

When You Need Protection, Try These Powerful Declarations

Do you feel unsafe? Are you afraid? Have you received a disheartening medical report? God forewarns us that in this world we will have tribulation, meaning difficult times. Then He tells us to rejoice, not because of the difficult situations we are passing through, but that in Him we have the victory. One step to walk in this victory is to declare God's Word over the situation. Try this, it will help you to strengthen your faith for God's protection.

According to the Word of the Lord, I declare what I already possess over myself and my family and friends in the mighty name of Jesus. And so now, I do declare that I dwell in the shelter of the Most High, I rest in the shadow of the Almighty, He is my refuge, my fortress, and my God and I trust Him, (Psalm 91:1-2). The Lord is faithful; He will strengthen and protect me from the evil one (2 Thess. 3:3). God is my refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble (Ps. 46:1). He is my hiding place, and He will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance (Ps. 32:7).

I sing to God, I sing in praise of His name, I extol Him who rides on the clouds, I rejoice before Him—His name is the Lord. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling (Ps. 68:4-5). I cast my cares on the Lord and He sustains me, He will never let the righteous be shaken (Ps. 55:22). I will lie down in peace and sleep, for He alone makes me dwell in safety (Ps. 4:8).

The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? (Ps. 27:1). I walk securely, because I walk in integrity (Prov. 10:9). I am prudent, I see danger and take refuge (Prov. 27:12). He is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He

cares for me because I trust in Him (Nah. 1:7). He keeps me in perfect peace, my mind is steadfast, because I trust in Him (Isa. 26:3).

The Lord does not take me out of this world but He protects me from the evil one (John 17:15). Because I trust in the Lord and do good, I can dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture (Ps. 37:3). The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe (Prov. 18:10). He will cover me with His feathers, and under His wings I will find refuge; His faithfulness will be my shield and rampart (Ps. 91:4).
{eoa}

Becky Dvorak is a prophetic healing evangelist and the author of *DARE to Believe*, *Greater Than Magic* and *The Healing Creed*. Visit her at .

For a deeper understanding about how to pray God's Word in forms of declarations, confessions and decrees, please check out Becky's new book, The Prophetic and Healing Power of Your Words. You can preview chapter 1 free, or click to purchase your copy today.

This article originally appeared at .

How the Greatest Commandment Can Help You Handle the Holidays With Grace

Come up with me, to a rooftop cafe (that I've fabricated in my imagination, but it really is lovely.) I'll sip a hot mocha latte, single shot, skinny, half-chocolate, no whip. You may

order whatever you would like. My treat.

From this calm, slow, meditative place, let us look down on the hullabaloo that is the American holiday season. See the crowded Costco parking lot? See the mom with hunched shoulders, trying to herd three kids into Target? See the grandmas stocking up on butter, because we all know butter is the taste of Christmas?

Busy, busy, busy. Stress, or as we might say in Spanish, "tension mental." Stretched-thin checking accounts. Cultural expectations.

Oh, and see over there the campfire that just destroyed the California town of Paradise? See all of those dazed, homeless people?

Here we are, pulling away from the world and sipping a warm drink, while we get a kingdom perspective on what holiday really means. Let's talk in low voices together about how we will walk through these days (once we sip to the bottom of our coffee cups).

How will we, the beloved children of Jesus, step into all of this and live vibrant and shining?

How will we maintain an unusual calm that will be a contrast to frantic?

How will we keep a wise eye on suffering and offer compassion and comfort?

How will we create warm, rich, extravagant traditions with our sweet families but without loving the world and all of the *stuff*?

Jesus says the greatest commandment is this: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30b).

We're doing it right now. We're loving God with our minds as we step back and *think* about the holidays before we dive into them. We think Godward thoughts about all of the traditions, money, festivities, presents and suffering. We love God best when we ponder how we can direct all of these elements of our holidays to bring honor to Him.

You know, most people don't think; they just do. But we are different. Because we are created by God, we have purpose, and we can do Thanksgiving through New Year's Day with careful intention. Following Christ requires us to stretch our minds toward Him in all of life, so we do the mental work regarding holiday lifestyle.

