

2 Promising Developments in Alzheimer's Treatment

Alzheimer's is a devastating disease that has no cure. In the United States, more than 5.3 million Americans currently have the condition, and unless new treatments are developed, the number of people suffering from the disease will almost triple by 2050.

With the depressing statistics firmly in mind, researchers are rushing to develop treatments that will at least slow—but hopefully cure and even prevent the disease.

Here are two promising developments:

Telomerase treatment. Dr. Michael Fossel, author of *The Telomerase Revolution* and co-founder of the bio-tech company Telocyte, is petitioning the FDA to start human trials on a treatment he believes will cure Alzheimer's. Fossel, a former emergency room physician, has studied aging for 30 years, and he says that an enzyme called telomerase is key to conquering the diseases of aging, including Alzheimer's.

Telomeres are the pieces of DNA that act as protective caps on the ends of chromosomes. Chromosomes, which protect our genes, get shorter every time a cell divides. Once a chromosome gets too short, it dies. Many studies have shown that shortened chromosomes are associated with the diseases of aging, especially cardiovascular disease, dementia and diabetes.

Some cells, however, don't age and continue to reproduce because they produce telomerase, which lengthens telomeres and keeps the cells young.

Fossel believes that treatments involving telomerase will extend life spans and conquer the diseases of aging.

Other researchers are also studying how to use telomerase to lengthen telomeres as a way of extending life and treating age-related disorders. Scientists at Stanford University are investigating a modified RNA protein that extends the length of telomeres.

RNA, or ribonucleic acid, helps transfer genetic information. The Stanford researchers modified RNA to contain the coding for telomerase. When they treated skin cells with the modified RNA, the treated cells acted like much younger cells, multiplying as many as 40 times more than untreated cells.

“We have found a way to lengthen human telomeres by as much as 1,000 nucleotides, turning back the internal clock in these cells by the equivalent of many years of human life, said Helen Blau, Ph.D., professor of microbiology and immunology at Stanford.

They hope that their research will one day be used to treat humans. “This study is a first step toward the development of telomere extension to improve cell therapies and to possibly treat disorders of accelerated aging in humans,” said study co-author John Cooke, M.D., Ph.D.

Ultrasound technology. Researchers at Australia’s Queensland Brain Institute at the University of Queensland have developed a noninvasive ultrasound that breaks up the brain-clogging amyloid plaques associated with Alzheimer’s disease.

The technique hasn’t been used on humans yet, but when it was used on mice bred to develop Alzheimer’s, 75 percent recovered their memory function. The procedure did not harm normal brain tissue.

The technique uses a specific type of relatively inexpensive ultrasound called focused therapeutic ultrasound, which sends sound waves into brain tissue.

The waves move very quickly, and gently unlock the blood-brain

barrier, which normally protects the brain. But it also prevents drugs from entering, which is a barrier to using traditional medicine.

The sound waves pass through the blood-brain barrier and activate the brain's microglial cells, which remove waste from brain cells. When activated, they break down and remove the toxic beta-amyloid clumps.

"We're extremely excited by this innovation of treating Alzheimer's without using drug therapeutics," said professor Jürgen Götz. "The ultrasound waves oscillate tremendously quickly, activating microglial cells that digest and remove the amyloid plaques that destroy brain synapses.

"With our approach the blood-brain barrier's opening is only temporary for a few hours, so it quickly restores its protective role," Götz said in a statement.

"This treatment restored memory function to the same level of normal healthy mice," he said.

"We're also working on seeing whether this method clears toxic protein aggregates in neurodegenerative diseases other than Alzheimer's, and whether this also restores executive functions, including decision-making and motor control."

The researchers hope to test the technique on larger animals, such as sheep, and to start human trials in 2017.

"The word 'breakthrough' is often misused, but in this case I think this really does fundamentally change our understanding of how to treat this disease," Götz said. "I foresee a great future for this approach."

