

7 Foods That Can Improve Your Digestion

The digestive system is the foundation of living and longevity. The typical individual suffers from constipation and bloating while spending money routinely on laxatives, fibers and antacids.

There are seven foods that are important to promote healthy digestion:

1. Chia seeds increase fiber. Chia seeds are rich in antioxidants which are fantastic for the body. They are typically found in Mexico as well as Guatemala. Chia seeds are also an excellent source of nutrients.

Ten grams of fiber are in each two tablespoons of chia seeds. Adding two tablespoons to the diet daily provides one-third of the recommended fiber intake. The seeds are tasteless, and they come in different colors (white, dark brown, black). Chia seeds are a rich source of fiber and omega-3.

Chia seeds reduce inflammation processes within the body. They also help to naturally lower cholesterol and contribute to promoting bowel movements.

Egg replacement tip: Mix one tablespoon of seeds with three tablespoons of water. Let mixture gel for 15 minutes. Use as an egg replacement.

2. Zucchini naturally cleanses. Zucchini is a vegetable worth adding to your regimen. This veggie helps to detox the body as well as improves digestion. Eating zucchini on a regular basis is hydrating and fulfilling.

Individuals who consume zucchini enjoy the natural cleansing effect the vegetable has on the body. The

food acts as a natural laxative and helps to move toxins out of the digestive system.

Cooking tip: Zucchini comes in different colors and varieties. The vegetable can be baked, grilled or roasted. To gain the most nutritional benefit from eating zucchini, leave the skin on. This veggie provides maximum health benefits when eaten raw.

3. Bone broth reduces inflammation. Using bone broth in dietary regimes provide a variety of health benefits. The broth aids the body in reducing inflammation, protects against infections and increases digestion. Minerals (calcium, glucosamine, magnesium) quickly absorb in the digestive system.

Cooking Tip: Add desirable veggies to crockpot, followed by bones (preferably organic). Add one tablespoon of apple cider and one clove of garlic. Cover ingredients with water and allow to simmer on low for at least 10-12 hours. Remove bones, strain, serve.

4. Lacto-fermented veggies detoxify. Including Lacto-fermented vegetables in the diet naturally detoxifies the body. This food type includes sauerkraut, pickles, Kim Chi and other fermented foods.

The tangy vegetables are easy to make and offer high levels of probiotics to the diet. The foods break down metals and toxins present in the body.

Health Tip: Making a variety of Lacto-fermented foods is easy and does not require much equipment. Most recipes require the base ingredient plus salt and filtered water.

In addition to Lacto-fermented vegetables, Dr. Colbert's Fermented Green Supreme food supports healthy digestion.

5. Coconut oil increases metabolism. Coconut oil is an

excellent replacement for butter or even oil. A sweet, nutty taste is present in the coconut oil. The edible oil comes from the meat of mature coconuts.

Antimicrobial properties which improve digestion exist in the coconut oil. Digestive benefits of including coconut oil in the diet include: boosting energy, increasing metabolism, and improving digestion.

Cooking Tip: Use organic, unrefined coconut oil when roasting vegetables, cooking eggs, making stir fries and for baking. Expeller-pressed coconut oil is preferred.

6. Ghee encourages digestion. One form of clarified butter, known as Ghee, holds its flavor and freshness for nearly one year. The butter stores nicely at room temperature without going bad. Ghee does not contain sugars or milk fats.

Ghee, when consumed, encourages the digestive system, which results in increased stomach secretions aiding the breakdown of foods. Other oils and fats used in the diet cause a “heaviness” when consumed.

Health Tip: Organic Ghee is available in health food stores or the organic section of specialty food stores. Ghee is easy to make from cultured, unsalted butter (organic).

7. Wild Alaskan salmon. Wild Alaskan Salmon is another awesome addition to the diet which improves digestion. Salmon is naturally low in calories and contains only a small amount of fat. This healthy variety of salmon tastes delicious and holds anti-inflammatory properties.

Health Tip: Other varieties of “salmon” receive feeding from GMO foods which make them inferior choices for a healthy diet.

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such as The Bible Cure Series, What Would Jesus Eat, Deadly Emotions, What You Don't Know May Be Killing You, and many more with over 10 million books sold. He is the Medical Director of the Divine Health Wellness Center in Orlando, Florida, where he has treated over 50,000 patients.

For the original article, visit .

