

Joyce Meyer: Praying Without a Doubt!

Prayer is a vital part of our relationship with God, and it's a great privilege, not an obligation.

When you really think about it, it's amazing to know that the God who created everything and knows everything actually wants us to come to Him boldly—through Christ—to have a relationship with Him.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) says, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." It's so important for us to trust God's love for us and know that He's merciful and sees us as righteous because of what Jesus has done for us (2 Cor. 5:21). If we don't, we will struggle to have confidence that He hears our prayers and wants to help us.

The truth is, God knows everything about us—what's right with us and what's wrong with us. He loves us unconditionally, and He wants to have a relationship with us and meet every need in our lives. Our imperfections have nothing to do with His ability and willingness to answer our prayers.

You Have to Believe

Doubt is a common hindrance to answered prayer, and when we experience it, it's usually because we're focusing on ourselves—our weaknesses and mistakes. The key is keeping our focus on God, trusting Him to give us wisdom and discernment so we know what to believe and what to do. James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

True wisdom comes from God, and He wants to give it to us "liberally and without reproach." "Liberally" means He gives

more than enough, and “without reproach” means that even when we’re in messes we’ve created ourselves, we can still go to God and He will help us.

Now, this doesn’t mean He won’t correct us, teach and train us when we’ve made a mistake. Like any parent who loves their children, He disciplines us because He loves us and wants what’s best for us. But when we’re in trouble, He doesn’t decide whether to help us or not based on our performance. His love is unconditional.

Here’s an example to demonstrate what I’m talking about: If my son were in trouble with the neighborhood bully and called for his dad and me to help him, we wouldn’t respond to him based on whether he had done all of his chores at home. It would be ridiculous if we heard him crying for help, yet we took time to check the list first to see if he had done everything he was supposed to do before we intervened.

As parents, we don’t refuse to help our children because they don’t do everything right, perfectly or the way we want them to all the time. God is our Father, and He knows we are not perfect. He wants to be involved in every part of our lives and we don’t ever have to doubt that!

Be Single-Minded

When we doubt God, we’re left midway between believing and not believing—we’re double-minded. But first Corinthians 2:16 says we can live with the mind of Christ. In other words, we can learn to think the way God thinks so we’re not led by the mind of the flesh, “which is sense and reason without the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 8:6b, AMPC).

James 1:6 says when we come to God for wisdom, it must be in faith “with no wavering (no hesitating, no doubting). For the one who wavers (hesitates, doubts) is like the billowing surge out at sea that is blown hither *and* thither and tossed by the wind.” This doesn’t mean we won’t ever feel doubt, but when we

do, we can know how to stand up to it.

Sometimes when I'm teaching, I doubt whether I'm sharing the "right" message based on how people seem to be responding to me. That's when I have to trust God and tell myself, "I've prayed about this. I've sought God about the teaching, and I'm not going to be double-minded. I trust God!"

I want to encourage you to ask God for the desires in your heart and then stand in faith for Him to do His will. Decide to trust Him and His Word, no matter what you feel, what people say or what your circumstances look like. The only thing that really matters is what God's Word says, and you will overcome doubt by putting your faith in Him every time you pray. {eoa}

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What Are Your Core Values in Life?

If you are not familiar with the phrase, let me explain to you exactly what a core value is.

Core values are the fundamental beliefs of a person. These guiding principles often dictate behavior and also help the person to understand the difference between right and wrong ... good and bad ... purposeful and wasteful ... valuable and worthless.

Your core values, when used as a moral map, can help determine whether or not you are on the right path in life.

So let me ask you again: What are your core values in life? Do you have any at all?

Now that I have explained what a core value is, let me give you an example.

I have a dear friend who loves adventure! The commitment to making life an adventure is one of her core values. She has climbed mountains, slept in tents in Africa and gone places that cause my heart to race and my blood pressure to rise. I actually have nightmares about the things that are on this woman's bucket list!

But because she is an adventure junkie, she has accomplished missions that I would never even think about! She works in remote parts of Africa to empower rural women through microenterprise opportunities and the message of the gospel.

All because "adventure" is one of her core values in life.

Perhaps to a homeschool parent, "family" is one of his or her core values in life.

Compassion must be a core value of a doctor or health professional.

I wish integrity and truth were the core values of more politicians!

Thriftiness was a core value to my dad, who was raised during the Depression.

The value of a hearty laugh has always been a core value to my mom who was born during the Depression and lived through the terrifying days of World War II.

The veracity of Scripture and the eternal truth found therein must be a core value to a pastor or to a Bible teacher like me.

As I was contemplating my core values over the past few months, I realized that I have a core value that perhaps I have never before identified. This particular core value has been birthed in me in the battle zones of depression, cancer, infertility, financial challenges, personal rejection and praying for children who have left their faith.

