Son of Sam Killer: Go and Sin No More

There are some things from your childhood that you simply cannot forget. For me, one of those was Walter Cronkite's reports on the *CBS Evening News* about David Berkowitz, the infamous "Son of Sam" serial killer.

Because my grandfather religiously watched Cronkite, I found myself, at the age of 11, watching with him and learning of the six horrible murders Berkowitz committed in New York City in 1976 and 1977 (he actually shot 13 people). What made the whole situation stranger—and tragic—is that Berkowitz claimed after being caught that he received orders from his neighbor's dog to kill, that "Sam is the devil."

Certainly the dog had nothing to do with Berkowitz's actions. The enemy, however, did. And certainly someone like that who had been sentenced to over 300 years in prison with no hope of parole was barred from the kingdom of God forever, right?

Thankfully, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the answer to that question is a resounding "no."

Ten years into his imprisonment, Berkowitz, who was adopted and grew up in a Jewish home, became a born-again Christ follower because God refused to give up on him although Berkowitz had given up on himself.

An inmate he met in the prison yard introduced him to Jesus.

"He told me that Jesus Christ loves me. I told him, listen, I don't want to hear that because I've done too many evil things and there's no forgiveness for me," Berkowitz said in an interview with CBN.com. "Maybe there's a God out there someplace, but I don't think he has any interest in me at all."

Within a couple of months, Berkowitz accepted Christ. Despite Berkowitz saying, “There were so many demonic strongholds in my life,” God loved him and saved him. ” … But He is patient with us, because He does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9, MEV).

And come to repentance is exactly what Berkowitz did. Berkowitz now prays with other prisoners and shares his faith openly with them, helping many inmates come to know the Lord. He’s doing more for the kingdom as a prisoner than most are doing as free “so-called Christians” in the church.

Some may not believe his transformation, but there is only One whose opinion that counts. Just as He said to the woman who was caught in adultery, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more” (John 8:11, MEV).

I want to thank my good friend and author Grant Berry, who wrote this story for *Charismanews.com* about Berkowitz, for reminding me of the incredible redemptive power of the shed blood of Jesus. Instead of the “Son of Sam,” Berkowitz now refers to himself as the “Son of Hope.”

Take Berkowitz’s story to heart, you who believe that God couldn’t possibly love you because of your sinful past. He loves you no matter what, and you are not lost forever.

And even if you call yourself a Christian and are buried in sin right now, come to Him and repent. He wants you back more than you can possibly know. Come and find Jesus again, and welcome back to life.

And as I always like to say, “there is that.”

Shawn A. Akers *is the online managing editor at Charisma Media. He is a published poet and published a story about Dale Earnhardt in* NASCAR Chicken Soup for the Soul*. You can read his blog here. To sign up for his newsletter, “Step Out of the Boat,” and other Charisma newsletters, click here.*

Why Are Men Leaving the Church?

I am often asked, “Why are the men leaving the church today?” Sometimes it comes out as, “What can we do to keep the men of this church?” or “How can our church reach more men?” There is no easy answer, but in this article I would like to provide some basic principles that will help you develop a male-friendly church.

The overriding principle is simply this: The environment you develop is more important than the events or programs you put on. A man is looking for an environment that is consistent with who he is as a man and a place where he feels comfortable belonging and becoming the man God wants him to be.

1. Men are looking for relevance. Most men in our society today do not see the value of going to church because it is not speaking their language, and it is not addressing the issues they face. For example, a recent survey showed that 92 percent of churchgoing men have never heard a sermon on the subject of work. The unspoken message is: What you do for 60 to 70 hours a week does not relate to what you do on Sunday mornings. The most important issues for men are their work, family, marriage, sexuality, and finances—and rarely are these addressed from the pulpit today. Some of the key questions men are asking are:

- What is true masculinity?
- What is success?
- How do I deal with guilt feelings?
- What is male sexuality?
- Is purity possible today?

- What does a healthy marriage look like?
- How can I raise my children to be successful?
- How can I be a man of integrity in the workplace?
- How can I be a leader in the home, church, workplace, and world?
- What is my purpose in life?

2. Men want to be involved in a cause greater than themselves. Men want to be involved in something driven by a compelling vision. Men want to know what hill the church is climbing, where we are going, what we are about. The church has the greatest and most far-reaching mission on earth and we should not be bashful about challenging the men of our congregation with it.

3. Men want a shot at greatness. I have never met a man who wanted to be a failure or a loser. Men want to win. They want to be heroes. They want to come in first. Unfortunately, it seems the church today wants nice men, not great men.

4. Men want to be challenged. Men tend to view the world around them as something to be overcome or conquered. It's high time we told them they do not have to check their competitive drive at the door of the church. If they are seeking risk, adventure, change, competition, and expansion—tell them how to find it within the mission of Jesus.

5. Men are looking for action. Men today are looking for something to do; they do not like sitting around and theorizing about the 27 views of the second coming of Christ! Men measure themselves by productivity and gain a portion of self-image based on what they do. Their desire for adventure is often expressed in the desire to be on the solution side of things. Many churches today are in maintenance mode, rather than being missional.

6. Men are looking for leaders and want to be leaders. This

principle is simple: Men do not follow programs, they follow men. They want to follow a bold, courageous, visionary leader. Establish an environment where strong leadership is attractive. Not only are men looking for a leader to follow, they want to become leaders themselves. They want to lead in their family, workplace, church, community and world. One of the things you can do is equip them to lead.