Hopefully, people around us will see and feel this difference in us, and we can be ready to tell them why we walk calmly through holidays with peace, deep joy and meaning. {eoa}

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Lou Engle: How God Began 'The Send'

"In 2011, a major revelatory shift took place." Lou Engle of TheCall shares the astounding story of The Send's beginnings, which came via prophetic words in his own living room. Listen as the Holy Spirit speaks during this powerful video.

WATCH: John Burton, 7 Keys to a Powerful Prayer Culture

“Can you imagine going to a football stadium where there’s 70-80,000 Christians there—I mean on their face, burning and groaning in the Spirit? That’s church.”

Watch as John Burton unpacks his ideas for developing a powerful prayer culture within both individual churches and the church at large.

What do you think? Let us know in the comments below!

John Thomas: How to Know if a Dream Is From God

Not every dream we have is from God. Yet God can and does speak through our dreams. How do we know when our dreams contain His messages? Watch as John Thomas teaches us to discern the difference in our dreams.

Follow This Leader’s Example

When You Need to Believe the Impossible

Perhaps you find yourself in the position of believing God for the impossible but not sure how to get there. First of all, if you find yourself in the place of the impossible, then you are in right standing for a miracle. If it's possible in your own strength, then it's not a miracle.

Believing God for the impossible is entering into the realm of faith, and before you can have faith you must have hope—hope for the miraculous. Hope in the strength of God where you defy man's wisdom and strength, and willfully deny your own human reasoning and the power of your five senses. The first step of faith may not be easy, but it is a must. To obtain a miracle, You must have faith in God's supernatural ability.

We read about a ruler of the synagogue named Jairus. He asked Jesus to come to his home to minister healing to his dying daughter, but she died before they started their journey. And in the midst of the death report, Jesus said some pretty amazing words to him about the situation. He said, "Do not be fear. Only believe, and she will be made well" (Luke 8:50b). And after they arrived to Jairus' house, He said to the mourners, "Do not weep. she is not dead but sleeping" (Luke 8:52b). The passage goes on to say that they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. (Read this amazing account in Luke 8:40-56.)

Imagine how foolish Jesus looked to the mourners when He spoke words of life instead of the obvious situation that lay before them. This is also why He made them all leave the room. In order for this little girl to come back to life, there could be no words of death, doubt and unbelief. Like Jesus, you are going to have to learn the power of your words, and speak life in the face of death.

Now, Jairus had a decision to make. He was either going to agree with the majority and doubt the power of God in the situation, or he was going to believe, meaning he would have to deny his human reasoning, the power of his five senses and the ridicule of those who thought they knew more about spiritual matters than Jesus did. He did deny himself and even the sympathy of the mourners. He believed Jesus for the impossible and obtained it.

Believing God for the impossible doesn't have to be complicated, but most often, we make it more complicated than it needs to be. I teach regularly about the power of childlike faith. Childlike faith is not childish, but super strong in the field of trust. It is weak in the arena of doubt, unbelief and human reasoning and lacks the power of the five senses. It is just as it should be—totally dependent upon the supernatural power of God to perform. And this is the stance Jairus and his wife had to take.

The humble place of believing God for the impossible is misunderstood by the world and even by many of our fellow believers in Christ. But in order to overcome the impossible situation you must deny your flesh and your soul (mind and emotions), the pleasures of sympathy that doubt and unbelief produce, and believe God, no matter what. But look at all the good this faith produces—life, healing, restoration, joy and possible out of impossible situations. Believing God is well worth it all. {eoa}

Becky Dvorak *is a prophetic healing evangelist and the author of DARE to Believe, Greater Than Magic and The Healing Creed. Visit her at .*

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Anne Graham Lotz: Happy Birthday in Heaven, Daddy!

Editor's note: Anne Graham Lotz wrote this on Nov. 7, 2018, which would have been her father's 100th birthday.

