

# How Your 'Talking Donkeys' Can Steer You Away From Total Disaster

I can remember the first time that I heard the story of Balaam and his donkey. I remember my first thought was not *How can a donkey talk?* I was not nearly as curious about the donkey speaking as I was that Balaam doesn't even seem to flinch when the donkey does talk.

As we read in the verse below:

*Then Adonai opened the donkey's mouth and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?" Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you've made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you now!" The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey which you have ridden as always to this day? Have I ever been in the habit of doing this to you?" "No," he said. Then Adonai opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of Adonai standing in the road with his drawn sword in his hand. So, he fell on his face (Num. 22:28-31, TLV).*

Notice in verse 28, the donkey speaks, and in verse 29, Balaam simply responds. No hesitation, no concern and no wondering how the donkey was speaking. What Balaam just says explains his anger.

The donkey then explains his actions. Like I said above, I can still clearly remember the first time I heard this story in Hebrew school, and while everyone was shocked that a donkey spoke, I was shocked that the man riding the donkey didn't freak out. Not even a little bit.

Not only did the donkey speak, but he spoke in order to save

Balaam's life. What an unusual event this was. Ever since that day, I have paid attention to the times in my life when unusual events took place, things that were so out of the ordinary that they drew my attention.

Some were events that would be considered miraculous, while others just seemed super weird. Because the more of these events takes place in my life, the more I realize the many times that G-D protected and preserved my life.

Before I started paying closer attention to these curious moments I would react just like Balaam. I would simply respond as if the unusual was usual. Sometimes I would respond by getting angry because the event slowed down my progress or kept me from accomplishing a goal. I would be lost to the truth that something miraculous was taking place because I was blinded to the miracle by my commitment to achieve my goal.

Then one day I stopped for a moment and started looking at the talking donkeys in my life as miracles of their own. I started paying attention to their voices and immediately looking for whatever it is that G-D is trying to get me to see.

Since I started being thankful and listening to the donkeys, I have been amazed at how many catastrophic events I have been saved from, both physically and spiritually.

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# Miracles Can Sometimes Happen in the Back Side of a Desert

It was the summer of 1969. I was 14 years old and filled with wonder, enthusiasm and childlike anticipation.

As I stood on the threshold of young womanhood, I was intently watching the culture, and I intrinsically knew that something strange was happening here.

It was the summer of Woodstock when nearly 400,000 people showed up at a farm in Bethel, New York, for a music festival that defined a generation. This generation was known for peace marches, drugs and free sex.

Woodstock was an epic event that became synonymous with the counterculture movement of the middle of the 20th century in America.

I couldn't relate to that part of my culture. The life that I was living seemed eons removed from the generation who were freaking out on drugs.

I obeyed my parents, went to church and didn't have a boyfriend.

I wondered where I would fit in, if I would fit in and if my life was relevant during the last year of that momentous decade.

The summer of 1969 was also the summer of the Manson murders. What a horrible, bloody, unimaginable happening!

*My heart was raw for the loss of life and beauty in one chilling event.* My dad told me it was demonic.

During July of 1969, Senator Ted Kennedy left the scene of a fatal accident in which Mary Jo Kopechne, once a campaign

worker for Robert Kennedy, drowned at Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts.

Senator Kennedy was given a two-month suspended sentence. Mary Jo's parents were given a lifetime of grief.

I wondered where God was in all of it.

And during that historic summer, my family and I took a long-planned vacation across the United States of America.

My dad, my mom, my 16-year-old sister, my 10-year-old brother and I would be trapped in a car and a trailer for six weeks together.

I hoped that we would still love each other when we pulled back in our driveway.

We loaded up our travel trailer and set out across New York and then Ohio. We visited presidential birthplaces and nondescript churches along the way. Our little white station wagon, dragging the 6-sleeper trailer, made its way through Indiana and Illinois.

We stopped on the banks of the Mississippi River and watched a riverboat pass by.

Then it was on to Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma. The air was dry, the wind was hot and we sang our way into New Mexico.

"You Are My Sunshine!"

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus!"

"It is No Secret What God Can Do!"

Then it was New Mexico where we saw the Carlsbad Caverns and an ancient Indian village high in the stone mountains.

We laughed and played car games while Dad pointed out sights along the way.

Finally, we were just hours away from the Grand Canyon in Arizona. We stopped early the night before we were to spend a day in the immense canyon that was carved out by the Colorado River.