47 Days Before Easter: 'Only Those Who Obey God Will Find Rest'

For the children of Israel, the Negev Desert has been the scene of a great deal of unrest. It is where they wandered for 40 years following their exodus from Egypt and stopped short of the promised land under Moses' leadership.

Certainly that is not the destination that God wants for any of us, Christian preacher and author Jamie Buckingham says.

"We should quiet our hearts and spirits in order to receive God's rest and peace," Buckingham says. "Only those who obey God will find rest. The rest of God is offered to all people through Jesus."

Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

For Jamie's entire message, watch this video, filmed from the Negev Desert:

For more information on Jamie's ministry, visit .

Dating: Is There Truth to Your Advertising?

One-third of all marriages now result from online dating sites. So these days, if your profile captures attention, you have a higher rate of opportunity.

And as you review other women's profiles, you have to decipher if you are reading fact or fiction. If you've ever ventured into this dating matrix, I'm guessing you've scratched your head wondering if there's any truth to their profiles' advertising.

So I want to encourage you to take a step back, and ask yourself, "Am I advertising the truth, and acting the way God wants me to?" Or "Am I putting up a facade, which in turn, is setting me up for dating failure?"

Before even answering that question, you might want to answer this, "what is my goal with dating?" What are you trying to accomplish? Why are you going through this in the first place? What's at the heart of your dating?

I think today's cultural man uses dating to use women. Marriage is a possible repercussion "when the right one" comes around. In the meantime, it's all about getting to that third date.

But for God's man, dating is a strategy to fulfill God's purpose and plan for your life, alongside a mate who is on the same path, and compliments God's mission. If you honestly seek

to serve God and His plan, then dating becomes a straightforward objective: Connect with a Christian who has the same goal to share God's love.

Then, be patient to see if there's any truth in her advertising, while acting genuinely after God's heart, not hers.

Consider this "Quick" vs. "Quality" comparison. Which one results in a God-honoring, time-tested, battle-ready, bulletproof relationship that can last?

Quick: External attraction; **Quality:** Internal beauty

Quick: Feelings; **Quality:** Faith

Quick: Insecurity driven; **Quality:** Identity driven

Quick: Physical; **Quality:** Spiritual

Quick: Meet emotional needs; **Quality:** Friendship

Quick: Common interests; **Quality:** Common relationship in Jesus

Quick: Secrets; **Quality:** Honesty

Quick: Becomes an obstacle to faith; **Quality:** Enhances faith

Quick: Chemistry; **Quality:** History

Quick: Learn a little; **Quality:** Learn a Lot

Quick: Dishonors God; **Quality:** Honors God

Quick: Dishonors other person; **Quality:** Honors other person

Quick: Poor foundation; **Quality:** Solid foundation

Quick: Adolescent; **Quality:** Adult

I'm not ignoring how attractive women can appear on the outside. But if your goal is true to God's way, then there

will be truth in your advertising, and your behavior will honor God.

And the best news? She will totally be attracted to your God-focus, self-control, and patience because there's peace and safety in a relationship when the man is under God's control.

Learn more about God's plan to navigate the dating matrix.

Try the 30-day Free Trial and sign up for the Every Man Ministries Newsletter.

Kenny Luck is the president and founder of Every Man Ministries. As the former men's pastor at Saddleback Church in California and current leadership pastor at Crossline Community Church, Kenny has found the proven way to improve men's ministries around the world. *Sleeping Giant* is this blueprint, and gives men the tools they need to lead and understand their own men's ministry. Watch Kenny's teachings at [Kenny Luck Ministries](#) and start your men's group today!

Follow Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter (@everymm,) and YouTube.

An Open Letter to Cam Newton

Note: This story is updated with new information. This is the grace I am talking about that we need to give. Here is my follow-up column on my website, which better explains my position.

Dear Cam:

During the 2015-2016 National Football League season, the whole world has become a witness to how you became a shining

example of a man who thoroughly enjoys the job and talents that God has blessed him with. I believe the entire league owes you a debt of gratitude for how you made playing football look like fun instead of someone who is simply drawing a huge paycheck.

As the quarterback of the Carolina Panthers, you brought the joy of professional sports back to the city of Charlotte. Your antics—your dabs and Superman poses after you score touchdowns—may seem obnoxious and arrogant to some, but that could simply be jealousy. Your playful demeanor won over a lot of fans, including myself.

As a former resident of the city and admirer of the team—notice I didn't say fan—I thank you for what you've done to bring enthusiasm back to the Carolina Panthers. I have many friends back in Charlotte, and they're having fun with it, too.

