer

Who do you say that I am? This is the most important question of all time and history. Who is this man, Jesus? What are His claims? What did He do? What does He do today? As it was at that literal moment, so it is today. It takes God's help to know who God is! It takes the ministry of the Holy Spirit to reveal to us who this glorious man Christ Jesus really is.

Upon entry into the district of Caesarea Philippi in Luke 9, Jesus began asking His disciples, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" (Matt. 16:13b). Some answered, "Some say that You are John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets" (Matt. 16:14). Jesus then penetratingly, personalized the question, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15b). Simon announced with zeal, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16b). Jesus then said, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17).

Some said that Jesus was John the Baptist brought back from the dead. Perhaps they saw the power of proclamation and the piercing word of knowledge in operation of Jesus' life like that of John's. Others saw the comparison of the miracle working power in His life as was in the life of the prophet Elijah. They saw how He had power over the natural elements of the wind and the sea and remembered how Elijah took his cloak and would part the Jordan River to cross over. Yet others reflected on his tears, compassion and intercession and perceived that He was the embodiment of the weeping prophet Jeremiah.

Whom Do I Say Has Sent Me?

Who are you, God? What is your name? This is a question that Moses asked as God was about to send him forth to be His

prophetic ambassador. “Who are you, anyway?” “How will they believe that You have sent me?” “Whom will I say has sent me?” “By the way, what is Your name?” (see Exodus 3:11-14).

In Exodus 3:13 we find Moses’ question, “When they say to me, “What is His name?” what shall I say to them?” The following verse states, “And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; ... “You will say this to the children of Israel, “I AM has sent me to you.’”

Moses was familiar with the Egyptian habit of having a name for every god, so he was naturally anticipating this question. He was asking ahead of time to be prepared for what was on the horizon. God’s response in Hebrew is *Eheyeh Asher Eheyeh*. This can be translated, I am that (who or what) I am, or perhaps, I am the self-existent One; the eternal, the One who always has been and always will be. This is shortened to I AM here, the ever-present and living One. It is equivalent to Jehovah the eternal.

Over the past years, many have taught us about the compound names of God from the Old Testament. He is Jehovah *Nissi*— the Lord Our Banner (Ex. 17:15). He is Jehovah *Tsidkenu* – The Lord Our Righteousness (Jer. 23:56). How wonderful it is that He is Jehovah *Shalom* – the Lord Our Peace (Judg. 8:23). He is Jehovah *Rophe* – the Lord Who Heals (Ex. 15:22-26). He has revealed Himself as our Jehovah *M’Kaddesh*— Jehovah Who Sanctifies (Lev. 20:8). Consider the meaning of Jehovah *Shammah* – The Lord Who Is Always There (Ezek. 48:35)! The name Jehovah *Jireh* tells us that God’s provision will be seen (Gen. 22). He is Jehovah *Rohi*— the Lord Our Shepherd (Psalm 23). You see, His names reveal His character.

God’s presence, power and character are all contained within His names. The Bible is full of a great variety of God’s names. Let’s take a more detailed look at them.

The Names of the Son of God

I have discovered at least 140 different names in the Old and New Testaments combined describing the Son of God. For this study, I am bringing you the 100-plus majestic names from the New Testament alone. Get to know who He says that He is. Then rely on the Holy Spirit to reveal to you who Christ Jesus fully is.

1. Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:1)
2. The Son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1)
3. The Son of David (Matt. 1:1; 9:27)
4. Christ (Matt. 1:17; 2:4)
5. Jesus (Matt. 1:21)
6. Emmanuel (God with us) (Matt. 1:23)
7. King of the Jews (Matt. 2:2; 21:5)
8. Governor (Matt. 2:6)
9. Nazarene (Matt. 2:23)
10. The Son of God (Matt. 4:3)
11. Master (Matt. 8:19)
12. The Son of man (Matt. 8:20)
13. Physician (Matt. 9:12)
14. The Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15)
15. The Friend of Sinners (Matt. 9:19)
16. The Beloved (Matt. 12:18)
17. The Sower of the Seed (Matt. 13:3)
18. The Son of the Highest (Luke 1:32)
19. The Horn of Salvation (Luke 1:69)
20. The Dayspring (Luke 1:78)
21. Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11)
22. Savior (Luke 2:11)
23. The Consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25)
24. Salvation (Luke 2:30)
25. Jesus of Nazareth (Luke 4:34)
26. Holy One of God (Luke 4:34)
27. The Word (John 1:1,2)
28. God (John 1:1-3; 20:28; Heb. 1:8)