Now, I am ready to state this core value in a bold and assertive manner. What is this newly recognized core value?

It is the importance of thanking God for the hard times in life. To praise Him in the fire. To worship Him in the storm. To stand and say, "I love You, Lord" at the very worst moment of your life.

"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which perishes though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you

greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory!" (I Pet. 1:6-8, NIV, author's emphasis).

But let's go back to the beginning and allow me to explain how I got here, how I arrived at being able to sincerely express gratitude to the Lord for the hard times in life.

I try to be a grateful person.

I know the unseen yet rich power of simply having a thankful heart. I have always believed that being aware of one's blessings can turn a gray day into radiant sunshine. A grueling challenge into pure delight. An unwanted trial into rich joy.

I often count my blessings.

Food. Home. Family. Books to read. Clothes to wear. The laughter of children. Flowers blooming on my daily walk. My health. Sweet friends. My Bible. Open doors of ministry. Provision. A legacy of faith passed down to me through my heritage. My piano. The glorious changing of the season. A new grandbaby. The ability to travel. Raspberries.

And the list of undeserved blessings goes on and on and on.

However, as I have been contemplating my core value system, I have been struck by the fact that some of my greatest blessings have come disguised as the most difficult events of my life. (I swallow hard even as I admit that lovely yet aching truth.) So let me say it again:

Some of my greatest blessings in life have come disguised as the most difficult events of my life.

On one hand that statement is filled with rare anguish as I gaze at the battle scars of my life. And yet, even pain stares back at me with all of the beauty of the sun stubbornly shining through a stained-glass window.

I have met the Lord in the hard moments of life, and for that I am profoundly and humbly grateful.

As I sit here writing, and contemplating not only my blessings but also that which has caused me unremitting trauma that lingers even to this day, I am thankful for the valleys in life, for the wretched storms—and for the fierce fires.

I am thankful for the “hard.”

And so, one of my newly identified core values is this: It is vitally important to pause and to thank the Lord for the difficult days in life.

We should never ignore the breathtaking surety that the hard stuff prepares us for the great stuff.

I am abundantly aware of the advantages and the sheer good that has come my way and I must—I simply must—thank God often for the good. But truthfully, I am perhaps more thankful for the disappointments, the pain and the challenges than for any blessing that has made my life easier.

I can say with certainty that it is possible to grow through what you go through in life.

Perhaps my life message is found in these words: “Lord, I am grateful for the adversity I have experienced in life. I am a stronger, more vibrant woman because of it.”

“Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2-4, NASB).

I will thank God in the fire. I will praise Him in the storm. I will worship in the valley.

“The defining choice to praise Him no matter what—and

especially when life is at its worst—is a core value in my life.

“I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me upon the Rock of Ages.”—Charles Spurgeon {eoa}

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Why Israel Is Losing the Propaganda War in America

The proverbial elephant is in the room, and it is stomping on Israel. Yet I fear we are unwilling to see the future as it is unfolding in human history.

Israel is losing the global propaganda war. Its stance in the

world community has fallen in the last 10 years where even the USA is becoming divided over her right to govern her sovereign land she settled nearly 3,400 years ago.

When the rocket attacks from Hamas began, the weight of blame came not on the terrorists, but upon Israel. Violence against American Jews happened openly in New York City, Los Angeles and around the country by Palestinian thugs, the media hardly took notice.

When I read that 1,000 Apple employees sent their CEO a letter urging him to take the side of the Palestinians, I realized Israel was losing the propaganda war in America.

The Palestinian propaganda machine has been highly effective on our college campuses. Their indoctrination of young students has helped build a strong argument against Israel. Similarly, their manipulation and influence in the UN has changed the world view of Israel.

Remember, there are hundreds of millions of Arabs with much wealth and influence in our world compared to the 8 million Jews in Israel and the several other million Jews around the globe. The Arabs have the resources to spread their false narrative and influence our colleges with their grant money and nations with their oil production.

We have leaders in Congress who openly state that Hamas is justified in their rocket attacks on Israel. Even though there has been some pushback from President Biden, no real action has been taken to condemn this outrageous and false narrative against Israel.

What if before we entered the Second World War, we had leaders in Congress say Nazi Germany was justified in bombing France and then England. They would have been run out of town.

I found it interesting that one of the members of Congress called the Palestinians Arabs. They went on to condemn Israel

as an occupying colonial power. I thought, how ignorant and misinformed she was.

If the Palestinians are Arabs, then they came into the land after the Muslim Arabs conquered Jerusalem at the end of the 7th century A.D. The Jews had settled this same land close to 2,000 years prior. This is common history.