7. Men are looking to have fun. If men walk into a church and see a bunch of serious, stoic-looking people, shouldn't they wonder if Christianity really is a killjoy? The world is a serious place; men are looking to laugh and have fun to balance that reality. They love a good joke, funny story or movie. I encourage you to develop a ministry environment in which men have fun together.

8. Men are looking for brothers. Most men have many acquaintances but very few men have a good friend. According to statistics, the average man over 35 years old does not have one close friend. Men need teaching on how to develop and strengthen friendships and an environment where they can find genuine male friends.

9. Men are looking for healing. Many are using socially unacceptable means to deal with the pain—making their work or their hobbies their life, misusing sex, drugs or alcohol. Unless these wounds and hurts are dealt with in a healthy way, they will never become the man that God wants them to be. They will never be able to have healthy relationships or move on from childish behavior.

I hope some of these insights from my own ministry to men will serve you well as you seek to minister more effectively to the men of your church and community.

Steve Sonderman *is the associate pastor for men's ministry at Elmbrook Church in Brookfield, Wis., and the author of "How to Build a Life-Changing Men's Ministry."*

For the original article, visit men.ag.org.

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8 Subtle Warning Signs of Cancer

The American Cancer Society projects that more than 1,665, 540 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in 2014. Even though it is the second most common cause of death in the United States, it's not always fatal.

In fact, more people survive every year, and the key is early diagnosis and treatment. But the warning signs of cancer aren't always clear, and they can be subtle and easily confused with minor ailments. Beware of the following signs of cancer:

1. Heartburn. Chronic heartburn, as well as mild nausea and feeling bloated, may be early signs of stomach cancer. Since antacids may relieve the heartburn pain, you may be convinced that you've nothing more than a bit of excess stomach acid. But if the symptoms continue, and you may even feel full after eating less than normal, see your doctor.

People who suffer from gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) are more vulnerable because the condition can cause Barrett's esophagus, a condition that can be a precursor of throat cancer.

2. Shortness of breath. The first symptom some victims of lung cancer notice is a shortness of breath while doing tasks that they could previously do without effort. A stubborn cough that lingers past a couple of weeks, whether dry or mucus-producing, could be an early sign of lung cancer—or a change

in a chronic cough if you are a smoker. If symptoms persist, visit your doctor. He'll listen to your lungs and may order tests such as an X-ray.

3. Flu-like symptoms. Early symptoms of lymphoma, cancer of the lymph nodes, are similar to flu, and they include aches and fevers. Although fevers are more common in cancers that have spread, according to the American Cancer Society, they tend to be early symptoms of lymphoma and leukemia.

4. Hoarseness. If you remain hoarse for more than two weeks after an upper respiratory infection or allergy season has passed, especially if it continues to get worse, get yourself checked out. Hoarseness or laryngitis could be caused by esophageal (throat cancer), lung cancer, or even thyroid cancer, as a tumor presses on the esophagus, and in many cases, hoarseness may be the only symptom of esophageal cancer.

5. Arm or shoulder pain. A pain on the inside of the arm or shoulder that gets worse over time could be a symptom of lung cancer caused by enlarged lymph nodes pressing on nerves. This warning pain, which can appear even before shortness of breath, isn't like a sore muscle but is constant and is similar to a pinched nerve or arthritis.

6. Bloating. If you're a woman and you're experiencing abdominal bloating that continues with no explanation, such as a regular monthly episode connected with PMS, consult with your doctor, especially if you're also feeling full, but haven't eaten much—or at all.

Unexplained bloating, especially when combined with feeling full, is a common symptom of ovarian cancer, a deadly cancer that causes few symptoms until advanced. Your doctor can order an ultrasound of your abdomen to spot possible problems.

7. Difficult urinating. Men who have trouble urinating, either not being able to urinate, having difficulty stopping, or a

weak flow, may attribute their condition to a swollen prostate, but difficulties urinating are the most common sign of prostate cancer. Your doctor can perform an exam and perhaps screen you for prostate cancer using the PSA (prostate specific antigen) test.

8. Fatigue. Weakness and fatigue are symptoms of many types of cancer, but are especially characteristic of leukemia, according to the American Cancer Society. If you continue to feel exhausted, even if you're getting enough sleep and aren't under undue stress, consult with your doctor.

For the original article, visit newsmaxhealth.com*.*

Why Donald Is Trumping the Republican Party

Once in a while I come across something so powerful I want my readers of The Strang Report to read it. This op-ed by Iowa journalist Bob Eschliman gives interesting insight into the 2016 Presidential election:

Is the GOP Missing the Boat?

By Bob Eschliman

"Conventional wisdom"—the collective knowledge of "experts" who have been following politics for years—has seemingly gone out the window this presidential election cycle, particularly in the Republican primary race.

Some blame the sheer number of candidates; depending on who you ask, there's anywhere from 15 to 18 major candidates seeking the GOP nomination. Others blame the media and its

secular/leftist bias, which mutes conservative Christian candidates and the grass-roots base that supports them.

The solutions many have attempted, however, suggest maybe they're missing the boat. Conventional wisdom isn't working, so they dig deeper into the annals of conventional wisdom to look for answers. Except that doesn't work.

Doing the same thing over and over again—like nominating candidates who are neither conservative nor Christian—and expecting different results is the definition of insanity.
First, we need to address the white elephant in the room: the health and long-term survivability of the Republican Party. I hate to break it to you all, but the Grand Ol' Party is dead and we're left to pick over its bones.

Don't expect the lamestream media to pick up on its death, not for a while anyway. That's because they miss the boat on just about everything, having been conditioned and devolved to the point where they simply parrot and regurgitate whatever they're told by the secularists/leftists they idolize.

