This Simple Truth Will Snatch You From the Depths of Despair

Whenever I am in the depths of despair, which is not often—but it does indeed happen to all of us from time to time—I have found a secret that miraculously changes my perspective. Would you like to know the time-tested practice that has revolutionized my emotional stability as well as my spiritual tenacity?

I simply remember who God is! I begin to focus on His unchanging characteristics and in the identity that He so lavishes on us, His beloved children. I take my eyes off of my circumstances and place them firmly on the one true God.

I remind myself that my God is mighty and that nothing is too difficult for Him. I ponder the immutable fact that His arm is not so short that it cannot move. I also declare out loud—for all of the demons in hell to hear—that greater is He who is in me than He who is in the world.

I confidently recall that my God is a faithful God. When I am faithless—He is faithful still! Every promise that He has made He will keep, and every battle that He has fought He will win! His faithfulness extends to the heavens and extends to a thousand generations! He is the same yesterday, today and forever!

I focus on the sweet knowledge that He is love. He loves me just the way I am and I never have to prove myself to Him. If I never write another book, He will still be crazy about me! If I never speak at another conference, He will still be head over heels in love with me.

I rest in sweet peace as I remind myself that He is

unceasingly kind. He is not an angry God who is just waiting for me to mess up, but He reaches toward me with His compassion and His kindness. How wonderful is that?

How sweet to know that God is a good, good God! His goodness is relentlessly chasing me down through every season and in every circumstance of my life. He knows of no other way to be than perpetually good. When I turn around, I see that His goodness and His mercy are following me all of the days of my life.

When I lay my head on the pillow at night, I remind myself that He never slumbers and that He never sleeps. As I learn to trust Him and His character, it is then that He keeps me in perfect peace!

When I remind myself of the matchless character of God, the valley of despair disappears more quickly than the dew on the morning grass. I am refreshed as I rehearse every adjective that the Bible uses to describe the God who made me, the God who loves me, the one who saved me, the Lord who has forgiven me and the King who sits on the throne of my heart!

Carol McLeod *is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books:* No More Ordinary, Holy Estrogen!, The Rooms of a Woman's Heart *and* Defiant Joy! *Her most recent book,* Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire, *will be released on Aug. 1. Her teaching DVD* The Rooms of a Woman's Heart *won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming.*

The Most Important Step to Save Your Broken Marriage

Much to his surprise, on the night of their 10th anniversary, Ann Wilson told Dave Wilson she had “lost her feelings” for him. Divorce seemed inevitable.

But starting that night, God revealed to both of them the most overlooked secret of having a great marriage—their vertical relationship with their Creator must come first. The Wilsons got their marriage back on the right path, and God blessed them with a ministry of coaching others in marriage for the past 30 years.

It all came down to one thing for the Wilsons—reconnecting with God.

“We’ve been married almost 40 years, and God has met us in the middle of our struggles, in the middle of the mountaintop experiences, and he literally saved our marriage,” Dave Wilson told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of “Greenelines” on the Charisma Podcast Network. “For men whose marriages are struggling, I would say to go vertical and ask God to save your marriage. Ask god to do what only He can do in you and through you.

“If your wife won’t go there with you, then you go there and you ask God to meet you and ask Him what He will do to change your marriage.

“For me, a miracle took place. I look back on it and I heard the voice of God say, ‘Repent, repent.’ I knew what God was saying. He was saying, ‘You’ve lost your first love with Me. This marriage isn’t going to be saved or fixed by you until

you put Me back in first place in your life. When I'm back in first place, then we can help fix your marriage.' When I got on my knees and repented, that's when everything changed."

For more about how you can have a vertical marriage, please listen to this podcast.

Prophetic Vision of Illuminated Washington Monument Points to Awakening

The Washington Monument was illuminated, almost glowing. Natural light wasn't causing it to shine and brighten the sky around it. Only a supernatural light could cause such a radiant sight. It was as though the glory of God enveloped this national landmark.

I saw this in a vision during worship at Awakening House of Prayer. I kept on looking from the perspective as one standing near the base of the structure looking up. As I kept looking, I saw it from further away. The light wasn't blinding to the eye but seemed to almost pulsate as the monument reached into the dark sky.

The vision was interrupted as worship ended and I had to step into the pulpit, but I could not shake it. Given that we have an Awakening House of Prayer branch in Washington, D.C., I determined to seek out the Lord for an interpretation of this vivid vision. I knew in my spirit it was a significant symbol

bearing good news.