If anyone would like to read a true account of the history of the Arab/Palestinian and Israel conflict read, "From Time Immemorial," by Joan Peters, published in 1984. Joan was an ardent activist who marched with Martin Luther King.

She then went to Israel to defend the Palestinian cause against Israel. What she discovered stunned her. The fault of the Arab-Jewish struggle could not be laid at the door of the Jews, but it was the fault of the Arabs, especially since the land had been settled by the Jews nearly 2,000 years before the Arabs conquered the land from the Byzantines, who had occupied the Jewish state inherited from the Roman Empire, who had taken it from the descendants of Alexander the Great, who had driven out the Persians, who had inherited it from the Babylonians.

The Jews had been in the land for around 800 years before the Babylonians took Jerusalem and sent the Jews into exile in 605 B.C. They then returned 70 years later to resettle their homeland.

Yet, the Palestinians have sold many of the nations of the world the falsehood that it is their land and even say Jesus was not a Jew, but a Palestinian. Why is this not challenged by the media and our world leaders?

You cannot win the argument when your foundational premise is based on a lie. Darkness is the devil's friend. The false narrative against Israel is darkness.

Now, I am not dismissing the suffering of the Palestinian

people, but it is their own brother and sister Arabs that have brought this suffering upon them. Because of the terrorism the PLO, then Hezzbollah and Hamas and many other misled Arabs have caused such death and acts of terror in Israel, that the Jewish state had to act to stop the horrors of terrorism within their borders.

The Jews are completely open to live as one with the Arabs in Israel. But they must defend themselves against the objectives of Iran and the terror organizations to destroy Israel as a nation and establish Arab-Muslim rule over Jerusalem and the land.

Israel has an impressive army and the backing of America in their opposition to the Arab-Muslim goal to drive them into the sea. Now, I want to share what few are willing to declare. The other elephant in the room: God is on Israel's side. That is not to say God is against the Arab/Palestinians, but God's plan of redemption runs through the Jews. Jesus is Jewish!

The Bible has foretold all the world events that are happening, especially with Israel. The Jewish prophets from Isaiah to Zachariah wrote of what is occurring now and in the past 150 years.

Isaiah prophesied that Israel would be reborn in a day. That happened by U.N. decree in 1948. Jeremiah foretold that God would bring the Jews home from the four corners of the earth. That began around 150 years ago as a trickle and now a river of Jews are coming home.

Daniel prophesied God's kingdom in Israel through the Messiah, that it would become the last and greatest kingdom on earth.

Daniel, Ezekiel and Zechariah also prophesied of the end time wars that would lead to the coming of the Messiah. Zechariah went so far as to say that the nations of the earth would gather against Jerusalem and take half the city before the Messiah would come to destroy these nations.

These nations are the goat nations that Jesus said would not bless Israel, but condemn her and seek to destroy her. Jesus would judge these nations for their unwillingness to help "the least of these."

Jesus prophesied that there would come a time when Jerusalem would no longer be trampled by the Gentiles. This was fulfilled in 1967 when the Jews re-established Jerusalem as their capital in the 6 Day War.

These are but a few of the prophecies concerning Israel and the land. There are numerous other prophecies given in the Bible all coming true as predicted!

There will be no lasting peace until the Messiah comes to deliver Israel in a greater miracle than the Red Sea. This miracle began in the return of the Jews to their homeland as Jeremiah prophesied and will end in the Messiah coming from heaven to usher in God's promise of peace and justice which will come forth from the Messiah as He establishes His rule over all the nations of the earth centered in Jerusalem.

We dare not come against God and His plan for Israel. That does not mean we cannot assist in helping the Palestinians, but not at Israel's expense. The land is Israel's by God's decree given to Abraham around 2000 B.C. That is the covenant of God, fulfilled in Jesus Christ 2,000 years later.

People can debate this and even deny it, but the truth is God's hand is on Israel. The Bible prophecies make it clear God will protect Israel and defeat all armies that come against her. Since 1948, this has happened in miraculous ways as Israel defeated all armies that have come against her despite overwhelming odds. There is no other explanation but God.

There will be no solution to the Israel predicament until the Messiah comes. We are wasting our energies in trying to come up with a two-nation solution. The best answer is to bring

about reconciliation between the Jews and Arabs, but the terrorists will not permit it, nor will Iran.

Thus, we need to defend Israel as one nation, not divide the land and pray for the Messiah to come. War is inevitable in the end. Truth is the only answer. Lies will only result in more darkness. Jesus said He was the way, the truth and the life ... The truth will set you free.

P.S. A dear friend of mine read the draft of this article, and he reminded me the land of Israel is God's land, Jeremiah 2:7 and Joel 3:2. God gave the land to Abraham and his descendants. We should honor what God desires, or He may curse our land. Therefore, Israel has a responsibility to be the best stewards of this gift from God.