Just trust me on this. The long-awaited end has already arrived, with little warning or fanfare.

The GOP died because the party establishment could care less about you and your principles so long as the lobbyists on K Street keep sending in the checks. You figured that out a few election cycles ago, and you started to push back.

But the establishment, so intent on holding on to power, squeezed everyone who challenged its authority—the Tea Party, the Liberty Movement, authentic Christians and constitutional conservatives—out of the "big tent." It replaced them with crony corporatists (there is nothing wrong with making a buck, except when you steal two from the taxpayers and still keep what you make) and Log Cabin Republicans.

Despite that, in a complete repudiation of everything Barack

Obama has done to destroy the United States of America, you went to the polls and gave the Republican Party control of both chambers of Congress. You did it with the express purpose of turning back Obama's socialist agenda and his reckless lawlessness.

That's not what happened in January, though, was it?

Instead, you learned the hard, bitter truth: The GOP "leadership" in Congress doesn't have the fortitude to stand up to Obama or the Democrats. And finally being sick and tired of being sick and tired, you did what any self-respecting human being with just a shred of dignity would do: You walked away.

While it's not unprecedented in American politics, it's something that hasn't happened in a long, long time—more than 150 years—and technology has had an impact on the way in which we organize, communicate, and associate with each other. So, rather than watching the Republican Party whither and die, replaced by something new over the next few congressional election cycles—much the way the GOP replaced the Whigs in the 1850s—it happened in the historical blink of an eye.

Enter Donald Trump.

Love him or hate him, you cannot argue that he's certainly gotten the pulse of a large swath of the American populace. Even if he's just pretending—I know many of the folks working for him, and I doubt any of them would waste their talents or put their careers on the line for a publicity stunt—he's accurately assessed what the winning messages are this cycle.

As a result, he's doing something that is completely unprecedented in American politics. He's running a third-party presidential campaign within the apparatus (albeit deceased) of one of the two main parties, and he's succeeding—another sign the GOP really is dead.

To see how it’s happening, you need to get down to ground level. And what better place to look than my home state, Iowa, which gets first crack at the presidential candidates every four years.

The state’s largest newspaper has been conducting its own poll, called The Iowa Poll, for decades. But in the past 20 years or so, it has been far from accurate in describing the on-the-ground situation in Iowa. That all changed with its most recent poll, which showed nearly a third of those who said they would be voting as a Republican at the Iowa Caucus in February were backing Trump.

That, of course, was just the headline. If you dig deeper into the numbers, you see the real story: He’s getting that support from three main groups. First, there are the fiscally conservative Tea Party Republicans, who like his take on government spending and the economy.

Then, you have the state’s largest voting bloc—the “no party” independents—which traditionally favors Republicans, but can swing like a pendulum based on “checkbook politics.” The independents like his no-holds-barred rhetoric and willingness to take charge and lead from the front, even in the face of intense backlash.

Finally, you have a smaller group of conservative Democrats, who are completely turned off by the hard-left swing their party has taken in the past few election cycles. Seeing Option 1 as the Socialist (Bernie Sanders) and Option 2 as the Socialist-Lite (Hillary Clinton), they decided to go with Option 3, The Donald.

We know The Iowa Poll is accurate because Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate, in response to the decision to forego the Iowa Straw Poll this year, created his own straw poll at the Iowa State Fair. The numbers from the straw poll show the same, startling dynamic: Nearly twice as many voted for

Republicans as voted for Democrats.

This isn't a Trump-only phenomenon in Iowa, though. The top four, based on polling averages over the past month, includes Carson, Cruz and Fiorina. None of them are considered darlings of the Republican establishment.

But of the four, only Trump is actively engaged in the process of turning poll numbers into actual votes on Caucus Night. He has a team of staffers traveling a tour bus, affectionately referred to as The Trump Bus, going around the state, not just advocating for Trump, but educating nontraditional voters on how to participate in the sometimes-complicated caucus process.

Now, each of those three groups closely identifies with Trump, even though they very likely have little in common with the multibillionaire businessman. So, when one of the other candidates, or another outside observer, makes the suggestion Trump isn't [fill in the blank—conservative, Christian, etc.] enough to run as a Republican, they take it as a personal affront.

They're not particularly beholden to constitutional conservative ideals, and for the most part, they aren't necessarily concerned with social issues (at least not as their primary issue). So, attacking his credentials in those areas have no effect, or very likely have the opposite effect when attacks on Trump are perceived as personal attacks on themselves.

And as these are not your traditional Iowa Republican Caucus voters, should Trump be pushed out of the party, there's little hope they will remain with the GOP.

Relying on the old, faulty conventional wisdom, however, the Republican establishment probably doesn't care. They likely see Trump supporters as yet another threat to their power. In fact, conventional wisdom suggests that in the absence of

Trump, the establishment and conservative Christian elements would duke it out for the GOP nomination.

But there's just one small problem. Actually, it's a rather big problem, also indicative of the Republican Party's recent demise. Of the 16 mainstream candidates, 14 are polling in single digits in Iowa, meaning everyone is within a point or two—factoring in the polls' margins of error—of being in the top three.

More conventional wisdom: There are traditionally three to five "tickets" out of Iowa to have a legitimate shot at competing for the party nomination. With several candidates focusing their attention on New Hampshire rather than Iowa, in a misguided attempt to jump-start flagging campaigns, that notion is also busted.

So, there has to be some coalescing for anyone to win.