Other treatments for Alzheimer's are also on the horizon. Scientists at the University of California discovered that immune cells found outside the brain—B-cells, T-cells, and NK-cells—help the brain rid itself of memory-destroying plaque.

Additional studies have indicated that gene therapies, including preventing the development of amyloid plaque in the brain, may become new treatments to prevent Alzheimer's.

For the original article, visit .

Dutch Sheets Reveals Prayer Strategy to Turn America Back to God

What would America look like if every Christian in America took 15 minutes to pray for our nation? If 50 million people were releasing the same intercessory prayers and decreeing and declaring God's promises over the nation every day, would it make a difference?

Dutch Sheets, author of the best-selling book *Intercessory Prayer* and an international speaker, thinks it would—and he's got Scripture to back him up. Dutch points to Matthew 18:19-20 for biblical support: "Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are assembled in My name, there I am in their midst."

That's the foundation for a new app that aims to set Christians in America praying. The free iOS app offers a daily devotional, a Scripture and a prayer model. Altogether, these tools work to help you spend at least 15 minutes with God.

"This is a strategy the Lord gave me for mobilizing the nation in a unified, daily appeal to heaven," Dutch says. "In the spirit of 2 Chronicles 7:14, it will lead us in repentance,

the unraveling of unrighteous structures and toward revival in America. Give Him 15 could turn out to be the most significant strategy I've ever been part of for America."

Launched in November at the first national Appeal to Heaven conference, the Give Him 15 app, which Dutch describes as a new national prayer movement, has already seen over 100,000 downloads. The content, which includes blogs, was developed by Christians all over the country in various streams. An urgent prayer alert is also built into the app, so that Christians can make intercession in the wake of tragedies such as the San Bernardino shootings or the 170 people taken hostage in a Mali hotel.

Here's a sample prayer from the app you can pray right now: "Dear Lord, I love You! Give me a passion to wait on You. I want to trust You enough to believe that You want this kind of time with me. I want to be desperate for the move of God You have promised, but I want it to be truly You and not a man-made movement. I pray for the church in America, that we stop trying to get the lost in the doors with productions and feel-good programs, but that we would want to see You and experience the weight of Your glory! The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come, Lord Jesus!' Come, Holy Spirit! Come!" *–Jennifer LeClaire*

23 Days Before Easter: The Kingdom Means Relationship With Jesus

The Jews of Jesus' day were trained to love and respect the law of God. They believed that the kingdom of God was

nationalistic, and that the Messiah would establish a militaristic, political, geographical kingdom, as in the time of David.

But when Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God, Christian author and pastor Jamie Buckingham says, He spoke of the rule that He was establishing on earth. He had come to destroy Satan's dominion by deliberately challenging Satan on his own ground.

In other words, the kingdom of God is more than simply obeying the law, Buckingham says; it is a relationship with the Messiah. For the rest of Buckingham's teaching, watch this video devotional:

3 Ways to Give Your Wife the Attention She Deserves

"Why don't you come up and hug me?"

"Why do you keep your distance when we're around other people?"

"Why don't you do anything special for me?"

Are you familiar with these phrases? For the better part of the first few years of my marriage, I use to get these comments every week.

I'd just stand there and listen to her, completely oblivious to the specifics she kept mentioning.

As time continued to pass in our marriage, she continued to pester me with these questions, and I continued to do nothing.

This didn't lead to more intimacy; it led to more fighting and disagreements. In fact, we were more likely to have a yelling match than just a normal conversation.

This wasn't a marriage built on God, and it certainly wasn't the marriage we had dreamed of before we got married. I mean, we dated for nearly six years before we got married; we should have had this stuff all figured out by the time we got married, right?

Wrong. We were young, dumb and selfish.

And to be completely honest, some of you are acting the same way in your marriage.

So how did things change for us?

Well, a lot of things changed, but one of the biggest things that changed was my attitude. As I started getting God involved in my thoughts on these disagreements, I started to realize I was being very selfish in my approach to her needs.