Today is my father's 100th birthday! I'm reflecting, not on the public figure Billy Graham, but on the one I called "Daddy." I miss him more now than when he first moved to our Father's house. With a dull ache in my heart, I long to drive up to see him one more time. To tell him about the new journey of faith God has me traveling. To hear him say, "I love you, darling."

Today, I'm remembering one who was always a farmer at heart. Who loved his dogs and his cat. Who followed the weather patterns almost as closely as he did world events. Who wore old blue jeans, comfortable sweaters and a baseball cap. Who loved lukewarm coffee, sweet iced tea, one scoop of ice cream and a plain hamburger from McDonald's. Who was interested in everything and everyone, from the small to the great. Whose mind remembered details even a computer would have trouble recalling.

Yet as I remember, I can't help but also think of his message, because he was immersed in it. Saturated in it. He was his message ... a simple man who had responded to God's love by placing his faith in Jesus, receiving the assurance that his sins were forgiven, that he would not perish, but would have everlasting life. Simple faith. Faith that now matters more than anything else.

For years, over his head as he preached was the banner that quoted the words of Jesus: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Jesus completed that sentence by saying that "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Based on

what Jesus said, Daddy is safely with the Father, celebrating his first birthday in heaven. Daddy not only claimed Jesus as the only way to God, he lived by the truth publicly on platforms and privately behind closed doors and is now enjoying real life.

So, while he may be physically absent and his voice silent, I am confident that his message will continue to reverberate throughout the generations to come. While I'm somewhat bound and set aside, I have not forgotten my recommitment to take up his message like a baton being passed in a relay race. I am committed to faithfully pass it on to those with whom I come in contact, whether through this blog, or those I pass at the hospital during chemo treatments or doctors' visits. Because Daddy's message is God's message. And it's a message of genuine hope for the future, of love for the present, of forgiveness for the past. It's a message, when received, that brings a fresh beginning, unshakable joy, unexplainable peace, eternal significance, meaning and purpose to life, and opens heaven's door.

I know, because the message Daddy carried to the world penetrated my own heart as a young girl and continues to make impact. {eoa}

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The Philippians 2 Reason Believers Should Strive to Arrive on Time

I have a love-hate relationship with clocks.

When I was a child, my parents always set our clocks five minutes fast, supposedly to help prevent us from being late to appointments.

It never worked. We were always late ... to everything.

Despite the ineffectiveness of the practice, I carried it over into my marriage. For 40 years, all our clocks were five minutes faster than the actual time.

It didn't work for us, either. We were usually late to most appointments, much to my husband's chagrin ... which should tell you whose fault it was. Punctuality was my nemesis.

Daylight Savings Time (DST) ended this past Sunday. A day on which we were all required to turn our clocks back one hour.

Since I've begun a new season of life and I was changing all my clocks anyway, I decided it was time for a fresh start. So I set all my timepieces to the accurate time ... and in the process, broke a 60-year-old habit.

Then I posted about it on social media.

The response floored me. It seems I'm not the only one to set clocks faster to help me be on time.

And I'm not the only one for whom the practice has failed.

So what's causing all these punctuality failures?

Is it because we've been conditioned to fill—or overfill—every

minute with activity? For many of us, down time is a rare and foreign experience. We feel guilty if we're not constantly on the go. If I have an open hour, my first question is, "What am I forgetting to do?"

Or perhaps we've become so self-centered that we think the world revolves around us and our convenience? One friend commented on my social media post, recalling a poem that changed her perspective ... and her habits:

*To be early is to be on time,
To be on time is to be late,
To be late is to be selfish.*

Her little poem is not only painfully convicting, it's also biblical. Philippians 2:3-4 says, "Let nothing be done out of strife or conceit, but in humility let each esteem the other better than himself." When I'm late, I'm guilty of putting my own interests above others'.

Maybe our tardiness is because, as another friend noted, "Optimists are usually the late ones. We anticipate everything going perfectly door to door." Guilty as charged. Of course, we all know it's a rare day when everything goes perfectly!

One cousin noted being tardy is in our family's genes. While history supports her conclusion, I'm determined to change our family's reputation.

It's only been five days, but so far, so good!

What tips do you have for being punctual? {eoa}

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 .