We've watched as the Panthers had an outstanding season, winning 15 of 16 regular-season games. You cruised through the playoffs to the Super Bowl, and you were named the NFL's Most Valuable Player. You deserve every bit of the accolades you have received.

Unfortunately, when you and your teammates lost to the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl 50 on Sunday, your image took a huge hit. It's not because you lost or because of your performance during the game. It was your demeanor in the post-game press conference that disappointed and shocked many.

You sulked. For the most part, you gave one-sentence answers to reporters' questions. Frankly, you acted like a 10-year-old child who had just had their cellphone taken away—not that a 10-year-old should have a cellphone.

You didn't own up to the six times you were sacked. You didn't own up to the two fumbles that led to 14 Denver points. You ended the press conference with the phrase, "I'm done, man."

Not cool, Cam, not cool.

I can't say that I've ever been a fan of yours. As an avid fan of the Alabama Crimson Tide, there's a natural tendency to dislike you because of your affiliation with Auburn University. You made us look bad during your senior year, and you won a national championship in 2010, which makes Tide fans' stomachs turn. But then that's just football.

I actually want to apologize to you for maligning you as a person. The controversy and scandal that surrounded you blinded my eyes so much so that I announced I wouldn't root for the Panthers any more when they drafted you. It was not my place to judge you, and I'm sorry I did. I did not give you the grace that Jesus would have. That showed my own character flaw. Again, I apologize.

As it turns out, I find my spirit actually grieving for you. I never thought I would ever say that. But as a man of God, I find myself now praying for you. Since I wrote this, a reader informed me that you indeed profess Christ, and that's wonderful. I apologize if I made any assumptions about that. Now it's all a matter of maturity in your walk with Him. Sunday's post-game antics only showed a sign of immaturity in you. You were hurt and disappointed because, for the first time in life on a big stage, things didn't turn out the way you had hoped.

Cam, many people are going to call you out for your behavior on Sunday, and chances are, you don't care right now. Deion Sanders, himself a man of God, did just that on national television by saying, "You are the face of our brand right now, you can't do that. I understand the emotions of losing, but you can't do that. A Manning, a Brady ... all these guys who are a prototypical type of quarterback in our game, they're not going to do that ever. Would Drew Brees ever?"

What Sanders should have done was pulled you aside and talked

to you about it in private. Or, he should have reacted like Marshall Faulk, who himself knows the pain of losing a Super Bowl. Faulk said, "I've been on that podium in that very same seat. It's tough, it's hard," said Faulk, whose Rams fell to the Patriots in Super Bowl XXXVI. "When I look back at how I handled it, I promised to never be that person again. Cam is going to learn from this.

Cam, remember this: Through it all, God loves you and wants you to draw near to Him so you can better handle the adversity in your life. This isn't the first time it's happened, and it won't be the last. But allow Jesus to come into your heart so that you can learn to deal with your trials and tribulations. He's inviting you to do just that.

I suggest you talk with teammate Charles Tillman, whom I interviewed on my Javelin podcast recently. He's a great man of God who can help you.

I know you're disappointed about not winning the Super Bowl, but that will pass. With your talent, you will be back there with another opportunity.

And as I always like to say, "there is that." {eoa}

48 Days Before Easter: The Dead Sea Scrolls

In this video filmed on location near the Dead Sea in Israel, Jamie Buckingham describes how the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered and recalls the baptism of Jesus. He also encourages all of us in our walk with Christ:

“As you approach this Lenten season, remember you are part of a great process bringing the kingdom to this world.”

Here is the entire video:

To learn more about Jamie Buckingham, visit .

5 Cost-Effective Ways to Take Better Care of Yourself

Do you want to take better care of your body? Each year in the U.S., literally billions of dollars are spent on the following items: diet plans, fitness centers, health-conscious cookbooks, gym memberships, home exercise machinery, athletic footwear and apparel.

At the same time, obesity, Type-2 diabetes, hypertension, and other so-called “lifestyle-related” maladies have continued to increase in prevalence, severity and financial impact. The cost to the economy is staggering; the cost to your family is beyond calculation.

In other words, what we’re doing isn’t working. We’re putting our futures and our families at risk because we’re not doing what’s necessary to take good care of ourselves. The cost is not only financial. The scope of the loss also includes work productivity, family stability, time with children, quality of life and life itself—all from what turns out to be a largely preventable set of circumstances.