29. The True Light (John 1:9)
30. Only Begotten Son (John 1: 18; 3:16)
31. Lamb of God (John 1:29; Rev. 5:6)
32. The King of Israel (John 1:49)
33. Teacher (John 3:2)
34. Gift of God (John 4:10)
35. Savior of the World (John 4:42)
36. The Bread of God (John 6:33)
37. The Bread of Life (John 6:35; 48-51)
38. Light of the World (John 8:12)
39. Door of the Sheep (John 10:7)
40. The Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
41. The Way, the Truth, the Life (John 14:6)
42. The Vine (John 15:1 – 8)
43. Lord and God (Jn. 20:28)
44. Holy One and Just (Acts 3:14)
45. The Holy Child Jesus (Acts 4:27)
46. A Prince and a Savior (Acts 5:31)
47. Lord of All (Acts 10:36)
48. A Propitiation (Rom. 3:25; I John 2:2)
49. Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:23)
50. The Deliverer (Rom. 11:26)
51. Christ Jesus (I Cor. 1:2; I Tim. 2:5)
52. The Power of God (I Cor. 1:24)
53. The Wisdom of God (I Cor. 1:24)
54. Sanctification ((I Cor. 1:30)
55. Lord of Glory (I Cor. 2:8)
56. Our Passover (I Cor. 5:7)
57. Spiritual Rock (I Cor. 10:4)
58. Christ the First fruits (I Cor. 15:23)
59. The Last Adam (I Cor. 15:45)
60. The Second Man (I Cor. 15:45 – 47)
61. Image of God (II Cor. 4:4)
62. Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29)
63. The Beloved (Eph. 1:6)
64. Chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20)
65. Head of the Church (Col. 1:18)

66. Firstborn from the Dead (Col. 1:18)
67. Christ Jesus our Lord (I Tim. 1:12)
68. Mediator (I Tim. 2:4,5)
69. The Man Christ Jesus (I Tim. 2:5)
70. Ransom for All (I Tim. 2:6)
71. Seed of David (II Tim. 2:8)
72. Lord Jesus Christ our Savior (Tit. 1:4)
73. Blessed Hope (Tit. 2:13)
74. Great God and Savior (Tit. 2:13)
75. Brightness of His glory (Heb. 1:3)
76. Express Image of His Person (Heb. 1:3)
77. Upholder of All Things (Heb. 1:3)
78. Captain of Salvation (Heb. 2:10)
79. The Apostle and High Priest of our confession (Heb. 3:1)
80. Forerunner (Heb. 6:20)
81. Minister of the Sanctuary (Heb. 8:1)
82. Testator (Mediator) of a New Covenant (Heb. 9:16,17)
83. Author and Finisher of Faith (Heb. 12:2)
84. Great Shepherd of the Sheep (Heb. 13:20)
85. Shepherd and Bishop of Souls (I Pet. 2:25)
86. Chief Shepherd (I Pet. 5:4)
87. Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Pet. 1:11)
88. Daystar (II Pet. 1:19)
89. Advocate (I John 2:1)
90. Jesus Christ the Righteous (I John 2:1)
91. Eternal Life (I John 5:20)
92. Faithful Witness (Rev. 1:5)
93. First Begotten of the Dead (Rev. 1:5)
94. Prince of the Kings of the Earth (Rev. 1:5)
95. Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13)
96. The Beginning and the Ending (Rev. 1:8)
97. The First and the Last (Rev. 2:8)
98. Morning Star (Rev. 2:28)
99. The Amen (Rev. 3:14)
100. Faithful and True Witness (Rev. 3:14)
101. Beginning of Creation (Rev. 3:14; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:15 – 18)

- 102. Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5)
- 103. The Root of David (Rev. 5:5)
- 104. The Word of God (Rev. 19:13)
- 105. King of Kings, Lord of Lords, (Rev. 19:16)
- 106. Root and Offspring of David (Rev. 22:16)
- 107. Bright and Morning Star (Rev. 22:16)

A Revelation of Who He Is

As you ponder upon the richness of who He says He is, it will change you. Meditate on His name. Let it sink deep inside of you. As this occurs, doubts and fears flee, and you will find that you are changed into the character of Christ Himself.