What does that mean in terms of dealing with the Arab/Palestinians? {eoa}

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Prophetic Word: The Lord Is Pouring Out a New Anointing for Parents

Beloved, have you struggled with being a parent? Have you strangely found yourself in the middle of a heart change lately, being drawn more toward your home, family and children than ever before?

If so, then today's encouraging word is for you!

I saw in the Spirit that the Lord is pouring out a new anointing for parents and parenting.

Many people have loved their children, but struggled to focus on them because of the cares of the world and stresses of life. You have done your best, but felt overwhelmed much of the time.

But in the Spirit, I saw the Lord pouring out a fresh anointing of the spirit of Elijah.

This is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in which He moves specifically to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers (and mothers), and the hearts of the fathers (and mothers) to the children. As it says in Malachi chapter 4:

“See, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreaded day of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse” (Mal. 4:5-6).

Those who are receiving this anointing are suddenly finding themselves content and fulfilled at home when they never felt that way before.

They suddenly find themselves yearning for their children even during the day when they are used to working and the children are accustomed to being in school or with helpers and caregivers. Many have lost their drive to do things they used to feel were important outside the home, and they are wondering if something is wrong with them!

If that describes you, Father says this to you today:

“My child, I gave you the desire of your heart when I gave you your children. You did not have the capacity at first to love them as I love you, however, so I am giving you that capacity right now.

“My child, I am not mad at you. You have been so faithful. But I want you to know that your children are a heritage from Me; the fruit of the womb is your reward. And I want you to fully enjoy your reward, both for My sake, for your sake, and for your children’s sake.

“So I am anointing you to be at home.

“I am anointing you to rest and create peaceful places for yourself and your family. I am anointing you to love your children well; to invest in them; to be best friends with your spouse; and to love your spouse as I desire you to love them.

“I am rebooting your love-walk, and the first place your love-walk belongs is in the home.

“Your home is a place that is supposed to be peaceful, restful, safe and lovely. It is supposed to be a place of harmony and unity with Me and with the others I have placed in your life. I care greatly about your home, and it has been neglected for far too long.

“My beloved, again, I am not mad at you. We are simply going to fix this together.

“I am anointing you to be at home because it is the best place

for you to be. This doesn't mean you won't go to other places also; you need to go to other places throughout the course of your daily life.

"But home is and is supposed to be the *best* place for you; the most wonderful place of all the places you go. It is the place I have prepared for you, and it should shine brighter in your heart than all the loveliest places you may venture throughout your day.

"Oh, My beloved, I love you so much. I want the best for you. So I am anointing you for the best things, and although the old anointing will not pass away, it will diminish in the place of your priorities down to where I originally intended for it to be.

"My child, I love you so much. I have prepared a nest for you.

"Remember what My Son said when He left the earth? He said, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' He meant both in My heaven *and* on the earth, My friend and child and beloved one.

"Remember that as it is in heaven, so it should and must be on the earth. So is it not right that I should manifest a place for you on earth just like I have in heaven? That was My first act, after all—to create a cradle for your very existence, made right out of the lovely earth. I planted a garden because I wanted you to have the loveliest home.

"Beloved, *I care about your home!*

"I care about everything that concerns you, and I am turning your heart toward home. I am turning your yearning to the things that last; the things that are forever:

– Your relationship with Me.

– Your children.

–The legacy of your marriage.

“O My child, you were bought with the price of My Son’s precious blood. Did you really think I would abandon you? I am not leaving you, and you have not lost your anointing. Instead, I have given you a new and greater anointing for the things that really matter the most.

“Beloved one, turn your heart to Me. Turn your heart to the things upon which I am focused, instead of looking at temporal things.

“Be willing to accept this anointing of Elijah, which will turn your world upside down. And why do I say it will turn your world upside down? Because your world was not right-side-up to begin with.

“You were looking at the ‘Martha’ things, but now I want you to look at the ‘Mary’ things of just sitting at My feet, enjoying the children and family I have given you, and investing in them fully *before* you do the temporal things that concern you in life.

“I am with you always, My child. Never forget it.

“Love, Abba.”

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Pastor Tony Evans Says You Can Make U-Turns to Find Success in Life

Have you ever felt like you've damaged your life so much with bad decisions that you don't believe you can ever find your way out of the hole?

Dr. Tony Evans, a pastor, teacher, author and speaker, says he's seen that type of discouragement in believers almost everywhere he goes. But he says with God, the damage isn't irreversible, and nothing is impossible.

Evans wrote his book *U-Turns*, to help believers know that when they align their life choices with God by pursuing an intimate relationship with Him, they can experience the abundant life Jesus died to give them.