But don’t be dismayed; all is not lost. The fact is, there’s good news. Discover five simple and cost-effective ways to take care of yourself and be a better role model as a dad.

1. Cut your calorie intake by one-quarter. So the other day I measured the “serving size” for my favorite cereal against what I actually throw in the bowl, and it turns out I eat more than double, plus a whole banana. Then I tried the same for every meal for a week. The recommended calorie intake for a “moderately active” man my age is 2,400. Let’s just say my first number is a 3. The simple act of monitoring calorie intake turns out to be a powerful intervention. Ditto measuring how long you exercise. Here is some more information on The Obesity Crisis.

2. Add 30 minutes of steady walking exercise each day. No matter what else you’re doing, add thirty minutes of walking. If that sounds daunting, step out for 10 minutes, three times. You’ll likely increase your work productivity as a side benefit. More oxygen to the brain, more time to think, more calories turned into muscle, more support for aging bones—it’s a win-win.

3. Never skip another annual checkup. Many insurance companies offer reduced deductions just for getting a checkup. It’s that important. Part two is to follow through on the doctor’s recommendations. Health maintenance is like any other preventative program. It’s considerably more effective than repair, significantly less time-consuming, and a fraction of the cost.

4. Eliminate all sugary drinks and most candy. Sugary sodas, sweet tea, spoonfuls of sugar in coffee, and gratuitous candy consumption significantly increase calorie intake while providing little to no nutritional value. In other words, if you’re looking to be more healthy, save those calorie expenditures for more beneficial foods.

5. Covenant with a “fitness buddy” to follow this plan. Accountability is huge when it comes to change. Collar one of your friends and challenge each other to shape up. And a huge parenting plus is being a health role model. Covenant to meet

once a week and talk about what's working and what's hard. Then encourage each other daily. Text, email, phone. No shaming, just support.

Derek Maul is the author of five books, a nationally recognized men's resource, a committed encourager and a pilgrim in progress. He divides his time writing and traveling to speak about the fully engaged life.

For the original article, visit .

Diamond Anniversary Couple Still on Fire for the Lord

Couples who celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary can count themselves very fortunate these days. Couples who are able to celebrate their 75th anniversary, like Charles and Millie McGregor, count themselves extremely blessed and favored by God.

The McGregors, of Edmond, Oklahoma, marked their diamond anniversary on Monday. And they both continued to serve the Lord with the infectious fervor they felt many years ago when the Holy Spirit touched both of their lives.

At 95 and almost 97, the McGregors are physically unable to attend church on a weekly basis. But on any given Sunday they can be found in front of their television, enjoying the messages of preachers such as Robert Morris and Charles Stanley. During the week, both Charles and Millie read their Bible daily, underline passages and pray with the youthful exuberance of teenagers at a YWAM rally.

“They are still teachable and learning and hungry,” said Paula McGregor-Sterns, one of four of the McGregors’ daughters. “I am so thankful for my heritage.”

For their 75th anniversary, the McGregors have received letters and cards from ministry leaders like Jack Hayford, Pat Boone Billy Wilson, Beth Moore, James Robison, Rob Hoskins, Jonathan Brooks and Micah Davis.

Both third-generation farmers, from Kansas and Oklahoma, the McGregors met as children. The couple’s parents were also good friends. Charles and Millie eventually married on Feb. 8, 1941, before Charles enlisted in the U.S. Army to serve his country in Europe during World War II. The McGregors’ first child, Judy, was born in 1944, but because of his tenure in the Army, he didn’t meet her until she had turned 18 months.

“My parents ended up raising four daughters on their farm in Oklahoma,” McGregor-Sterns said. “They planted wheat, oats and barley and raised Black Angus cattle and sheep. My mother went back to school to receive her nursing degree at the age of 43, and all of their daughters received a college education, which was unheard of for a farming family. Our parents retired debt-free (thanks to his business background) off the farm in Kansas 11 years ago when they moved to Edmond.”

McGregor-Sterns said her parents were raised as Christians in two different denominations. Yet Charles never considered himself a true follower of Christ until a significant event occurred.

“We went to church all of our lives, but we weren’t believers until we encountered the Holy Spirit,” Charles said.

