

Shifting Atmospheres

Spiritual

The enemy is always at work against us, but God and His power are greater. In this enlightening teaching, Dawna de Silva unpacks the concept of shifting spiritual atmospheres.

R.T. Kendall: How to Get More of God

R.T. Kendall explains how to have a deeper, relationship with God in this excerpt from one of his life-changing sermons. Experience God alongside this world-renowned scholar and Bible teacher.

Dr. Bill Hamon: The Day I Met Michael the Archangel

Dr. Bill Hamon shares with *Sid Roth's It's Supernatural!* how a private audience with Michael the archangel changed his life forever. Watch and glean from his prophetic insights.

A Dramatic Definition of 'Radical': The Jim Bakker Show

"A radical is somebody that says, 'I'm so passionate about this that I'm gonna do it afraid.'" Donna Howell explains her powerful definition in this episode of *The Jim Bakker Show*. This clip will bless and inspire you.

Anne Graham Lotz: Is God Speaking Through the Storms?

As Irma was hitting the Florida Keys, I received a request from to submit an article along the lines of what I would say to those after the storms passed. I agreed to do my best, but knew immediately that I didn't want to write what I wanted to say, but what God wanted to say. And so I began to earnestly seek Him. I knew I needed to be very careful not to put words in His mouth. Did He have something to say through the storms? The following is what came to me. It was posted on the homepage Sept. 12.

Within weeks, we have experienced record-breaking fires in the Northwest, record-breaking hurricanes in Texas and Florida and a record-breaking earthquake in Mexico. What is happening? Are these disasters random? Just freaks of nature? Or is something

more significant intended? The answer may be found in an incredible biblical story.

The Old Testament book of 1 Kings 19 records a dramatic scene when the Lord God passed by as the prophet Elijah stood in the mouth of a cave. The description is eerily similar to ours, because first there was a great and powerful wind, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a still, small voice—the gentle voice of Father God speaking to His frightened, weary child.

God used the earthquake, wind and fire to get Elijah's attention, because God had something to say. Our situation is so similar to Elijah's it begs the question: Is God using these storms to get our attention because He also has something to say to us? Yes, He is. What is it? I believe God is saying in essence what He said to Elijah. His message can be broken into four parts:

- **Be comforted.** The fact that God spoke to Elijah revealed God's presence. God is with us. He has promised, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5b) God is right there. With you. Now! And He understands what it feels like to be stripped of everything.
- **Be blessed.** God told Elijah He would bring help. And God did. He brought Elisha alongside. God will bring us help, too: First responders, FEMA, friends, neighbors, family—even strangers will come alongside to help in the work of rebuilding. They are moved to do so by the Spirit of God, so even in the mess, mold, muck and misery, we are aware of heaven's blessing.
- **Be encouraged.** God told Elijah there were more faithful believers in God than Elijah was aware of, implying Elijah's life had been more impactful than he knew. Our lives also have eternal significance. No man is an island. Life is not just about you. Me. These storms

have given ample opportunity for us to understand that life is about something bigger than we are. It's a good time to reorder our priorities and private world.

- **Be ready.** God gave Elijah another assignment—a purpose. And I believe God has a purpose for us. We need to look to Him and be ready for what's coming next. Because soon after Elijah's sensational confrontation with God, he was "raptured." Taken up into heaven without seeing death. Don't miss this implied message. In the words of Jesus, "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God. Believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, you may be also" (John 14:1-3). Heaven is waiting! *Jesus is coming!* The signs He gave signal that His coming is imminent. On that day, don't be left behind. Be ready to meet Him face to face. Turn to Him now. Place your trust in Jesus.

God *is* speaking through the storms. Are you listening?

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This article originally appeared at .

How Matthew 19:26 Gives You a

Righteous Response for Hard Times

During and after the effects of Harvey and Irma, people helped people and strangers became neighbors. Good people did good things. God's people did good things. Of course, this doesn't diminish the reality of definite heartache.

In addition to noticing the good that people did during hard times, let's notice the good God did. Yes, there was a tragic loss of life and property. Yet, God is a miracle worker. He was there with people as they faced dire circumstances. He is still there.

As a believer in God and as a believer in the holy Word of God, I know God is good. I choose to believe what the Bible teaches. Even when storms surge, God is good. Still good. Always good.

What if we looked for His goodness more intentionally? Let's talk about His protection, how much worse things could have been, and all that did *not* go wrong. Let's testify that God is strong, wise, and omnipotent. He is almighty and infinite in power.

Sometimes it's hard to see God's goodness in the midst of hard times.

Destruction. Fear. Danger.

Sometimes, we don't take the time to notice. We're not seeing what He's doing. We might expect God to show up in one way. But when He doesn't, we get disappointed and decide He wasn't there for us. What if we had looked for other evidence?

God might prove His goodness in surprising ways. Listen to stories from friends and colleagues. Help them see God in

their story. Enter into conversations with others trying to process all the damage. Let's help them believe God was not surprised. He is still there.