Washington Monument Significance

The 555-foot marble obelisk known as the Washington Monument was erected to honor President George Washington, who served as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army before the United States was officially a nation.

Washington goes down in history as, “first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen.” His legacy reminds us of the spirit of the American Revolution. But in recent years, Washington has been revered for a white flag with an evergreen tree that flew on ships in his “secret navy” in 1775.

That flag had the words “An Appeal to Heaven” written across the top in black, bold letters. Dutch Sheets received a revelation about this flag and its implications in the first war or our nation and has continued rallying intercessory prayer troops since.

A Sign of Coming Third Great Awakening

Before the prophetic vision, I did not know the Washington Monument was closed in August 2016 to repair elevators. A cable broke loose at the bottom of the elevator. Prophetically speaking, we can’t ascend with broken cables. The Washington Monument is set to re-open on Sept. 19.

I believe Sept. 19 is a significant day for the nation in the spirit dimension. I believe the relaunch of the Washington Monument is shifting something in the spirit, which is why I saw it illuminated in the vision. I believe we’re getting closer to another Great Awakening.

On April 21, 2007, the Lord woke me up at midnight with a prophetic word that I didn’t fully understand. The Holy Spirit spoke these words to me:

“There is a great awakening coming to this nation, for I have heard your cries and I long to heal your land. I am a covenant God and I will not forget the covenant I made with your Founding Forefathers. Yes, there will be a shaking, but the foundations will not crack and they will not crumble. Only those things which can be shaken will be shaken that the sin in the land may be laid bare.

“Repentance. I require repentance from My people who have through the generations allowed the enemy to take ground in this nation. I require repentance for the abortions and for the prayerlessness. I require repentance for the apathy and for the idolatry. You shall have no other gods before me. I am indeed the God of America.

“Yes, there is a great awakening coming to this nation. I am the author of it, and I will bring it to pass. Just turn from your wicked ways and humble yourselves. Stand in the gap and make up the hedge. I am the Lord, and I am a warrior. I will not leave or forsake this country. I will fight through you and with you to regain what has been lost.

“Be encouraged now because as you go forth boldly with My Word and My Spirit, there will be the sound of truth, and it will prevail in the land. Speak boldly and clearly and watch as the mighty men arise to take their positions on the wall and in the churches and in the marketplaces, for I am raising up deliverers and reformers in this generation who will not shrink back at the challenge that is coming in the days ahead.

“Yes, it will grow darker before My light shines brightly from this nation again. But the light has not been extinguished and will not be extinguished. The time to rise up is now. I am calling you to war. I am calling you to repentance. I am calling you to My side. I am the Captain of the hosts. I am calling you to victory. I am calling you to destiny. Will you answer?”

Jennifer LeClaire *is the former editor of Charisma magazine and the founder of Jennifer LeClaire Ministries. She is the author of books like Becoming a Next-Level Prophet, 101 Tactics for Spiritual Warfare, Waging Prophetic Warfare, Decoding Your Dreams and Defeating Water Spirits.*

How to Identify and Destroy Demonic Activity Beneath Your Spiritual Struggle

Bishop Joseph Walker III says many believers want to experience spiritual deliverance from their spiritual struggles, yet they fail to find and identify the root causes. It's only when they discover and pinpoint the trigger point that they will be able to begin the healing process.

Charismatics, he says, tend to deal with issues only from a spiritual perspective. But seeking clinical spiritual counseling can help you discover underlying issues that can help save your marriage, your family and your ministry.

"We must acknowledge that something has gone awry, the uneasiness you have in your spirit about living in the duality and the paradox of this place of 'I know that there is something that is in me that is not right,'" Walker, the pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. "You want to make it right, to know that you're in an actual Holy Spirit-led season in your

life.

“God has given you the grace to be able to function in ministry, whatever you are doing. But God also gives you the resource to be able to walk through it. I’ve walked through it myself.

“Through Jesus Christ, we have the ability to be completely free of the emotional, social and spiritual struggles that have us bound. But to experience lasting change, we must stop dealing only with the symptoms and get to the root issue. When you do that, you will be in a place where you can be transparent about your story and let other people know that can take our mess and turn it into a message.”

For more about how to get to the root of your spiritual struggles, listen to this podcast.

Prophecy Unfolding: Why Israel’s Conflict With Iran May Lead to an End-Times Battle

End-times expert Michael Snyder is often mistaken for a pessimist because of the heavy cultural topics about which he writes. But Snyder considers himself a man full of hope—the hope he has in Jesus Christ.

When Snyder sees prophecy unfolding as it is in the Middle East with the conflict between Israel and Iran, he views the

situation in a much different way than many.

“Most of us who study Bible prophecy have been anticipating a large-scale conflict in the Middle East. Many of us believe the Bible speaks of such things in the last days,” Snyder told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of “Greenelines” on the Charisma Podcast Network. “What most people don’t realize is that the fighting is actually already going on. … just within the last couple of months, Israel started to hit targets in Iraq, where Iran has a strong presence.

“So right now, we’re on the verge of a major war in the Middle East. The shooting is already happening. The only question is, will this be a full-blown, cataclysmic apocalypse war between Israel and Iran, which both sides have been preparing for, for a long time? If this happens, it’s going to be literally a struggle for national survival for Israel. …

“But God warns us about these things, and He has been speaking to men and women of God—charismatic believers—all over the world. The reason God sends us these warnings is not so that we can be afraid, but so that we can know God is in control and that He has a plan. So God gives us hope. Shaking is coming because of sin. But that means it’s time for us to go to work. It’s time for us to fulfill the ministries God has given all of us and for us to bring our nets out for the harvest because harvest time is here. It’s actually a very exciting time if we understand God’s plan.”

For the rest of Michael Snyder’s thoughts on end-times prophecy, listen to this podcast.

Prophetic Prayer: 'This Is a Season of Divine Breakthrough'

If you have been stuck in a spiritual rut, apostle and prophet Hakeem Collins wants to help you move forward to realize your kingdom purpose by breaking through unseen spiritual resistances.

Through his new podcast, "Prophetic Breakthrough," Collins looks to help believers bust through the stagnations and limitations in their lives and to help them fulfill God's calling on their lives.

"Your identity is important, and the Holy Spirit has been sent to help you achieve what God has called you to," Collins said on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. "And you can do it. I come as a mentor to help you get that extra push and boost to get to the next level."

Collins prayed this prayer over the body of Christ:

"I pray that this will be a season that they will begin to move into the accelerated pace that You, Father God, have called them to. I decree and declare that this is a season of divine breakthrough and that the glory of the Lord will be risen upon them according to Isaiah 60 and that Your light shines upon them.

"I pray that iron sharpens iron. Whenever they feel down and they feel like they don't have someone to relate to, that this podcast will become an aha moment. It will become a defining moment. It will be a word of hope and a word of breakthrough in them so they can carry out their day and their week.

"My heart is to see people just maximize their full potential

in God and just be who they are in Christ. The world would be great if everyone just realized who they are and identify their calling and purpose. We all would just change the world."

For more about Hakeem Collins' ministry, listen to this podcast.

When God's Faithfulness Seems Unfaithful to You

I realized recently just how completely ironic my life is. One of the things I disliked the most as a young person was writing, and now I spend a good portion of my day writing for magazines and websites. Now, I am working on my eighth and ninth books.

I also am what would be described as an introvert. As a child, with four brothers and three sisters, I would grab a book and hide in my closet to read and be alone. I much prefer small, intimate conversation to large crowds and yet, I spend much of my life either in the middle of or in front of crowds of people.

While I have been blessed to speak before crowds made up of thousands of people, my favorite times are not standing before crowds. My favorite times are when I can sit down in a small group (usually over coffee) and just talk with people. It is in these small, intimate gatherings that people open up with each other, and some real, powerful ministry and teaching

takes place.

It was in one of these coffee gatherings that one of my younger friends asked me a very important question. “I am faithful to my family and faithful to my congregations. I pray and study and serve in several ways in my synagogue. I work hard on my job. What I don’t understand is if I am as faithful as I am, why do I have so little? In other words, why does it seem to me that I have been faithful, but G-D has not?”

This person had opened their heart. They were feeling let down and left out.

I could have answered this person as others might have by saying, “Your question provides the answer to your question. You are spiritually immature, and if you are only being faithful so that G-D will give you things, then you are being faithful to you and not to G-D.”

That would have been an easy answer and one that many would have given. It would have been quick and surgical. But, a surgical strike, while quick and easy, is rarely the correct response to real heartfelt questions like this one.

This is how I answered him:

“First, I want to commend you for both being faithful to your family and synagogue. Second, I want to thank you for being honest about how you are feeling because you are not alone in feeling this way. However, let me ask you to look at this situation from a different vantage point.

“I believe that G-D’s response to your faithfulness has been His being faithful to you. What you may not be understanding is that G-D can be just as faithful by not giving you something as He can be by giving you something.”

Then I asked him to take a look at Deuteronomy 7:22 (TLV): “Adonai your God will drive away those nations before you

little by little—you will not be able to put an end to them all at once, or else the beasts of the field will multiply on you."

I continued, "First, notice that this section of Scripture in Chapter 7 is all about how G-D is going to bless the children of Israel for their faithfulness to him. Then, we come to verse 22, where G-D says that He will give the land to Israel little by little so that the beasts of the field will not multiply on them.

Because G-D is faithful, He didn't just give the children of Israel everything at once. No. Because He is faithful, He purposely didn't give them too much too fast." I told him, and those sitting around the table, "Sometimes G-D shows His faithfulness in response to our faithfulness by not giving us things we deserve until we are prepared to handle them."

Eric Tokajer *is author of* With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians *and* Galatians in Context.

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5 Ways to Make Your Home Irresistible to Your Kids

In our family, we intentionally have tried to help our children feel happy at home. Over the years, we've used board games, pool and foosball tables, a zip line, themed family nights and special family outings for them to look forward to.

Our ultimate goal is for family life to be fun and memorable, and for our home to be a place where our kids want to be—both now and someday. Recently, one of our kids said to my wife and me, "I just really want to spend more time together at home." Something about those words made us smile on the inside.

Imagine if your kids enjoyed being at home more than anywhere else. What if your kids grew up and actually looked forward to coming home? Andy Stanley has said, "We want to raise kids who one day want to spend time with us, even when they no longer have to." What a great goal. But this doesn't happen by accident. How do we make our homes irresistible to our kids both now and then? Here are a few ideas:

1. **Make your home a place of fun.** The greatest memories your children can have should surround your home and the time spent there. I want that to be true of our family. I'm guessing that you want it to be true of yours as well. Family life should be fun. Laughter should be normal. Good memories should be made. While this can sometimes happen through entertainment and technology, some of your children's greatest memories will probably be of playing outside together or of having that tickle fight.
2. **Make your home a place of peace.** The world is not a peaceful place, but your home should be. When your kids come through the doors of your home, they should know that this is their place to find peace and comfort, despite anything that has happened in their day. While no home is perfect, your home ought to be the closest thing to heaven on earth for your kids. This requires that as parents, you choose not to argue in front of your kids and to make being a peacemaker a normal part of your family culture.
3. **Make your home a welcoming place for their friends.** Relationships matter. The right relationships can be a springboard to your child's success and the wrong

relationships can be a huge setback. As a parent, leverage your influence to cultivate your children's relationships as close to home as possible. Get to know your kids' friends and make them feel comfortable in your home by providing a fun and engaging place to hang out. Having food, toys, games, and activities for your kids and their friends can be a helpful advantage.

4. **Make your home a place of safety and security.** Home is supposed to be a child's safe place—a place where a child feels secure. Children's senses of safety and security come from knowing they are loved as well from boundaries and rules being clearly explained and enforced. So don't shy away from being the bad guy when necessary and also don't hesitate to lavish your kids with your love and affection.
5. **Make your home a place of unconditional love.** "Our children should believe in their hearts that there is nothing they can do that will ever change our love for them."

Your home should be a place that your children know they can always come back to, no matter what they have done. Our children should believe in their hearts that there is nothing they can do that will ever change our love for them. This is the greatest key of all to making your home irresistible.

While each of these five ideas is important, none of them is instant. Ensuring that your kids are happy at home ultimately rises or falls on our intentionality as parents. You can do this!

Sound off: In which of these five ways could you improve the most? {eoa}

Andrew Linder *is a husband and the father of four awesome kids. He is the founder of* GodlyParent.com *and is passionate about intentional parenting and helping other parents and leaders effectively reach the next generation.*

For the original article, visit allprodad.com.

How Psalms and Hymns Significantly Spark Your Faith

Paul's epistle to the Colossians explained that "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" can be used to "teach and admonish one another" as we "let the word of Christ dwell in (us) richly, in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16).

He similarly taught the Ephesians (5:18-20) this trilogy of musical communication ("psalms and hymns and spiritual songs") is an expression of being "filled with the Spirit" and a means of "making melody in your heart to the Lord." He also explained that the content of the lyrics should be in the context of "giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father."

Israel's King David was an experienced musician, having learned to play a stringed instrument skillfully while caring for smelly sheep in the fields. As a teen, he had enough reputation to be recommended to King Saul to play his elementary, harp-like instrument to soothe the king's soul and find relief from his unrest.

- **"Psalms" are scriptural lyrics, in song.** David accumulated accounts of his Godward reflections and aspirations. Later, he or his royal music director put them to music as "psalms." These became righteous reminders to read and sing. The Jews learned to sing

collections of these psalms at various times and places. Even today, we are encouraged and taught by these same "psalms" put to music.

- **"Hymns" are humanly inspired lyrics, in song.** They might be said to be songs which are about "Him," meaning God. The lyrics are about Him, His character and His actions. Hymn lyrics are great expressions of biblical truth and doctrine about God. As songs, they are often sung boldly, with great expression.
- **"Spiritual songs" may be expressions from our spirits** and not our souls (human thought). Paul taught that he often prayed "in the spirit," where his mind was "unfruitful" and the words were unknown to him (1 Cor. 14:14-15). "Spiritual song" is the same thing, but with a spirit-supplied melody and lyrics in an unlearned language. Pastor Jack Hayford describes this experience of a spiritual song as "impromptu rhythmic lyrics given by the Holy Spirit in one's own language or in "tongues.'"

Another kind of Christian music is commonly called "Gospel music." I think of these as "testimony songs," because they usually convey testimonies of personal experience and related Gospel truths. Like David's psalms, they express real emotion, sincere aspirations and deep passion. They draw from the inspiration of life and Scriptures and declare biblical truths and doctrine.

Consequently, many have been schooled in the truths of the Good News of Jesus Christ (the "gospel") more from the songs they have heard and sung than the sermons they may have heard or the books they have read.

Yes, Christianity is a singing faith! Let me conclude with an example of a significant scripture and the inspiring, related lyrics of an older gospel song: "Day by Day"

Scripture: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is

made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. 12:9a).

> *Day by day and with each passing moment/ Strength I find to meet my trials here.*
>
> *Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment/I’ve no cause for worry or for fear.*
>
> *He whose heart is kind beyond all measure/Gives unto each day what He deems best,*
>
> *Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure/ Mingled with peace and rest.*
>
> *Help me then in every tribulation/ So, to trust Your promises, O Lord,*
>
> *That I lose not faith’s sweet consolation/ Offered me within Your holy Word.*
>
> *Help me. Lord, when toil and trouble meeting/ E’er to take, as from a Father’s hand,*
>
> *One by one, the day’s, the moments fleeting/ Till I reach the promised land. (Text: Caroline Sandell Berg; translated by Andrew L. Skoog) {eoa}*

Ordained to the ministry in 1969, **Gary Curtis** *is a graduate of LIFE Bible College at Los Angeles (soon to become Life Pacific University at San Dimas, California). He has taken graduate courses at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois and Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Gary served as part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the First Foursquare Church of Van Nuys, California, for 27 years (1988-2015), the last 13 years as the vice president of Life on The Way Communications Inc., the church’s not-for-profit media outreach. Now retired, Gary and his wife have been married for 50 years and live in Southern California. They have two married daughters and five grandchildren.*

10th Avenue North Frontman: Stop Begging to Know God's Will for Your Life

After years of wrestling with his obsession to know God's will for his life, Tenth Avenue North lead singer Mike Donehey came to an "aha" moment. God had not revealed His plan to Donehey because God Himself *was* the plan.

Donehey had to ask God to change his will to seek the Lord first and focus on serving Him. And it all began with his prayer life.

"Before you ask God, 'What's your big plan for me?' just say, 'God, what's in me that you want to take out?'" Donehey told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. "I gave up begging to know God's will and began to ask to help me get in His presence and to change my own will.

"For me, that means the first point is to go and pray with God. The problem is, in a fast-paced, achievement-driven, capitalistic society, to go and spend copious amount of time with God sounds like a waste, especially if you don't hear from God. And now, I don't even say I'm going to spend time with God because that puts you in an investment-return paradigm, and spending is a monetary term.

"So, I just go. I'm going to go and waste time with God. And here is what I always say. When I've wasted time with God that day, even if I haven't heard from Him, I'm still at peace because I know I gave Him the chance to say something. We must all learn to see God as the plan, not simply the formula to

the plan. Pour your heart out before the Lord and help me find a way to do what helps me serve, bless and meet people’s needs.”

For more of Mike Donehey’s story, listen to this podcast.