Hear me out guys. Don't you have needs? Aren't there certain things you crave to hear you wife say to you?

As a Christian, there are certain things I want to hear from God such as, "Well done, my good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:23). It's refreshing to know that God recognizes us and finds powerful ways to encourage us in our daily walk just through his Word.

The same goes for me, and hearing things from my wife. Here are a few things I love to hear her say:

"Thank you for working so hard for our family."

"Thank you for protecting our family."

"I respect your opinion, and I believe in you."

Guys, those statements or something similar to those breathe

life into us, don't they? The problem is simple though, these are not "normal" things for your wife to come out and say to you. She may think it, but as guys, we want to hear it. We want to know.

So things changed for me when I realized there were certain things that I needed in the relationship, and there were certain things that she needed as well.

And, you guessed it—her needs were different.

So what can I do to fulfill this attention she keeps asking me for?

1. Simply give it to her! That may be too simple, but it is true. Guys, you decided to marry her, and now you need to love her!

2. Get serious about knowing her love language. That's right, stop assuming you know your wife so well, and start exploring her love language. Better yet, grab the book by Gary Chapman here and read the book together. Not only will you discover the truth about her love language and her specific needs, but she will know your needs as well. Sounds pretty amazing, doesn't it?

3. Shut up and listen. Stop being "so busy." Shut off the phone and television. Stop what you're doing when she is talking to you and actually listen. If she throws out a little love nugget, don't just move on to your next thing. Instead, write down what she said on a paper or on your phone and figure out a way to do it.

- Plan to take her out this weekend.
- Plan to hug her every night before bed.
- Plan to hold her hand the next time you're in a group.
- Make her more important than anything else in your life, besides God.

I feel like we've come a long way in this article, and I think your challenge moving forward is pretty clear. From now on, work hard to listen to and understand your wife's needs.

You'll watch the intimacy in your marriage grow faster than ever before.

For the original article, visit .

Christianity Without Repentance Falls Short

The word *repent* is one that doesn't sit too well with many people around the world. What is intended to be a gift and opportunity to encounter the grace of God has now become something at which individuals cringe when hearing.

I blame those wielding bullhorns and picket signs for the mess that has become of repentance. And while this liturgical experience may have a bad reputation due to the idiotic actions of others, we must understand that repentance itself one of the most vital parts of the Christian faith. Without it, a relationship with God isn't possible.

Repentance is all about turning away from our fleshly desires and, instead, clinging to the beauty and supremacy of God's will. There is nothing to be ashamed about in admitting you've messed up. Repentance bridges the gap between our failures and God's forgiveness. That's the beauty. It's the gateway to new life and an unrelenting relationship with God.

You and I must stop viewing repentance as a burdensome *I have to*, and instead, realize it's an undeserved *I get to*. We must

understand how lucky we are to have a loving God who gives us the opportunity to admit our failures, and choose to turn away from our selfish ways. Repentance is a gift, not a burden. There is an unfathomable liturgical experience when one finds the humility to turn from their ways and seek forgiveness in the grace of God.

The basic definition of repentance is: *to turn away from something or change your mind*. Nothing more and nothing less. Repentance is all about seeking forgiveness for the mistakes and downfalls we've found ourselves in the middle of. When we repent, we are telling God we put his will above our own.

Repentance itself was never meant to be promoted in a way of fear-mongering and hate, but instead of love and excitement for the life and grace that God brings when we decide to turn away from our selfish ways (Acts 3:19).

"Repentance grows as faith grows. Do not make any mistake about it; repentance is not a thing of days and weeks, a temporary penance to be got over as fast as possible! No; it is the grace of a lifetime, like faith itself. God's little children repent, and so do the young men and the fathers. Repentance is the inseparable companion of faith."— Charles Spurgeon

Let's take a moment to renew the way we see repentance.