The establishment considers the following candidates in their "camp": "Jeb" Bush, Scott Walker, Marco Rubio, John Kasich, Chris Christie and Lindsey Graham. Combining their current Iowa polling averages, you're looking at about 22 percent of the vote. Even if they coalesced behind Fiorina, or Cruz, the best they could muster alone is 30 percent—a statistical tie with Trump.

The conservative Christian elements probably claim the following candidates in their "camp": Ted Cruz, Mike Huckabee, Bobby Jindal, Rick Perry and Rick Santorum. Combining their current Iowa polling averages, you're looking at about 17 percent of the vote. Even if they coalesced behind Carson, the best they could muster alone is 35 percent—also a statistical tie with Trump.

To soundly defeat Trump, both sides must come together. And in Iowa, that's just not going to happen. Christians and conservatives in my home state have been burned too many times by the GOP establishment in the past few months for that to

happen.

A little over a year ago, the Republican Party of Iowa's State Central Committee saw a changeover from conservative Christian control back to establishment control. As a result, the God-fearing Christian who was serving as chairman of the party was ousted and replaced by one of the establishment SCC members. It was a move unprecedented in the history of the state party.

A few months later, Gov. Terry Branstad spent more than $200,000 on an advertising campaign—in an election in which he was assured victory—to win one county, meaning he carried all but notoriously liberal Johnson County in a race he won by nearly 22 points. That was money that could have gone toward electing conservatives in the Iowa Senate, which still remains in Democrat control.

Once the Iowa General Assembly went back to work in January, the establishment immediately went to work to pass a 43-percent increase in the state's motor fuel tax. To ensure the bill got to the floor in the Republican-controlled House, legislators were removed from their committees and replaced by establishment Republicans who would vote in favor of the tax hike.

And then, after the legislative session was over, the Center for Medical Progress began releasing its investigative videos, exposing Planned Parenthood's profiting from the sale of the body parts of aborted children. Outrage in Iowa was strong, and calls immediately went out for the state to stop providing taxpayer support for Planned Parenthood.

Branstad instead shrugged his shoulders and said there wasn't anything he could do. He correctly pointed out there wasn't a specific line item in the budget going directly to Planned Parenthood that he could veto (Iowa governors have line-item veto authority). However, he initially ignored the fact that federal block grants administered by the state's Human

Services and Public Health departments were still going to the abortion provider.

The state-funded University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics also perform abortions in Iowa, and have notoriously avoided Medicaid billing for those procedures to keep Branstad from being placed in the awkward position of having to reject the charges. Planned Parenthood's Medicaid contract remains in place, as well, ensuring it receives hundreds of thousands of dollars a year from taxpayers.

Conservative Christians in Iowa have been calling for that to end for weeks now, including a rally at the Statehouse to demand action. Instead, the only response they've gotten from Branstad is a very weak assurance that his administration would ensure no taxpayer dollars are spent directly on abortion services.

Any taxpayer dollars given to Planned Parenthood to keep the lights on, so to speak, for "women's health care services"—which are already available from local hospitals and clinics throughout the state—frees up donor dollars to subsidize its abortion procedures. It's a property of money called fungibility.

Pro-life activists and legislators in the state have since called upon Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller, a Democrat, to launch a criminal investigation into Planned Parenthood's operations in the state. Branstad didn't join in, nor did the outgoing or income Speakers of the House (both Republicans), nor did the Senate Minority Leader (also a Republican).

Much like those who have been taken advantage of time and time again by the national Republican Party establishment, Iowa conservative Christians have had enough. They're just not going to play ball with the establishment anymore. As was evidenced in 2012, they would rather walk away than support someone who doesn't hold with their principles, especially

“establishment RINOs.”

So, given this scenario, and not a lot of mathematical probability of it changing between now and February, it seems inevitable that Trump will win the Iowa Republican Caucus, launching a chain reaction in several other early states that turns into a political tsunami the likes of which we haven’t seen since 1980. And if that happens, the conventional wisdom says he will get hammered by either Sanders or Clinton—or even Vice President Joe Biden, should he run and win the Democratic nomination—in the General Election.

Or will he?

The following should not be construed as an endorsement, but rather as something to ponder as you make your own informed voting decision. But, what if Donald Trump, the thrice-married, four-times bankrupted businessman, has been appointed by God to lead us?

What if he is a modern-day Nebuchadnezzar?

With the armed forces of Babylon on the verge of sacking Jerusalem, God used His prophet Jeremiah to instruct the Israelites that He was about to inflict his punishment upon Judah and the Temple, and that if they wished to survive, they must follow Nebuchadnezzar and willingly go into bondage. Those who did as they were instructed were blessed.

As He has always done, God followed through on His promise. It was through another of His prophets, Daniel, that He was able to move the Babylonian ruler’s heart. In the end, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged Daniel’s God was the One True God.

Could the same thing happen again? I don’t know, but if you take an honest look at what our nation has become, it’s not difficult to imagine God has had enough too. It’s something I will continue to prayerfully consider over the next few months.

But there is one fact of which I am absolutely certain: The Republican Party is dead. You can also be certain that Donald Trump's emergence as a political force is a direct result of that fact.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on how you look at it), the media and the GOP establishment missed the boat on that one.

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Cindy Jacobs Addresses Fearful Prophecies Over America

With several months of the year of the whirlwind before us, how should we position ourselves amid the doom and gloom? That's a good question—and one I've been pondering more and more lately. In fact, I've discussed it with many prophets and prophetic people in the last couple of weeks—and I've prayed plenty.