When You Feel All Alone, Remember This Triumphant Truth

It might have been the last day possible, in Montana terms, to get home and do a final leaf pick-up “before the snow flies,” as we say here. Everything outside has to happen before the snow flies, and then comes the six-month sabbatical from all outdoor chores that don’t involve a shovel or a snowblower or a roof rake.

Roof rake—it’s a thing.

I finished my classroom tidy, threw a quick, “See ya tomorrow” at the school secretary, and headed home to work in the yard. As the bypass turned and gave me a full view of the stretch of Rocky Mountains on my right, I could see that we had our first snow line.

“Hurry,” the snow line said to me. “I’m coming for the valley floor, and I wait for no rake.”

When I turned into our subdivision, I thought, “I wish my students at school could see me work this afternoon.” It was kind of strange, but I had a strong desire for them to know about more of my life than just verb conjugations and translate-this assignments and vocabulary drills. What if they could know that I also mow lawns and load up a truck with huge black bags and drive to the dump in a stick-shift?

But they don’t know this side of my life.

That's when I prayed, *Jesus, only you know this part of me. Only you know every part of me.*

For four hours, I worked to race the setting sun and the black line of clouds coming in from the west. Sweat dripped down my back. My arms started to burn.

Four hours—just me and Jesus.

In Matthew 6:18, Jesus makes this profound statement: “Your Father ... sees in secret.”

This verse came to mind, and I felt the holiness of spending hours doing an activity during which my sole companion was God. He was the only one who accompanied me to Lowe's and saw the nice man who helped me pick a new leaf-blower. God was the only one I could talk to as I wrestled the cargo net over the bags of leaves. He was the only one who was listening when I said, “Oh Lord, am I gonna finish before that approaching wall of water blows right over the top of me?”

It could have been a lonely four hours, except it wasn't.

I once heard a local pastor say, “The only one who will be with you for the entire adventure of your life is Jesus.” This is true, and it makes me want to practice being with Jesus on the raking leaves kind of days. Sara Hagerty describes the richness of being seen by Jesus in the secret moments of our lives, in her book *Unseen*: “Tucked away in a hidden place, looking to God is what brings me back to life.”

So think of all of those times in the day when you are in a place that your boss can't see and your spouse can't see and your friends aren't around for. These are sacred moments when you are seen by your Father in heaven. He is with you, as your ever-present, loving, joyful, helpful companion. You are never alone. {eoa}

This article originally appeared at .

The Proverbs 18:21 Reason This Cliche Holds Life-Giving Truth

“You’re going to talk yourself to death.”

It might sound humorous, but can you really do that? It’s an interesting question to look at, especially since this cliché has been around for many years. Most people grow up with clichés and automatically use them without ever giving thought to what they are actually saying. But it is time to take a look at this old saying and hold it up to the light of God’s Word.

What does the Bible have to say about the way you speak and about your life in general? Let’s look at the following Scripture and read for ourselves. We’ll start with Proverbs 18:21a, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.”

What did the Bible just say? There’s the power of what in our tongues? Life and death. I don’t know about you, but this sounds kind of serious to me. And to think that the tongue (our spoken language) has power to produce anything is a bit mind-boggling. But if the holy Bible says it, then I believe it. After all it is our standard to live by, it is the infallible word of God.

And the second part of the verse has this to say: “and those who love it will eat its fruit.” I guess the next question to ask ourselves is “What type of fruit are we going to indulge in?” Poisonous fruit, or life-giving fruit? Holy Spirit is always visual with me, and as I write this last question, I envision a large wooden bowl of fruit set on the table before

me. Some of it is poisonous, and the other fruit is full of life. It's pretty obvious which fruit I would take and eat of: life-giving, of course.

So it is with our words. And our precious Holy Spirit has set before us a beautiful bowl of powerful fruit to partake of every day: spoken words. Some will harm us if not used properly, others will heal us in spirit, soul and in our physical body as well. And we get to choose which fruit we will dine upon today.

And this leads us back to the original question, "Can you talk yourself to death?" According to God's word, yes, one can.
{eoa}

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