"So many people are living with regrets, failures, sins and circumstances that have negatively affected them because they're having to live with the consequences," Evans tells Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "Sometimes it's from their own decisions; sometimes it's from the impact of the decisions others have made for them.

"And those consequences, those negative repercussions are discouraging them or limiting them and are causing them not to maximize their potential," he says. "So, I wanted to write a book of hope.

"Yes, there are consequences to being a sinner and living in a sinful world," Evans says. "But the beautiful thing about our

faith is that the consequences don't have to have the last say. They don't always immediately disappear, but we no longer have to be held hostage to them. So, my writing the book was to give hope, based on the fact that God is a hope-giving God, even when we are dealing with the repercussions of our own decisions that have given us negative circumstances."

For the rest of this encouraging interview with Tony Evans, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* at this link, and be sure to subscribe to *Greenelines* on your favorite podcast platform. {eoa}

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Wisdom From David Wilkerson Christians Need to Hear Right Now

"When God determined to recover a ruined situation, he would find a man and baptize him in anguish" –David Wilkerson.

And this is exactly what we need today!

Anguish is defined as severe physical or emotional pain or distress. Spiritual anguish is when we feel deeply the things that reflect the heart of God. Prophetic voices have always sounded the alarm and called people to weep over the things that break the heart of God. Jeremiah lamented, "My soul, my soul! I am pained in my very heart" (Jer. 4:19a). And God told Isaiah to "Cry aloud, do not hold back. Lift up your voice

like a trumpet” to warn the people of their sin (Isa. 58:1a).

In the New Testament, John the Baptist was the “voice of one crying out in the wilderness” (John 1:23a). Even Jesus experienced deep anguish when he cried out, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing!” (Luke 13:34).

Anguish Over the Ruins

The book of Nehemiah begins with Jerusalem in ruins: “When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days. Then I fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven” (Neh. 1:4). Later in the book, Nehemiah said to the king, “Why should not my face be troubled when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies waste, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?” (Neh. 2:3).

We only need to look at the devastating drift from God’s moral standard in America to understand Nehemiah’s lament. From the school districts to the courtrooms, and from the media to manipulating news outlets, the outright perversion is extremely alarming. We are drowning in a cesspool of moral filth: “The wicked strut about on every side
When vileness is exalted among the sons of mankind” (Ps. 12:8, NASB). Where is the anguish?

The gates of the city represented security, commerce and justice, all of which had decayed. As it was then, so it is today. The ruins are all around us as well. Security and justice are being exchanged for corruption and manipulation, and commerce is being replaced with socialism. Again, where is the anguish? Where is the desperation? Where is the righteous indignation? The woke church isn’t waking anyone up, and the dead church isn’t reviving anyone. We need true prophetic voices again to sound the alarm: “Return to Me, and I will

return to you, says the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. 1:3, MEV).

Anguish Sparks Spiritual Awakenings

Anguish is where a deep prayer life and revival are born: "Lord, God of my salvation, I cry out before You day and night. May my prayer reach Your presence; listen to my cry" (Ps. 88:1-2 HCSB). Anguish fears judgment but also knows that there is hope: "When Zion travails, sons and daughters are born" (see Isa. 66:8).

In 1930, there was a powerful awakening at a school for the sons of missionaries in South India. It was traced to three young boys who were in anguish over the lack of spiritual fervor at the school. God answered their prayers and brought intense spiritual hunger.

In 1949, The Hebrides Revival in Scotland began when two elderly sisters were in anguish over the desperate need for revival. They told the pastor that both of them would pull down heaven by praying from ten o'clock at night until two o'clock in the morning. Their anguish prevailed and spiritual fire was ignited. We must once again reach this level of desperation.

Anguish Over a Lack of Spiritual Hunger

To awaken our spiritual appetite, there must be a continual hunger and thirst for God. Matthew 5:6 tells us that only those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled. Are you in anguish over the spiritual condition of our families, nation, and church—over the lack of righteousness? Then ask God to awaken your barren and dry soul by setting aside time to fast and pray.

Evangelical author Neil T. Anderson once asked a high priest of Satanism this question: "Based on your experience of the other side, what is the Christian's best line of defense?" The Satanist responded, "Prayer, and when you pray, mean it.

Fervent prayer stops Satan's activity like nothing else."

Decades ago, Gordon Cove challenged readers when he wrote, "You have not sought the Lord with '*your whole heart*' until you have tried a protracted season of prayer and fasting." Could a lack of prayer and fasting be hindering you from understanding the heart of God? Absolutely. Desperate times call for desperate measures.

Anguish Over Sin Leads to Salvation

Another important aspect of anguish involves us realizing our utter depravity and our need for complete reliance on God. Jesus cried out in deep anguish on the cross for us and we must cry out to Him: "Oh God, save me, a sinner ... have mercy on me."