One of the great weapons of spiritual warfare is to exercise the authority of His name. We are to declare the wonders of His great name. Stake your all in His name and watch the enemy be driven off. As the disciples of old came to realize, so will you, “even the demons are subject to us through [His] name” (Luke 10:17b). We do not serve a God who is impersonal and unknown. But rather, He has made Himself known unto us through the revelation of His name.

But you will come to realize that there is even something greater than demons fleeing at the mention of His name. At His name the angels bow. At His name rulers and kings tremble and fear. At the whisper of His name, hard hearts are melted. There is only one who is worthy. It’s not us. It is Christ and Christ alone.

In a historic moment sometime in the future, every knee in heaven, on earth and under the earth will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. What an awesome occasion in history! The climax of all things is wrapped up in the loveliness of this one man—Christ Jesus Our Lord and the vindication of His name.

As you get to know the names of God and bask in the reality

that He has given to you His name, you will be overcome with worship and deep affection. He has given us His name: Christian. What's in a name? Oh, just a few things: authority, power, provision, identity, security a relationship. Wear His name with honor. Declare the glory of His name to the ends of the earth. Boast in His name. For His name is great and greatly to be praised.

The names of Jesus are like a spiritual jackhammer to breakup anything in which we might attempt to have security or identity other than Jesus alone. The jealousy of God sometimes places special demands on us. He is not satisfied until the identities of His special names are placed deep within our own identity, until we find our total security and identity in only Him.

In recent years, I don't prepare for meetings primarily by seeking to get a "word from the Lord" for a congregation, city or an individual who might be present. Rather, I attempt to simply seek God for God and let the Lord take care of the rest.

Our focus must faith toward God—not just having a ministry via a gift. We need to seek God for Him and Him alone. As we pick up His presence by communing with the King of hearts, His name will be exalted and lifted up.

Improve Your Memory Tomorrow by Sleeping Well Tonight!

Proper sleep is essential for brain health. In fascinating new research, scientists have shown that your brain actually cleanses or "washes" itself during sleep. The brain has a

special waste management system that helps get rid of toxins that build up over the course of a day, including the beta-amyloid plaques associated with Alzheimer's disease. Your brain is so busy managing your life during the daylight hours that this cleaning system is pretty much turned off. In fact, one theory about why people with dementia sleep so much is that their brains are trying to clear out the accumulating plaques/gunk.

Without healthy sleep, the brain's cleaning crew does not have enough time to do its job, and trash builds up, causing brain fog and memory problems.

How would your home look if no one cleaned it for a month? That is the effect chronic insomnia can have on your brain, and unfortunately, it is all too common, affecting one in four people.[i]

Many lifestyle habits, illnesses and stresses can trigger insomnia, including poor sleep hygiene (such as drinking caffeine at night or leaving the phone on next to the bed), depression, worry, restless leg syndrome, hormonal imbalances (especially progesterone in women) and shift work.

Researchers suggest we aim for seven to eight hours of sleep a night; it seems to be the sweet spot for most people. Getting less than seven hours is associated with lower overall blood flow to the brain and a higher risk of dementia, and it can disrupt hundreds of health-promoting genes.[ii]

To get a better night's sleep and allow your brain time to clean itself up, try one or more of the following ideas. If something doesn't work, experiment with other techniques until you notice your sleep improving.

Set up your bedroom for sleep. It should be cool, completely dark, and quiet. The ideal sleeping temperature may vary from person to person, but it should be on the cool side. If your room is too light, consider hanging blackout shades, and try

using earplugs if you live in a noisy neighborhood or sleep next to a snoring spouse.

Block gadget disruption. Stash your phone, tablet and digital watch away from your bed, or at least turn the sound off. Face your digital clock toward the wall so that you aren't distracted by luminescent numbers.