Should we store up three years worth of food? Take all of our money out of the bank? Hide in a cave, praying for the best but believing the worst? Leave the country? What should be our

response? I, for one, refuse to let a spirit of fear over take me, despite all the doom and gloom prophecies.

Cindy Jacobs, co-founder of Generals International, says first of all we are to obey the admonition from Scripture to not give in to fear. She is convinced the enemy wants to stir up panic and distress. But she is also convinced we have to stand firm, trusting God's faithfulness.

"I want to share with you what I am hearing prophetically at this moment. On a global level, God is changing the landscape of financial power. Some nations are going to find that their 'cash cows'—the commodities that have propped up their ideologies—are diminishing or being taken away. This will even begin to affect the terrorist organization, ISIS," Jacobs says.

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"Is there going to be a total collapse such as we saw in 2008? If there is, I do not have a word about that. In past economic shakings, I have known in advance that a severe crisis would take place," Jacobs continues. "For instance, in January of 2008, the Lord spoke the word to me, 'There will be no more business as usual.' It could be that this time around the Lord has simply chosen to speak to other prophets and not me, and that is His prerogative."

Still, because so many voices—both prophetic and secular economic analysts—are pointing to extreme economic trouble this fall and even into 2016, Jacobs is praying hard through this season. I am praying with her—and so should you. She reports positive prayer answers after taking her prayer team to Wall Street to intercede for God to give us a course correction instead of a complete economic meltdown.

"As we move into the September/October months of the Jewish New Year and the appearance of the fourth blood moon, what do

I know that I have heard? Historic changes will take place in the coming days that will be a prophetic catalyst for a great awakening. God is setting the stage for revival and harvest," Jacobs says. "I also have a strong admonition that we are in a time of hearts being tested—whether we will rely on our own strength and capabilities, rather than God's."

I stand in 100 percent total agreement. I'm hearing the similar things are so are the likes of Chuck Pierce, Bill Hamon, Barbara Yoder and Ryan LeStrange. I'll share more with you about the revelations in the days ahead, but for now, let's get to the question about storing food. Should we store up mass amounts of food?

I live in South Florida, where hurricane season has caused devastation so I do have food and water stored. But I do not have three years worth of dried food in my house. Even if I wanted to, I could not possibly store up that much food in my little beachfront condo. If the Lord has told you to do that, obey—but don't move out of fear. Jacobs says if we're hoarding out of fear it's not from the Lord.

"In truth, no matter what comes, we are called to be overcomers. There have been many dire prophecies, but they all are conditional upon a lack of repentant hearts. At the moment, there are a number of prayer projects and fasts being called by various ministries, and our Reformation Prayer Network stands with them as well," Jacobs says.

"God will be the same great God in the coming days as He is right now at this very moment. He is not about to forsake His children, no matter what transpires. He is vitally interested in our personhood, families, and futures. God is setting the stage to make some serious history, and I, for one, am not afraid of the future because He is my future—eternally!"

And I offer a hearty "amen!"

Jennifer LeClaire *is senior editor of* Charisma*. She is also director of Awakening House of Prayer in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, co-founder of* AwakeningTV.com*, on the leadership team of the New Breed Revival Network and author of several books, including* The Next Great Move of God: An Appeal to Heaven for Spiritual Awakening; Mornings With the Holy Spirit, Listening Daily to the Still, Small Voice of God; The Making of a Prophet and Satan's Deadly Trio: Defeating the Deceptions of Jezebel, Religion and Witchcraft*. You can visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter. Jennifer's Periscope handle is @propheticbooks.*

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10 Ways to Teach Your Kids About Money

Economist John Maynard Keynes wrote, "Whenever you save $5, you put a man out of work for a day … whenever you buy goods you increase employment …"

Unfortunately, like Keynes, many people and governments have embraced the idea that huge spending equates to a better fiscal policy. But economist T.N. Carver writes, "In the long run, the thrifty man will spend more because he will have more to spend than the thriftless man."

Teaching kids about money and the wisdom of thrift is important, and we strive to provide you with the very best financial resources. That's why we are proud to partner with Brightpeak Financial—their products, tools, and resources were designed specifically for the financial needs of families like yours.

Without further ado, here are our 10 ways to teach your kids about money:

1. "It's just money." The first thing to teach your kids about money is that it's only green paper. Money is required for existence in society but cannot buy love, friends, or happiness. And they will not take it with them after their life is over.

2. It's your responsibility. Many parents don't take the time and effort to teach their kids about money. This would explain a portion of the current debt crisis. It is your responsibility to mentor your kids in the important facts of life. Money stands tall on that list.

3. Younger kids and money. Kindergarten-age children are fascinated with money. Isn't it refreshing to see a person get truly excited over a nickel? Teaching a child this age about money also comes with the extra benefit of learning math skills. Introduce to him all of the different valued coins. Have him count and divide them. He will never tire of this game! If you would like additional tips for young kids, you can download a free eBook by Brightpeak Financial on teaching your kids money smarts.

4. Give an allowance. When you feel your kids are at an appropriate age, have them start earning their own money. Nothing teaches children the value of a dollar like having to work for it. And they can start saving up their allowance to purchase items they want instead of bugging you for it! Try this All Pro Dad training tool, Chore Chart.

5. The shopping spree. It might sound peculiar, but allow your kids to go on a shopping binge with their saved allowance. Most likely they will blow what they have very quickly. This will lead to the discovery that what they purchased were items they aren't even sure they wanted. This will teach the valuable lesson of spending money wisely.

6. Use online resources. The website Money Instructor.com is a fantastic site for parents and teachers. It features lessons, worksheets, games and many other helpful tools to teach children. You are paying that monthly Internet fee so put it to good use!