The following story is one of my favorite examples of God being good in a surprising way that almost wasn't recognized. There's no evidence it's true, but I could see how it could have been. I hope you enjoy it. I also hope it reminds you that God answers our prayers in His ways that are best. Let's look for Him more in good times and bad. Then, let's share what we see.

God Works in Mysterious Ways

During World War II, a U.S. Marine was separated from his unit on a Pacific island. The fighting had been intense, and in the smoke and the crossfire he had lost touch with his comrades.

Alone in the jungle, he could hear enemy soldiers coming in his direction.

Scrambling for cover, he found his way up a high ridge to several small caves in the rock. Quickly he crawled inside one of the caves. Although safe for the moment, he realized that once the enemy soldiers looking for him swept up the ridge, they would quickly search all the caves, and he would be killed.

As he waited, he prayed, "Lord, if it be Your will, please protect me. Whatever Your will is, though, I love You and trust You. Amen."

After praying, he lay quietly, listening to the enemy begin to draw close. He thought, "Well, I guess the Lord isn't going to help me out of this one." Then he saw a spider begin to build a web over the front of his cave.

As he watched, listening to the enemy searching for him all the while, the spider layered strand after strand of web

across the opening of the cave.

“Hah,” he thought. “What I need is a brick wall, and what the Lord has sent me is a spider web. God does have a sense of humor.”

As the enemy drew closer, he watched from the darkness of his hideout and could see them searching one cave after another. As they came to his, he got ready to make his last stand. To his amazement, however, after glancing in the direction of his cave, they moved on. Suddenly, he realized that with the spider web over the entrance, his cave looked as if no one had entered for quite a while.

“Lord, forgive me,” prayed the young man. “I had forgotten that in You, a spider’s web is stronger than a brick wall.”

We All Forget at Times

We all face times of great trouble. When we do, it is so easy to forget what God can work in our lives, sometimes in the most surprising ways. And remember with God, a mere spider’s web becomes a brick wall of protection.

Dr. Kathy Koch *is the author of* Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World.

This article originally appeared at .

When You Need a Miracle, Here’s Help

Do you need a miracle? Then it’s of utmost importance to seek out and surround yourself with people of faith. Why? In 1

Corinthians 15:33, we are warned about the people we keep company with. It clearly states, "Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."

This word "corrupts" in Greek is *phtheirō* and it means to "defile, destroy, deprave." This draws a pretty clear picture of what happens to our habits of faith when we do not align ourselves correctly with others of strong faith. Think about this for a while. When you align yourself with people of weak faith or people who are ignorant of the supernatural power of faith, you allow them to defile your faith. The Merriam-Webster online definition of "defile" is "to make impure or unclean." It also means to contaminate, which implies intrusion of or contact with dirt or foulness from an outside source. It describes "deprave" as "to pervert or to pollute," and it describes "destroy" as "to put an end to the existence of [something] by damaging or attacking it."

It's worth the effort to search the real meaning of the words used in the Bible, and in this case, you can see the seriousness of choosing the company you keep. The last thing you need when activating your faith for a miracle is to be surrounded by unbelieving people, including unbelieving believers. These types of people will put an end to the existence of your miracle by damaging or attacking your faith. They will contaminate your faith, make it impure or unclean with their doubt. You cannot afford to pollute your faith with their unbelief.

What did Jesus do when He encountered a room full of doubt? He kicked the doubters out. He did not allow them to contaminate the spiritual atmosphere with their unbelief. Let's read this testimony from Luke 8: 50-55:

But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, "Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be made well."

When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in

except Peter, John and James, and the father and mother of the girl. All wept and mourned for her. But He said, "Do not weep. She is not dead but sleeping."

They laughed at Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside and took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He told them to give her food.

Do you see the reason to seek and surround yourself with people of strong faith when you are in need of a miracle? Jesus was about to raise Jairus' daughter from the dead, but the unbelievers ridiculed Him when He declared by faith that she was not dead, just asleep. He knew the destructive power of doubt being activated from the people. He made them leave, and then the only supernatural force activated in that room was faith. It overpowered the spirit of death and released the Spirit of life, and the girl came back to life.

This is exactly what we had to do when we raised our son, Marcos, from the dead. We had to purify the spiritual atmosphere from all doubt and unbelief, so that the supernatural power of our faith could override the spirit of death with the Spirit of life, and he came back to life, and dead body parts were recreated for the glory of the Lord and for our good pleasure.

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This article originally appeared at .

Teaching Kids Kindness in a Cold, Cruel World

I was recently in a waiting room with three of my four children, and after I requested a “Yes ma’am” from them, another parent in the room thanked me. He thanked me for requesting respect and kindness from my children. I was taken aback as it was a blatant reminder that these things are no longer commonplace, and as parents, we are tasked with the daily struggle of teaching kindness in an unkind world.

This realization hit me full force when I first sent my innocent, precious babies off to school on the public school bus. At the end of the first week, my kindergartner was speaking to me with her middle finger in my face, asking “Mommy, what does this mean?”

As parents, we are the first line of defense in promoting kindness, but how do we combat the constant attack against our impressionable ones?