Don't let feelings of unworthiness keep you from surrendering and submitting your life to Jesus. Paraphrasing C.H. Spurgeon, "When Satan tells me I am unworthy, I remind Him that I've always been unworthy, and yet, God still loves me." Feelings of unworthiness do not prevent you from having fellowship with Him. Make the choice today and turn your life completely over to Him. Your anguish over sin will be turned into tremendous peace and joy: "Therefore if the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Hear the sermon where this article originated here. {eoa}

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Dr. Tim Clinton Urges Men: Don't Despise Mundane Assignments

In the Bible, it is written that David was given a simple assignment: to deliver lunch and supplies to his older brothers' camp, out by the battle. But as we know, God had something greater planned.

In their book, *Take It Back: Reclaiming Biblical Masculinity—The Heart and Strength of Being a Man*, Dr. Tim Clinton and Max Davis show parallels between David's experience and that of NFL running back Bob Brunet. The comparison demonstrates that opportunity awaits when we least expect it, cloaked in a veil of mundane activity, masquerading as an enemy or obstacle, but which ends up providing the means to fulfilling God's will in our lives if we rise to the challenge.

"As David was handing out sandwiches and chips, Goliath stepped onto the scene and issued his challenge," says Clinton. "And David stepped up. Little did David know, taking on Goliath would launch him into his destiny. Without the challenge of an enemy in the presence of his peers, David would have never been promoted to the next level. Hear me on this: God often uses an enemy to catapult you into your calling. But you've got to step up. Your giant can be your opportunity."

Just as David was a teenager when faced with his giant, so too was Brunet when his giant arose. In his case, it was a series of unfortunate events in his young life that prevented him

from playing football until the playoffs during his senior year of high school in the tiny, south Louisiana town of Larose.

Starting in junior high, Brunet recounts events that seemed to work against his chances of ever playing football. Though he was a fast runner, he didn't make the sixth grade Pee Wee League team because he had been ill the week before and couldn't run fast enough during tryouts. In his sophomore year of high school, he missed spring training due to his after-school job; in his junior year he made the team but didn't make the traveling squad. Then, before his senior year, he was diagnosed with a slipped disc, but the coach let him stay on the team as equipment manager. And that is how Bob, like David, ended up bringing food and drinks to his "brothers" on the team.

The team made it to the playoffs, but in a strange turn of events, their top two running backs were injured in the last regular season game and couldn't play. By that time, Brunet had recovered from his injury, and, as a last-ditch effort, the coach put him in the first playoff game.

"Despite not having any previous playing time, Brunet played really well, and he was in the starting lineup all the way through the playoffs to the state championship game," says Dr. Clinton. "Brunet had been faithful, and that put him in the right place at the right time to step into the opportunity offered to him."

Dr. Clinton marvels at the fairytale ending that happened next: "During the championship game, a coach for Louisiana Tech was in the stands. He had come to watch some other players, but he liked what he saw in Brunet. After the game, the Tech coach approached Coach LeBlanc and asked him about number 23. LeBlanc couldn't even recall that a number 23 was on the team. Then he responded, 'Oh, that's my manager. We lost our starter to injury, so Robert was filling in for us.'

That night, the Louisiana Tech coach offered Bob Brunet a scholarship, and he accepted (even though he had never heard of Louisiana Tech).”

Brunet’s opportunity showed up when two running backs went down, and the opposing team was the threatening “giant.” “He had to make a choice to lay down the water bucket and respond to the coach’s call. I’m sure it was intimidating. After all, he had not been practicing or playing with the team,” says Clinton. “But he was ready because he knew what was inside him. Don’t despise mundane assignments. Facing giants is often preceded by routine tasks.”

Just as David stepped up and later became king, Bob stepped up and was later drafted by the Washington Redskins, resulting in a football career that spanned 10 seasons, with a Super Bowl appearance in 1973, and being rated the NFL’s No.1 special teams’ player during that time.

“If [either] had not been prepared mentally, physically and spiritually to face a giant, [each] would have missed his opportunity. Be ready. Live ready,” Clinton says. “You never know when your giant is going to show up and issue a challenge.”

And Clinton leaves men with these thoughts: “The people in your circle of influence may need someone to step up for them, a champion fighter to stand in the face of the enemy and declare, ‘The Lord God is with me, and He will prevail!’

“We need men to say they’ve had enough, men whom the world can look up to as examples of faith and encouragement, men who know what’s inside them and are ready to do the right thing at the right time.”