It was the McGregors’ faith and prayers, Paula said, that helped save her sister, Dianne. Born a “blue baby” in 1947, Dianne had an irregular heart with valves that didn’t work correctly, so her heart enlarged to three times the normal size. She wasn’t expected to live past the age of seven, but

Charles' mother, Viola, whom Paula said was a "woman of great faith" and "who had recently had an experience/awakening with the Holy Spirit," invited Charles and Millie to bring Dianne to a Foursquare church in Kansas City, where there was a man there who prayed for healing. When they visited the doctor again, Dianne's heart was completely normal! She is now 68 and has grandchildren of her own.

Later the McGregors met a woman named Anna Rains, who introduced them to the Holy Spirit. Rains would teach all four of the McGregors' daughters in Sunday school at a Caldwell, Kansas, Assemblies of God church.

"My parents faithfully served the Lord all of their lives with great enthusiasm to see the Word come alive by the power of the Holy Spirit," McGregor-Sterns said. "They taught Sunday school classes, had Bible studies in their homes, supported many missionaries over the years, invited itinerant preachers and evangelists into their home. They raised their four daughters to wholeheartedly serve the Lord all of their lives. We all remember seeing our dad kneeling by his bedside before he went to sleep at night, Mother always prayed with us, and my dad always had his tithe check written out on Saturday night to present on Sunday morning. We prayed over each meal whether it was at home in private or out in public, for we weren't ashamed."

The McGregors have supported many missionaries financially and they were senders of those going on short-term missions. They also hosted many itinerant preachers, evangelists and prophets in their home.

The McGregors' family legacy will continue for generations to come. They have 11 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren, which include five nurses, two doctors, eight businessmen and businesswomen, five teachers, one head of an international airline, two mathematics teachers, two attorneys, one coach and one pastor.

Are You Looking for Love in the Right Places?

Hardly a day goes by that I don't see a TV commercial advertising a site where you can meet Mr. or Mrs. Right. Some cater to young singles, others to the more mature and still others to those of like faith or ethnic background.

I know of a few couples that actually met and courted their spouse online and have successful marriages. I'm not sure of the percentage of failed ones.

Valentine's Day is coming up, and we are bombarded with hearts, flowers, decorations, candy and sweet recipes. Restaurants and jewelry stores gear up for what will be a busy and lucrative time, while children exchange "Valentines" in school or other functions, and even "Charlie Brown" gets in on the act with a TV special.

Invariably there will be the surprise proposal with man on bended knee being photographed as he pops the question to his intended amid sighs of "Aw" and cheers from onlookers.

For some, it's an exciting time and, for others, not so much. There are those who may not hear the words "I love you" or "Be My Valentine," and for them it may be a *very long and tedious day*.

All of us are born with a need for love and acceptance. God made us this way. Studies show that babies who are held and loved do far better than those who are not.

Because of this innate need, many of us spend our lives looking for love—sometimes in all the wrong places. We want to

belong, to be part of something or someone. We seek acceptance and a sense of belonging wherever we go.

Being driven by this need can cause all kinds of problems. It might lead us to cling to our children, smothering rather than loving them and stifling their growth and development. Or it might tempt us to live in a fantasy world, dreaming of a knight in shining armor who will fill the void in our lives.

This need may cause us to look to *others* for affirmation: family members, friends, co-workers and so on. We rely on their esteem to convince ourselves we are worthy of esteem.

The truth is that as Christians, we are already fully accepted in the Beloved. We are members of God's family, precious daughters and sons of the King who are totally and unconditionally loved!

There isn't anything we can do to earn this love and acceptance. Jesus assures us, "All whom the Father gives Me will come to Me, and he who comes to Me I will never cast out" (John 6:37, MEV). We are secure in Him.

We have no need to look for satisfaction anywhere else. Yet there were times I had sought affirmation from others—and felt unloved and rejected when I didn't receive it. Has that ever happened to you?

When I asked the Lord about my actions and responses, He said: "Whenever you look to *others* for love or acceptance, you *will* be disappointed. You are *already* loved; you are *already* accepted by Me. Come to Me and receive your fill, then you will be able to be a giver of love. Share My love with others rather than looking to receive it from them. As you give, you will receive because you will reap what you sow. Accept others even as I have accepted and continue to accept you—not because you're perfect but because I love you and count you worthy of the price of My blood. You are a gift to me, bought and cherished. Cherish others as I cherish you. Love others as I

love you.”

Wow! That gave me a new perspective, and it was very liberating. Because I am *already* accepted and loved beyond measure, I don't *need* others to love me. I can love them without any expectation of reciprocity. I can release them to be who they are without placing demands upon them.

I can set them free not to do something for me just because I did something for them. In fact, Jesus told us it is better for us to invite those to dinner who *can't* repay us. What He meant is that we actually receive a greater reward when we do something for people who can't or don't pay us back—it is a greater indicator of our love.

Make a decision today to stop looking for love in all the wrong places and find it in God. Then you will be a vessel through which His love can flow out to others. Receive it from Him that you may give it out—and watch how you reap what you sow!

Prayer Power for the Week of Feb. 7, 2016

As you pray this week, embrace God's unconditional love for you, let it fill your heart, express it back to Him and share it with others. Ask Him to direct your steps to those who desperately need to know they are loved so that you can be a vessel of reconciliation and acceptance. Pray for those struggling through personal and economic loss as well as the ravages of winter weather. Continue to pray for worldwide revival and the soon return of our Lord. Lift up our nation and its leaders, the upcoming elections, more laborers for His harvest fields, Israel and the persecuted church (Jer. 31:3; John 6:37; 1 John 1:4; 1 John 4:19).

Are 'Wedleases' What Our Society Is Coming To?

I recently heard of an initiative in Mexico to create something called *wedleases*. The idea is based on the studies that show half of all marriages don't last.

So, instead of wedlock, a better way would be to allow a couple to lease a spouse, with the option to buy or marry them later. I can probably end this post right now based on the level of absurdity right there.

This week happens to be National Marriage Week which, *Newsweek* says, "presents a chance to focus on rebuilding a culture of marriage for this generation." Ideas like *wedleases* make things like National Marriage Week important, but on a smaller scale, we can all do our part. If we want to rebuild the culture of marriage, we must start with our own marriage.

Here are five ways to help rebuild the importance of marriage—starting with your own:

1. Set a foundation of sacrificial love. One of the first big lessons I learned in marriage was about myself: I was selfish. We must love our wives in a way that puts their needs above ours.

2. Make our wives feel special. Our wives are to be set apart, to stand out from every other relationship. This even includes our kids. Take a look at your calendar and your bank account. How much of both are you investing in your wife?

3. Get rid of some stuff. Early in my marriage, I realized I couldn't keep the same crew. I couldn't go to the same places and I couldn't spend time on things that could potentially cause challenges in our marriage. For you, that could be as

minor as less golf or fewer hours at work to something as major as changing careers or no longer visiting certain sites on the Internet.

4. Talk, but listen more. Communication is key in our marriages. Be transparent in sharing what's on your heart and mind. Even more important, take the time to listen to your wife, without going into problem-solving mode. My challenge is that I immediately attempt to solve my wife's problems, but sometimes she just wants me to listen.

5. Be the example. As you get right internally, it's time to show what marriage can look like. I'm not saying parade all over the place talking about your marriage. But find a couple or couples to spend time with and share what you've learned and experienced. Go on dates and hold hands, post pictures of you and your wife experiencing the joys you have in marriage. Don't be afraid to show that you love your wife and your marriage.

I agree that the culture of marriage needs to be rebuilt, but it won't happen overnight. It will take all of us who love our wives, value marriage and understand how important it is to our society. I am going to do my part, will you?

Jackie Bledsoe is an author, blogger and speaker, but first and foremost a husband and father of three who helps men better lead and love the ones who matter most.

For the original article, visit .

7 Steps for Our Daily Commute With God

It was time for me to get a new Suburban. I had driven my 2004 GMC Yukon XL 457,000 miles.

The hour meter showed that I had spent over one year of 24-hour days in that leather seat. It still looked great. I had worked hard to keep it maintained and clean. I had purchased eight sets of Michelin tires. It had a few issues. One in particular I've yet to live down.

My wife, Kay, traveled with me to a speaking engagement in Texas. The summer heat was an unbearable 115 degrees. The air conditioner went out! By the time we arrived at the hotel, she was soaking wet. Now, anytime I mention Texas she says, "It is too hot there."

After a diligent search, I found a dealership in Dallas that specialized in Suburbans. I wanted a low-mileage, clean, black Suburban. They had several to choose from. The salesman, Mike, was awesome. Without the typical negotiation tactics we were able to reach a good price. He asked, "Do you want to trade in your Yukon? We'll give you the best price that we can."

"Sure, but I know what I have," I replied. When I revealed to Mike how many miles that I had put on my Yukon, he exclaimed, "What in the world do you do to drive that much?"

I was able to tell Mike about FivestarMan and what I do to encourage men. I shared with him how grateful I was for that Yukon. I said, "Mike, I've spent more time in prayer in that truck than anywhere else on earth."

He said, "Neil, the earth is about 25,000 miles in circumference. You could have encircled it about 18 times!"

Your world is only as big as the trails that you travel.

There are a lot of men who have limited their world simply because they're not willing to travel new trails. Their path is the same path they've always beaten. It's easy to get in a rut and stay there. It's difficult to cut a new swath. The greatest temptation in a man's life is comfort.

I was working in a coal mine in Oklahoma when I had to make the decision to leave everything and go to college. It was hard. I had to quit my job, sell my possessions, pack my suitcase and move to another state. It wasn't easy, but it was necessary. As I drove away from everything I was comfortable with, I prayed to God.

It was during that drive that I began to discover that God relates to men in the daily commute.

"The steps of a man are made firm by the Lord; He delights in his way" (Psa. 37:23-24, MEV).

I realized that my steps had directional intent—an overwhelming realization that God had a destination in mind for me. Some call it providence, while others call it destiny. This revelation encouraged me that God would be very involved in my decisions. Along with this new understanding came the personal responsibility to seek Him for guidance. This lesson has been extremely valuable for me and has given me the self-assurance that I am in step with Him.

Here are seven steps for our daily commute with God:

1. Spend time with God in the cool of the day.

"Then they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden" (Gen. 3:8, MEV).

It had become a habit for Adam to walk with God in the cool of

the day. We do not have sufficient evidence to determine how long Adam and Eve lived in daily communion with God before the horrific events of the fall. What we do know is his decision on that day would have a global and generational impact upon mankind.

Not only was Adam expelled from his management of the garden—the Storehouse of Seed, of which he was to “cover the earth” with the vegetation—he was also cut off from his daily commute with God.

It’s interesting that the day begins in the evening—when three stars are visible. The creation account always points to the evening and morning of the day. The cool of the day is referencing the evening, when the heat of the sun has gone down.

When you’re driving home from work, leave the radio off and ask God to prepare you for your responsibility as a husband and a father to be a blessing to your family.

As a husband, your words are like seeds that are sown for a determined harvest. Ask God to give you the right words to speak over your wife. You don’t know exactly what her day may have been like, but the Holy Spirit does and He will help you have the right words—the best words—to speak to her. As Solomon advised, *“A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!”* (Prov. 15:23, MEV)

Rather than coming in and plopping down on the sofa, ask God to strengthen you so that you can go into the house with energy and excitement to be with your family. Before you turn on the evening news, get the news in your own world. That’s what matters most at home.

2. Determine that you will commute with God 365 days of the year.

“So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him” (Gen. 5:23, MEV).

I am very intrigued by the great-grandfather of Noah, namely Enoch. Although he was a prophet we have very little evidence of his life in our canonized Bible, although most Christian historians and theologians recognize his importance. Jude references him, “Enoch, who lived in the seventh generation after Adam, prophesied about these people. He said, “Listen! The Lord is coming with countless thousands of his holy ones ...” (Jude 1:14).

What we can see is that he invested 365 years walking with God. The writer of Hebrews lists Enoch in the Hall of Faith, *“By faith Enoch was taken to heaven so that he would not see death. He was not found, because God took him away. For before he was taken, he had this commendation, that he pleased God”* (Heb. 11:5, MEV).

Enoch walked so closely with God that he didn’t experience death. He was the first person to experience what we would refer to as the rapture, the snatching away.

I’ve determined that I want to invest 365 days of each year walking with God. I don’t want to miss a day. I don’t want to wander or roam without directional intent.

3. Walking with God in the daily commute will give you promptings of future events.

“These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man and blameless among his contemporaries. Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9, MEV).

As Noah walked closely in communion with God—in the daily commute—he discovered that a great deluge, a water baptism of the earth was going to take place. The rest of mankind had given their hearts over to wickedness and violence. This

cleansing was required in order to remove this scourge from earth. However, with this warning of things to come, Noah was given the blueprints of a large ship. Noah's motivation is clear—he built the ark to save his family members.

Many people have the erroneous idea that Noah was a radical environmentalist and animal rights activist. Obviously, we should be diligent stewards of the earth's resources and Solomon said that righteous men are kind to their animals, but Noah had one thing in mind when he spent decades building the ark—he wanted to save his family.

As you have a daily commute with God, you begin to think long-term. You'll see further into the future. Your decisions will be more accurate for things to come. Your responsibility as the progenitor of the family will take on a keen sense of destiny.

4. Trust that God knows where you need to be to receive His best for you.

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out into a place which he would later receive as an inheritance. He went out not knowing where he was going” (Heb. 11:8, MEV).

Abraham was given directional intent. Even though as he was traveling he didn't know where he would end up. He did know there would be an inheritance awaiting him upon his arrival. He had to trust the Voice he was hearing. He had to have confidence that he was hearing from God.

Sometimes I meet men who don't want to let go of their own plans. They've schemed up a good idea of what they think would be best for their lives and for their families.

However, I've learned that my schemes are not as good as God's dreams for me. He has a greater capacity of imagination than I do. His ways are much higher than my ways. His thoughts are much greater than my thoughts. To be honest, that is probably

one of the greatest challenges for men. To yield their lives and the lives of their family members to the purpose of God above our plans for ourselves or for our family members.

I've had to do that with my children. Now that they're grown, I've had to sit back and watch God lead them in different directions. Sometimes, I want to raise my voice and say, "Are you serious? Do you really think this is a good idea?" Yet, I must allow them to develop an ear to hear the directional intent that God has for them.

Abraham had to "leave his father and his family household" in order to go to the inheritance that God had for him.

5. A typical day at work can become an encounter with God.

"He said, "Do not approach here. Remove your sandals from off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground" (Exod. 3:5, MEV).

Moses was very well-educated and powerful in speaking (Acts 7:22). He had a strong sense of leadership and justice; however, his first attempt to exercise leadership backfired. Now, exiled from Egypt and led into a wilderness, he had become a shepherd managing his father-in-law Jethro's sheep.

During a typical day of work, Moses sees the burning bush that is not being consumed by the fire. As he approached to investigate the phenomenon, he encountered God.

Some men don't realize how involved God is in their work.

As you're driving to work, leave the radio off and have a daily commute with God. Ask God to strengthen your hands to prosper. Make the commitment that whatever your hand finds to do, you will do it with strength and skill.

Ask God to bless your company. Ask God to give you ideas and witty inventions. Commit to God that you consider your work as meaningful, not trivial. God made you a cultivator. Whatever

you touch should be better after you've handled it.

6. When you're facing your greatest challenges, it's important that you walk with God.

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4, MEV).

When David was a young man, he attended his father's sheep. He spent nights under the stars strumming his guitar and singing Messianic songs. It was during those intimate and isolated times that David had to learn to "fear no evil." It was during those nights that he wrestled a lion and a bear, protecting the sheep from predators. He would later take those lessons to the valley of Elah (Oak Tree), where he would face the champion Goliath.

Facing Goliath, David recalled his past experiences of victory over the lion and the bear, and he also recalled the anointing that flowed upon his young head when the prophet spoke over him that he would become a king.

When you have a daily commute with God, you will be reminded of the steps that God has guided you through. They may seem small now, but at the time, they were important lessons to learn. You will also be reminded of the important words of promise that you've received.

So, when you're facing a big-time problem, you can know that God is walking in this valley with you.

7. Jesus descended so that He could walk with man.

"He said, 'Come.' And when Peter got out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus" (Matt. 14:29, MEV).

Peter and the other disciples had worked for hours, rowing to get across the lake. A storm was opposing all of their efforts. They were getting nowhere. As tired as they were,

they looked over to see Jesus walking on the water, during the storm, making more progress than they've made all night!

Sometimes we read these accounts as if they're fairy tales, yet this actually happened. You can imagine how frustrating it would have been to have worked all night trying to get somewhere, only to see Jesus passing you by without hardly an effort.

Maybe that hits close to home for you. Your life may be at the place where you're tired of the opposition. You may have reached your limit, and you're just frustrated with the lack of progress. You may be so ready to make progress that you're willing to take steps you've never tried before. That's what Peter did.

When Peter saw the progress Jesus was making compared to the lack of progress all his co-laborers were experiencing, Peter said, "Hey, if it's really you, Jesus, invite me to walk with you" (my paraphrase).

Jesus came to this earth to walk with man in the daily commute. Jesus' response to Peter was "Come." In other words, get out of the boat!

Remember, your world is only as big as the trails that you're willing to travel. {eoa}

*FivestarMan was founded in 2008 by **Neil Kennedy**. Kennedy has passionately promoted God's Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Kennedy has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.*

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