Ban pets from the bedroom—or at least keep them off the bed.

Try to fix emotional problems before bedtime. If you are a worrier, devote about 10 to 15 minutes before bedtime to your nagging concerns; then put a stop to them. If you're at odds with someone, send him or her a positive text or email—or determine to deal with the issue in the morning. In other words, "Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry" (Eph. 4:26). Doing so may prevent your anger from festering and growing further.

Establish and stick to a regular sleep schedule. Try to go to bed at the same time each night and wake up at the same time each morning, including on weekends. Getting up at the same time each day, regardless of how long you slept the previous night, will help set your internal body clock, which can keep insomnia at bay.

Read a book before bed. Preferably pick up something thick or tedious, such as Leviticus in the Old Testament. If you read the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament or the latest Stephen King thriller, it is likely to keep you up. Avoid reading from an e-reader or tablet; its light will keep your brain alert.

Don't take daytime naps—even if you have trouble sleeping at night. Napping is one of the biggest mistakes insomniacs can make since it compounds the nighttime sleep-cycle disruption.

Lull yourself to sleep with sound therapy. Listening to audio of soothing nature sounds or soft music, or taking in white

noise from a fan, may enable you to drift off easier. Studies show slower classical music or any music with a rhythm of 60 to 80 beats per minute may help with sleep.[iii] Sleep-enhancing music by Grammy Award-winning producer Barry Goldstein is available at .

Drink a cup of warm, unsweetened almond milk. Add a teaspoon of vanilla extract (the real stuff) and a few drops of stevia. The combination may increase serotonin in your brain, helping you sleep.

Don't exercise within four hours of bedtime. Regular workouts are a great way to combat insomnia, but vigorous exercise late in the evening may keep you up.

Wear socks to bed. Warm hands and feet are the best predictors of rapid sleep onset, according to researchers.

Cut out caffeinated beverages in the afternoon or evening. Refrain from drinking coffee, tea or other caffeinated beverages after 2 p.m. Also avoid chocolate, nicotine and alcohol—especially at night. Although alcohol can initially make you feel sleepy, it actually interrupts sleep.

Don't look at the clock if you wake up in the middle of the night. Checking the time can make you feel anxious, which aggravates the problem of sleeplessness.

Use the bed and bedroom only for sexual activity or sleep. Sexual activity releases muscle tension and a flood of natural hormones. Adults with healthy sex lives tend to sleep better and feel better overall. If you are unable to fall asleep or stay asleep, move to another room.

Stay away from benzodiazepines and traditional sleep medications. When medications are necessary, I often prescribe trazodone, gabapentin and amitriptyline to my patients.

Develop a relaxing nighttime routine that encourages

sleep. Turn off all electronic devices at least an hour before bedtime, and lower the lights in your house. A warm bath or shower, meditation, prayer or massage may also help you relax. (Download helpful meditations at .)

Adapted from *Memory Rescue: Supercharge Your Brain, Reverse Memory Loss, and Remember What Matters Most* by Daniel G. Amen, MD, available — from Tyndale House Publishers.

[i] R. C. Kessler et al., “Insomnia and the Performance of US Workers: Results from the American Insomnia Survey,” *Sleep* 34, no. 9 (September 1, 2011): 1161-71, doi:

[ii] E. J. Van Someren et al., “Disrupted Sleep: From Molecules to Cognition,” *Journal of Neuroscience* 35, no. 41 (October 14, 2015): 13889-95, doi: ; J. C. Chen et al., “Sleep Duration, Cognitive Decline, and Dementia Risk in Older Women,” *Alzheimer’s & Dementia* 12, no. 1 (January 2016): 21-33, doi:

[iii] L. Harmat L. J. Takács, and R. Bódizs, “Music Improves Sleep Quality in Students,” *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 62, no. 3 (May 2008): 327-35, doi:

How to Rediscover Wonder and Awe for God’s Word

Streams Ministries’ John E. Thomas wants believers to be on fire for the Bible. In this video, he points out the many different ways that the Bible should stimulate wonder and awe for the believer. What most amazes you about the Bible? Let us

know in the comments.