In *Take It Back: Reclaiming Biblical Masculinity – The Heart and Strength of Being a Man*, Clinton, president of the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC), challenges readers to reject the culture’s redefinition and

seek biblical examples of true manhood. Fast-paced, filled with relevant, biblical stories of godly men like David and Nehemiah and contemporary stories of godly men like George Foreman and Tim Tebow, *Take It Back* empowers men to be who God created them to be and to impact the culture that is in desperate need of their influence. Study and discussion questions at the end of each chapter make *Take It Back* a perfect resource for men's Bible studies and small groups.

Dr. Tim Clinton, EdD, LPC, LMFT, is president of AACC, the largest and most diverse Christian counseling association in the world. Dr. Clinton also serves as co-host of *Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk*, heard on nearly 1400 radio outlets daily. Licensed as a professional counselor and as a marriage and family therapist, Dr. Clinton is recognized as a world leader in mental health and relationship issues and spends much of his time working with Christian leaders and professional athletes. He has authored or edited nearly 30 books. Dr. Clinton and his wife, Julie, have two children and a granddaughter.

Max Davis is the author of over 30 books that have been featured in *USA Today*, *Publisher's Weekly*, Bible Gateway, and on the *Today* show and *The 700 Club*. He holds degrees in journalism and biblical studies. In addition to his own works, he's done a variety of collaboration projects with highly notable leaders.

Take It Back was released on April 6 by Charisma House, which publishes books that challenge, encourage, teach and equip Christians. {eoa}

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

CN Morning Rundown: A University Student Suffering Discrimination for Religious Beliefs Receives Vindication

Here's a quick summary of the top stories on :

University Student Suffering Discrimination for Religious Beliefs Is Vindicated in Court

Religious freedom comes at a price—one that Florida State University student Jack Denton no longer has to pay.

The university has settled a religious freedom lawsuit on behalf of former student Jack Denton, who was discriminated against for sharing his faith in a private student club chat.

Denton served as the Student Senate president at FSU. Prior to this role, he was actively involved in student government. He shared his Catholic faith with his peers—many of whom he considered friends—in a private chat.

The Dangers of Self-Diagnosed Gender Dysphoria

Last Sunday, CBS News featured a segment on its *60 Minutes* program which highlighted the dangerous trend of quickly affirming gender dysphoria and rushing individuals through the process of sexual “transitioning.” Radical, surgical changes (including breast and testicle removal) can never be reversed, though the individuals may regret their decisions later.

Abigail Shrier, a writer for the *Wall Street Journal* and the author of *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*, reported on Twitter that the *60 Minutes* investigative segment acknowledged “the role of peer influence & social media in encouraging trans identification in teens,

the rising population of de-transitioners, & a medical system that 'affirms' self-diagnoses of gender dysphoria in place of adequate oversight."

Transgenderism is a dangerous and destructive ideology. And, it is about to be used to transform civil rights legislation and affect us all. Earlier this year, the so-called Equality Act was reintroduced into the U.S. House of Representatives as H.R. 5, after failing to receive Senate approval in 2019. This time, it passed the Democrat-dominated House and now waits to be considered in the Senate.

Dr. Fauci Admits Support for Investigation Into COVID-19 Origins

In the early spring 2020, Dr. Anthony Fauci rejected any thought that COVID-19 could have spawned from the level four lab at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, labeling it "conspiracy theory."

In an interview between Dr. Fauci and *PolitiFact* editor Katie Saunders, he changed his position on the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic and where the fault for the outbreak could lie.

When asked to comment, he recently said, "No, I'm not convinced about that. I think that we should continue to investigate what went on in China until we find out, to the best of our ability, exactly what happened." {eoa}

Read breaking news like this and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

The Inspiring Faith of an Australian Gospel Worker Detained in North Korea

If it was a crime to tell other people about Jesus, would there be enough evidence to find you guilty as charged?

In North Korea it is a crime to tell others about Jesus, and Australian John Short was charged and put on trial.

Short is an Australian gospel worker who was detained in North Korea after depositing gospel tracts outside a Buddhist temple during a tourist visit inside the “hermit kingdom.” You can hear him tell the amazing story on *Forbidden Faith: Inspiring Conversations with Persecuted Christians* on the Charisma Podcast Network.

In spite of pressure and physical discomfort, Short refused to give in to fear. He says there isn’t room for both faith and fear in the heart at the same time—so he chose faith instead of fear. Short was encouraged by the example of persecuted Chinese Christians with whom he had ministered and fellowshiped during many years serving the body of Christ in China.

Listen as John shares about his experience being interrogated every morning and evening for days on end, including being forced to write a detailed summary of his activities during every year of his life (he was 75 at the time of his arrest).

In addition to John’s side of the story, listeners can hear John’s wife, Karen, tell what it was like to have no word from John during his 15-day detainment. In this special bonus episode of *Forbidden Faith* with Karen Short, you’ll also hear about the powerful impact the spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting made not only in John and Karen’s spiritual lives

but in those around them as well.