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For the original article, visit [.](#)

Nikki Mathis' Prophetic Worship Carries Sound of Revival

I first met Nikki Mathis at a conference where Dutch Sheets was ministering. When she put her hands to the keyboard and lifted up her voice, I heard the sound of revival.

I've since enjoyed listening to her albums: *Sounds of Rain*, *Overcome* and her latest, *Radical Love*. She even recently put out a Portuguese album called *Me Chamas para Teu Fogo*, which translates *My Flames for Your Fire*.

I recently sat down with Nikki to find out what inspires her music and why music is so vital to the next great move of God:

Charisma: What inspires your music?

Mathis: I get inspiration a lot of times through what God is speaking and saying to me in that season, my own prayers or Scripture that the Lord is showing me. Musically, I love hearing what some of my favorite worship leaders are putting out, and often songs will be birthed from a place of spontaneous worship in a corporate setting that later gets turned into a song.

Charisma: How would you characterize your sound?

Mathis: I would say it flows in both a live, intimate love message and awakening and revival. Flowing in the prophetic and spontaneous is one of my favorite places to go in worship, and that can come out of an awakening sound or a deep intimate worship sound.

Charisma: What bands or singers have influenced you?

Mathis: Jason Upton and Rita Springer were foundational for me

when I first started listening to and leading worship. They were real forerunners for spontaneous and prophetic worship.

I built on that with IHOP, Misty Edwards, Jaye Thomas, Laura Hackett and Jon Thurlow. Bethel and Jesus Culture through Kim Walker, Amanda Cooke and their awesome group of worship leaders. More recently Rick Pino, Lindy, Harvest Bashta and Chris Burns are some more favorites.

Charisma: Why is music so vital to the next great move of God?

Mathis: With music being one of the primary ways our culture receives messages, the enemy is working overtime on putting his stamp and message in the secular music of this age.

Lucifer was a worship leader, and anointed one at that, and understands how to use music to glorify himself. His job was simple and still needed. But now, instead of an anointed and selfish cherub, God has chosen us, His people, His worship leaders, to bring the glory to Him instead.

I believe music is vital for the next move of God because across the board it speaks a language that goes deeper than words, and when all of God's worship leaders are on their post, bringing glory to Him and penetrating people's hearts with love for Him, unity will arise like never before.

The sound of worship is changing. It is being used in a real raw place, because that is what this generation wants. And to reach the lost, we have to get real and raw, and worship that is not fake will cause others to worship.

Charisma: What is your favorite song on your new album and why?

Mathis: My favorite song on *Radical Love* would have to be the song "Radical Love." Also known as "Calling me to the fire," God is calling us as the body of Christ to go deeper into His fire.

It's not comfortable, and it is sometimes full of tribulations, but without this fire, we will become a complacent people whose words fall to the ground. There is something on the inside of all of us, that knows there is so much more than what we just experience in our Sunday morning services. And this call to the fire is the call to explore that. We will come out shining!

Charisma: What role should music play in revival?

Mathis: Music should always be used to point people to Him. Music in revival will cause people's hearts to be drawn to Him on a level that isn't easily reached.

I have heard people say, "That is just emotionalism." Our soul is made up of our mind, will and emotions. Why wouldn't I want to experience God with my soul? I want to experience and worship God with all of my being! Spirit and body as well!

Music touches all three parts of us, and it isn't wrong that we get emotional when worshipping Him with music. It means our soul is entering in to worship the living God! That's what music should always be doing in revival, pulling people into worship the King of kings in a way that goes deeper every time.

Charisma: Why is worship so powerful in warfare?

Mathis: Isaiah said to put on the garments of praise instead of a spirit of sorrow. Praise and worship always magnify Him and make what we are going through so much smaller.

When we compare the cares of this life to His greatness, they tend to fade away in comparison. There are many prophetic acts we can do that the Bible tells us bring confusion to the enemy, like clapping our hands for an example.