7. Emphasize interest. Albert Einstein once called interest the eighth wonder of the world—it's so powerful. Encourage your children to open a savings account to accrue "free money." And, on the flip side, show your kids how much more they'll have to pay for anything they might borrow money for in the future.

8. Common sense. Scott Reeves of Forbes magazine writes, "If you can teach your child the difference between needs and wants, how to budget and how to save, your child will know more than many adults." Proper money management is basically just good common sense and keeping greed in check.

9. Big decisions. A great idea is to allow the whole family to be a part of major family purchases. The family vacation, buying a new car, and purchasing a new washer and dryer are a few examples. Give everyone in the family an assignment to research. Compare costs, quality reviews and the most bang for the buck. This will be fun and a terrific real-life money management experience.

10. Counter-influence. We live in a consumer-based economy. Our current system only works when people spend great deals of money. We also have to contend with the daily bombardment from all angles of advertising. Children are encouraged from the earliest ages to want and to spend. You must counteract this influence by providing the skills for a properly balanced life and that starts by you showing the rare jewel of contentment.

For the original article, visit allprodad.com*.*

Exploring Non-Surgical Relief for Foot Pain

New techniques are allowing podiatrists to treat bunions, plantar fasciitis, hammertoes, and pain in the ball of the foot without surgery, the ***Wall Street Journal*** reports.

Many patients have a misconception that age-related foot ailments can only be treated with surgery.
But experts say nearly all foot problems can be treated with such techniques as ultrasound-guided injections that deliver anti-inflammatory drugs to the precise site of the pain and shock wave therapy that promotes soft-tissue healing.

Other nonsurgical treatments include the use of insoles that redistribute the pressure on the foot and physical therapy. Both approaches aim to address the cause of the foot problems, which can help prevent them from recurring.

“I think people come in wanting surgery because they want a quick fix and want to be back to normal,” said Norman Turner, an orthopedic surgeon at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. “Unfortunately, in most cases surgery isn’t a quick fix because it can take just as long, or longer, to get back on your feet.”

All surgeries carry risks of complications, such as infection, Dr. Turner noted. And even when nonsurgical treatments don’t fully fix a problem, they often delay the need for surgery, which is helpful because some surgical procedures don’t last forever.

For the original article, visit newsmaxhealth.com*.*

How America Became Entangled by Materialism

On a drizzly day in June 1978, Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn delivered a riveting commencement address to a crowded audience on Harvard Yard that would shake the foundations of the way Americans thought about themselves.

"When the modern Western states were being formed," he said, "it was proclaimed as a principle that governments are meant to serve man and that man lives in order to be free and pursue happiness. In the process, however, one psychological detail has been overlooked: *the constant desire to have still more things and a still better life and the struggle to this end imprints many Western faces with worry and even depression, though it is customary to carefully conceal such feelings. This active and tense competition comes to dominate all human thought* and does not in the least open a way to free spiritual development."

Two years earlier, Francis Schaeffer wrote that the majority of people had adopted two impoverished values: *personal peace* and *affluence.* "Affluence means an overwhelming and ever-increasing prosperity—a life made up of things, things, and more things—a success judged by *an ever-higher level of material abundance."*

Why are Americans caught up in the constant desire for more and more things?

The material prosperity we enjoy is a modern miracle. In 1950 our homes were one-third their present size, no one had heard of an invention called a "personal computer," Greyhound was how America traveled, space exploration was an abstract idea,

television was an infant, and a millionaire was a rarity. Our progress would make even Solomon burn with envy.

Who would have guessed that, in the 65 short years since the end of the Great Depression (1942) and World War II (1945), America would achieve such a remarkable standard of living—even in the middle of such a devastating recession? Yet, our prosperity has a dark side.

The dominant economic theory in America in our lifetime has been *consumerism.* Webster's Dictionary defines consumerism as: "the economic theory that a progressively greater consumption of goods is beneficial." Is this true? A glance at newspaper ads and TV commercials readily proves that, true or not, the world of commerce diligently applies this theory to their marketing and business plans.

All in all, America is sick. We have a bad case of the "-isms." Standing behind this constant desire for more and more things are a host of addictions to "-isms," such as individualism, hedonism, materialism, relativism, careerism, secularism and materialism. Materialism is buying things we don't need with money we don't have to impress people we don't like.

The American opportunity for prosperity has spun out of control. We have created a nation addicted to *consumption* rather that *production*. Rather than an overriding desire to produce value and make a contribution, we have created a culture that wants the benefits of labor without the obligation to perform it. Richard Weaver says we have observed the extinction of the idea of mission—that men no longer dream of high goals like building a cathedral. The end result is self-pampering and eventually self-disgust, for the ancient truth that labor is therapeutic has been lost. Man's decision to live wholly in this world is evidenced by the worship of comfort rather than making a contribution to the public good.

here is, of course, nothing inherently wrong with consuming. It is elevating consuming and consumption to a philosophy of life that leads to sin. Paul said it best: *"Those who use the things of this world (should live) as though not engrossed with them"* (1 Cor. 7:31). While consumption is no sin, it is "pre-sin." Virtually any good thing can become sinful when carried to the extreme. The Scriptures put it this way: *"A little yeast works its way through the whole batch of dough"* (1 Cor. 5:6) and *"'Everything is permissible for me'—but not everything is beneficial"* (1 Cor. 6:12).