Listen now to hear John share his experience—and God’s faithfulness—while he was a prisoner in North Korea.

You can find out more information about what following Christ is like for Christians in North Korea through Voice of the Martyrs’ 2021 Global Prayer Guide. The Global Prayer Guide is a full-color book with country summaries on 60 hostile areas and restricted nations where the Voice of the Martyrs currently serves persecuted Christians. For each country, readers get a general overview of the situation for Christians, who the primary persecutors are, what it means to follow Christ in that country, how difficult it is to get Bibles and a summary of VOM’s ongoing work there.

Request your free copy of VOM’s 2021 Global Prayer Guide now and listen to inspiring conversations with persecuted Christians on *Forbidden Faith* today. {eoa}

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.

Larry Tomczak: Ready Responses to Rescue People From Deception

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel ...deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed ...” (Luke 4:18).

The last time I spoke in Washington, D.C., I had the privilege

of interacting with a distinguished ambassador from Africa. In this prestigious position he represents his country and government and enjoys excellent pay and benefits while declaring and demonstrating the best his country has to offer.

Are you aware that God honors you with this title as His ambassador, and that in this special assignment, He instructs you: "Always be ready to give an answer to every man who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you." (1 Pet. 3:15)?

The Bible tells us, "knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men ... we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us" (2 Cor. 5:19-20).

This ministry is essential, not optional, for us to "hasten the return of the Lord" (2 Pet. 3:12) and rescue people from deception to discover a dynamic, transformative relationship with Jesus.

Truth Sets People Free

After my teenage years of deception playing in the rock band, "The Lost Souls," in Cleveland, I was easy prey for the enemy in the turbulent 1960s. Yet God was faithful to bring people across my path who helped dispel lies prevalent in the culture that I was believing, not only about Christianity but ideas seducing scores on a pathway to destruction. My best friend, Chuck, was dead at 23 having succumbed to Satan, the "father of lies" (John 8:44).

Christians were God's ambassadors who conveyed truth to me the same way Jesus did in dealing with deception. Confronting falsehoods, He stated confidently, "It is written ... It is written ... It is written ..." (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). He told us, "If you remain in My word then you are truly My disciples. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. ... Therefore, if the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:31-32, 36).

Today, the crisis in our culture is a crisis of truth. Journalistic standards have collapsed and we are daily bombarded with narratives undermining Judeo-Christian foundations previously upheld. Radical “progressives” are propagandizing our children, youth and the general population to replace traditional America with a socialist, secular model.

The opportunity is at hand for all of us as His ambassadors to rule over the enemy’s schemes by bringing the scepter of truth. “The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying ‘Rule in the midst of Thine enemies.’ Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power” (-3, NAS).

May the following be a resource to help you in this battle! Print it, post it and pass it along to others. I also strongly encourage you to make use of the 30 free 3-minute YouTube videos at so you will be an informed influencer, confidently and winsomely communicating truth on the 30 hot button issues of our day.

Responses to Rescue the Deceived

- **All roads lead to God.** “No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6).
- **You’re too narrow minded.** “Narrow is the way that leads to eternal life and there are few who find it” (Matt. 7:13).
- **There is no hell.** “But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell” (Matt. 10:28).
- **No one can know if there’s a God.** “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Ps. 19:1).
- **God is love; all will be saved.** “There is no salvation in any other, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

- **The Bible was written by man; it's full of contradictions.** "All Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim. 3:16a).
- **Man is basically good.** "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).
- **Believing generally in God is enough.** "Do you believe that there is one God; you do well. The demons also believe and tremble" (Jam. 2:19).
- **Jesus? I stay neutral.** "You are either for Me or against Me" (Matt. 12:30).
- **I'll think about it and decide later.** "Look, now is the accepted time; look, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).
- **Sending people to hell is unjust.** "But God is patient with us, because He does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).
- **Abortion is not about a child; it's just tissue.** "But as soon as she delivers the child, she no longer remembers the anguish for joy that a child is born into the world" (John 16:21).
- **There's nothing wrong with homosexual/lesbian marriage.** "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife" (Matt. 19:5).
- **Transgender is fine; people choose their gender.** "He who made them at the beginning made them male and female" (Matt. 19:4).
- **Open the borders. Immigrants aren't wrong for sneaking in.** "He who does not enter by the door into the fold... but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber" (John 10:1).
- **Everyone has to find his own way.** "There is a way that

seems right to a man, but it's end is the way of death" (Prov. 14:12).

- **I don't believe in God.** "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps. 14:1).

Here's the Deal: "The servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but must be gentle toward all people, able to teach, patient, in gentleness instructing those in opposition. Perhaps God will grant them repentance to know the truth, and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will" (1 Tim. 2:24-26). {eoa}

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