I'll never forget it. We stayed at a KOA Campground in the middle of the desert of Arizona. It was a hot, still night and the manager of the campground came out into the common area and stacked one picnic table on top of another one.

Then—on top of the mountain of picnic tables—he placed a little black-and-white TV with extension cords leading back to the campground office.

Around us, all we could see was sand, cacti and dry vegetation.

As the sun went down that night, the manager turned on the little television set, all of the campers gathered around the grainy images that danced on that screen.

Fathers told their children to be quiet and hold still, mothers patted babies on their shoulders and teenagers shuffled their feet.

Walter Cronkite was there on the television screen. He belonged to all of us during that long decade. He had cried when President Kennedy was shot, shaken his head at the senseless murders in California and mourned boys who were killed in Viet Nam.

Walter Cronkite's voice became the voice of a father to a nation. We listened to him, and we trusted him.

Where have all the Walter Cronkites gone?

That evening, in July of 1969, Mr. Cronkite sat in wonder with the rest of America.

We were there. Man had landed on the moon.

A miracle was happening before our very eyes.

There was a holy hush on the desert of Arizona that night among Americans who had never met before but would forever be bonded together in shared astonishment.

*This single event was greater than Woodstock, more earthshattering than the Manson murders, and it eclipsed Chappaquiddick.*

When the astronauts were asked what the surface of the moon was like, we all strained to listen to their answer:

“It has a stark beauty all its own. It’s like much of the high desert of the United States.” –From the Nasa transcript of air-to-ground voice transportation.

What? That’s where we were! We were in the desert of the United States of America on July 20, 1969!

The men in the obscure campground cheered, mothers cried and teenagers clapped and shouted.

We were in the high desert of the United States. We were standing on desert sand.

And those men, over 200,000 miles away, were experiencing the same kind of topography.

The camaraderie was deafening. And then we all cried with Walter Cronkite as he took off his glasses and wiped his middle-aged eyes.

No one in the campground wanted to return to their trailers that night. There was too much to talk about. Too much to share. Too much to take in.

The campground manager brought out a couple bags of marshmallows while some of the men started a bonfire.

Women scurried back to their trailers and tents to bring out

baked goods and lemonade.

It was America at its finest. We were family.

Before the last ember died away that night, we joined hands around the campfire in the middle of the desert.

Families from Minnesota and Texas, from West Virginia and New York, from Georgia and from Utah all joined together.

Someone began a prayer, thanking God for the safety of our astronauts and for the blessing of living in America.

And then, a voice began in the dark and in the stillness, "God Bless America!"

That was a defining moment of my teenage years.

You see, I knew that in spite of murders and compromise, in spite of politics and protests, there was still a deep goodness in America that would help us all through the difficult days ahead.

Our trip wasn't over that night, but it could have been. We continued on to California and Idaho and South Dakota and then made our way home along the Great Lake states.

However—it is the image of that campground in the middle of the Arizona desert that has stayed with me for 50 years.

I will never forget what it felt like to see a miracle ... to experience strangers become family in an instant ... and to know that there is always something good in spite of pain.

Sometimes the good is discovered in the back side of a desert.

**Carol McLeod** is a bestselling 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.

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# 6 Simple Choices to Help Ease Family Pain

I was speaking with a wise, successful woman on the phone today who loves the Lord with her whole heart and who has committed her life to serving Him. She is going through a situation that I would call “family trauma.” The pain was written all over her lovely face and heard in every word that she spoke.

I have been where she is—have you? Family trauma is one of the most difficult roads that a man or woman travels this side of heaven. There is no pain like family pain.

If you are dealing with family trauma today, perhaps these simple choices that I have made many times will help you ease the pain as they have eased mine. These choices may not change your circumstances, but they will, indeed, change you.

**1. Strengthen yourself in the Lord.** You will never be able to encourage your family or tap into the necessary wisdom needed unless your faith is vital and active. Continue to read your Bible daily and attend a life-giving church. Choose to worship the Lord in spite of your pain. Keep worship music playing loudly whenever and wherever possible.

When David’s family had been captured by the enemy and when his entire village had been burned to the ground, the Bible tells us, “David strengthened himself in the Lord his God” (1 Sam. 30:6b, NASB).