Forces That Encourage Materialism

The constant desire for more and more things is encouraged in social structures. The availability of installment credit, which Daniel Bell calls "the greatest single engine in the destruction of the Protestant work ethic," has eliminated the need to postpone acquisitions and defer gratification until a time when people can pay with cash they have saved. Today, we can instantly gratify our desires for an ever-growing litany of products, which—according to Madison Avenue—symbolize progress and change.

A fascination with new things creates a restlessness in modern man. Through the structure of advertising the ethic of "sell" constantly bombards us with the newest, most improved gadgets. Madison Avenue pin-stripers have created a phenomenon we might call *psychological obsolescence.* We are made to feel itchy for a new car, even though the one we have had for only three years runs fine.

The advances of technology give Americans "convenience, comfort, speed, hygiene, and abundance" in such proportion that there seems to be little need to look anywhere else for fulfillment, meaning, and purpose. Indeed, we don't even need to plumb the meaning of death because we can postpone it.

Forces That Encourage This Desire in Philosophy

Previous cultures took it as a task to preserve their culture—its inventions, values, etc. Today, this is almost seen as a wicked idea. Change, even change for the sake of change, is a virtue. C. S. Lewis said that what one generation called permanence, we now call stagnation. This idea inexorably feeds the desire for more and more things.

An evolution from community to individualism has made us a more anthropocentric culture. Today the manager and the therapist, products of this individualism, define the outlines of American culture. The assumption is that we can manage and fix everything, whether a problem in production or making someone feel good about themselves. We have seen a loss of language that speaks for the public and common good, and of a concern for community. The triumphant language today is that of individualism, a concern for the individual.[7] This has in turn led to self-centeredness. Selfishness inevitably leads to a desire for more and more things.

Theological Compromise

The constant desire for more and more things has led to a syncretism between materialism and Christianity (if such a thing was possible). People begin to think the purpose of Christianity is to help them become more successful, and that if God loves them He will bless them with a temporal blessing.

In the process, people become cultural Christians, which is to say there is not any marginal difference between the way they order their lifestyles and the way non-believers order theirs. There is a God we want and there is a God who is. They are not the same God.

Cultural Christianity means to seek the God (or gods) we want and not the God who is. It means to want God to be a gentle grandfather type who spoils us and lets us have our own way.

It is to live by our own ideas, to be a Christian on our own terms. To be a Cultural Christian is to abandon the first principles of orthodoxy. Whereas Cultural Christians are a community of *orthopathos* concerned for right feelings, Biblical Christians are a community of *orthodoxy* concerned for right beliefs.

The church, rather than calling people to sacrifice and self-denial, too often ends up catering to the ambitions of its congregation. The church shows men how to be successful but not how to be faithful. Rather than calling men from materialism, "me"ism, and worldly lifestyles, the church becomes the agent of personal fulfillment for men who cannot control their appetite for more and more things.

Individualism in the church, the infatuation with the "new thing," and an insatiable desire for more and more things has caused a segment of the church to refocus on meeting the felt needs of people. Seeker-sensitive services often entertain the mind, but do not engage the soul. The church begins to offer its attendees support rather than salvation, help rather than holiness.

In this process the church becomes worldly. People become consumers of religion instead of worshippers of the most holy God. They come to receive a blessing rather than give God a blessing. They come to be entertained rather than to be broken. The congregation is looked at as an audience to be entertained rather than a flock of sheep to be discipled.

All this comes from an anthropocentrism fostered by culture, but not expunged by biblical preaching. Instead, the insatiable desire for more and more things is overlooked or, worse, promoted as the essence of how God blesses.

Furthermore, the church has often been too seeker-sensitive by allowing people to remain anonymous without at some point calling them to transition into becoming part of a community

of believers. According to Bellah, religious individualism must be transformed by reconnecting it to the public realm.

However, in other ways, the church has not been seeker-sensitive enough. The church has not recognized the confusion of the average Christian about how to live an intentional, deliberate Christian life. The church has not discipled men and women how to go "into" the world without becoming worldly.

Deliberate Christian Living

Ministry that is sensitive must simultaneously respond to the survival needs of daily living while at the same time elevate people's thinking to the higher plane of worship, praise, and thanksgiving.

So how does the church balance appealing to seekers with transforming them? The church needs to *begin* where people live day-to-day. Today the church and culture are so far apart that preaching "bridges" must be constructed that bring people from the world in which they live and struggle into the Holy of Holies, where they can feel a fresh touch from the living God.

To do this effectively, we must *give seekers what they need in the context of what they want*—real needs cloaked in their felt needs. Today people want success. So let's talk to them about success, but then transition into what constitutes true success from God's eternal perspective.

Meaningful ministry must call people to right things: surrender, sacrifice, suffering, and service; not to success. It must help people discover their identity and purpose in Christ, not in satisfying worldly ambitions. It must help them discover their spiritual gifts and calling, rather than endorse the pursuit of pleasure. It must help men and women discover God's will rather than encouraging them to write their own script—a script that invariably includes a constant desire for more and more things.

For the half of our churches that are getting it right, to God be the glory. Enter into His rest. For the other half, God loves you, but he wants you to "repent and do the things you did at first" (Rev. 2:5).

Pat Morley *is the Founder and CEO of Man in the Mirror. After building one of Florida's 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded Man in the Mirror, a non-profit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the bestselling author of* The Man in the Mirror, No Man Left Behind, Dad in the Mirror, *and* A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines.

Click here for the original article at maninthemirror.org.

Popular OTC Products May Trigger Deadly Strokes

An announcement by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) explains a new requirement that over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription painkillers within the family of aspirin have a warning on the label.