We practice what we preach.

It’s a constant struggle, and I’m no saint, but our children surely won’t learn it if we don’t make it a priority. It’s the little things that leave big impressions, resetting attitudes and changing hearts from coldness to kindness.

Below, find 10 easy ways to emphasize kindness in your daily lives:

1. Use your manners—please, thank you, yes ma’am, no ma’am, excuse me.
2. Hold the door for the person behind you.
3. Give a compliment.

4. When you're angry, take a deep breath and speak calmly.
5. Make random acts of kindness a common occurrence.
6. Be on time.
7. Apologize when you're wrong.
8. Curb your road rage.
9. Give encouragement to someone struggling.
10. Smile.

It's often not the big fanfare that sticks with children but rather the subtle act or quiet word of encouragement. Kindness may be a lost art in our world, but it doesn't have to be so in our homes. Begin early by being deliberate with your kindness, and your children will learn to be deliberate with theirs as well.

Angela Jamison is the mother of four young children and struggles daily to teach them the importance of kindness. From buying a stranger's lunch to promoting manners, Angela is on a mission to reinstate kindness in the smallest members of our society. When she is not with her own children, Angela is the director of a Christian preschool and enjoys reading, writing and exploring the path laid before her by the most perfect Father. You can learn more about Angela at her blog,

This article originally appeared at .

Turning Your Child's Casual

Interests Into Lifetime Strengths

Talking with children and teens about their interests is one way to develop strengths. It may be one of the most important ways to encourage children.

Just look. Listen. What do they like doing? What do they talk about? Pay attention—what obviously gives them joy? Enter into conversations. Watch what happens.

I recently spent some time with Lauren, an 11-year-old who loves photography, and her five siblings and parents. Lauren and her siblings obviously like nature. The children enjoyed pointing out the bunnies in their backyard and telling me stories about their imagined adventures.

After just a few minutes, Lauren asked her mom if she could use her camera. Because her mom quickly said yes, it indicated to me that it's a common request. As I watched Lauren, her picture-smart skills became obvious. She likes being able to see things more clearly through the camera's lens and capture what she enjoyed in pictures.

I loved her mom's support of her daughter's interest and budding talent. Lauren was careful with the camera as she spent time in the backyard and front. She showed us her pictures. As I commented on the details, she stood taller and ran to take more photos.

She came back often to show us more. It's not hard to encourage children. It's easy! Because intelligence can become strengths when interests are acknowledged, that's what we need to do. When Lauren's mom and I talked with her about specifics we noticed in her pictures, Lauren was encouraged.

She loved being reminded that she's nature smart and picture

smart. I'm grateful her parents affirm her and her siblings with the "smart" language. This encourages children's interests and strengths. ... Children are talented. They are smart! Try spending quality time with children you know and be fully present and focused so you can talk about what interests them. Watch as they respond to your interest. Before you know it, interests will develop into strengths.

To God be the glory!

Dr. Kathy Koch is the author of *Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World*.

This article originally appeared at .

The Awakening Impact of Romans 8:28

Because of wounds we received at church, my family stopped attending when I was a child. As a teen, I occasionally went with a friend. It's been many years, but I remember clinging to every word as a pastor shared how God spoke to him following a personal tragedy.

While he was preaching a revival, someone didn't see that his son, Luke, was in the parking lot. The child was struck and killed. This pastor and father breathed the oxygen of agony until his heart was able to receive the seed that changed his life and mine. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

About three years later, this verse kept me from taking my

life when facing a devastating trauma at the age of 19. And in time, it awakened me to the wisdom and wonder of that powerful truth as I surrendered to Christ and began training my children to experience the beauty and brutality of life.

If a single seed can have such a powerful impact, what if we plant a forest within the hearts of our children? It's not too difficult.

- Recognizing that a single Bible verse has the power to determine destinies, we can make church a priority. It's one thing to teach our children about God, but much more effective when we have others reinforcing the values we're trying to teach them.
- We can transform our homes into houses of prayer and power by posting Scripture on mirrors, kitchen cabinets and inside closets, always reminding us that God loves us and has called us.
- We can be intentional in teaching our children. My grand-angels learned all of Psalm 91 while riding to and from school.
- We can ask God to surround them with people who will pray for them and guide them when beyond the church walls and through small groups or activities they become involved in. In praying for this, my daughter had a Christian dance instructor, piano teacher, schoolteachers and more. It made a powerful difference in her life, as her faith was her culture.
- So let's grab a piece of pretty paper. I often have the kids paint scribbles on watercolor paper, tear it into small pieces and write Bible verses on it. Buy a piece of canvas and have the kids make a Scripture collage. As happened with me, someday a verse they write may save their lives. It may save their souls. And as they share this power with others, they will transform the world.

"As for God, His way has integrity; the word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all those who take refuge

in Him" (Ps. 18:30).

Connie Norris' *passion is to mobilize women and children to pray. Please visit her website, "My Home, a House of Prayer for All Nations" or connect with her on Facebook.*

This article originally appeared at .