When we choose to worship and praise in the face of the enemy, the struggles and the warfare he tries to bring gain no ground

because we are taking our greatest weapon, which is our worship, and watch it fade under the majesty of the King being lifted up.

24 Days Before Easter: Living for Jesus Is Solid Rock Living

In Matthew 7, Jesus told the parable of two house builders. One was a wise man who built his house upon a rock, and the other a foolish man who built his house upon sand. The house that was built upon rock withstood all kinds of weather, while the house that was built upon sand fell.

Have you built your life on solid rock or sinking sand? If Jesus isn't the foundation, you fall into the latter category, Christian author and Pastor Jamie Buckingham says.

"If you haven't built your house upon the rock, Jesus, then do so before the rains come," Buckingham said in this video devotional:

5 Reasons Why Marriage Is So

Amazing

If you are married, you may have discovered why marriage is so important and experienced some of the good that comes from it. Or maybe marriage was hard for some of you, and you're no longer married.

However, there is hope. But that hope starts with realizing that marriage can be more amazing than you have experienced or even thought.

I've been married many years and have experienced both the amazing as well as the very hard. Marriage eliminated loneliness for me and for my wife. We are more effective working as a team versus working as individuals. Through challenges, we have both matured. And a side bonus, we have wonderful kids that came from our union.

Those are all good and wonderful, but I've also discovered something even greater. God has created marriage to reveal more about Him and how awesome He is. And this is revealed through many of His purposes for marriage.

Here are five reasons that explain the importance of marriage:

1. Beginning – Marriage is the beginning—the beginning of the family—and is a life-long commitment. It also provides an opportunity to grow in selflessness as you serve your wife and children. Marriage is more than a physical union; it is also a spiritual and emotional union. This union mirrors the one between God and His church.

2. Oneness – When a man and woman get married, the “two become one.” Marriage is a bond like no other. It gives us a life partner, a teammate, as we move through the challenges of life together.

3. Purity – Marriage is designed for purity. We are under

assault by temptation nearly every minute and from many directions. The bond of marriage gives us the support to defeat that temptation by engaging in deep, satisfying love—a love that gives to, and receives from, our mate physically, emotionally and spiritually.

4. Parenting – When a marriage produces a child or receives a child through adoption, it is one of life’s greatest blessings. Roughly 40 percent of children being raised today are in a home without a father. The effects of that fact are staggering. Father absence causes increases in mental and behavioral disorders as well as criminal activity and substance abuse. But when children are raised in a healthy marriage, they get a front row seat to see and experience the lasting benefits of strong family.

5. Love – Marriage is designed to mirror our Creator’s unconditional love for us. It’s a love that will always be there and will never leave us or forsake us. When a man and woman love one another with that unconditional love, contentment follows and joy abounds.

What do you think is important about marriage?

For the original article, visit .

Is Too Much Salt Making Kids Obese?

Children are eating too much salt, and it’s increasing their risk of becoming overweight or obese, say Australian researchers. Even more concerning was their finding that those who ate the most salt also had the most abdominal obesity—the

most dangerous type of fat that leads to heart disease and diabetes.

The study, which included children ages 4 to 12, found that 70 percent of them ate more salt every day than the maximum recommended.

Since much of the day's salt intake is excreted in the urine, researchers asked children to collect their urine for a day to get an accurate measure of how much salt they were eating.

"We found that 70 percent of Australian children are eating over the maximum amount of salt recommended for good health," said lead researcher Dr. Carley Grimes. "In this study, children were eating on average 6 grams of salt a day, which is over a teaspoon, and they should be aiming to eat about 4-5 grams a day."

Every additional gram of salt the children ate raised their risk of being overweight or obese by 23 percent. "Such high intakes of salt are setting children up for a lifetime risk of future chronic diseases such as high blood pressure and heart disease," she said.

Grimes said that much of the salt the children consumed came from everyday foods such as bread, cheese, ham and sausages.