**2. Build a prayer team** who will pray for you and for your family without ceasing. This should be a group of people who are committed to holding up your arms in the battle until

victory is accomplished. These prevailing and relentless intercessors should also be ready to encourage you with Scriptures and with words of comfort. Mountains move when men and women choose to pray rather than to panic.

You should not be in this battle by yourself, so make a list of people who will take the time daily to lift you and your family to the throne of the Father.

**3. Engage with a practical support system.** This group of people should be friends and family members who are willing to go the second mile time after time. Perhaps they will babysit for you, clean your house or bring a meal. Maybe they will mow your lawn, drive someone to a necessary appointment or just ease the burden of daily life.

If you don't have a tribe of people such as this, reach out to your church and ask for practical help.

**4. Go for counseling if necessary.** We all need wisdom from trained professionals who are able to offer mental, emotional and spiritual guidance.

**5. Find a Scripture verse that holds a promise in it that applies to your situation.** Once you have identified this verse, share it with your prayer team. Pray this Scripture, share it on social media, write it out and keep it in front of you day and night. When a child of God connects with the promises of God, a miracle is on the way!

**6. Remind yourself to stay in a place of faith not in a place of doubt and fear.** Don't allow yourself to speak words of discouragement or sad resignation, but speak forth the power and the authority given to us in the Bible. What you say during a traumatic experience in life matters very much, so be sure that only words of praise and faith come from your mouth!

Family trauma is certainly one of the most devastating experiences we encounter, so build into your life these

strengthening disciplines of faith to guide you through the fire. {eoa}

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## **When God Does Old Things in a New Way**

I was participating in a large conference meeting recently and enjoying a worship service while awaiting the keynote speaker's message when I heard a few people who were sitting directly behind me discussing the service. I didn't want to hear them, but they were speaking loud enough to be able to be clearly heard above the worship team (which meant they were talking very loudly).

What I heard them say was not something new—it is something I have heard said countless times over my nearly 40 years as a believer in Messiah Yeshua and many times in synagogue before I came to faith in Yeshua as my Messiah.

I am certain that once you see the statement below, you will also say that you have heard it many times yourself. The statement was "That is not the way we used to do it!!"

This statement is often said in defiance to whatever is being done at the time in the service. It may be a commentary on the opening prayer, the worship music/choir, the use of a digital presentation instead of song books or the preaching style of

the speaker. The long list of things we used to do differently grows every week as new ideas are implemented and new technology becomes available.

The trouble with the “that’s not how we used to do it statement” isn’t the statement itself, because the statement itself is true. The problem is that, for some reason, the people making that statement believe that because people are doing something that has been done before in a different way that G-D cannot or will not respond by blessing those in attendance.

In other words, if we sing a song a new way, G-D can’t move. Or, if we don’t use songbooks, there won’t be an anointing of our worship service. Or if we sing an ancient song with a modern melody, it somehow loses its spirituality. Whenever I hear someone make the “That’s not how we used to do it” statement, I respond by saying I am so glad the people of Israel didn’t have that same attitude when they crossed the Jordan River into the promised land.

Think about this with me for a moment. The children of Israel are at the banks of the Jordan River just as they were when they were at the banks of the Red Sea. And just as when Israel crossed the Red Sea, the waters parted and Israel walked across on dry ground. However, as we read in Joshua, Joshua’s actions were completely different than Moses’:

“It will come to pass when the soles of the feet of the kohanim (priests) who are carrying the ark of Adonai, Sovereign of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the Jordan’s waters will be cut off. The waters coming downstream will stand up in one heap” (Josh. 3:13, TLV).

As we read in Exodus 14:16:

“Lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it. Then *Bnei-Yisrael* will go into the midst of the sea on dry ground” (Ex. 14:16).

Notice that Moses lifted his staff and G-D parted the waters while Joshua sent the *kohanim* carrying the ark ahead, and as they stepped into the water, the water parted. In both cases, both leaders followed G-D's instructions and when they did, G-D brought about a supernatural response.

As we look at these two events, we see the beginning was the same when both Moses and Joshua led their people to a body of water. Their response was the same: to seek G-D and follow His instructions. The end result was the same: The water parted. It was only the methodology that was different.

When the children of Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, crossed on dry ground, it was the result of G-D doing an old thing in a new way. So, whenever you hear someone say, "That's not how we used to do it," remind them that G-D often does an old thing in a new way and encourage them to step into the water with you.

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# 6 Things Your Daughter Won't Tell You but Wishes You Knew

In Meg Meeker's book, *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters*, she states this, "Fathers inevitably change the course of their daughters' lives—and can even save them. From the moment you set eyes on her wet-from-the-womb body until she leaves your home, the clock starts ticking. It's the clock that times your hours with her, your opportunities to influence her, to shape her character."

"Every daughter is born with the instinctive need and desire for her father's attention and affection."

And from the time she is born until the time she leaves the house, this need is yours to fill. There may be times when she verbalizes these needs, but there will certainly be seasons when she doesn't know how to. However, her needs are real, and they don't go away, whether verbalized or not. As a father of a teenage daughter, I'm constantly learning these things myself. Dad, here are six things your daughter won't tell you but wishes you knew.

1. **"I need a man in my life who won't always let me have my way."** Children were created with [the need for male leadership](#). This especially applies to our daughters. There will be times when your precious princess will want things that are not in her best interest. This is where your leadership must step in to save the day, even when you may be accused of ruining it.
2. **"I crave your physical affection even when I don't show it."** Girls naturally love the physical affection of their fathers. In fact, according to Meg Meeker's book, a daughter's self-esteem is best predicted by her father's physical affection. Our daughters need lots of hugs and other physical displays of our affection. Let's

give it to them.

3. **“Sometimes I don’t need you to solve my problems; I just want you to listen.”** Dads, let’s admit it, we’re full of answers. But that’s the last thing our daughter needs to hear from us, not the first. She doesn’t need us to jump to the rescue with all of our answers. She simply needs us to listen to her problems. And she’ll be much more likely to hear us out if we’ve done her the favor first.
4. **“Even when I disrespect you, I still respect you more than you know.”** Dads, if you have a daughter, prepare to have your heart broken a time or two. Because your daughter will not always understand the *what* and the *why* behind what you do for her. But know this, that regardless of what she says or does, there are very few people in the world of whom she thinks as highly as you, even when you doubt it.
5. **“I know you think I’m beautiful, but I wish you’d tell me often.”** Every girl needs to believe she is beautiful inside and out, and she needs to be told often. No one is better to tell her this than you, and for most of her years at home, there’s no one she’d rather hear it from than you either.
6. **“I long to hear the words ‘I love you’ from you more than possibly anyone else.”** Your daughter is seeking your approval first and foremost. And there ought not to be anyone who tells her she is loved more than you. Dad, make it a daily practice to tell your daughter “I love you”.

**Sound off: In which of these ways could you give your daughter more attention and affection?**

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For the original article, [visit allprodad.com](http://visit.allprodad.com).

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# 4 Spirit-Filled Steps to Help You Move Your Personal Mountain

I am wondering if some of you are dealing with a mountain or two today. Perhaps it is the mountain of mental illness or the mountain of adultery.

Maybe the mountain that you are facing is the mountain of financial instability or of addiction in someone's life.

Mountains are menacing and intimidating. Mountains often seem to get in the way of advancement or of walking into one's destiny.

I have faced a mountain or two in my day as well. There was the mountain of depression ... and the mountain of infertility ... and the mountain of cancer ... and other mountains I choose not to name.

A mountain rises from the landscape of one's life and looms its dark shadow over everything in its pathway. A mountain might appear impossible to climb, too big to go around and too massive to move.

What mountain are you facing today? Let me tell you what my definition of a mountain is: A mountain is simply anything that is too large, too massive and too fixed for a man or a woman to move beyond in their own strength.

It is possible to conquer a mountain, but it is impossible to do it alone. It is possible to climb a mountain, but it is preposterous to assume that you can do it by just being you.

It is indeed possible to get around a towering elevation of sheer stone, but you need more than vitamins, a personal trainer and strong leg muscles to do so.

You need to be relentless. You need to get on your knees. You need to talk to your mountain. And you need Jesus.

Can I just coach you for a minute here? I have crushed a mountain or two in my day and I'd love to share my mountain-moving, hell-shaking, devil-whipping strategy with you!

### **Be Relentless**

First of all, you need to be relentless!

Don't be intimidated by the mountain; the mountain should be intimidated by *you!*

Go for it! Do the next right thing! If you need counseling, go for it! If you need to ask for forgiveness, just do it!

If you need to break a bad habit, do it today and replace it with a good habit.

But whatever you do, *don't throw in the towel*. The mountain is no match for you!

### **Do It on Your Knees**

The next thing is, to climb a mountain, you do it on your knees.

That's right. Get on your knees and lift your hands in the air!

It is the posture of all expert mountain climbers.

The mountain won't move until you move.

Move to your knees.

Pray until your voice is gone.

Pray in the dark of night. Pray at morning's first light. Pray rather than eat.

Mountains are much less terrifying when viewed from the position of on your knees.

The truth is, that mountain is terrified what will happen to it when a man or woman of faith chooses to conquer it on their knees. "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man [ or woman] accomplishes much" (James 5:16b).

Prayer moves mountains, make no mistake about it!

### **Talk to the Mountain**

My third piece of wisdom is this: Have you tried talking to the mountain?

Have you tried telling the mountain where to go?

God honors a man or woman who owns the holy boldness to put a mountain in its place.

"Jesus said to them, 'Because of your unbelief. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move. And nothing will be impossible for you'" (Matt. 17:20).

Let me be practical with you for a minute and put some words in your mouth. The way you talk to a mountain might sound like this:

"Mountain of infertility! Get out of my way! You will not stop God's plans and purposes for my life!"

"Mountain of financial debt! Move in Jesus' name! I will tithe. I will pay my bills. I will give. I will use wisdom. And Jehovah Jireh is my provider!"

"Mountain of discouragement, be gone in Jesus' name! I will

worship through my pain. I will stay in His presence where there is always fullness of joy.”

## **Cling to Jesus**

And finally, you need Jesus.

You will never climb this mountain on your own. Take His hand.

Cling to Him. Let Him go first. Follow in His footsteps.

Be more aware of Him than you are of the mountain.

You see, my friend, when you are with Jesus, you will find that mountain climbing becomes a walk in the park.

When your closest companion and dearest Friend is your Savior, you will discover there is no mountain that will obstruct your view or impede your pathway.

He will always lead you beside quiet waters and give you rest in the green pastures.

Always.

Thanks for listening to my heart this week. As you know by now, my heart is truly not a perfect heart but one that is filled to overflowing with gratitude for the life I have been given and the people who walk with me. And, it continues to be a heart that is relentlessly chasing after God and all that He is! {eoa}

**Carol McLeod** is a bestselling 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 is a prolific author and loves digging for truth in the Word of God.

This article originally appeared at [carolmcleodministries.com](http://carolmcleodministries.com).

For more mountain-moving encouragement from Carol McLeod, listen to the podcast included with this article!

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# Why the Church's Authority Is so Much Greater Than You May Realize

As I attempt to read Scripture objectively, I am usually greatly impressed with the fact that I have yet to fully comprehend the vast authority God has granted to His people related to participating in His reign on the earth.

The fact that Jesus taught His followers to pray for His kingdom and will to be done on earth demonstrates that He has called us to be the primary vehicle to manifest and steward His kingdom in this realm (see Luke 11:2-4). Psalm 115:16 actually tells us that God has given the earth to the sons of men; Psalm 8:6 speaks about how God has granted mankind dominion over the works of His hands (on the earth), which refers back to the original cultural mandate God gave Adam and Eve in the very beginning of human history (see Gen. 1:28).

That being said, Jesus, as the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), fully restored back both the image of God (partially lost after the fall) to Christ followers, as we see in Ephesians 2:4—which is why He told the church to disciple the nations and exert His rule and stewardship in the created order (see Matthew 28:18-20).

In the New Testament, we see the implications of this vast rule demonstrated in both word and deed. One of the most mind-

blowing of all passages for me is when Jesus actually told the (then) representatives of the Mosaic covenant (see Matt. 23:2) that they had the ability to stop people from entering into the kingdom of Heaven! (See Matt. 23:14.)

Jesus also taught His followers that they had the power to bind and loose things on the earth based on the authority given them from the heavens (see Matt. 18:18). In the context of when He said this, He was actually referring to granting the church the power to adjudicate between believers who were in conflict with the authority to disfellowship reprobate people from the congregation of the Lord and to treat them as though they were not in covenant with God (see Matt. 18:15-18). This kind of authority is hard to fathom, and difficult to preach—due to the immaturity of the contemporary church as well as the potential of spiritual leaders to abuse their power and misrepresent the character of the Lord. However, we should not go in the opposite direction and make believe these passages do not exist or are not relevant. (Some may erroneously say that passages that refer to binding and loosing are only for the original 12 apostles, missing the fact that the context has to do with how the church should deal with conflict—guidelines that are obviously needed for every generation of the church.)

Jesus also gave the church the authority to forgive and release people from their sins (see John 20:23)— something the Roman Catholic system has used to create the confessional in which people in their church confess their sins to an ordained priest. James also admonishes the church to confess their sins to one another and pray for one another so they may be healed (see James 5:16).

Whatever your position and or interpretation is regarding these verses, one thing we can say is that God has entrusted the body of Christ with an awful responsibility of representing Him by walking in forgiveness toward others and by giving the church the power to put outside of fellowship

those who lack the fruits of repentance and continue to sin in ways that damage the body of Christ. (Paul even says to mark those who cause division in the church and have nothing to do with them; see Rom.16:17, Titus 3:10.)

Paul the apostle was entrusted with such authority, he even had the God-given right to hand an unrepentant sinner who was committing incest with his father's wife unto Satan for the destruction of his flesh so his spirit would be saved in the day of Christ (see 1 Cor. 5).

The apostle Peter walked in such authority he became the vehicle in which a married couple was struck down dead for lying to the Holy Spirit (see Acts 5:1-11). His divine authority was also such that even his shadow released the power of God to heal the sick and cast out evil spirits (see Acts 5:15,16). Not only that, Ephesians 5:19 admonishes the church to recite the Psalms—in spite of the fact that approximately one-third of the Psalms are imprecatory songs—that is to say, songs that either pray for or declare the judgement of God upon the enemies of God!

Furthermore, one cannot deny the connection in the book of Revelation between the angel (or messenger) of the Lord, the prayers of the saints, and the release of divine judgement upon the people in specific places in the earth in answer to their prayers (see Rev. 5-19).

Consequently, even a cursory reading of both the first and second testaments points to the fact that, the more mature a Christ follower is—and the more a person has an intimate knowledge of the ways of the Lord through pouring over His Word and growing in His Spirit—an amazing amount of heavenly authority to participate with God in stewarding the earth is released! You can almost say, “The sky's the limit”!! (God will not trust His authority to steward the earth with carnal believers whose unChristlike heart is set on selfish ambition, power and revenge, and who desire to build their own kingdom

instead of promote God's kingdom!)

Lastly, some of the biblical saints grew so intimate with Christ that God enabled them to participate in His heavenly council when He was deliberating with His select angels regarding divine actions about to take place (see Isa. 6, Jer. 23, 1 Kings 22:19-23). This is essentially what John the apostle experienced when he was caught up in the spirit on the Lord's day and had a vision of the inner workings of the holiest place in the heavenly temple as recorded in the whole book of Revelation. Paul even said He heard things that he was forbidden to speak! (See 2 Cor. 12:1-4.)

Truly, the secret of the Lord is with those who delight and fear Him (see Ps. 25:14). In closing, because of all I related in this article, it behooves mature saints to be very careful what they say about other people, how they pray and how they live—because, somehow or another, God has granted believers to sit with Him in heavenly places (Eph. 2:4-6) and participate in His rule on the earth, which is one reason why He said “death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Prov. 18:21a) and why Jesus told us that faith-filled words can move mountains (see Mark 11:22,23). Hence, the more mature a believer gets, the more they understand their authority in Christ, and the more godly fear they should have related to how they walk out their faith in this world.

A Christian who is always bad-mouthing others, engaged in idle talk, gossip and being judgmental and exhibiting a critical spirit has yet to understand their role as members of His body and the divine power God has granted them to represent Him on this earth. Unfortunately, they are acting more like Satan, who accuses the church day and night before the Father (see Rev. 12:10)—which will not only limit the authority God will grant them, but will also aid the work of the evil one against the kingdom of God.

May the Lord teach the church the awful responsibility they

have to represent Him and participate in His government in this world.

*For the original article, visit [josephmattera.org](http://josephmattera.org).*

*Dr. Joseph Mattera is an internationally-known author, consultant, and theologian whose mission is to influence leaders who influence culture. He is the founding pastor of Resurrection Church, and leads several organizations, including The U.S. Coalition of Apostolic Leaders and Christ Covenant Coalition. Dr. Mattera is the author of 11 bestselling books, including his latest, Poisonous Power, and is renowned for applying Scripture to contemporary culture. To order his books or to join the many thousands who subscribe to his newsletter, go to [josephmattera.org](http://josephmattera.org).*

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## **Revival of Miracles: Small Georgia Church Performs 8,000 Baptisms in 17 Months**

In 30 years of ministry, Pastor Todd says he's never seen God show up the way He has the past 17 months at Christ Fellowship Church in Dawsonville. His power has obliterated cancers, swept away disease, shattered alcoholism, caused marriages to reconcile and mental healing to manifest in the church's baptismal waters.

In fact, word of these miracles has become so widespread that Smith and his staff have performed more than 8,000 baptisms since February 2018. People have flocked to the small town of Dawsonville just northeast of Atlanta—with a population of only 3,500—from across the country and around the world.

People have flown in from more than 20 countries worldwide to experience the supernatural power of God in Dawsonville.

“I’m not talking about headaches, toe aches and tummy aches. We’re talking about major medical and emotional issues,” Smith told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of “Greenelines” on the Charisma Podcast Network. “Folks are entering the water, and Jesus is touching them in the water. I’ve never seen anything quite like this in my entire life.

“I’ve never seen the power of God manifest in such a way in the baptismal waters. And this a baptismal revival. People are finding out about it by word of mouth. The testimonies that are coming forth are about real life change, and people’s lives are being saved. Again. I’ve never seen the power of God like I am at this moment. And people, as soon as their foot enters the water, the fire of the Lord begins to touch them. Many of them lose the ability to walk forward, and others, when they get baptized, they get slain in the spiritual power of God that comes upon them. They can’t find strength in their legs, and they will just collapse right there in the water. Many of them are baptized with the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues.”

For more about the miracle-filled baptismal revival in Dawsonville, Georgia, listen to the podcast below.

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## **Why Some Church Leaders May Be Giving Demons Too Much**

# Credit

Demons and spiritual warfare are real, says master's-level practitioner and health educator Tracy Daniels. But, he adds, many in the church are too hasty to put those labels on individuals who are dealing with mental health issues.

"In church, we kind of read it as, when somebody's struggling, it must be a demon," Daniels told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. "Don't get me wrong. I believe in oppression, depression and possession. But I also know that when people are struggling with mental health, it doesn't mean it's a demon.

"It goes back to the way our bodies are made. When we look at our dopamine and serotonin levels that are in our brain, that affects the way we think. It's the stigma that's associated with mental illness—people being known as crazy or psycho or nuts, or something like that. What I tell people is this. I work out of seven psychiatric hospitals, and I don't believe anyone is crazy, nuts or psycho. Every one of us has life issues. It doesn't make us crazy; it makes us human.

"So, I want to educate the church on what mental illness is all about. There's a human factor that we all experience. So, my advice to those in the church is don't be too quick to stick a demon thought on it. There can be much more to it."

A military veteran of 37 years, Daniels has also ministered to survivors of shootings at the Pulse night club and Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

For more of Daniels' expertise about mental health, listen to the podcast below.

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# To Raise Godly Kids, Christian Parents Must Start With This

No parent is perfect, and raising godly children in an increasingly chaotic culture hasn't made it any easier. But Dr. Kathy Koch, founder and president of the Christian ministry Celebrate Kids Inc., has identified proven strategies for training your child and parenting in a way that will bring honor to God.

It all starts with the heart—and character—of the parent, Koch says.

“If we're aware that there's something from our past that has broken us, let's examine that and let's humbly move toward healing,” Koch told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of “Greenelines” on the Charisma Podcast Network. “Maybe we haven't forgiven someone, maybe we haven't had a hard conversation. Maybe we need some accountability and some help to grow and mature in a particular area.

“I'm so proud of parents that listen to me speak and realize there's something that's a true barrier, and they're willing to deal with their own situation. If you feel like there's a barrier between you and your child because of something that has happened to you, that's realistic. We're complex human beings. Children are children, and they are not developed yet with Christ-like character. But children tell me all the time that, if they [parents] would apologize and mean it, it would mean so much to me.

“For parents, a lot of it stems from who you believe you are

and who you believe your Creator is, and are you going to own that. That's huge."

For more of Dr. Kathy Koch's parenting wisdom, listen to the podcast below.