

Megachurch Pastor Reveals the One Message We All Need to Hear

Discouraged. Overwhelmed. Stressed-out. Burdened.

Sound familiar? Of course it does. But Kyle Idleman, pastor of 22,000-member Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, says the challenge doesn't often come in "one big devastating moment." Instead, he says, it's "stress contamination" caused by lots of small things piling on.

Idleman has a simple solution. In his own case, he says, "I needed somebody to challenge me. ... to say, 'Hey, you need to quit feeling sorry for yourself and find your strength in the Lord.'"

Idleman's newest book, *Don't Give Up*, teaches readers to make a shift in their prayers as David did in the Psalms. "You begin by telling God about your anxiety or stress or your discouragement, but that's not where you end. You end by telling your discouragement about God."

He points to Hebrews 12 as what he calls an "anchor passage," where "the writer says that if you focus your eyes on Jesus, you won't grow weary, you won't lose heart."

Listen to the podcast to find out more of Idleman's Spirit-filled secrets for casting your cares on the Lord.

'When Calls the Heart' Executive Producer Answers the One Question Everyone's Asking

Brian Bird, executive producer of television's popular series *When Calls the Heart*, knows the power of loyal fans. The half-million identified "Hearties" who follow, promote and praise the No. 1 Hallmark Channel series rose up in outrage at the end of season 5. That's when—only weeks after his marriage to Elizabeth (Erin Krakow)—popular Canadian Mountie Jack (Daniel Lissing) was killed.

"There's a whole bunch of 'Wanted' posters up about me," Bird says about the Hearties' outrage on a recent episode of "Greenelines" on the Charisma Podcast Network. Despite Jack's tragic demise, he said, nearly 5 million viewers tuned into the Christmas-night opener of season 6.

"What we have discovered is that there is a massively hungry audience out there that is underserved," says Bird, whose many credits in film, television and writing include serving as co-executive producer and senior writer for the final four seasons of the CBS series *Touched by an Angel*.

"When I was doing *Touched by an Angel*, there was much more family content on the networks. But in those 15 years or so since, the networks have all but forgotten about the family."

Download the podcast to learn the reasons behind Jack's sudden departure, Bird's views on family-friendly content and the plans for a potential spinoff from *When Calls the Heart*.

Is It OK to Question God? Pastor Who Lost Her Husband Says Yes

What do you do when your husband goes to bed and never wakes up? He was only 37, and you thought he was perfectly healthy. Suddenly, he leaves you with two sons, 12 and 13, as well as a church to pastor all on your own.

This happened to Karen Jensen Salisbury on New Year's Day in 1997. Her husband's sudden death left her with much to grieve—and many questions for God.

That tragic turn of events led Jensen Salisbury to write her new book, *Why God Why?*, which she discussed with Taylor Berglund on the latest edition of “Charisma Connection” on the Charisma Podcast Network.

Jensen Salisbury says it's perfectly OK to ask God tough questions like “Why?”

“You've heard people say you should never question God. But I think you can ask Him all the questions you want because He's the one with the answers, right? And He loves you. He wants to help you come through those events. He doesn't want a terrible event to define your life.”

Jensen Salisbury calls *Why God Why?* “a manual for getting past the pain.”

“It's the story of how my sons and I got past the pain and how God brought us through the valley of the shadow and gave us wonderful lives,” she says. “He is so faithful. That's what we

found. We kind of wanted to share that with other people, that there is a way.

“Yes, I’m sorry that there is a valley of shadow. Yes, I’m sorry that terrible things happen. But you know, welcome to life on planet Earth. There is a way to make it through and come out even better.”

Listen to the podcast for Jensen Salisbury’s inspiring story.

He Thought His Divorce Would Debilitate Him and Stop His Kingdom Work, but God

“I look at most people and I see where they’ve had some type of setback,” says megachurch pastor Bob Sawvelle. “Whatever it may be, dramatic or not, sometimes it’s just their own lack of understanding of their identity in Christ that keeps them from moving forward.”

Sawvelle knows about setbacks. He endured a divorce that left him thinking it would debilitate him, and he would never step into the fulness of his kingdom purpose.

Only when he recognized God’s very different perspective on this situation did Sawvelle begin to realize his full potential in Christ. God didn’t see him as a failure, and Sawvelle now believed he could move forward in his calling and put the stumbling block behind him.

While on a brief hiatus as missionaries in Haiti in 1994,

Sawvelle and his second wife, Carolyn, were touched by the Holy Spirit in meetings at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship and then again in 1995 in meetings with Randy Clark. Eventually, the Sawvelles took over as senior pastors at Passion Church in Tucson, Arizona, which has experienced massive growth.

Sawvelle's own growth in the Lord led him to write *Fulfill Your Dreams, Seize the Day and Be Extraordinary*, which offers principles to help believers fulfill dreams by embracing their purpose. Sawvelle discussed the book with host Chris Johnson on a recent edition of "Charisma Connection" on the Charisma Podcast Network.

"The more we can just keep our eyes on Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, and keep walking with Him, no matter what the setback may be or the hardships or the circumstances we face, along the way, our dreams can continue to unfold," Sawvelle explains.

Listen to the podcast to learn more about overcoming your setbacks and fulfilling your God-given dreams.

Shocking YouTube Kids' Video: Abortion Is 'All Part of God's Plan'

A YouTube channel for kids is facing controversy after posting a video of a pro-choice activist working to convince children it's OK to have an abortion.

Amelia Bonow, the woman who started the social media hashtag #ShoutYourAbortion, appears in the video talking with children about her abortion experience and sharing her views on the issue.

The popular organization known as HiHo Kids has more than 2 million followers on YouTube. HiHo published the video online on Dec. 28 entitled "Kids Meet Someone Who's Had an Abortion." It's already been seen by more than 200,000 people.

In the eight-minute video, young children squirm as Bonow tries to indoctrinate them with her pro-abortion worldview. She compares having an abortion to a bad dentist appointment and a bodily procedure that's "kind of uncomfortable." She also tells one child that she believes abortion is "all part of God's plan."

She asks kids what they think abortion is, and several say it's when you "get rid of the baby." But Bonow refers to the baby as "the pregnancy."

"You go to the doctor, and they put this little straw inside of your cervix, and then inside of your uterus, and then they just suck the pregnancy out, and it was like a crappy dentist appointment or something," the pro-choice activist tells a little girl.

Later, when a boy says he thinks some unwanted babies should be allowed to be born and adopted, Bonow disagrees, shocking the young boy. She tells him abortion is "all part of God's plan."

CBN News has contacted Bonow and HiHo Kids for their comments on the video. At the time of publication, they had not responded to our inquiries. The video has faced enormous criticism online.

Kris Williams, a pro-life rapper turned YouTube commentator, specifically responded to Bonow's HiHo Kids video by posting

his own YouTube video.

“God is not pleased with the killing of children,” Williams responded. “I don’t know what she means by part of God’s plan—as if he commanded it to happen or if He is OK with what happened. She would have to define that a little more. But no, God is not OK with your murdering your child. God is pretty clear in the Law with what He thinks about murder.” {eo}

Click here to read the rest of this story from our content partners at CBN News.

What ‘Separation of Church and State’ Is Really Supposed to Mean

Dec. 15 marks the 227th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, which protects freedoms such as speech, press and religion. It says “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.”

To the Founding Fathers, this meant walling off government from interfering with Americans’ faith. Nowadays, the understanding of that wall has become so twisted, it’s sometimes used to prevent Americans from practicing their faith.

It’s as if today’s interpreters think “making no law respecting an establishment of religion” means government and God can have nothing to do with each other. But what did the Founding Fathers who wrote the First Amendment actually mean?

Founders Opposed Ramming of Religion Down Citizens’ Throats

“When the founders talked about separation of church and state, they had a historical context that we really lack,” David Barton of WallBuilders told CBN News.

He said those founders saw great danger in rulers establishing a specific religion their subjects then had to practice.

Christian historian Rev. Eddie Hyatt, author of ***Pilgrims & Patriots***, explained, “Church and state were merged together, and the church used the power of the state to enforce its doctrines and practices.”

Founders Feared a Forced and Cruel Christianity

Hyatt mentioned certain governments used deadly force against dissenters who wanted to worship in their own way, saying, “Those people were persecuted, burned at the stake, some had their tongues cut out. The founders did not want that kind of Christianity.”

Barton added, “And so that’s the context they have for the separation of church and state. It was never the church taking over the state. It was always the state taking over the church.”

Click here to read the rest of the story from our content partners at CBN News.

Christian Blogger Faces Death and Rape Threats for Pro-Life

Tweet

PJ Media contributor and Fox News guest Denise McAllister and her family are in fear for their lives after receiving threats of rape and murder because of an anti-abortion tweet.

“I have worked with the police,” McAllister said in a tweet Tuesday. “My home is now on police watch.”

McAllister shared news of the threats with her nearly 14,000 Twitter followers.

“I am facing legit death & rape threats because I have dared to call out women who are hysterical about abortion and to challenge them to be responsible and not to elevate sex to the point that they’re willing to kill human life to avoid their responsibilities,” McAllister said. “How sick is that?”

Last week McAllister condemned abortion in a tweet, saying, “At the root of abortion hysteria is women’s unhinged desire for irresponsible sex. Sex is their god. Abortion is their sacrament. It’s abhorrent as women have flung themselves from the heights of being the world’s civilized force to the muck and mire of dehumanizing depravity.”

McAllister says the threats, which were sent to her privately, are serious and credible.

“They are threats outside of Twitter, stating they know where I live,” McAllister told JP Media. “Threats of rape and strangling. I spoke to the police. I am on home watch. My children are very frightened.”

Elizabeth Johnston, the Activist Mommy, said when she was threatened similarly, she reported the threat to Facebook and was told it didn’t violate community standards. {eo}

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How Satanists Are at War Against Trump and His Evangelical Supporters

President Donald Trump is only a year and a half into his presidency, and he remains one of the most controversial political figures of the day. Despite this, evangelical Christians have expressed their faithful support for him and his conservative policies.

One group dedicated to challenging evangelicals and their positive relationship with the administration is The Satanic Temple (TST).

Founded in 2012, The Satanic Temple (not to be confused with the Church of Satan) is a non-theistic organization that has gained prominence since President Trump's election. The group reported it gained "thousands of new members" after Trump won the presidential race.

"The Satanic Temple attracted 'thousands' of new members in just the first 36 hours after the election of Donald Trump," the group reported. "The 4-year-old temple, which had a pre-Trump membership of around 50,000, has never before seen a spike in registration nearly this big."

"We're definitely a resistance movement," spokesperson and co-founder Lucien Greaves said after a speech outside the University of Colorado Boulder. "We stand in stark opposition to this idea that we must unify under a single religious

banner.”

“We’re on the front lines of some of these battles against theocratic encroachment, especially with characters like Mike Pence holding such a high office,” he added.

Since the election, The Satanic Temple has launched multiple campaigns aimed at challenging Christian influence in the political sphere. One example is their After School Satan Clubs.

Ultimately, the group is about glorifying rebellion. In fact, they say they don’t even worship Satan or believe he is a personal being. Instead, they focus on rebelling against “tyrannical” authority, secularism and theism. {eo}

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End-Times Expert Issues Urgent Warning About ‘Evil’ Putin

President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin will meet face to face Monday at the presidential palace in Helsinki—a move author Joel Rosenberg believes is a bad idea.

“Personally, I don’t really want President Trump in the room with Putin. I don’t think we have a lot to say to President Putin,” Rosenberg told CBN News Middle East Bureau Chief Chris Mitchell. “I don’t believe in walking into the room with a world leader who’s an enemy, who’s a strategic threat, unless

you have a specific game plan.”

On Friday, the U.S. Justice Department announced charges against 12 Russian intelligence officers for hacking offenses during the 2016 presidential election. In response, congressional leaders urged Trump to call off the meeting.

Rosenberg warns of potentially bigger threat—Russia’s growing influence in the Middle East.

“The challenge with Vladimir Putin is that he wants to expand the influence of the Russian empire. ... The only place he really has to maneuver is the Middle East. He’s got Iran in his pocket, he’s pulling Turkey into his orbit,” he explained, adding that Syria has also grown closer to Russia in recent months.

Rosenberg does not want Trump to pick a fight with Putin, but to remember that he is talking to someone opposed to U.S. interests.

“For some reason President Trump thinks that if he gets in the room with him, maybe he can warm Putin up and Putin will turn out to be a good guy—he’s not. Putin is not a good guy, he’s evil.” {eo}

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President Trump Signs EO

Protecting Religious Liberty at National Day of Prayer

For the second consecutive year, President Donald Trump signed a faith-based executive order on the National Day of Prayer, sending the strong message that he is continuing his commitment to the issues important to the Christians and evangelicals who helped send him to the White House.

Townhall editor Katie Pavlich reported Thursday that Trump's newest EO—the White House Faith-Based Opportunity Initiative—will allow religious organizations to obtain resources from federal government programs.

Best-selling author of *God and Donald Trump* and award-winning journalist Stephen E. Strang said the signing of the order is evidence Trump is keeping issues of religious liberty front and center, as he has from the start of his presidency.

Strang noted in *God and Donald Trump* that the president, just three months into his term, chose the 2017 National Day of Prayer to announce an executive order to help neutralize the effect of the so-called Johnson Amendment and promote free speech and religious liberty.

“This decisive action by President Trump further cements his commitment to the faith community,” Strang said. “Those who hold religious convictions dear have already been marginalized and forced into decisions or behaviors that are against their beliefs. Those who refused to give in lost their businesses and reputations, and even their homes were at risk. This executive order will ensure that religious groups will have the same opportunity as everyone else to grow their organizations, stay true to their beliefs and make a difference in their communities.”

Trump added from the Rose Garden at Thursday's National Day of

Prayer ceremony: “The faith initiative will help design new policies that recognize the vital role of faith in our families, our communities and our great country. This office will also help ensure that faith-based organizations have equal access to government funding and the equal right to exercise their deeply held beliefs. We take this step because we know that, in solving the many, many problems and our great challenges, faith is more powerful than government, and nothing is more powerful than God.”

In *God and Donald Trump*, Strang gives an inside look at the Donald Trump campaign, election and presidency, including how Trump engaged with evangelicals and other faith groups to claim victory.

Strang is an award-winning journalist and successful businessman who began his career as a newspaper reporter at the *Orlando Sentinel*. He later founded a Christian publishing house and media company while interviewing and writing about nearly every Christian leader in the country over the past four decades.

For more information on *God and Donald Trump*, visit [. {eo}](#)

God and Donald Trump is published by Frontline, an imprint of Charisma House, which has published books that challenge, encourage, teach and equip Christians, including 14 New York Times best-sellers.