"Foods that contain higher levels of salt may enhance the flavor of foods which are often also higher in fat and energy, and a salty diet may also encourage greater consumption of high-energy, sugar-sweetened beverages when these are available," she said.

"This study is ringing alarm bells as we now have good evidence to indicate the need to cut the amount of salt that our children are eating," Grimes said.

The study results were published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*.

In the United States, about 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese. The number of obese children tripled from 1971 to 2011, and, according to , childhood obesity is the No. 1 health concern of parents.

For the original article, visit .

5 Ways to Recognize False Friends

False friends. The Bible has plenty to say about them—and you’ve probably had one or two yourself. Of course, you probably didn’t know they were false when you first befriended them or you wouldn’t have put yourself through the grief!

In my role as editor of *Charisma* magazine, I’ve met my fair share of false friends. They usually walk in my life with a big smile on their face, suggesting they can lift my load, open new doors or be a confidential sounding board. I’ve fallen for it once or twice, but after getting a third-degree friendship burn, I learned how to spot false friends from a mile away.

I’m not flowing in suspicion, mind you. I’m operating out of discerning of spirits and what I’ve learned from past experience. I also lean heavily on the Word of God, which, as I mentioned, has plenty to say about the topic. Here are at least five ways to discern false friends.

Listen to Jennifer’s podcast on this topic: “Spotting False and Phony Friends.”

1. False friends bear rotten fruit. “Beware of false prophets

who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruit. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit. But a corrupt tree bears evil fruit" (Matt. 7:15-17).

This verse mentions false prophets, but you can identify a false friend with a fruit inspection just the same. False friends make a lot of promises but don't do the works to back up their words. False friends may tell you what you want to hear with words smooth as butter (Ps. 55:21) to get on your good side because they want something from you, but when you need them, they are nowhere to be found.

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2. False friends betray your trust and stab you in the back.

The Bible says faithful are the wounds of a friend (Prov. 27:6), but that's in the context of a friend correcting an error in your life that you can't see. Sort of like iron sharpening iron. That's a lot different from someone who speaks cruel words behind your back or betrays your confidence.

That's painful, and David knew it all too well: "Yes, my own close friend, in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted up the heel against me" (Ps. 41:9). And let's not forget that Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (Luke 22:47-48).

3. False friends won't respect your godly boundaries.

False friends don't have any respect for your boundaries or your morals. They don't care if you've set your heart to study the Word every night or get up early in the morning to pray. They will tempt you to spend your time in ways that do not glorify God. Take Paul's advice: "Do not be so deceived and misled! Evil companionships (communion, associations) corrupt and deprave good manners and morals and character" (1 , AMP).

4. False friends won't show you kindness when you're in need.

The Bible says not to withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do it (Prov. 3:27). Many times, when we're going through a trial, we need kindness. Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit, and any friend operating in the fruit of the Spirit will show you kindness in a time of need. But false friends don't have your best interest at heart, and they won't offer genuine kindness. Job 6:14 puts it this way, "A despairing man should be shown kindness from his friend, or he forsakes the fear of the Almighty" (MEV).

5. False friends bring strife and division into your life.

Proverbs 16:26-28 warns, "An ungodly man digs up evil, and in his lips there is as a burning fire. A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends." False friends bring drama and bad blood into your relationships with them and with other people. If someone is nothing but drama or is working to separate you from good friends who love you, take caution.

Those are just a few characteristics of false friends. You may think of others. Thank God, He sends us good friends and those we should treasure. Proverbs 27:9 tells us, "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart, so does the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel." Proverbs 18:24 speaks of a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 17:17 reveals how a friend loves at all times.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 tells us: "Two are better than one, because there is a good reward for their labor together. For if they fall, then one will help up his companion." And Hebrews 10:24-25 admonishes us: "And let us consider how to spur one another to love and to good works. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but let us exhort one another, especially as you see the Day approaching."

I don't know about you, but those are the kinds of friends I want. Amen?