The warning must explain that even the short-term use of the medication in question increases one's risk of strokes and heart attacks, even among individuals who are not facing the common risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease.

The new FDA warning labels will be applied to all medications that fall under the umbrella category of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDs. The only exception that will not be forced to carry such a warning on its label is aspirin. Leading over-the-counter medications, all of which are non-

aspirin products or NSAIDs, will carry the warning of potential health risks: Such brands include Celebrex, Aleve, and Motrin. Millions of Americans take the latter drugs each year.

The newest studies have experts asserting that even in minute amounts, NSAIDs can prove deadly. As Northwestern University's Bruce Lambert asserts, the warning label, while clear about its direct assertions in relation to cardiovascular health threats, will also carry the underlying message that there are safe pain relief medicines.

In the FDA's recent announcement pertaining to the potential danger of NSAID use, the organization also explains that such OTC medications have had a warning on the box for the past ten years explaining the risk of stroke or heart attack. The newer labeling regulations put an emphasis on the dangers and intensify the severity of the health warnings.

According to experts conducting the latest research, within weeks of starting such medications, the risk of stroke or heart failure increases, and this is true even for people who have no cardiovascular related health issues prior to the use of NSAIDs. Of course, if the individual does have cardiovascular related conditions prior to NSAID use, the risk of stroke or heart attack is that much greater. What's more and even worse is the fact that individuals who received NSAIDs for pain after having a heart attack were more likely to die within the year following the heart attack than those individuals who had not received such drugs.

New labeling regulations will also make it clear that the higher the dosage one takes, the higher the health risks. The label will explain how different medications come with varying risks, but at this time, there is no distinction as to which medications are the riskiest to consume. Presently, the potential variations and associated health risks are still under investigation.

A panel of experts evaluated the information pertaining to heart health risks and the use of NSAIDs. On the panel was a professor of medicine and public health from Emory University, Peter Wilson, who explains the potential dangers based on percentages. For those using the lowest dose possible of over the counter NSAIDs, the increase of potential for cardiovascular problems or stroke is 10 percent. If consuming low prescription doses of the medication, the risk doubles to 20 percent.

If the individual is taking prescription medication with elevated doses, the risk of stroke or cardiovascular problems increases dramatically up to 50 percent. The risks are particularly bad for the elderly aged 65 or older or others who have existing cardiovascular issues. The primary worry is that consumers see OTC pain meds as benign, and there is an incredible likelihood that they are not benign at all.

Such medications are ideal for those individuals who are young, healthy, without cardiovascular problems, and good for short-term usage only. Such medications are no longer recommended for the treatment of minor aches and pains.

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For the original article, visit drcolbert.com.

Exploring a Husband’s Role as a Prophet, Priest and King

Ephesians 5:25 offers the principle instruction to married men: “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church.” If you want a biblical marriage, then you need to understand how Christ loved the church.

Some men think Christ is Jesus’ last name. Of course, Christ is not a name but a title for Jesus that means “Messiah” or “anointed one.” Jesus loved the church—His family—as its Christ, or anointed one. Since husbands are to love their wives in the same way as the anointed one loves His family, they need to know exactly what Jesus was anointed to do. In the New Testament, as we shall see, husbands become anointed ones.

In theology, Christ occupies the classic threefold office of prophet, priest and king. Let’s explore how this relates to you.

1. The role of a prophet. A prophet represents God to people. In the Old Testament, a prophet would face the people and speak. Jesus was a prophet who spoke the Word of God to the people and was, in fact, the Word incarnate. A prophet speaks for God.

A husband is to be the family prophet. He represents God to his wife (and, by extension, his family—the fruit of their union). When his wife reacts emotionally, he calms her with God’s wisdom. He proclaims the gospel of faith to his family. He provides biblical instruction and training to his wife and children without becoming legalistic. He prepares family devotions and encourages private devotions. He is the arbiter of family values. He insists on regular church attendance. He is a messenger from God to his family.

2. The role of a priest. If a prophet represents God to people, then a priest represents people to God. In the Old Testament, a priest would turn his back to the people and mediate for them before God. Jesus is the High Priest who mediated between people and the Father by the sacrifice of His life. A priest mediates before God.

A husband is to be the family priest. He represents his wife and children to God. He spends time in prayer each day remembering the needs and concerns of his wife. He prays for the salvation of his children. Like Job, he asks the Lord to forgive the sins of his children. He sets the spiritual temperature in the home. He sacrifices his life for theirs. He is a mediator to God for his family.

3. The role of a king. A king takes responsibility for the welfare of his people. He provides both justice and mercy for them. Jesus is a king from the line of David. A king provides for and offers protection and security for his people.

A husband is to be the family king. He provides for the needs of his family. He works diligently to earn enough for food and shelter. He administers discipline with fairness. He quickly forgives and overlooks offenses. He acts in a manner worthy of receiving honor. He treats his wife with consideration and respect. He is careful not to be harsh with her. He is a provider for his family.

Husbands are to be the anointed spiritual leaders of their wives. God has anointed you to lead your wife as her prophet, priest and king. Because of the fall, your wife, according to Genesis 3:16, has a desire for you that is best rendered “a desire that borders on disease.”

So you must be gentle and wise because she is more fragile than you. It is God’s will for your marriage to work. Give her a voice in the marriage. After God, but before all others, make your mate your priority.

Patrick Morley *is founder and CEO of Man in the Mirror. After building one of Florida's 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded Man in the Mirror, a nonprofit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the best-selling author of* The Man in the Mirror, No Man Left Behind, Dad in the Mirror *and* A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines.