

DIVINERX | HEALTHY LIVING | 2020 RESET

# CHARISMA<sup>®</sup>

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

**He invented MyPillow  
and sells it on TV, but  
this ex-drug addict  
says it's just a platform  
to help point people  
to Jesus**

A photograph of Mike Lindell, a man with a mustache, wearing a blue polo shirt and a silver watch, smiling and hugging a white MyPillow. He is wearing a gold chain with a cross pendant.

**Mike Lindell**

**From crack addict to CEO**

From the leaders of the popular TV Broadcast

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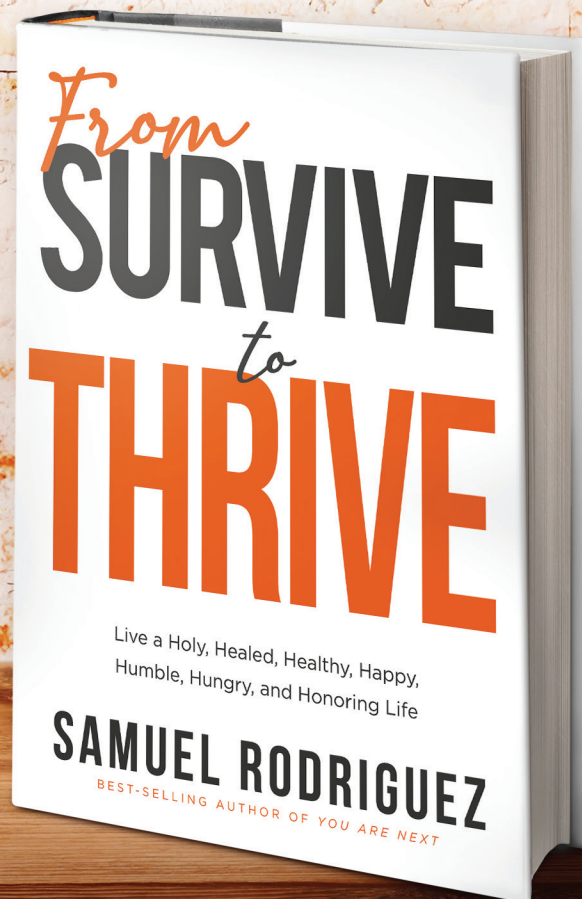
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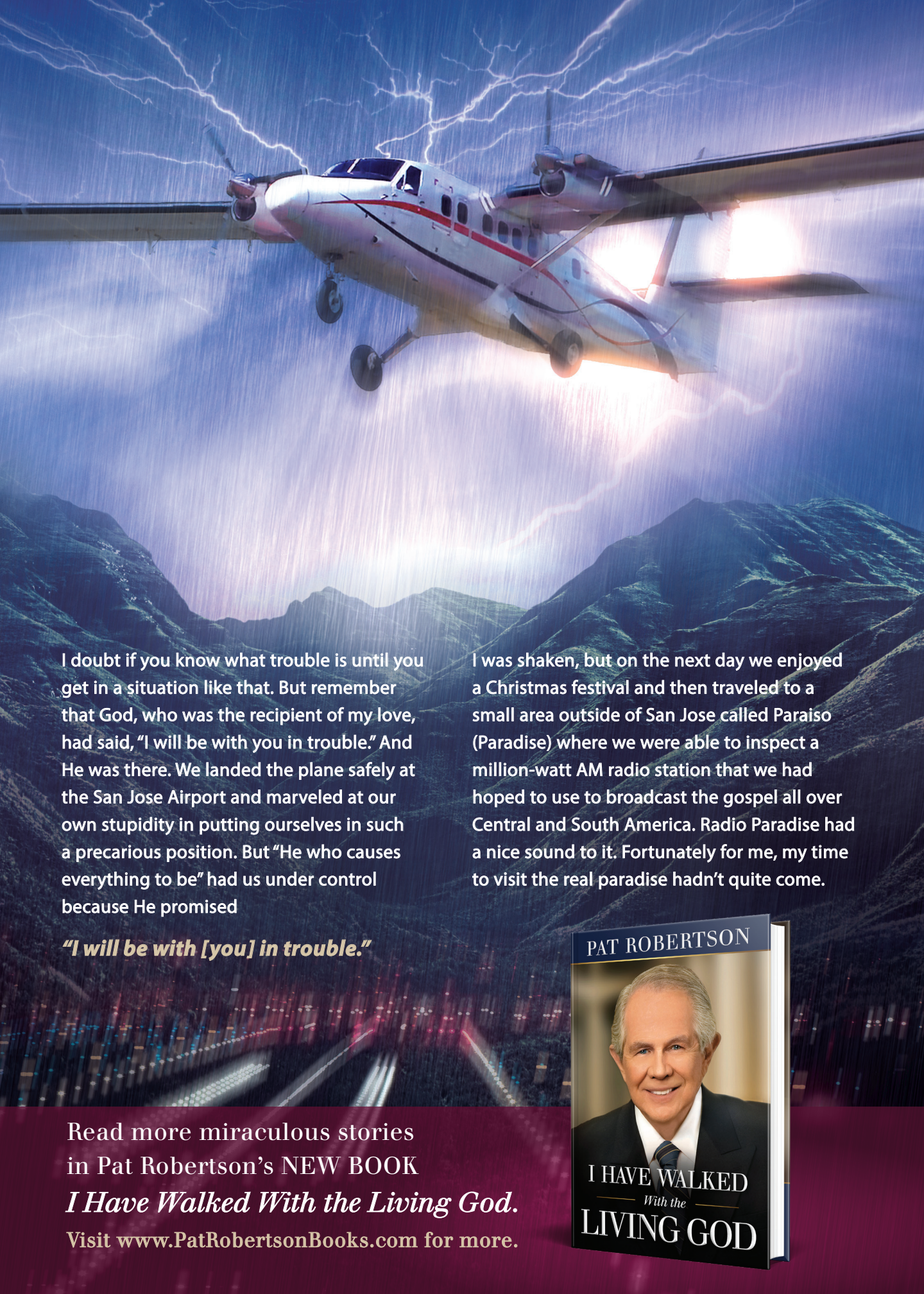


# God Was With Me IN TROUBLE

By PAT ROBERTSON

In Psalm 91:15 God says that for those who love Him, *"I will be with him in trouble."* None of us knows when trouble will come. None of us knows of upcoming sickness or disease. I'll give you one example of a time when trouble came unexpectedly upon me.

I was flying over the mountains of Costa Rica in the right seat of a Piper Navajo that was nearly out of gas when we encountered a vicious thunderstorm. Suddenly, most of our electronic equipment went out. The minimum approach altitude was nine thousand feet. The only instrument working in our little plane was the DME (or Distance Measuring Equipment), so we had to estimate the flight path to the nearest mountain and then make a left turn into what we hoped would be the nearest airport. We flew at the minimum required altitude in the blinding rain and then turned left at what we hoped would be the appropriate place. We could not see the airport because the officials there had turned off the lights. Fortunately, they worked on a control switch from approaching aircraft and we were able to get them turned on. We were like a tiny wood chip in a turbulent sea, pitch-black dark, and surrounded by mountains. And yet the choice before us was to either try to land at the airport or fly over the mountains and crash in the ocean.

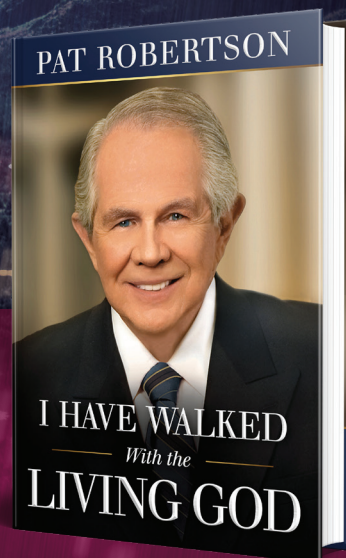


I doubt if you know what trouble is until you get in a situation like that. But remember that God, who was the recipient of my love, had said, "I will be with you in trouble." And He was there. We landed the plane safely at the San Jose Airport and marveled at our own stupidity in putting ourselves in such a precarious position. But "He who causes everything to be" had us under control because He promised

***"I will be with [you] in trouble."***

I was shaken, but on the next day we enjoyed a Christmas festival and then traveled to a small area outside of San Jose called Paraiso (Paradise) where we were able to inspect a million-watt AM radio station that we had hoped to use to broadcast the gospel all over Central and South America. Radio Paradise had a nice sound to it. Fortunately for me, my time to visit the real paradise hadn't quite come.

Read more miraculous stories  
in Pat Robertson's NEW BOOK  
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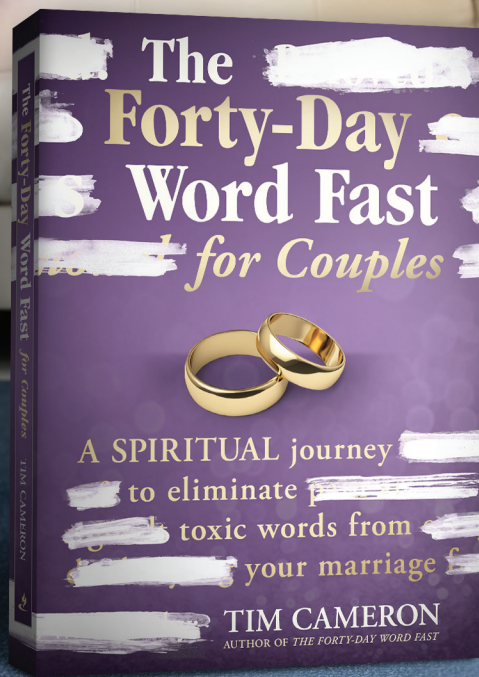
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# Change your words. Change your marriage.



## Ask yourself...

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- Where do we turn when the heat is on?
- What is getting in the way of us getting closer?

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*"It's always good to hear the history of great churches and mighty men of the faith."*

—David M. Van Winkle

## A MIGHTY MAN OF FAITH

Regarding "Gospel of Power" by Christine D. Johnson (*Charisma*, November 2020):

"I read your article with Pastor Bill Johnson and thoroughly enjoyed it. You did an excellent interview asking the right questions. It's always good to hear the history of great churches and mighty men of the faith."

**Pastor David M. Van Winkle**  
Eustis, Florida

## BEST ARTICLE ON RACISM

Regarding "Stand in the Gap Against Racism" by Will Ford:

"Best article on the subject I've seen recently."

**Gregory Davies**  
[facebook.com/charismamagazine/](https://facebook.com/charismamagazine/)

## A PROPHETIC STATEMENT

Regarding "Stand in the Gap":

"I am an avid follower of Will Ford and his ministry partnership with Matt Lockett. I have read their book *The Dream King* about Martin Luther King and racism in America, and I've got to say I loved the article called

'Stand in the Gap Against Racism.'

Coming from his background, Will has a real grip on the pulse of what's going on in this country with the racism issue.

As for the article, I especially love what he said about 'God is using us to call believers of all races to join in prayer and intercession because only a united church can heal a divided nation.' What a prophetic statement. Hope to see more of Will Ford in your magazine."

**Frank Boesch, Oviedo, Florida**

## LIGHT UP HOLLYWOOD

Regarding "Light Up the Entertainment World" by Shawn Bolz:

"In a world that has a lot of divide and a lot of hate, it is so refreshing to look at what good is happening. Shawn Bolz did a wonderful job at giving us an outline of how God is touching each and every part of this world. The entertainment industry can be used for so much more, and it is great to see how Christians in that industry are using their gifts to bring light to this very dark world."

**Kimberly Brunetto,**  
Lakeland, Florida

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# How Do You Find Your Peace?

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**ANXIETY.**

**ANGER.**

**GUILT.**

**DEPRESSION.**

**ADDICTIONS.**



**Emotional stress drains.**

**Do you feel like peace and strength eludes you?**

*Hidden Treasure* provides the biblical answers to receiving God's peace and strength in your life. You can be FREE from being enslaved to worry, anger, emotional stress, addictions, and unforgiveness in your life!

This book is a product of my personal testimony and how God taught me to surrender to Him. 1 Peter 5:7 taught me how to cast my cares on Him, because He cares for me. *Hidden Treasure* shares my testimony over the years and the insight I learned from Scripture on how to depend on God and cast all my cares on Him.

*Peter Aiello*



Visit [HiddenTreasure.website](http://HiddenTreasure.website) for a FREE download of *Hidden Treasure*



## Dear Journal

### Fill your mornings with Spirit-inspired journal writing

As we happily turn the calendar page to 2021, it's a good time to consider our ways. Even though we should always start our new year tomorrow morning, I get especially excited about the process of planning a new year. But the process excites me more than the actual planning.

Any process begins with proper tools. For example, I have an amazing collection of fountain pens. Last year I returned to my first love and resolved to only write with fountain pens.

Last January, my desk was peppered with 12 blank journals. For some reason, blank journals at my fingertips bring me peace.

This is also the time of year that I heavy-up my reading plan. Three books I recently read include:

» *The 80/20 Principle* by Richard Koch. This is the third edition of the classic book that laid out the Pareto Principle. I assigned it to my classes for many years. The update addresses the move toward 90/10 or even 99/1.

» *Born for Significance* by Bill Johnson. This quote continues to inform my plans for 2021: "We must first discover our insignificance to discover our significance, knowing there is nothing we can do to save ourselves or improve our lives in light of eternity apart from God." One of my personal margin notes is "self-improvement comes through the power of the Holy Spirit"

» *The Scribe* by James Goll. "Journaling is a strategic tool that has been used throughout the generations as a means of capturing and retaining special moments, special thoughts, special prayers and special revelations in a personal manner," Goll writes. His book has reenergized me to journal as I study the Word every morning.

"Journaling is not a boring task. Oh no! Journaling is full of adventure and life," Goll writes. "It has at least three different expressions: 1) Devotional; 2) Revelatory and 3) Historical. So whether journaling is used to increase your personal devotional life with God or used as a tool to retain dreams and visions or recording lessons from life, each style and format is very important"

I believe Goll's teaching, "revelation comes through journaling."

"My heart overflows with a good theme; I address my verses to the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer" (Ps. 45:1b, NASB). Goll divides this verse into three logical parts. (The next section has been adapted from his book.)



**"As you journal through devotions, you will find inspiration and direction as you follow the King."**

» "My heart overflows with a good theme." "Is your heart overflowing? When your heart is overflowing with God's goodness, it is looking for a place and a people to impact."

» "I address my verses to the King." As you journal through devotions, you will find inspiration and direction as you follow the King.

» "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer." It is a unique experience to create flow with the Father as we write words of praise to Him and receive a tap of the shepherd's staff, then write what we hear. As the ink pours across the pages of my journal, I recognize with gratitude what a gift it is to communicate through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I write freely in my journals because I know no one will ever read what I scribble. On some mornings, I have trouble getting started. I don't believe in writer's block so I've learned to respond to prompts to start the flow. Here are five helpful prompts:

- 1) One takeaway I received from this morning's Bible reading is ...
- 2) I feel God is leading me to ...
- 3) One area in which I'm praying for transformation is ...
- 4) The Lord is leading me to talk to \_\_\_\_\_ about \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 5) I've been keeping this from my journal ...

There is so much to write about as we begin this year filled with hope. We are "hidden under the shadow of His wings" and have nothing to fear. Dot your desk with a few journals and plenty of pens. Sing a new song unto the Lord.

**DR. STEVE GREENE** is the publisher and executive vice president of the multimedia group at Charisma Media and executive producer of the Charisma Podcast Network. His Charisma House book, *Love Leads*, shows that without love, you cannot be an effective leader. Sign up for his free "5 Things I Learned Last Week" and "Greenelines" newsletters, and download his Greenelines and At Work With God podcasts at [greenelines.com](http://greenelines.com).



# Women Embrace Breakthrough Pill

A top medical doctor discovered a natural formula that targets your thyroid to combat lack of energy, mood concerns, and many other signs of thyroid imbalance needlessly affecting millions. Even men find it works after age 40.

By S.A. Nickerson, Health Correspondent

Patient after patient had similar complaints — lack of energy, mood swings, lack of romantic interest, and even more weight gain!

That's when Dr. David Brownstein discovered there was a common cause — a **problem with his patients' thyroid!**

In fact, 80% of Americans suffer from sub-optimal thyroid function. **And women over 45 are particularly vulnerable.**

"An incredible number of women across the country visit their doctor each year complaining of feeling tired, grumpy, or not quite right. Far too many of them are told this is normal for their age. Or even worse, that it's all in their head," says Dr. Brownstein.

### Users Call ACTALIN® a 'Godsend'

"It is wonderful. For the first time in many years, I have my numbers right on my thyroid test. God bless you Dr. Brownstein."

Lois W. — Goldthwaite, TX

"I had several symptoms of low thyroid (low energy, cold hands and feet, hair loss from eye brows and top of forehead, etc.). I tried taking ACTALIN a few months ago and experienced an improvement in energy and the temperature of my hands and feet."

David B. — Calgary, AB

"So far I have a "good feeling" about ACTALIN for the thyroid.....I believe now that my fingernails are stronger now."

Mark A. — Lake Worth, FL

"The product ACTALIN worked wonderfully"

Lisa B. — Palm Harbor, FL

"My hair has stopped falling out and I am not so cold all the time any more. My energy has also improved."

Janice M. — Romulus, MI

"My hair was coming out by the handfuls. Since ACTALIN my hair has grown and my weight has stabilized."

Bobbie S. — Rockingham NC

"Don't buy into this big lie," he warns, "because nothing could be further from the truth."

Dr. Brownstein is no ordinary doctor. **He's both a medical doctor and a renowned natural physician** serving as medical director of the respected Center for Holistic Medicine.

Before writing a prescription for a powerful drug with potentially harmful side effects, he always first seeks to find a natural remedy.

### Thyroid Test Not Always Accurate

Dr. Brownstein cautions: *Very few women realize their thyroid isn't functioning adequately.*

This means their **health concerns are often ignored** or not taken seriously. And a common lab test for thyroid function may be misleading. So unfortunately, many sufferers have been told their thyroid is just fine when it's actually operating at a sub-par level.

### Jumpstart Your Thyroid, Get Your Energy Back

Your tiny thyroid gland drives the metabolic rate of every cell in your body, 24 hours a day. It particularly impacts your energy level, your weight, and your mood.

From the beating of your heart to the function of your sex organs, your thyroid exerts a powerful hormonal influence on numerous critical tasks throughout your body.

Dr. Brownstein created a natural formula called **ACTALIN®** — a proprietary blend of **17 nutrients beneficial to thyroid health**, including iodine.

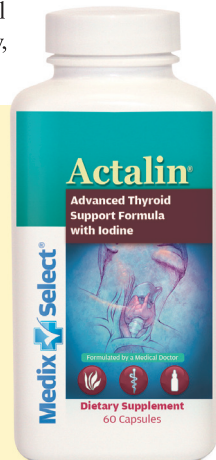
And contrary to what you hear, the iodine in table salt is simply not enough for full thyroid health.

With daily use, **ACTALIN** provides the body with a non-drug way to rev up a sluggish thyroid and regain lost energy.

In fact, **ACTALIN** has become so popular, over 600,000 bottles have already been sold.

### Adrenal Support and Stress

While a high-stress lifestyle is a key factor impacting thyroid health, the adrenal glands also suffer. So the advanced **ACTALIN** formula offers support for your overtaxed adrenal glands with a unique blend that includes adrenal glandular powder. This provides more overall support for your busy, stressful life.



## RISK-FREE Trial of ACTALIN®



DR. BROWNSTEIN

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You'll also receive Dr. Brownstein's detailed special report "**A Doctor's Guide to a Healthy Thyroid**" as a **FREE** bonus gift (a \$20 value).

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\*Trial offer requires enrollment in SmartShip program. See Website for details. These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Testimonials are from actual customers who have used our products. Testimonials reflect their experience but may not be representative of all those who will use our product.

## The Most Important Habit You Need in 2021

Reset your priorities in this new year. Make it your goal to spend consistent time with God.

**W**hen I was a teenager, my mentor, Barry, taught me to have a daily devotional time. This has become the single most important habit in my life, and I'm convinced no one can grow as a Christian without it.

I memorized Proverbs 8:34 when I was just 18: "Blessed is the man who hears me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." I started getting up early and praying in my dorm room. I discovered that God promises a blessing to those who spend time with Him. More than 40 years later I'm still setting aside that special time with God.

But how do you structure a daily quiet time in today's overscheduled culture? Many Christians today say they are too busy to set aside time to pray and read the Bible. Instead, they multitask their devotional lives by listening to Christian podcasts while commuting to work or praying under their breath while showering or brushing their teeth.

If you never set aside time to focus wholeheartedly on prayer or the Bible, your relationship with God will feel cluttered and superficial. It's not too late to develop new habits. Here are a few ways you can make your time with God richer and more intimate.

**Set a regular time for your "date" with God.** There is no rule about when to pray. Some people prefer mornings; others find an evening hour easier. Devotional time works better for me early in the morning before life's pressures crowd my time. Once you develop your unique habit, and you realize how much you benefit from it, you'll find you simply can't live without time with God.

**Choose a special place with privacy.** Jesus said: "But you, when you pray, enter your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret" (Matt. 6:6a). This doesn't mean you can't pray while driving to work. But you need a quiet place in order to focus.

**Turn off your phone.** Would you talk to friends, reply to texts or answer emails during a date with your spouse? Not unless you trivialize that relationship. The same principle applies when you spend time with the Lord. We need to reclaim the art of undistracted devotion.

I've found it necessary to silence my phone during time with God. And if you use your phone to read the Bible, consider switching to an old-fashioned hard copy of the Scriptures. The temptation to check messages or post Instagram photos can ruin your devotional life.



**"We need to reclaim the art of undistracted devotion."**

### **Don't put yourself under pressure.**

You don't have to read 50 chapters of the Bible or pray three hours. Pace yourself. Be realistic and take small steps. If you have not been seeking the Lord regularly, start by reading a chapter a day in the Bible and praying for 15 minutes. Eventually you will want more. It is better to be a tortoise than a hare.

**Learn to "chew" the Bible.** One of the simplest ways to study the Bible is to read one book at a time and slowly digest each verse. The biblical word "meditate" means "to chew," as a cow chews its cud over and over. The more you read a passage, the more "juice" you squeeze out of it.

**Listen for God's voice.** Some people have complained to me, "I just never hear God speaking." Yet when I ask if they read the Bible regularly, they say they're too busy. God wants to speak directly to us through the pages of His Word. When you read Scripture with a prayerful heart, God can cause a verse to jump off the page as a direct personal message.

**Use a prayer list.** Years ago, I started the habit of praying for certain people God had put in my life. Pouring my heart out in prayer for them has become one of the most fulfilling spiritual disciplines I engage in.

The apostle Paul feared the Corinthians might be "led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3b, NASB). Our media-saturated culture gives us a million ways to occupy our time, but simple devotion remains the antidote to all distraction. As you step into 2021, reset your priorities and make it your goal to spend consistent time with God.

**J. LEE GRADY** was editor of *Charisma* for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs *The Mordecai Project* ([themordecainproject.org](http://themordecainproject.org)), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is *Set My Heart on Fire* (Charisma House).



# SIMPLY CHRIST

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

## THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST

The apostles presented the gospel as a great mystery which God had chosen to unveil. Paul said the glory of this mystery is "CHRIST IN YOU!" Colossians 1:27. There is actually a reason that his message was not "Jesus in you." Although in reality both messages are the same, yet in making known the truth of the gospel these messages are very different. When speaking of Jesus, the apostles were generally referring to "Christ after the flesh" II Corinthians 5:16. This began with his virgin birth and continued all the way through his resurrection and ascension. While it is certain that Jesus is Christ, when the apostles spoke of Christ they were speaking of so much more than just the 33½ years of his walk on earth. Paul wrote, "though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" II Corinthians 5:16.

The apostles preached the eternal nature of Christ. John begins the message of Christ with "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:1-3 Here, the eternal and divine nature of Christ is revealed as the one by whom all things were made. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" John 1:10. Paul joins in the eternal description of Christ saying "...all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" Colossians 1:16-17. Peter gives us insight into the eternal nature of Christ telling us that "the Spirit of Christ" was in the prophets "when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" I Peter 1:11. It was this eternal Christ, who was with God and was God, who left his eternal glory and came to earth on a mission from heaven.

The clearest description in the scripture of what Christ's mission was is found in the message delivered to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. He told Daniel that from the time a proclamation was given to rebuild and restore the fallen city of Jerusalem, there would be a period of 483 years (69 weeks

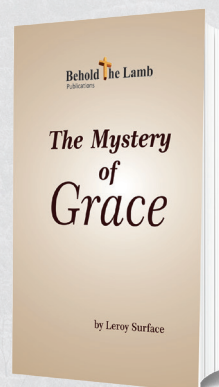
of years) until "the Messiah the prince," or "the Christ," would appear. Daniel 9:25 In the middle of the next 7 years (1 week of years) that followed, Christ would be killed ("cut off"). Yet before these years expired, he would "...make an end of sins ...make reconciliation for iniquity, and ...bring in everlasting righteousness..." Daniel 9:24. This mission is why Christ came to earth "...made in the likeness of men." Philippians 2:7.

We all know that Jesus Christ made "reconciliation for iniquity on the cross," but that was only part of his mission! According to the prophecy, he also had to "make an end of sins" and "to bring in everlasting righteousness" before the time period of this prophecy expired. You can be sure that he did not fail in this heavenly mission. As a summary of all that Christ came to accomplish, John wrote, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" I John 3:8. After the serpent's deception had succeeded in causing the fall of humanity into sin and darkness, God told the serpent that the "seed" of the woman "shall bruise thy head." Genesis 3:15 Calvary was about God keeping that promise. Hanging upon the cross, Jesus let all eternity know that he, the Christ, had succeeded in all he had come to accomplish. With his last breath he cried, "It is finished," John 19:30 for he had accomplished his mission upon earth!

If you look at this world after the cross, it appears that little has changed. Sin still exists; most people are not reconciled to God; there are no signs of everlasting righteousness; and Satan's work is seen on every hand. But this is where the "mystery" of Christ is revealed Colossians 1:26. It is a mystery that the prophets did not fully understand. The Jews certainly did not comprehend it. Even many in the church today deny it. Jesus' mission was not to fulfill these things in the world, in the nations, or even in certain groups of people. He came to do it all "IN YOU!" His mission was that YOU would be reconciled to God! That an "end of sin" would be made IN YOU! That "everlasting righteousness" would reign IN YOU! That Satan's works would be destroyed IN YOU! Christ's mission was always to obtain absolute victory on the cross and manifest that victory IN YOU. He did not fail in his mission on the cross, and if you will believe this gospel and trust in Christ, he will not fail IN YOU! The gospel is "CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY!"

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FREE BOOK  
Mystery of Grace



## The Key to a Truly Fulfilled Life

Get grounded in God's Word and His love, not your stuff

**M**atthew 6:33 (NIV) says, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." The key to living the abundant life God has for us is learning to make Him our first priority. Yet many people seek the "things" first, things like jobs, houses, cars or other material things.

To seek means "to crave, pursue, to make sacrifices to get, to go after with all of your strength and all of your heart." It's a mistake to crave and pursue possessions, believing they will give us the lasting peace, joy and contentment that only come from God's presence in our lives.

Take a moment and ask yourself, "What am I seeking? What do I spend most of my time thinking or talking about? How do I invest the majority of my energy?" These are important questions you need to answer from your heart.

I remember years ago when I had lots of material things, but I still wasn't very happy. Have you ever been there? Maybe you've wondered *What's wrong with me?* as I did. Well, when I asked God that question, His answer was, "Joyce, you're shallow. It's time to step out into the deep."

That was a wake-up call. I was a shallow Christian. I wanted the "fruit" of God's Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience—operating in my life, but I wasn't seeking that, so my "roots" weren't very deep at all. I had it backward, as many of us do at times. We want the money, the house, the platform or whatever our "thing" is. So we pursue that rather than the true treasure of God's presence.

Just as a tree needs roots to go down deep and spread wide in the soil for it to grow strong, healthy branches that can withstand the elements, Christians need to develop deep spiritual roots in Christ. Our lives need to be deeply rooted and grounded in the Word of God and in His love—not our "stuff"; otherwise, we soon find out when the storms of life come, our "things" don't make us so happy anymore. That's because those things can't give us what we truly need. And it doesn't matter how much stuff you have if you're miserable.

Now, I'm not saying it's bad to want nice things or to desire a good life. But we need to examine our priorities when it comes to those things. We need to learn to seek God's face and not His hand. If we will seek His face, His hand will always be



**"We are to pursue God in prayer, crave time in His Word and go after a relationship with Him with all of our heart and strength—even if it means sacrificing some of our desires."**

open to us, providing what is best for us.

If you're wondering how to seek God's face, it simply means you take time to cultivate a relationship with God, to get to know Him and trust what His Word says about who you are in Christ. And with prayer, Bible study and time, you will.

We are to pursue God in prayer, crave time in His Word and go after a relationship with Him with all of our heart and strength—even if it means sacrificing some of our desires. The Bible never tells us to seek things, but to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33).

It seems that many times, we get it the other way around, going after possessions as if we'll never have what we want if we don't. But I encourage you to think about what it will be like at the end of your life. I know that's not a pleasant thought, but do you really think you'll be concerned about your stuff? Or do you think you'll want family near?

If we are to be truly happy—with or without all the stuff—we must establish our lives in Christ and learn to trust God to fulfill our heart's desires. As we pursue His kingdom and His righteousness, we will see what it means to be content in life. As the apostle Paul said, "I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content" (Phil. 4:11, NKJV).

The key is to pursue God. Seek His face and go after a relationship with Him above and beyond everything else! You will find that if you seek His face, His hand will always be open to you. So, learn to be content in your relationship with God—He knows exactly what you need.

**JOYCE MEYER** is a *New York Times*' bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and her newest devotional, *Quiet Times With God (FaithWords)*. She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [joycemeyer.org](http://joycemeyer.org).

## Endure testing now ahead of a glorious future God will not waste His spiritual wine on an untested church

At first glance, it's easy to think Paul left something out of this key passage: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities nor powers, neither things present nor things to come, neither height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God" (Rom. 8:38-39a). He doesn't refer to the past but only to the present and future. Since God's Word doesn't miss anything, the omission must be purposeful.

Through Jesus' blood, the old has been eradicated, so the present and the future remain. But we often become either too focused on the future or hung up on the past.

When we fixate on the future, we miss the importance of now, but the way we navigate the present will likely determine our future. In the story of sisters Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42), Martha was concerned with being hospitable, but Mary was drawn to sit at the feet of Jesus. Mary's choice in her present impacted her future. Unlike Mary, many of us don't embrace the present because we are locked up with the past.

I believe the church is currently being tested, not for punishment but for future promotion. This promotion is the capacity to allow a greater weightiness of the glory of God that is coming in the future. If the present is preparing for what is to come, we should pay closer attention to our response in the now.

Jesus is building His church, and only He has the right to define what that should look like. In Matthew 11:12 (NKJV), Jesus said, "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." He was speaking about John, whose ministry consisted primarily of preaching repentance and baptizing. Jesus is contrasting the transition of the ministry of John into the kingdom of God. John preached about the kingdom but never entered it. Jesus commended John for past ministry and then pointed to the present.

Unless we see it through Jesus' eyes, His statement that the kingdom of God is experiencing violence "and the violent take it by force" is hard to grasp. In this passage, violence does not refer to what we might think in the English vocabulary. In the Greek, it is *biadzo* and implies the idea of crowding out. The King is applying pressure to crowd out anything not identified with the King and His kingdom.

In the same way, crowding or pressure is coming to the church to eliminate anything



**"Pressure is coming to the church to eliminate anything that cannot withstand the weightiness of His future glory."**

that cannot withstand the weightiness of His future glory. Luke 5 compares old and new wineskins. The old wineskin no longer has the ability to expand, so wisdom dictates not to place new wine in the skin that can no longer support the expansion of future wine. God is a good steward of His own spiritual wine so as not to waste it upon an untested church.

These points will help us in this testing:

- 1) Keep your purpose and mission front and center.** In everything, magnify Jesus and His Word above the crisis or problem. We empower what we magnify.
- 2) Communicate without fear or complaint.** Being fearful and complaining tend to extend our testing period.
- 3) Remind others of the benefits of testing.** Second Corinthians 4:17 (MEV) says, "Our light affliction, which lasts but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

So what is the Holy Spirit saying to the church during this time of testing?

- 1) The church must boldly define its mission without rant or rancor.** This is not the time to conceal what God wants us to say. Extend beyond organizational growth.
- 2) Our focus must be deeper than doctrine and on the one in whom we believe.** We need a personal encounter with Jesus, the Word we know and trust.
- 3) The church will demonstrate the kingdom with signs, wonders and miracles.** "But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, no doubt the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Luke 11:20).

As Pastor Ken Adams says, "Jesus started the church the way He wanted it, and now He wants the church the way He started it."

**KERRY KIRKWOOD** is founding senior pastor of Trinity Fellowship Church in Tyler, Texas. He is a bestselling author and director of the *REVIVE* Network of Churches and leaders. He also has appeared several times on Sid Roth's *It's Supernatural!* television program.



**Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr.**

## Racial Unity Champion Bishop Harry Jackson Jr. Dies

Jackson was a national and international Christian leader

**B**ishop Harry R. Jackson Jr., senior pastor of Hope Christian Church in Beltsville, Maryland, and an adviser to President Trump on spiritual matters, died Nov. 9 at his home at age 67.

Pastor to more than 3,000 congregants, Jackson was a national and international Christian leader. He fought tirelessly for racial unity in America, especially within the church. He was part of a group, along with Vice President Mike Pence, that rebuked injustice after the death of George Floyd in Minnesota earlier in 2020.

Bishop Jackson earned a master's in business administration at Harvard University. He wrote several books, including the most recent, *A Manifesto: Christian America's Contract With Minorities* (Whitaker House) and *The Truth in Black & White* (FrontLine/Charisma House).

Many reached out to honor this man who impacted them personally—and the world around him—for the cause of Christ.

Dr. Alveda King spoke with Jackson the weekend before he died.

"Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr., Christian brother, friend and mentor to many, has transitioned and he is now home with the Lord. ... Farewell for now, my friend," she said.

The bishop's first wife, Dr. Vivian Michele Jackson, died April 2, 2018, after battling blood cancer. Jackson had just remarried Sept. 5, 2020. He leaves behind his wife, Rosalind Lott, and two daughters from his first marriage, Joni and Elizabeth Jackson.

In his final sermon, preached at his home church, Jackson spoke of hope: "The world needs hope ... and truth."

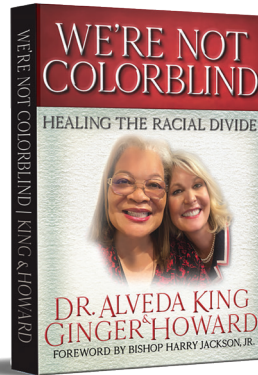


## Authors Say Don't Be Colorblind

Focusing on racial reconciliation will help heal America

**A**lveda King and Ginger Howard have an unlikely friendship, and they have now combined their activist backgrounds to bring insight on healing America's racial divide. Evangelist King is a niece of civil rights icon Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Howard is a Republican National committeewoman for Georgia. Together, they have authored *We're Not Colorblind: Healing the Racial Divide*, a book centered on their painful pasts and the message that all are created in the image of God.

King and Howard often felt discouraged as they completed their book but were unable to find a publisher. But in a CBN interview, King reminds Howard, "Ginger, God's timing is perfect." The two believe the 2020 release of their book is an example of God's perfect timing, as upheaval over Black rights skyrocketed. While empathizing with the racial tension but disagreeing with the Black Lives Matter organization, King believes this book represents hope in the midst of turmoil. Howard agrees, pointing to the idea that being colorblind is not the solution. Instead, we must see all people as God's masterpieces.



## Former 'Charisma' Columnist Pauline Harthern Dies at 90



Pauline Harthern

**P**auline Skinn Harthern, who, with her late husband, Roy, built Calvary Assembly in Central Florida into one of the biggest charismatic churches in America in the 1970s, died Nov. 2, 2020, at age 90. Born in England to Assemblies of God pastors, she moved to America in 1951 after her marriage.

Healing evangelist Benny Hinn, married to Suzanne Harthern Hinn, one of Harthern's three daughters, officiated his mother-in-law's funeral and remembers her as a godly, gracious lady with a powerful ministry of intercession and deliverance.

In its heyday, Calvary Assembly pioneered numerous ministries, including Jesus festivals near Disney World and a television station now owned by TBN in Orlando, as well as *Charisma* magazine, launched by Stephen Strang in 1975. Harthern wrote an article in the first issue of *Charisma* and later wrote a column called "From My Diary," as well as several books.

## Divine Dagnet Fights Human Trafficking

**O**hio state authorities are fulfilling the biblical mandate to "care for the least of these" and end human trafficking in their state. Their aim is to return all missing children to their families.

A series of raids followed an interdenominational prayer assembly in Ohio's Richland and Ashland counties focusing on the welfare of women and children. "Operation Safety Net" saw 25 children rescued from human trafficking. Similarly, "Operation Moving Target"

led to the arrest of 27 people in northern Ohio for sexually explicit online conversations with undercover agents posing as children.

Several other such raids were organized by U.S. Marshals Services, yielding the rescue of 35 children in Ohio, 39 in Georgia and 27 in Virginia.

"We're trying to have an impact," Agent Whitwell of the U.S. Marshal Services told CBN News. "We're trying to do the best we can with the resources we have in place."

## Prison Book Project Provides Life-Changing Ministry

Join Christian Life Missions in supporting this worthy cause



Ray and Joyce Hall

After serving in the Air Force for more than 22 years and then working another 15 years for Martin Marietta, Ray Hall of Titusville, Florida, deserved to retire. Instead, he founded the Prison Book Project in 1994 to provide good Christian books and Bibles for tens of thousands of prisoners in more than 2,700 prison facilities around the world. Today at age 86, he continues this life-changing ministry as a volunteer. Since many prisoners are trying to get their lives turned around, they are motivated and have time to read but no way to get good Christian books to nurture their spiritual growth. Hall estimates each book is passed to at least 30 others.

Publishers donate excess books or sell them at cost. Christian Life Missions (CLM), the nonprofit partner of *Charisma*, has set a goal of raising \$20,000 to help Hall, his wife, Joyce, and a group of wonderful volunteers. Everyone involved in the ministry is a volunteer, but it takes money to ship and warehouse the books.

As Stephen Strang writes in his column on page 58, Christian Life Missions has been supplying books and Bibles to prisoners for decades, and he urges you to help CLM and Prison Book Project by sending your tax-deductible gift to Christian Life Missions, 600 Rinehart Road, Lake Mary, FL 32746 or giving securely at [prison.christianlifemissions.org](http://prison.christianlifemissions.org).

## Black Leaders Seek to Protect Unborn

Amie Beth Shaver was born to an African American father and white mother and placed for adoption in 1972. Today, Shaver is leading a charge to protect unborn Black babies as one who credits her very existence to her parents' lack of abortion options, as the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court case wasn't decided until one year after her birth.

"The biggest standing threat against Black lives is the abortion industry," said attorney Catherine Davis, founder and president of The Restoration Project.

On behalf of the Equality Proclamation, Black-led human rights leaders filed the Equality Petition in the



Alabama Circuit Court to take action in ending discrimination against Black lives in the womb.

"To say anything other than, 'The child in the womb is a person' is just not true. We know that the child in the womb is not a clump of cells," Davis told *The Daily Signal*. "We are petitioning the Alabama courts to exercise their Tenth Amendment rights and take all measures necessary to protect pre-born African American children in their state from discrimination and to ensure their equal protection under the law."

# Sadie Robertson Huff Launches New Worship Initiative

*Duck Dynasty* and *Dancing With the Stars* celebrity Sadie Robertson Huff's next endeavor will be an extension of her Christian community initiative, Live Original. LO WORSHIP encompasses a record label and publishing group and introduces a



Sadie Robertson Huff

new band by the same name. The worship team consists of leaders Brantley Pollock from Church of the City in Franklin, Tennessee; Kaylea Mayo from Christ Church in West Monroe, Louisiana; and Cazaiah Franklin from Nashville, Tennessee. The first single is "Compass," which brings a message of hope and peace: "I'll keep my eyes fixed on you because I know what you say is always true." Robertson Huff reflected on what worship means to her. "I wanted to help people find the words to sing over themselves in hard times," she says. "Worship has always done that for me." The LO Facebook page describes the initiative as "a band of friends that strives to write lyrics and melodies that echo the sound of revival in our generation. That's right, our generation. This band is truly God-breathed and we hope this fills your feed, your hearts and souls with truth (and some fun!)"



Follow our daily reading plan in each issue of *Charisma* to read through the Modern English Version Bible in one year. The plan is also available online at [brg.charismamag.com](http://brg.charismamag.com).

*"EVERYONE WHO THIRSTS, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."* —Isaiah 55:1

## JANUARY

Jan. 1	Gen. 1:2; Luke 1
Jan. 2	Gen. 3-5; Luke 2
Jan. 3	Gen. 6-8; Luke 3
Jan. 4	Gen. 9-11; Luke 4
Jan. 5	Gen. 12-14; Luke 5
Jan. 6	Gen. 15-17; Luke 6
Jan. 7	Gen. 18-19; Ps. 3; Luke 7
Jan. 8	Gen. 20-22; Luke 8
Jan. 9	Gen. 23-24; Luke 9
Jan. 10	Gen. 25-26; Ps. 6; Luke 10
Jan. 11	Gen. 27-28; Ps. 4; Luke 11
Jan. 12	Gen. 29-30; Luke 12
Jan. 13	Gen. 31-33; Luke 13
Jan. 14	Gen. 34-36; Luke 14
Jan. 15	Gen. 37-38; Ps. 7; Luke 15
Jan. 16	Gen. 39-41; Luke 16
Jan. 17	Gen. 42-43; Ps. 5; Luke 17
Jan. 18	Gen. 44-46; Luke 18
Jan. 19	Gen. 47-48; Ps. 10; Luke 19
Jan. 20	Gen. 49-50; Ps. 8; Luke 20
Jan. 21	Ex. 1-2; Ps. 88; Luke 21
Jan. 22	Ex. 3-5; Luke 22
Jan. 23	Ex. 6-8; Luke 23
Jan. 24	Ex. 9-11; Luke 24
Jan. 25	Ex. 12-13; Ps. 21; Acts 1
Jan. 26	Ex. 14-16; Acts 2
Jan. 27	Ex. 17-20; Acts 3
Jan. 28	Ex. 21-22; Ps. 12; Acts 4
Jan. 29	Ex. 23-24; Ps. 14; Acts 5
Jan. 30	Ex. 25-27; Acts 6
Jan. 31	Ex. 28-29; Acts 7

## FEBRUARY

Feb. 1	Ex. 30-32; Acts 8
Feb. 2	Ex. 33-34; Ps. 16; Acts 9
Feb. 3	Ex. 35-36; Acts 10
Feb. 4	Ex. 37-38; Ps. 19; Acts 11
Feb. 5	Ex. 39-40; Ps. 15; Acts 12
Feb. 6	Lev. 1-3; Acts 13
Feb. 7	Lev. 4-6; Acts 14
Feb. 8	Lev. 7-9; Acts 15
Feb. 9	Lev. 10-12; Acts 16
Feb. 10	Lev. 13-14; Acts 17
Feb. 11	Lev. 15-17; Acts 18
Feb. 12	Lev. 18-19; Ps. 13; Acts 19
Feb. 13	Lev. 20-22; Acts 20
Feb. 14	Lev. 23-24; Ps. 24; Acts 21
Feb. 15	Lev. 25; Ps. 25-26; Acts 22
Feb. 16	Lev. 26-27; Acts 23
Feb. 17	Num. 1-2; Acts 24
Feb. 18	Num. 3-4; Acts 25
Feb. 19	Num. 5-6; Ps. 22; Acts 26
Feb. 20	Num. 7; Ps. 23; Acts 27
Feb. 21	Num. 8-9; Acts 28
Feb. 22	Num. 10-11; Ps. 27; Mark 1
Feb. 23	Num. 12-13; Ps. 90; Mark 2
Feb. 24	Num. 14-16; Mark 3
Feb. 25	Num. 17-18; Ps. 29; Mark 4
Feb. 26	Num. 19-20; Ps. 28; Mark 5
Feb. 27	Num. 21-23; Mark 6
Feb. 28	Num. 24-27; 1 Cor. 13

# WHEN GOD CLEANSSES HIS CHURCH

The message which the angel Gabriel brought from God to Daniel foretold of the coming of one called "The Messiah the Prince" Daniel 9:24-27. Among the six things the Messiah would accomplish was "to make **an end of sins**, to make reconciliation for iniquity," and to "bring in everlasting righteousness" verse 24. The "rock" which the true church is built upon is the revelation Peter received that Jesus of Nazareth is "The Messiah the Prince," or "The Christ." Peter said to Jesus, "**Thou art the Christ** (the Messiah), *the Son* (the Prince) *of the living God*" Matthew 16:16. The Apostle John confirmed this as the cornerstone of our salvation, saying, "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*" I John 5:1. The understanding that "**Jesus is the Christ**" is absolutely necessary to salvation. If Jesus is "the Christ (the Messiah the Prince)" it is certain that He must accomplish exactly what He was sent into the world to do; He must "make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity" and "bring in everlasting righteousness." That is exactly what Christ died on the cross to accomplish, and when He said from the cross, "*It is finished*" John 19:30, everything His Father sent Him to do was accomplished. The Apostle John said "**And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him**" I John 3:5-6. According to John's words, this was common knowledge in the first century church. Sadly, it has become a mystery to the modern church, an understanding that has been hidden for nineteen centuries. It has been hidden because Satan has so blinded the eyes of the people that they cannot see the truth which is so clearly written in the scriptures (KJV) of both the prophets of God and the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

## Cleansed by the Blood of Christ

The blood of Jesus Christ was shed to "cleanse us from all sin" I John 1:7. Jesus is "*The lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*" John 1:29. John dedicated his "Book of Revelation" with these words: "*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...*" Revelation 1:5. The prophet Isaiah prophesied of the new Jerusalem when he said, "Thy people also shall be all righteous" Isaiah 60:21, and "*They shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD*" Isaiah 62:12.

## Sanctified by the Will of God

We know by the scriptures, **the will of God** when He sent Christ into the world was that He would "make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity," and "bring in everlasting righteousness." The Apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrews, "**By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ**" Hebrews 10:10. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "**For this is the will of God**, even your sanctification..." I Thessalonians 4:3. Those who know and believe the truth are sanctified by the offering of Christ's body on the cross.

## God's greatest Vengeance

*"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* Hebrews 10:28-29

Moses commanded that those who despised his law would be stoned to death. What should be the punishment for those who "despise the Spirit of Grace?" Many in the modern church do not understand the "Spirit of Grace." They think "God so loved the world..." that He takes sinners to heaven "by grace." O what a deception. The Spirit of grace is Christ offering His body Hebrews 10:10 and shedding His blood Hebrews 13:12 for our sanctification. Full salvation, which is freely given "through faith...not of works" Ephesians 2:8-9 is the Spirit of grace. Those who "despise (unconcerned, indifferent) the Spirit of grace" have "trodden underfoot the Son of God." They count the blood of Jesus to be no better than the animal blood which was offered under the Law of Moses to "cover sin." They have insulted the Spirit of grace, and according to the scriptures, the greatest of God's judgment awaits them. For these, "*there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries*" Hebrews 10:26-27. Those who have refused the Spirit of grace will certainly receive the spirit of judgment and burning.

## The Spirit of Judgment and Burning

*"In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning."* Isaiah 4:2-4

This is without question a prophecy of the New Jerusalem, which the Apostle Paul called "*Jerusalem which is above...*" Galatians 4:26, and refers to the church of Jesus Christ. Paul said Christ will present it unto Himself a "*glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*" Ephesians 5:27. John saw the glorious church as "*a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues*" Revelation 7:9, who have "*washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*" Revelation 7:14. Sadly, they can hardly be seen on this earth because of so many "tares" which have been sown in their midst. Jesus explains the end of this in His parable of the tares and wheat.

*"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Matthew 13:40-42*

The spirit of judgment and burning will soon come to those who have refused the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ which was offered for their entire sanctification. Christ, the same one who "loved us, and gave Himself for us" Galatians 2:20, will also "gather out of His kingdom (the church) all things (people) that offend and do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire." This is the spirit of judgment and burning which awaits those who refuse the Spirit of grace. Isaiah spoke of this time, saying, "The sinners in Zion (the church) are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isaiah 33:14.

### The Righteous Judgment of God

*"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." I Peter 4:17-19*

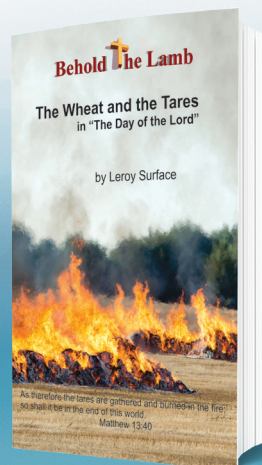
When God sent the destroying angels to destroy Jerusalem, He commanded them, "Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary" Ezekiel 9:6. The first ones to be slaughtered were the seventy elders of Israel. Their destruction was not because they were holy men of God, but because they worshiped other gods "in the chambers of their imagery" Ezekiel 8:12, which according to the Hebrew text refers to their "imaginings." They worshiped a wrong image of God which they held in their hearts. My heart is heavy as I write this message. Hatred has divided our nation. Hatred has set fire to numerous cities, destroyed and looted many businesses, and murdered our policemen. With all that is happening in our nation, some are prophesying God's judgment against America. The truth of this matter is, these things are God's judgment against America, which has come upon us because of the American church. It is in the church that the glory of the incorruptible God has been changed into a corruptible image Romans 1:23-24. It is in the church that the truth of God has been changed for a lie Romans 1:25-26. When God's judgment comes to America, it must begin at the house of God.

In January, 1986 I received a vision of three years of God's judgment against the church in America, which was fulfilled

in the years 1987-89. According to the vision, judgment would begin with television ministries. In April 1987, the largest television ministry in the world fell due to a sex and money scandal. Ten months later, in February 1988 the remaining largest TV ministry fell to a sex scandal. In that same year, and in the same denomination as both these ministers, 285 pastors of large churches also fell through scandals. What a horrible time it was for the church, but what an opportunity at the same time for the church to repent and turn. Sadly, it did not. Instead, when several famous preachers of the day which were chosen to represent the church were interviewed by Ted Koppel on his Nightline broadcast, their only defense was "We are all sinners; we sin every day." Only D. James Kennedy, the pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Florida, gave a righteous response to Ted Koppel's questioning. All the others on the panel also denied the right of the world to judge the church. Thus was a seed planted which has contributed to the degeneration of the modern church.

*"Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness." Jeremiah 23:9*

A generation ago the judgment of the church began with the evangelists and pastors. God is even now beginning to judge the church again; this time His judgment will begin with the many "prophets" who have "learned how" to prophesy during this generation. The veil of secrecy which has covered them will be pulled back, and many, perhaps millions who have been under their spell will go free. Even their most staunch supporters will find it necessary to either separate from them or perish with them. It will seem like a hard time for the church to endure, but when it is finished, the righteous "shall shine forth as the sun," and the last day harvest will begin.



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# WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

Gambling and crack addiction bound Mike Lindell for years, yet God gave him an idea to invent a pillow and prophecies he'd use this platform to help transform a generation

BY STEPHEN STRANG



If you watch TV at all, you've seen Mike Lindell. He's the bold, boisterous, broad-mustached CEO of infomercial fame who invented MyPillow because he couldn't get a good night's sleep. Almost overnight he went from life as a functional crack, alcohol and gambling addict who made his living running honky-tonks and counting cards in casinos to leading a multimillion-dollar business. Yet he only turned his life over to Christ in 2017.

Lindell has now emerged as a friend of President Donald Trump and a high-profile Christian leader who has helped underwrite events such as "The Return" and fund major motion pictures, including the pro-life project *Unplanned*.

He has also sold 43 million MyPillows and expanded to mattress pads and toppers, sheets, towels, even bedding for dogs and Mike Lindell bobblehead toys. (I bought one.) He employs 1,500 in his home state of Minnesota (and another 1,500 around the country). He's well on his way to hit a billion dollars in annual sales in 2021, especially with the addition of *MyStore.com*, an online store launching in January that he believes will help entrepreneurs sell their products. But while these facts make up a significant part of his story, they're not the entire story. Not by a long shot—as Lindell himself might say in his broad Minnesota accent.

Lindell believes God has given him a "platform" to bring people to Jesus, and he's started a faith-based recovery network that is growing almost as fast as MyPillow. In fact, he seems to have had a unique connection with God long before he knew Him. He received prophetic words about his platform long before he got off crack, gave up gambling or even received Christ. He wore a cross necklace over a bright blue shirt on his commercials long before he became a Christian. He also told others they should accept Jesus and get off drugs long before he attended a retreat called Operation Restored Warrior in 2017 and was confronted

with his own need to finally surrender his life to Christ.

His story of believing God for creative ideas and having the Lord come through at the last minute again and again—even saving him from death—is the theme of his memoir, *What Are the Odds?* The book recounts lows and highs in his life more outlandish than those you'd expect to find in an action-packed adventure movie. In fact, he hopes to make the book into a movie by spring 2022.

One of Lindell's greatest creative ideas, the one for MyPillow itself,



came in a 2004 dream in which God gave him both the name and the concept for making his product unique. This launched his platform, despite the fact that he almost went bankrupt, lost his marriage, had employees try to steal his company and faced multiple lawsuits. His book, which God told him he would write years before he could share it, includes one miracle story after another.

As a Christian journalist for more than four decades, I've interviewed hundreds of people who have extraordinary stories of changed lives or developed major platforms to spread the gospel. But never have I had an interview more fascinating than the one I had with Lindell when I flew to the Twin Cities and spent close to five hours hearing his stories and touring

two gargantuan facilities. We discussed how, long before he recognized it, God was working in his life, what He has done in the intervening time and the divine destiny he now sees unfolding—which I hope inspires you to experience the same.

Full disclosure: I love MyPillow. And so does my brother-in-law Jim Ferrell, who told me he bought at least 30 pillows trying to find a good one until he discovered Lindell's invention. I took an easier route. I saw the commercials, bought a MyPillow and loved it.

I'd seen Lindell wear his famous cross on TV and heard he might be a Christian. So I wasn't surprised to see him at the National Religious Broadcasters convention in 2019 where someone introduced us. "You're the man who improved my sleep," I told him. Without missing a beat, he responded in a sing-song voice I recognized from his infomercials: "I knew it would."

As a businessman and entrepreneur myself, I admire the way Lindell has navigated the many obstacles he has faced and led his company into exponential growth. But this CEO has one consistent message: All this is only a platform for pointing people to Jesus.

"The platform that has now manifested is a platform for a great revival," he told me. "Whether that includes me going into politics, just to evangelize, whether it doesn't include that ... it's all the same. All the roads lead to Jesus."

I grew up in a Christian home, so for me, Lindell's story of alcohol, drug and gambling addiction offers a fascinating look into a world I don't know. And to see the hand of God giving him prophetic words even when he was running taverns and gambling or taking drugs seemed almost unbelievable. According to accepted theology in charismatic circles, the miracles come after your life is surrendered to Jesus and you're pursuing godliness—not when you're totally immersed in an ungodly lifestyle.

For *What are the Odds?*, which he self-published, Lindell did something





Mike Lindell and Tonja Waring appear in MyPillow's very first infomercial in 2012. Soon after its first airing, MyPillow's sales skyrocketed, and the infomercial became the top infomercial of its kind in the world.

no cost-conscious publisher would do: He chose an expensive cover that included two holograms. The front is a professional shot of him today, flipping to one taken by his drug dealer after Lindell had been awake for 14 days straight on a crack-cocaine high. The back, a cute picture of Lindell as a 7-year-old, morphs into one of him speaking at Liberty University. That boyhood photo has significance, he told me. He was just 7 when his mother left his father and moved into a mobile home with her three children. That's when the wounds developed that, he later learned, drove his addictions and inappropriate behaviors. Until that point, he seems to have had a stable upbringing—fishing and hunting trips, playing with neighborhood kids, living on a lake with both parents.

### 'Everybody's Looking for Hope'

Those deep childhood wounds never healed until he encountered two significant programs that helped him gain true freedom: Operation Restored Warrior and Living Free. Both helped him face and gain healing from the wounds he says he has in common with every other addict. His own freedom has now birthed a major focus in his life—the recovery network he believes will help heal millions.

**“I would even tell the dealers that someday I’m going to quit and have this platform, and it’s going to change the world.”**

“The Lindell Recovery Network is my calling to use in a big way,” he says. “Because that’s what’s going to bring the biggest revival. ... This platform gets it done, because everybody’s affected by addiction, and everybody’s looking for hope.”

As difficult as life became after his parents split, his mom took the kids to an Assemblies of God church and Sunday school. There, he learned a few things about the Bible, especially about the end times, which became a personal fascination after the church showed a movie on the topic.

“It just resonated with me,” he says. “I never forgot that.”

Lindell shares how when he tended bar he would tell his intoxicated customers that “the computer is the beast” and scanners were part of the plan to take away the use of cash. Somehow many customers and other friends would be scared straight and walk away from their addictions, even as Lindell continued his own.

“You’ve got to think how powerful it is when I’d be doing lines of cocaine with them, and drinking, and I’m sitting there telling how bad it is,” he explains. “Now you’d say, ‘Well, that’s a hypocrite,’ right? They would say, ‘You know what? You’re doing it. What do you mean? If you’re so good, why don’t you quit?’”

But Lindell adds, “They would believe me, 100%. I would even tell the dealers that someday I’m going to quit and have this platform, and it’s going to change the world. I would start prophetically seeing that a long time ago. My friends were walking down the street, and I said, ‘I’m part of the great revival in the Bible—in the end times,’ I said. ‘I’m a leader of that.’”

“I could tell you the names of those who quit forever overnight,” Lindell says. “Now whether they found the Lord or not, that part I didn’t know, but they definitely quit their [addiction].” continued »

Even as a child Lindell showed a willingness to risk it all, like the time he bet his friends he could jump out of the window of a moving school bus. Thankfully he landed on soft snow. He also displayed an early entrepreneurial flair by hosting carnivals at the trailer park where he lived. “I felt if I could deliver amazement, the kids would like me,” he writes. “In the little playground at the center of the trailer court, I would put on carnivals complete with games (penny pitch, softball throw) and magic shows.” He even bet neighbor kids a quarter that he could escape if they buried him up to his neck in sand. (He lost the bet, and the trailer-court manager saved his life.)

But he also began to try more dangerous means of coping. He wanted to entertain but was painfully shy. In high school, he discovered what he calls a “secret weapon” to help deal with his shyness: alcohol, starting with peppermint schnapps and then sloe gin.

Almost at the same time, Lindell began his gambling habit in earnest, fueled by his constant desire for the “high” he got when he won at the last possible moment. In his younger years, he bet on a simple card game he played with his parents and even on the marathon rounds of Monopoly he shared with friends.

“I always found it more interesting when there was some kind of wager, even if it was just five bucks,” he writes. “This is how I put down gambling roots early on.” But by his sophomore year of high school, he says, “I bet on anything I could.”

What Lindell didn’t realize at the time was that these habits were activating the chemical reward system in his brain. “For me, sports betting—and later, playing craps and especially sitting at a blackjack table—was like an IV drip of pure satisfaction,” he writes. “In fact, that dopamine drip is a real thing, and so powerful that people will literally destroy their lives to get it.”

And Lindell continued on a path to destruction. After high school, his gambling addiction only increased, bringing him to desperation after



**Mike Lindell with his son Charlie grinding foam in 2005**



**Mike Lindell employs more than 3,000 people making products for his MyPillow company.**

losing \$25,000 in one long weekend of NFL betting. In an effort to escape his Mafia-style creditors, who threatened his family, he broke into a gas station, hoping to land in the relative safety of jail. After leading police on a high-speed chase, he did end up in jail and at the mercy of the southern Minnesota gossip chain. While serving in work-release, he earned as a result of that escapade, a friend introduced him to what Lindell says became his “new best friend”: cocaine. That began an addiction, which later morphed to a

nearly 20-year crack habit only ended by God’s miraculous intervention.

Lindell describes himself as a “functional addict,” but his addictions kept hurting his family and business, as addictions always do.

In 1985, he fell in love with Karen, mother of his children, who joined him in his crack addiction and put up with his wayward ways for 20 years before she left him for another man. During this time, Lindell coached Little League and, on the surface, looked like a good parent, even though



**Mike Lindell was invited to the White House bill-signing ceremony for the bipartisan Overdose Prevention and Patient Safety Act on Oct. 24, 2018. Having discussed how to help addicts with then-candidate Trump in August 2016, Lindell was elated to see President Trump and Congress working together to take concerted, meaningful steps.**

his various addictions drained the family financially.

At one point, he decided to take his family on a long vacation, flying into Las Vegas, where he planned to “gamble a little” and then drive on to Southern California, where the Lindells would visit the typical tourist sites such as Disneyland, Knott’s Berry Farm and Sea World. He spent the first night at the craps table in the casino across from their motel and lost every bit of the \$4,000 he and Karen had brought along for their vacation. In typical fashion, he manipulated a pit boss into giving the family a huge suite for the night, then headed for California as planned.

“For the rest of our vacation, we scraped by on the proceeds from four ATM cards, heading to the machines at 12:01 a.m., pulling out our daily limit to get through until midnight the next day,” he writes. “The night before we were to head home, we rolled into a little Best Western. The six of us had one room with one bed and no money.”

## **‘You Will Be Provided a Platform’**

Time and again, a “miracle” would happen like one that took place when

Lindell, then only 20 years old, already owed a bookie \$12,000. He walked into a bank and, instead of spinning a story, decided to be totally honest with the loan officer. “Mark, I’ve lost money to some bad guys with some betting, and I need cash right away,” he said. “I’ve gotta have \$12,000. You can give it to me as a mortgage on my trailer.” Most people would have been turned down flat. But Lindell had his cash within 15 minutes and paid off his debt in full.

Another time, when Lindell was on his way home from a failed gambling binge in Kansas City, Missouri, he accidentally drove into a rough area of town, hitting a pothole that caused the camper shell to fly off his truck bed and land in the street. Just then, two men approached, one of them holding a gun.

Instead of fear, all Lindell felt was a crack-induced rage. He says he yelled at the men to put the gun away, adding, “I’ve got all of six bucks on me, and you can each have three! But first you’re gonna help me put this camper shell back on my truck!” The two men walked over to where Lindell was attempting to drag the camper shell by himself and helped him lift it onto the truck bed. Then

they silently disappeared.

God kept showing up in his life long before Lindell recognized Him. He woke up one morning with words swirling around his mind, so he grabbed a notebook and wrote them down. “It wasn’t like I was writing,” he says in his book. “It was more like I was taking dictation. My hand moved the pen, and words appeared on the page. It struck me that these were words I didn’t even use.”

Lindell ended up with six pages of handwritten notes that included a step-by-step plan for getting off crack. The notes also included these mysterious words: “You will know when the time is right, and you will be provided a platform.”

He writes, “Were these thoughts from somewhere—or Someone—else? I didn’t know.”

A major influence was his sister Cindy Carlson, who was what we’d call an “on-fire Christian.” His book explains how he couldn’t understand why she and her husband, Bryan, drove more than an hour across town to attend Living Word church, pastored by Mac Hammond.

The same day Lindell received the divinely dictated plan to get off crack, his sister called him. Hammond had brought her up in front of the congregation that morning and asked if she had an older brother named Mike. God had given the pastor a prophetic word for Lindell, and his sister shared it. “Whatever happened to your brother, it’s important. He has to follow through on it, and you need to tell him.”

Lindell knew exactly what this meant. Shaken, he grabbed the notebook containing the plan and stuffed it behind a framed album cover hung on the wall. Four years would pass before he saw those pages again.

As if this weren’t enough, right after a girlfriend left him and he came out of a stress-induced walking coma, in one 24-hour period, four people gave him nearly identical messages. A local TV station kept replaying what he considers one of the worst interviews of his life. One night a woman called his business cellphone to ask if he was the

one whose interview she'd watched. "I don't want to buy a pillow," she told him. "But I was praying, and God let me know that what you're doing is so important. You can't give up." Then she prayed for him and MyPillow for 30 minutes while he listened and did lines of cocaine.

Ninety minutes later a local boutique owner called and said she also saw him on TV. "God's called me to pray for you. What you're doing is very important, and you can't give up," she told him. "Although I didn't know what the future held or why, I was encouraged that the woman said this company was important to God," Lindell writes.

Hours later his phone rang at 3 a.m., and a male voice barked, "Well, let me tell you something, pal, I don't believe in God, but I keep having this dream that I'm supposed to call you and tell you what you are doing is important to God."

Finally, the next morning a woman called. She didn't want to buy a pillow either, but she did want to pray for him. "You have a 'platform,'" she said tentatively, echoing Hammond's 2003 prophetic word. "But I don't know what that means."

The story that fascinated me most was how he instantly got off crack. I'd read his 325-page book, so I was aware of the stranglehold his addictions had on his life. Yet in a 24-hour period, he dropped the crack habit. He said Jesus took away his desire for drugs on Jan. 16, 2009, and it's never come back. And this took place long before he surrendered his life to Christ and five years before he was delivered of gambling. He broke that addiction in 2014 after he heard an audible message from God while driving down the highway toward a casino.

Growing up in Christian circles I've seen many seemingly strong believers who continue to struggle with addiction or other problems despite going through deliverance or fasting and praying to be free. I've heard a few testimonies from people who say Jesus delivered them instantly, but those are exceptions,

**“God, when I wake up, I don't ever want to have the desire for drugs or alcohol again.”**

not the rule. Yet even for believers who may struggle with relapses of drinking, pornography or other addictions, Lindell's story offers true inspiration.

In his book, he recounts how he picked Thursday, Jan. 15, 2009, as his final day of bondage. That night as he slept on a friend's sofa, he prayed what he says may have been his first genuine prayer. "God, when I wake up, I don't ever want to have the desire for drugs or alcohol again." He remembers when he woke up, he was lying in bed like someone who has had a bad fall and staying there a minute to determine if they've broken anything.

"Yes, I was all in one piece," he writes. "And I could feel, without question, that my desire for drugs and alcohol was gone. ... But the greater miracle was how I felt inside. I felt calm and refreshed and peaceful. It was a new kind of peace I had never experienced. I also felt an urgent sense of calling."

His calling, of course, was to use his business platform and notoriety to bring people to Jesus. When I told one of my businessman friends about my interview, he said Lindell's story lets him know God can use businessmen, not just ministers, to impact the world.

Even for people who never gamble or abuse drugs, seemingly everyone can relate to some sort of deep pain like Mike Lindell experienced. And every believer in Jesus can pray they will experience miracles over the problems in life or receive creative ideas that turn into business or ministry successes. And who wouldn't like a huge testimony such as going from life as a cocaine and crack addict to become an inventor and CEO of an outrageously successful business?

Mike Lindell seems the least likely person to become a famous Christian leader. His spiritual journey is unlike

any I've ever heard, which is one reason I wanted to interview him myself. I hoped I could learn more from his unconventional life and be inspired by how he uses the huge platform God has given him. I also hoped that by telling his story, I could inspire *Charisma* readers how they too can learn from his testimony.

There's so much more to the Mike Lindell story, such as the supernatural connection he made with Rabbi Jonathan Cahn that led to his sponsoring *The Return*, and the unbelievable series of miracles that allowed him to become a confidant of President Donald Trump. As I wrap up this article, I remember the concluding words of the book of John: "There are also many other things which Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that not even the world itself could contain the books that could be written" (John 21:25).

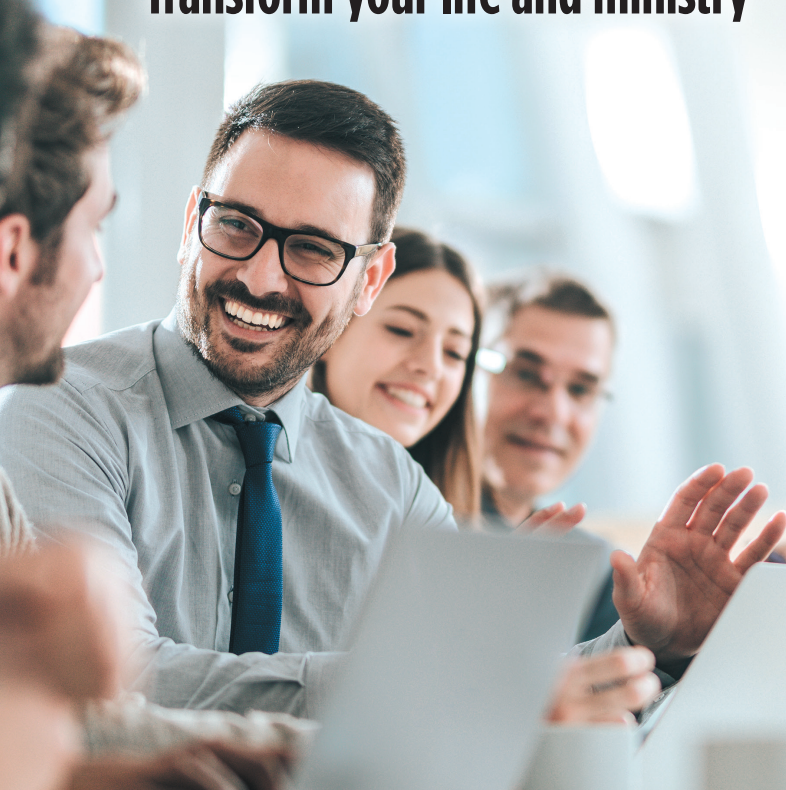
One of the biggest parts of his story is the miracle that started his Lindell Recovery Network, which space does not allow me to cover. So watch for a second article about Mike Lindell in the next issue of *Charisma*, about his addiction recovery network, including how you can get involved.

For me, reading Lindell's book (which I recommend you also read) and spending several hours with him were enormously inspiring. In my years of covering the charismatic world, I've heard numerous testimonies, and in my walk with God, I've had a few miracles of my own, but nothing like Lindell's. His story motivates me—as I hope it motivates you—to believe God for great things that will lead people to Jesus and spark the great revival Lindell says God has shown him lies ahead. ◀

**STEPHEN STRANG** is founding editor of *Charisma*. Learn about the books he's written at [stevestrangbooks.com](http://stevestrangbooks.com).

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# GOD HAS PUSHED THE RESET BUTTON

**2020 was a difficult year.  
Don't panic—the Lord is still in control.**

**BY J. LEE GRADY**

**D**id you ever wonder if 2020 was just a bad dream? I've had that fantasy many times since the COVID-19 pandemic started in March of last year. But I always wake up and realize the nightmare is real!

Life hasn't been easy. Some of us got infected with the virus, or we know people who got sick or even died. People with loved ones in nursing homes haven't been able to visit in months. Many Americans lost jobs or experienced a drop in income. Families have had to deal with closed schools and shuttered businesses.

And besides the pandemic, we've had forest fires, racial tension, political turmoil and the most named tropical storms since meteorologists started keeping those records.

The pandemic has had a devastating impact on churches, too. After months of virtual meetings, churches that now are meeting in person have learned that many of their members are too afraid to be around people, or they've grown too accustomed to watching church in their pajamas at home. Church budgets have been slashed, and pastors are wondering if having 50% of their previous members will be the new normal.

We've been challenged. We've been hit with overwhelming discouragement. We've been stretched to a breaking point.

Yet those of us who love Jesus know we can't despair. The pandemic didn't take heaven by surprise. God has been with us during our worst trials, and He promises to work all things together for our good.

When my ministry travel was canceled in March, I had no idea where I would get my income. I had a few freak-out moments. Then the Lord underscored these words from John 15:2: "Every branch in Me that bears no fruit, He takes away. And every branch that bears fruit, He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

There's an uncomfortable truth in this verse. If we want to grow spiritually, and if we want more spiritual fruit, we must submit to the Father's plan, not ours. He cuts things away so new growth will appear.

British preacher Charles Spurgeon, when preaching about John 15, said: "All fruit-bearing saints must feel the knife." Ouch! That means we can't just skate along in comfort, always getting what we want. If we desire the fruit of a mature Christian life, we must welcome the unexpected interruptions He uses to reset our lives.

continued »



**“If we desire the fruit of a mature Christian life, we must welcome the unexpected interruptions He uses to reset our lives.”**

Pruning is a painful and embarrassing experience. If you've ever seen a row of pruned trees, you know what I mean. They are ugly. They look stripped and hopeless. Grapevines that have been pruned look dead. Are you willing to live the pruned life?

## Going Under the Knife

Pruning cuts off what is ineffective. This pandemic has been painful, but when we look back in a year we'll realize that God used it to eliminate things in our lives that weren't working. Some churches, for example, realize they were pouring tons of financial resources into programs or buildings that had no real impact. Pruning has revealed what is essential for us to make a powerful, book of Acts-style impact on our communities.

Before Jesus came, John the Baptist had to prepare the way. He called people to repentance and a cutting away of the old. Whenever God is about to do a new thing, He lays the axe to the root. He recalibrates us so we don't go back to our old ways. He can't put new wine in old wineskins.

A tree that has never been pruned looks good. But unless the dead wood is cut away, along with the showy leaves, we will never see new blooms. We need the knife. The church will not look the same in 2021. The way we did things in previous seasons won't work in this next move of God. Ask Him to trim away the dead branches of stale religion in your life and in your church.

Right now we are an ugly sight, stripped of our packed buildings. We have been reduced to basics. But with the cutting comes something fresh and powerful, something that is so much better than church as we knew it prior to the pandemic.

More than anything, pruning brings us into a deeper connection with Jesus, the "true vine" (John 15:1). He promises that those who submit to His cutting process will abide closely with Him. Isn't this what we want?

We can't abide in Him if a thousand other things are distracting us. Life prior to this pandemic was too busy and too cluttered. Jesus wants our gaze

to be on Him. The process of pruning cuts away everything else so we can love Him and trust Him fully.

When I invited the Lord to reset my own life during this turbulent time, He showed me three important steps I needed to take. I invite you to take the same journey:

### 1) Refocus

The Lord showed me that the church has been weighed down by fear and worry because of what we listen to. So many Americans are depressed because they are glued to the mainstream media for hours each day. The constant barrage of negative news has triggered anxiety and caused insomnia. The media's dishonest manipulation of information has created a mental health crisis that in some ways is more serious than the virus itself.

Sometimes Christians are as guilty as secular journalists for creating this toxic atmosphere of negativity. I can't count how many times people have sent me emails and videos about the latest conspiracy theory or a certain pastor's doom-and-gloom prophecies. It's no wonder some believers are throwing up their hands and saying they hope Jesus returns soon.

But God does not want us to have a gloomy perspective on the future. Psalm 2 tells us that His throne in heaven is the most permanent, stable place in the universe. We don't have to worry about God's enemies because He promises to "speak to them in His anger, and terrify them in His fury" (v. 5b, NASB). He's in charge. Why don't we rest in that reality?

I have a prediction. The pain of 2020 will pass. Life will go on. The pandemic will end, we will take our masks off, flights will resume, the global economy will start humming again, churches will reopen, and we will discover that even in the darkest days God was at work.

That doesn't mean we won't struggle. We will face ups and downs, hardships, persecution and every other form of spiritual resistance. But nothing will stop God's work. We must get our eyes off the problems around us and look up. We must see



Women pray during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**“We must stop wringing our hands in fear and begin lifting our hands in prayer.”**

His throne—and trust in His sovereign power. We must stop wringing our hands in fear and begin lifting our hands in prayer.

Jesus told us His kingdom is like a seed that grows so large it “becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches” (Matt. 13:32b, NASB). The growth may be slow. But no matter what the media says, nothing will stop Christ's kingdom from expanding. No matter how dark it gets, the light will come. Learn to refocus, and you'll see glimmers of hope everywhere.

### 2) Refuel

Unless you were hiding under a rock for the past 10 months, you know gasoline hit record low prices when the pandemic began. In Georgia, where I live, we were paying \$1.25 a gallon in March. Some states reported the price was below a dollar a gallon.

There were two reasons for the price drop: Not as many people were buying





gasoline, and Russia and Saudi Arabia are engaged in a price war, causing the oil supply to swing up. Market analysts said they had never seen such a glut of oil.

As I pondered this situation, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart: “Now is the time to fill up.” I knew He wasn’t talking about my car’s gas tank. Sometimes there are things in the natural world that send spiritual messages. The Lord has been asking the church in this season of lockdown to fill our spiritual reserves.

Jesus talked about the importance of having enough oil. The five wise virgins in Matthew 25 made sure they had enough oil for their lamps, while the five foolish ones weren’t prepared. They were locked out of the wedding feast because they didn’t consider oil an essential commodity. The Lord wants us to be ready for what’s coming.

We’ve been like the foolish virgins. The oil of the Holy Spirit hasn’t been important to us. We can take it or leave it. We don’t think we need God’s supernatural power because we have technology, comfortable church buildings, economic prosperity, hip preachers and slick contemporary worship.

We figured out a way to do church without God’s help. We even have books and church growth gurus to teach us how to manufacture a cool vibe, entertain people for 60 minutes and get them out quickly. Revivalist

A.W. Tozer said it this way: “If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95% of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference.”

Many churches today are devoid of the Holy Spirit’s power. Our processed version of Christianity doesn’t resemble the book of Acts. I believe God wants to send a global awakening of the Holy Spirit after this coronavirus pandemic. But we must prepare. Do we have enough oil in our lamps? You may need to seek a refilling.

When Paul went to Ephesus he met some men who believed in Jesus in an intellectual way, yet they had never been filled with the Holy Spirit. In fact they didn’t know there was a Holy Spirit (see Acts 19:1-7). This reminds me of many American churches. We go through the motions of church, but we are clueless about Pentecost.

Now is the time to ask the Baptizer to anoint you and refill you. Don’t wait until your regular routine resumes. The last thing we need is to go back to last year’s “normal” setting. What God has in store for us in 2021 is unprecedented. Only those with full tanks will be able to handle it.

### 3) Reprioritize

Some people have stayed strictly quarantined during the coronavirus crisis. I know people who haven’t been to social gatherings in months. I’m not going to criticize anyone for following protocols and procedures to protect themselves from the virus.

But just because we quarantine, wear masks and stay 6 feet away from people doesn’t mean the Holy Spirit has gone into hiding. He is still working! And He certainly doesn’t socially distance from people.

I have a young friend in the nation of Malawi named Nickson. In July, he moved to the village of Mpamba to plant a church. His home congregation in Mzuzu, 30 miles away, could only afford to give him \$25 to help. But in one month, Nickson led 51 people to Jesus, and they began meeting for worship under a plastic tent.

Nickson is discipling them in spite of the pandemic. “I came here to be a

voice for Jesus to these people so they can become a part of the family of God,” he told me. In November, he and his members began construction on a sanctuary.

Nickson’s challenges are overwhelming, but he is always smiling when he texts me photos from Malawi. And he doesn’t realize his church is growing faster than most churches in the world.

I love to hear testimonies from people like Nickson because they remind me the Holy Spirit is still working today, and that the challenges we are facing can’t stop the spread of the gospel. COVID-19 is contagious, but the gospel spreads even faster.

I experienced my own “pandemic miracle” in 2020 when I led an Indian man named Mahipal to Christ. Mahipal worked at a gas station near my house. I was able to disciple him every day because my schedule had been canceled. He learned the Scriptures, and he was baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. By the time he went home to India in July, he had led 11 other people to faith in Jesus!

My experience with Mahipal taught me that God was not “socially distancing” from people during this crazy time. God wants to get close to people, regardless of what kind of crisis is happening in the world.

I became bolder in 2020 at a time when many people were hiding in fear. I pray you will do the same in 2021. People all around you need the Lord. Let them see your hope and joy, and tell them the reason you are still smiling during a global crisis. ◀

**READ MORE:** *Find encouragement to hold on during hard times at [reset.charismamag.com](http://reset.charismamag.com).*

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| MENTAL WELLNESS

# YOUR DIVINE PRESCRIPTION FOR



# Hope FOR THE NEW YEAR

## How God can heal your mind, body and spirit

BY FRED ANTONELLI, Ph.D.

If someone had told us in advance that 2020 would look as devastating as it has, we wouldn't have believed them. At least, we would have had serious questions. The events of the past year sound like a wish list for the Grim Reaper.

» The impeachment trial of the president of the United States took place in the U.S. Senate.

» The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic.

» The Dow Jones Industrial Average plunged by 1,190.95 points, or 4.4%, to close at 25,766.64, triggered by fears of the spread of COVID-19.

» The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 passed 47 million worldwide.

» Many small business owners lost their companies and thousands throughout the country were laid off or lost their jobs because of the pandemic.

» Protests and violence caused by the killing of George Floyd broke out across cities in the U.S. and around the world.

» Churches were forced to close and when reopened, had to meet a strict criteria of social interaction mandates from the state.

» And if this weren't enough, we endured the most divisive and hotly contentious presidential election since the Civil War, one that split the nation in half.

When you stop and think about it, the hour seems to closely resemble Habakkuk's cry to God in the first chapter of his Old Testament book.

"O Lord, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Or cry to You, 'Violence!' and You will not save? Why do You make me see wickedness, and cause me to see trouble? Plundering and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. Therefore the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround

the righteous; therefore injustice proceeds" (Hab. 1:2-4).

Talk about anxiety, fear and discouragement! Habakkuk was a man on the edge with God. He complained about society falling apart around him and God seemed to not listen to his prayer. If this is what Habakkuk was feeling, I can only wonder what some others around him must have been going through. They must have thought the sky was falling and God had taken a vacation!

The fact is, what Habakkuk witnessed and what we see today in real time are very similar. The United States, though the greatest, most industrial and most powerful nation on the planet, is not without its blemishes or its propensity toward sin. What appears to be the silence of God as the country flails in self-destruction mode is, in reality, the patient timing of a fifth Great Awakening about to break forth.

God said in Chapters 1 and 2 of the book (and I'm taking liberty here): "You wouldn't believe it if I told you. I'm going to use the ungodly Babylonians to do my bidding. Write this truth down, Habakkuk, so others can read it, because this truth waits for an appointed time. It talks about the end of all of this you're witnessing; you'll see. The enemy is rotten, sinful and puffed up. But you have to get this, Habakkuk—the righteous person will live by his faithfulness!"

We need to grasp what God is saying to Habakkuk here. If not, we'll miss the real power and strength we need to be victorious in this crazy world. God said, "the righteous person will live by his faithfulness" (Hab. 2:4b, NIV). That means through consistency, commitment and steadfastness, we'll see God's goodness happen before our very eyes because of our loyalty to Him. The world may become unhinged, but believers in Jesus will feast off their faithfulness to God, and God Himself will prove faithful. It's then that Habakkuk gets it, and in Chapter 3, begins

to cry out for revival. He ends the chapter in verse 19 by coming alive: “The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.”

Habakkuk finally caught what God was saying. As a result, God did great things—and so will He do for you as well.

## Real-Life Issues

The mental health toll from the coronavirus on individuals, couples, families, employment, businesses, pastors, churches, missionaries, schools and medical workers has been nothing short of devastating, to say the least. Here’s some clinical information to add perspective.

Research from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey from May 2020 to July 2020 indicates symptoms of anxiety disorder and/or depressive disorder shot up from 34.5% in May to 40.1% in July. The survey was conducted on adults ages 18 and older.

The Census Bureau survey said that more than one-third of Americans are displaying clinical signs of anxiety, depression or both since the coronavirus pandemic began. A Pew Research Center survey said this figure was as high as 55%. Loneliness from pandemic-related isolation and lockdowns also plays a part in depression.

The economy is now a significant source of stress for 70% of Americans, according to the American Psychological Association (APA). This is up from 46% in the APA’s 2019 Stress in America survey.

And this comes on top of the uptick in marital issues and divorce from the pandemic. Marriage therapists, both secular and Christian, have been busier counseling couples than they ever have been.

And this doesn’t include depleted savings accounts, homeowners falling behind in mortgage payments and churches experiencing decreased giving.

These are all real-life issues that face every one of us irrespective of our faith, socioeconomic status, physical and emotional well-being or political

persuasion. There is also no doubt that “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12b, MEV) are trying their best to disrupt our lives and rob us of our promises and authority in Christ. In other words, this stuff is affecting all of us!

So yes, when you spell it all out, things do look rather dismal on the surface—or do they?

## Divine Favor

When we read the story of Noah and the flood, we often read it one-dimensionally. In reality, this story has another fascinating, life-giving side—a bigger, more meaningful side.

The flood story in Genesis 6-8 gives us a pretty clear-cut message. Sin and depravity had gone wild, to the extent that God says in Genesis 6:7, “I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—both man and beast, and the creeping things, and the birds of the sky, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

When Dad wishes he’d never had you, that’s a pretty bad thing. Yet that’s how crazy wicked the human race had become. But look, here’s the best part of the story: “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. 6:8, NIV).

If we don’t take a deliberate look at this, we’ll miss what’s really going on here. With all of the ugly and destructive things happening around Noah, he found favor, grace and acceptance with God. That’s important for us to see. If we miss that—the favor, grace and acceptance part—how God feels about us—then all we end up seeing is the bad stuff around us and not the good and redemptive plans He is preparing in the background.

As God is getting ready to flood everything around Noah, He spares Noah and his entire family because of favor. But when we read this, our minds are caught up more in the devastating flood than the story’s main theme: rescue.

Through difficult and trying times, whether physiologically, psychologically, occupationally, politically, relationally or spiritually, God’s intention, plan, purpose and desire is to show favor to you through the battle.



His ultimate goal is to bring rescue, and from that, new life!

Without faith in God’s favor and rescue in our lives, marriages, finances, jobs and mental stability, all we have is the destruction around us and not the goodness of the Lord working on our behalf. Trust me, God isn’t in heaven wringing His hands saying, “Whoops! Sorry, I missed that one!” We need to know something important at the outset of 2021: God is in control. Let me say that again: God is *totally in control*. Nothing has escaped God’s eyes, and everything is in perfect order for His plan.

“Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, and I will deliver him and honor him” (Ps. 91:14-15, NKJV).

Moses wrote this psalm the day he completed building the tabernacle in the desert (Ex. 39). He was awestruck as he entered the holy place, reflecting on everything God had brought the Israelites through under extreme and even impossible conditions. In the end, Yahweh brought Moses favor and rescued him and all of Israel from certain death. This goes to show that it’s never over until God says it’s over, and God *never* says it’s over!

“I will never leave you, nor forsake you” (Heb. 13:5b, MEV).



The enemy wants us to think God just isn't going to come through for us, our families, our economic condition or even our country. He tells us somehow COVID-19, political unrest, an unstable economy, job loss, a contentious presidential election and worries over where our country is headed will prevail in the end. No, they won't! We must move our eyes from the wreckage around us to the rescue God is planning. If we don't, our adversary will try to imprison us in fear while God has lavished us in favor. Because of Christ and His work of redemption in our lives, we are a righteous and blameless people who have received grace as a result of Christ's shed blood on the cross.

It's interesting to note that those three descriptions of Noah—receiving grace (favor), being righteous and being blameless—appear for the first time in Genesis 6. Verse 9c says, "Noah walked with God," and so do we. Not unlike Noah, each Christian walks with God in the midst of immorality and political devastation. And we must lock into our hearts that even though all these things go on around us, God's favor and grace are on His people. Even though it may look like things won't work out, hold on. They will, and God will make sure of it.

Remember, things didn't look good for Abraham, and in particular, Isaac. It was sacrifice time, and Isaac was

the sacrifice! The whole experience was breaking Abraham's heart, and no doubt Isaac was a little anxious too. But when the time was right—and with God, the right time always comes—Yahweh showed Abraham favor, grace and rescue by providing

**“We must move our eyes from the wreckage around us to the rescue that God is planning.”**

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a ram in the thicket as an alternative sacrifice for his beloved son. God came through! Perhaps with tears in Abraham's eyes, hoping but not 100% sure things would turn out well for him, he believed. As a result, he saw the goodness of Yahweh's favor in his life and the life of his son. God is never without options, so we are never without hope.

### **Viable Alternatives**

God provided a shelter, a rescue from the storm for Noah and his family. He is going to do the same thing for you and your family. Depression and anxiety are real and affect many people both inside and outside of the body of Christ.

As a licensed mental health professional, I've gotten in trouble with some evangelical charismatics in the past, but I believe firmly in what I'm about to say. I've seen it work and work well. If you find you just can't shake your depression, anxiety or both, you need to know there are viable alternatives to help you emotionally maintain and in many cases, maintain well through the storm.

Pray first, of course. Include your spouse, family member, friend and pastor on your prayer team. If you still find you are struggling, I suggest you talk to a licensed clinical Christian counselor who can help walk you

through the rough spots. They may suggest you talk with your primary doctor to consider other options that could prove very helpful.

Depression and anxiety come in two types: situational and genetic. Either the onset was brought about by a particular situation such as the loss of a job, marital issues or pressures at home, or the onset came through heredity. Perhaps your mom had depression/anxiety problems and so did your grandmother on your mom's side and Uncle Charlie and Aunt Bertha as well. Either way, viable and helpful options are available. Remember, Jesus chose a physician, Luke, as both an apostle and an evangelist. Also, it was Jesus who said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Luke 5:31b, NIV).

If you suffer from mental illness, do not allow anyone to place you under guilt or shame as you seek help. There are options that can assist you, and you are not unspiritual in seeking them out. As a matter of fact, you're demonstrating wisdom. The outcome could prove very beneficial. There are also some all-natural products that may help you as well.

David put it best in Psalm 30:5: "For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." In this verse, "his favor" refers to God's grace and acceptance, which will work in you for a "lifetime"! Though the darkness of the night comes at times, stay encouraged because with God, there's always the promise of the dawn. Be expectant—divine rescue is on the way! ◀

**READ MORE:** For additional information about a Christ-centered approach to mental health, check out [anxiety.charismamag.com](http://anxiety.charismamag.com).

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**“Am I feeding my body correctly? Do I repeatedly ingest food that is not food at all? Do I have a sedentary lifestyle?”**

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# Dead Silence or Living Words?

How you can move into life and lasting health in this new year

BY MARK SHERWOOD, N.D.

**D**ead silence” describes a time without any noise. Silence can sometimes yield comfort, but it can also produce a feeling of awkwardness, even anxiety. People try various means of avoiding dead silence: talking to themselves; having conversations with friends or family; looking at television, movies and online or print content; or listening to music, podcasts and other broadcast material.

Today we face a dead silence I want to address head-on, one that concerns me deeply. It is a silence of the government, medical establishments and the church in the area of disease prevention. This silence concerns our stewardship of the temple or “earth suit” God has given us and the powerful environmental and spiritual forces that affect it. In this article, I hope to destroy and dismantle this dead silence by discussing both spoken and unspoken words related to health and giving some practical direction and prescriptions of action designed to generate better overall well-being.

## Shatter the Silence

In this new year, many of us have set new and worthy goals with fresh affirmations and proclamations. Often, these involve spoken or written resolutions pertaining to physical or spiritual improvements. However, statements only take us to the door of our goals. We need action to open the door to realize those goals.

The following Scripture comes to mind:

“If you refrain to deliver those who are drawn unto death, and those who are ready to be slain; if you say, ‘Surely we did not know this,’ does not He who ponders the heart consider it? And He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to every man according to his works?” (Prov. 24:11-12).

A contemporary paraphrase puts it this way:

“Rescue the perishing; don’t hesitate to step in and help. If you say, ‘Hey, that’s none of my business,’ will that get you off the hook? Someone is watching you closely, you know—Someone not impressed with weak excuses” (Prov. 24:11-12, MSG).

In other words, if we, as disciples of Jesus Christ, see others being led down paths of destruction and death (the potential shortening of life and, therefore, diminishing of God’s ultimate purpose), we should say or do something. As true Christ-followers, our level of care for our fellow man must increase, expand and grow. We cannot in good conscience use the excuse, “It’s none of my business.”

The church, government and medical establishments rarely mention





perfectly created, not lacking anything.

» God provided food grown from the earth to sustain His creation. He also created the appetite (draw) toward that food which He created.

» God gave us dominion (authority) over the earth, which would include the physical body He created from the earth.

Therefore, if God made us perfect and provided all we need, we have no need to live in a state of fear and anxiety. Instead of focusing on sickness and a fear of death or virus, we must concentrate on living a life of fullness and completeness in God. Additionally, if what we put in our mouths does not meet the criteria of God's intent—coming from the earth in its original packaging—we have disobeyed what He says in His Word about His provision.

As we know, the current pandemic has been perpetuated by our failure to follow these simple truths. But it has also shown us our weaknesses—spiritual, emotional and physical. To examine this area further, let us ask ourselves these questions:

» Do I view my life as lacking anything? Do I believe God made my immune system poor and inadequate?

» Am I feeding my body correctly? Do I repeatedly ingest food that is not food at all? Do I have a sedentary lifestyle?

» Have I allowed God to have true authority in the renewal of my mind? Do I speak or repeat words that do not line up with His truth?

Taking inventory and revisiting foundational truth brings solidity and confidence into our lives. This godly confidence yields a life that shines like the brightest star in the darkest night. Let's all shine brighter each day.

## Walk in Health

As we take inventory and listen to honesty, I think it is clear we all can and should do better.

Our immune system is one of the most extraordinary defense mechanisms ever created. Straight from the hand of God, this effective war machine has the power to defend our bodies from threats both inside and

anything about what our lifestyle is doing to our physical health. We hear a lot about deadly viruses, hospitalizations, sickness, fear of death, loss of jobs, elections and economic collapse. But what about some conversation on how to avoid needless disease processes, how to live and speak faith through works, education on the dangers of medication dependence and healthy lifestyle protocols?

Every government official and church leader (for that matter, every disciple of Christ) should both teach and broadcast these truths. In fact, our failure to boldly proclaim them has caused more and more people to be “drawn unto death” and “ready to be slain.”

Friends, now is the time to wake up from our slumber, see through the darkness, arise out of our deceptions and stand up, step up and speak about true stewardship of the temple God has given us.

We must not stay silent. We must both speak and act. We cannot wait any longer for this message. In our era and under our watch, dead silence is

resulting in increased illness and far too many deaths.

## Speak the Truth

If we truly believe God and His Word, we must also believe His Word is true. If we believe even one word is false, we must also believe all is false. So let's examine what He lays out about His creation in the beginning—the first chapter of Genesis.

“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ Then God said, ‘See, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is on the face of all the earth and every tree which has fruit yielding seed. It shall be food for you’” (Gen. 1:27-29).

When we unwrap this Scripture, we find these truths:

» We are created in the image of God. His image is perfect. So we are



outside. Simply put, if anything gets in or on our bodies with the intent of creating harm, God has equipped the immune system with the ability to kill, neutralize and disable the threat. Further, this remarkable system has the ability to adapt to changing threatening environments by creating antibodies.

We have responsibility for several factors that will build up our immune system. We also have the ability to take actions that will weaken or even destroy it. So let's first discuss a few measures that will prepare our immune system to do the amazing job God designed it to do:

**1) Consume real foods.** These would include well-sourced quality fats and organic (where possible) fruits and vegetables.

**2) Get sufficient sleep.** Our bodies require seven to nine hours each night.

**3) Manage stress effectively.** This involves finding a balance between stress-inducing events and relaxation-inducing events.

**4) Take time for adequate exercise.** We all need a minimum of 150 minutes per week of dedicated activity. One can easily begin with a walking program.

**5) Add appropriate supplements.** Additions to a healthy diet will include the following: zinc, vitamin C, vitamin D, omega three fatty acids, colostrum, sulfuraphane-yielding broccoli sprouts and magnesium. Others are important as well, but these make a good starting point.

The following factors will weaken the immune system or perhaps destroy it altogether.

**1) Consuming any processed foods, sugars, soda, fried foods and MSG.** Other problematic nutrients include soy, corn, breads and all grains.

**2) Failing to allow time for sufficient sleep.** The average adult gets only 6½ hours per night, which is woefully inefficient. Keep in mind, as we age, we produce less melatonin, which decreases sleep duration. Those over 40 years of age may need to consider melatonin supplements.

**3) Living in an environment of chronic stress, anxiety or fear.** Speaking of fear, thinking on fear and perpetually listening to fear destroy rather than build up our immune function.

**4) Failing to move.** Inactivity is, unfortunately, the norm today. Our world is becoming increasingly obesogenic and sedentary. We need movement to live. When we stop moving, we start dying.

**5) Failing or refusing to take necessary supplements.** Those listed above are unequivocally missing even in the best diet. Failing to take them is choosing to withhold supplies for the immune system's use.

Now is a good time to go through the checklist for the five builders and

which is counterproductive to our purpose. And fourth, *never* use weight loss as a target to health. Scale weight tells us nothing; body composition tells us everything.

For anyone who wants 100% success with nutrition and a better bodily healing process as a result, here are some surefire guidelines for success:

Eliminate all breads, sugars, rice, processed foods, fried foods, sodas, soy and corn.

Consume unlimited amounts of all above-ground vegetables, including spinach, kale, cauliflower, broccoli, field greens, collard greens and so on.

Limit fruit to two half-cup servings per day.

Use the following guidelines when selecting protein: grass fed and grass

**“Our immune system is one of the most extraordinary defense mechanisms ever created.”**

five destroyers. Where do you stand and where do you need to improve?

### **Eat for Life**

Through our wellness center and other outlets, my wife and I are often asked to provide dietary guidelines and protocols to our community. We get asked questions such as: Which diet is best? Should I eat for my blood type? How many carbohydrates, proteins and fats should I consume? How many calories should I eat?

With that as our backdrop, allow me to address these head-on. First, diets *do not* work. Dieting is a bad idea. Never go on a diet. Second, the science of counting calories for dietary guidance is faulty and has long been disproven. A calorie in one person's body does not have the same effect as in another person's body. Third, counting calories and consequently lowering them in the belief that weight loss will result lowers the metabolic rate and yields less energy,

finished, hormone and antibiotic free, wild caught, free range and organic.

Consume generous amounts of healthy fats, including olive oil, avocado, macadamia and coconut oil.

There you have it. This plan will work with 100% certainty. Don't believe it? Ask the thousands of people we have helped across the globe. When we adjust our thinking and our nutrition, great things begin to happen, including the healing of our physical bodies, created by God to fulfill His divine purpose and destiny.

It is never God's will that we walk around in a state of sickness, but this lifestyle has become all too common. Let's change that by making these adjustments now and have the best year—and coming years—of our lives. ◀

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| FAVOR

# ACTIVATE HEAVEN

Win battles and walk  
in favor by speaking  
words from God



## BY JOHN ECKHARDT

In our age, building a platform seems to be on every person's mind. Getting on Facebook Live and preaching, singing and training whoever may stop scrolling and listen is what so many are doing to reach as many people as possible. They desire to get their message out to as many as they can. Often this can be a point of competition: Who has the most followers? Who has the most viewers? Who is drawing the most attention and getting other opportunities to speak, preach, teach or share their skills and expertise?

Now, I'm not saying any of this is wrong, but I want you to know that God knows how to get your voice out. God knows how to release your voice. He knows where your word needs to go.

As He purifies and matures your voice, He will bring promotion and set you before great men and women. He may give you a prophetic word for somebody. He may cause you to have a dream, like the apostle Paul did, of somebody saying, "Come over to our church, come over to our company, come over to our nation and help us. We need to hear your voice."

In Acts 16, Paul had a dream of a man pleading with him to come to Macedonia and help them. Paul had never been to Macedonia, but the man had asked him to come and help them. So Paul went to Macedonia, preached the Word of God, and revival broke out. His voice needed to be heard in Macedonia.

There may be places you've never been, but God can come to you in a dream and tell you where to go. He can show you people in your dream whom He wants you to contact to give them a word.

The apostle Peter provides another example of God speaking in a dream about where someone should go to deliver His word. In Acts 10:9-23, Peter had a vision of a sheet coming down from heaven, of unclean animals that represented unclean nations—Gentiles.

Immediately following the vision, God sent a messenger from the house of the Roman centurion Cornelius to Peter. The messenger asked Peter to go with him to Cornelius' house. Arriving there, Peter preached, and the Spirit of God fell on all who were in the house (Acts 10:44). They began to speak in tongues, and all of a sudden, the floodgates were open. As a result of their conversion, more Gentiles began to come into the church along with the Jewish believers.

As we've seen from Paul's and Peter's examples, your voice can go places you've never been. God can do it through dreams. God can do it through visions. God can speak to you. He can even have somebody call you.

I got a call once. It wasn't on my phone; it was through Facebook Messenger. I wasn't used to receiving calls that way, but I answered.

"Hello? Who is this?" I asked.

A guy with an accent answered and said, "Praise the Lord! Apostle Eckhardt, I am calling from Moldova."

Moldova? Moldova is in Eastern Europe, near Russia.

He said, "Praise the Lord! I got your book. I've been reading your book. I'm an evangelist in Moldova. I want you to pray for me."

I said, "OK."

I've never been to Moldova. I don't know anybody there. But somehow my book was there.

The man then said, "I'm a Russian evangelist. I speak English. When I preach in Russian, we go on the streets. I've been reading your books on the apostolic. Would you bless me?"

I said, "Well, if you had the nerve to call me from Moldova on Facebook, I'm going to pray for you."

I began to pray for him, and I prophesied over him on the phone through Facebook Messenger. He received the prophetic word, and my voice was going into Moldova—from the South Side of Chicago to Moldova.

Have you ever been to Moldova? Not many people have. I learned it is near Transylvania. I was in Hungary once, and my hosts pointed in a direction and said, "There's Transylvania."

I said, "Transylvania? Isn't that where Dracula is from?"

They said, "Yes. There are many witches there."

I said, "Well, God bless Transylvania. I am not going up there, dealing with Herman and Eddie Munster and Dracula. No, thank you. I am OK. I've dealt with witchcraft, but I don't want to deal with Transylvanian witchcraft."

The point here is that you can end up in strange places—places you've never been—as God begins to send you to people who need what you have.

### Rise, Shine and Come Forth

Some time ago I was leading a congregation through a series of prophetic activations. We were doing one activation where we encourage people to hear the sound of the Lord. When you are tuned in to the Spirit in this way, sometimes the Lord gives you sounds. You may hear wind blowing, rain falling or birds singing. You may hear trains. This time, I heard the sound of an army marching. In the Spirit, I heard its boots marching. Then the Lord gave me a verse in Psalm 68, "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it" (v. 11, KJV).

The Hebrew word translated "company" means "army." It is also translated as an army of women in some Bible versions. Somehow the King James Version left that out. Some people don't think women can preach or prophesy, but every married man knows women preach.

So as I was leading this activation, I began to see how America needs revival and breakthrough. There is so much going on in our country—perversion, rebellion, witchcraft, violence, hatred and injustice. But I believe that when it's the darkest, that's when prophetic people rise.

Elijah was the prophet when Jezebel was ruling the nation. Two of the most wicked people who have ever

ascended to the throne, Ahab and Jezebel, were the ones controlling the nations, but God raised up Elijah. God has a way of raising up strong anointings when the world seems dark, when it looks like the devil is taking over and witchcraft is prevailing. The strongest anointings are raised up when things are bad. Strong people are raised up who know how to pray and fast, preach and teach—people who know how to rebuke, take authority and prophesy.

I believe no matter how dark it looks, the Bible says, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee” (Isa. 60:1-2).

When darkness tries to cover the land, that is when it is time for you to shine, rise and come forth. God is raising up a new breed of believers who will prophesy, pray, preach, teach, bind

everybody, it seems. We have problems with people in the military, with the police department, with authority, with racism, with prejudice, with Democrats versus Republicans and with drugs.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, so many things have come undone and need to be set back in order. But I believe God is going to send those with His words—with solutions, skill, wisdom and insight—and we will see that the best is yet to come.

### How You ‘Speak’ Is Unique

Some of us are more evangelistic—we feel a sense of urgency to use our voices, gifts and talents to introduce people to the gospel of Jesus. Some of us are more apostolic—we feel motivated to use our voices, gifts and talents to help establish systems and programs that secure the church or other organization they’ve been put in place to serve. Some of us use our

be different from where some people think you ought to go. Expect to be misunderstood.

### Special Assignments, Callings and Mandates

When you walk in a special grace, special anointing, special ability or special talent, it opens you up to the realm of what I call special miracles. There is a class of miracles called special miracles. You can find evidence of this in Acts 19:11, which says, “And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul.” This is telling us that there is the miracle realm, and then there is the special miracle realm. The word “special” simply means something unusual, something better or something on a higher level. In the New King James Version, the same verse says, “Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul.”

As you walk in this new heavenly identity, you need to understand how important it is that the Lord performs special miracles for you and through you. This is how you demonstrate the things that are in heaven that can be loosed in others’ lives. This is also how God will bless you so that by your words and actions—your hands—the special miracles of heaven will be released into the lives of those God sends you to.

For you and through you, God wants to do something different, something unusual. He wants to perform some unusual miracles. He wants to open some unusual doors. He wants to bring unusual breakthroughs. He wants to raise you to unusual levels. He wants to cause you to make unusual connections. He wants to do something very unusual for you and through you.

In studying the word “special,” you will find that it is not a word frequently used in the King James Version. It is more often used in other translations such as the Amplified Bible, The Voice, the Passion Translation and The Living Bible. Then if you follow how the word is used, you will see it show up as “special messenger”—the apostles were called special messengers. You will see references to “special favor,”

**“God is raising up a new breed of believers who will prophesy, pray, preach, teach, bind and loose.”**

and loose. He is raising up a company of people who know that no weapon formed against us shall prosper. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will raise a standard against him (Isa. 59:19).

No matter how bad it looks, one word can turn a situation around. All it takes is one word from God to change a whole situation. So this concept of being a voice, being the heavens or having a voice that activates heaven is not just people saying, “Thus saith the Lord.” It’s about an army of believers God is raising up, an army into whose mouths God will put His word so that when they release it, something will shake and change.

Things are changing politically. There is a lot of division, particularly in America. Everybody hates

voices, gifts and talents to teach, coach, mentor or train. Others of us use our voices, gifts and talents to serve, administrate, give or pastor.

Each of us “speaks” with our different gifts and graces. We’re not the same. Even two apostles can be different. Even two prophets can be different. Don’t try to be like someone else. Be who God has called you to be. Go where He sends you. Don’t be a copycat. Don’t be a clone. It’s OK to receive an impartation from someone, but God has created you to be different and unique. Don’t be born an original and die a copy. We have too many copies out here.

As God prepares you to go to your Macedonia, know that you may seem different than what people expect, or the place He’s called you to go may

which was given to Esther. But when we see “special endowments,” the word is being used to describe an unusual impartation of the gifts of the Spirit.

The apostle Peter talks about this: “As each of you has received a gift (a particular spiritual talent, a gracious divine endowment), employ it for one another as [befits] good trustees of God’s many-sided grace [faithful stewards of the extremely diverse powers and gifts granted to Christians by unmerited favor]” (1 Pet. 4:10, AMPC).

Paul told Timothy to stir up the gift, or the special endowment, that was given to him by prophecy with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. “Do not neglect the gift which is in you, [that special inward endowment] which was directly imparted to you [by the Holy Spirit] by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you [at your ordination]” (1 Tim. 4:14).

Spirit-filled ministry, especially prophecy and the laying on of hands, is a vehicle through which gifts or special endowments are released. Then in 2 Timothy 1:6, Paul told Timothy again to neglect not the gift God had given through the laying on of his hands.

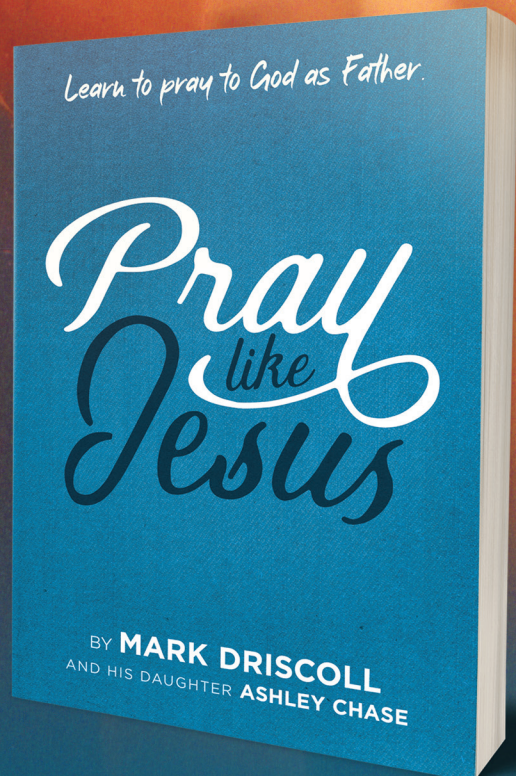
Special endowments come directly from God through the vehicle of laying on of hands in prophecy. These are unique gifts: prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues, faith, gifts of healing, the working of miracles, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, mercy, giving, exhortation, prophecy, serving and so on. (See Rom. 12.) All of these special endowments are connected to the miraculous—when you move in words of knowledge, words of wisdom and discerning of spirits and when you prophesy, speak in tongues or interpret tongues. Moving in these gifts releases miracles, as they are imparted as special abilities to individuals with special assignments, commissions or mandates.

You’re reading this because God has given you a special assignment—a place where your voice will have great impact.

continued »

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# What is Prayer?



Prayer is not something you have to do. Prayer is something that you get to do! Many people value prayer and try to have some sort of prayer life. But most struggle to build any momentum in their prayer lives when they fall into a rut.

**Praying like Jesus doesn’t just change your prayer life; it changes your *entire* life!**

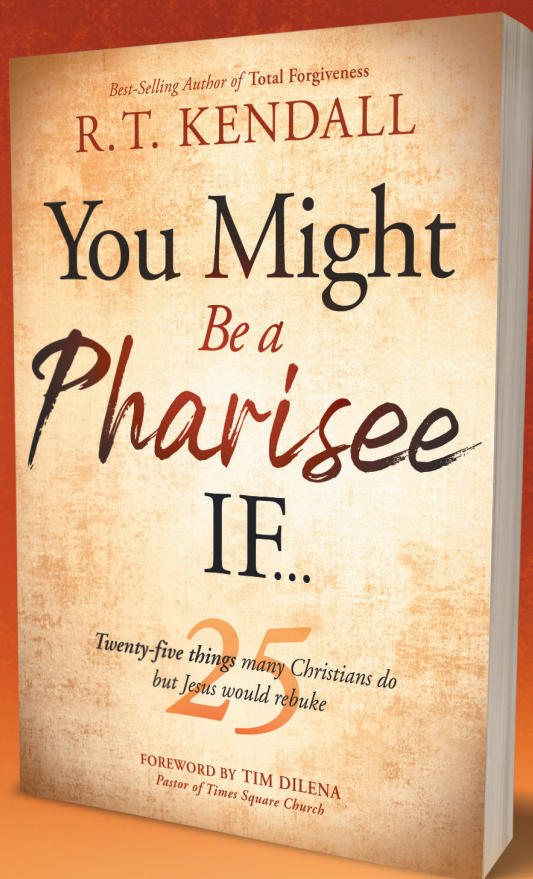


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God has given you a unique way to speak and preach heaven. He has given you special vision and a special gift. This thing that God has placed within you is unique and different, and it separates you from others.

### Remain Humble

My calling out your uniqueness is not an attempt to feed your pride or a statement that you are better than anyone else. The truth is, the more special you and the things God does in your life are, the more humility you must have.

God gave Paul a special mandate to preach to the Gentiles but then gave him a thorn in the flesh, because the abundance of revelations given to him could have caused him to be puffed up (2 Cor. 12:7-10). Paul received special revelation from heaven. He understood the mysteries of God more than all the other apostles. There was special grace given to him, but there was also a thorn in his flesh to keep him in a place of humility.

God does give special gifts, special talents and special anointings—and we need them if we want to bring heaven into the lives of so many who are living in a kind of hell on earth—but these endowments are never given to make us think we are better than someone else. What we can recognize is that God does give people special assignments, special callings and special mandates—special things to do on behalf of the kingdom—and they may be different, unusual and not standard. Often when God gives us those kinds of mandates, we tend to pull back because we've never seen anything quite like it before.

John the Baptist was a special messenger raised up by God (John 1:5-15). After he was born, people wanted to name him after his father, Zacharias, but God said, "His name is John."

Zacharias may have thought, "But there's no one in my family named John."

Zacharias and those around him didn't understand that God wanted the child to be named John because he was special. He was different. He was unique. He had a special calling. He

**A RESOURCE ON THIS TOPIC:**

John Eckhardt teaches you how to use the supernatural power of your voice to advance God's agenda and defeat Satan.



carried the spirit of Elijah. He was in the wilderness eating locusts and wild honey. He had a special garment of goats' hair. God was raising up a special kind of ministry to be the forerunner of Christ.

Samson was different. He was special. When Samson was a child, God said, "Don't cut his hair. He's going to be a Nazirite. He can't drink any wine, because he's special" (Judg. 13:5,7). God gave him special strength to use to bring deliverance to Israel.

Then there was Joseph. His father made him a special coat of many colors because he was different from his brothers (Gen. 37:3). He had a special assignment to go into Egypt before them and bring deliverance to his family. He had a special endowment—the ability to interpret dreams. It was something very unusual; no matter how difficult the dream was, he had a special endowment to interpret it.

Then God gave Solomon a special endowment of wisdom. Solomon received a special ability to walk in wisdom more than any other person of his day, and really, anyone in history. No one could come close to matching the endowment God gave to Solomon.

And there was the special endowments God gave Bezalel: the special skill and wisdom to construct the articles of the tabernacle and to design the garments of the priests and the tabernacle (Ex. 31:1-6).

John the Baptist was different. Samson was different. Joseph was different. Solomon and Bezalel were different, and so are you. ◀

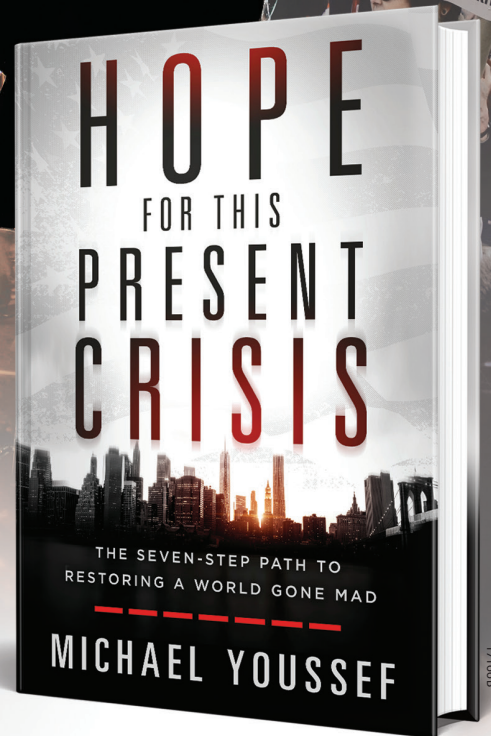
**JOHN ECKHARDT** is overseer of *Crusaders Ministries in Chicago*. With a strong apostolic anointing, he ministers throughout the U.S. and in more than 80 nations. He has written more than 40 books, including *Prayers That Rout Demons* and *God Still Speaks*.

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# HEAL YOUR GUT

How the gut is connected to the overall health of Holy Spirit's temple



BY DON COLBERT, M.D.

**H**ow many patients who have come through my doors would have seen immediate relief of their symptoms or diseases had they jumped into the Healthy Gut Zone diet? The answer is thousands upon thousands!

Naturally, though many of them needed to take action, not all of them did. But I will say this: Every patient I have had who took action to improve his or her gut health always had multiple health benefits come as a direct result. When you heal your gut, your entire body wins! And a happy gut is the foundation for a healthy body!

Now, you know I am not promising that every disease, sickness, ailment or symptom will go away by following the Healthy Gut Zone diet.

However, I have seen so much good happen with my patients, so many healthy prognoses after seemingly dead-end reports from doctors, that I encourage everyone to at least try it. What harm can it do to focus on your gut's health?

One of my recent patients was an 80-year-old woman with kidney failure. How is that for a serious condition? She was on kidney dialysis, but within six months of starting the Healthy Gut Zone diet, she no longer had to go in for dialysis, and her doctors couldn't believe it. Her creatinine dropped from 2.6 to 1.6 in just a few months and stayed there.

Now, not everyone is faced with extreme health challenges like she was, but the simple act of getting her gut healthy again had amazing side effects on everything else in her body. She said she would stay on the Healthy Gut Zone diet for the rest of her life. The last time we spoke, she expressed her thanks for being healthy. Young or old, that is what everyone wants.

Patients with serious diseases, autoimmune diseases and neurodegenerative diseases (Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease and dementia) will need to stay on the Healthy Gut Zone diet and avoid most lectins. But the majority of patients with gut issues will eventually be able to eat most foods, as long as they limit or avoid sugar and wheat and rotate every three to four days any foods that may inflame their gut.

With that said, it is crucial to understand what is at the core of the Healthy Gut Zone diet. Here it is in straightforward terms:

**1) Feed the good.** The Healthy Gut Zone diet feeds the good bacteria in your gut the things that they need (probiotics, prebiotics, polyphenols, fiber and resistant starches).

**2) Starve the bad.** The Healthy Gut Zone diet avoids, minimizes or eliminates sugars, most starches and carbs, saturated fats and foods that cause pain, inflammation, leaky gut, bloating or irritation.

**3) Take time out.** The Healthy Gut Zone diet gives your gut time to catch its breath and heal itself.





That is all your gastrointestinal tract needs. Your body is amazing in its ability to heal and recharge itself. And because the entire body is connected to the gut, we must get your gut healthy first. Everything else will follow.

With the Healthy Gut Zone diet, all three pieces (feed the gut, starve the bad, take time out) come together at the same time. The 1-2-3 tandem action is required by the gut, and it makes the whole process that much easier to implement.

## Feeding the Good

With the gut, the underlying foundation is always that of making it healthy again. When the gut is healthy, you are usually happy. That is always the focus, no matter what.

“Feeding the good” means feeding the good bacteria in your gut what they need to be happy, healthy and effective. You will be looking at food in that light, which means you will

want to eat gut-friendly foods, such as the following.

**Salads and vegetables:** You want about one-half to two-thirds of each lunch and dinner to be raw or cooked veggies.

The core or base of the Healthy Gut Zone diet is the veggies because that is what your gut needs the most. Thankfully there are endless recipe options, ways to prepare salads, soups, vegetables and toppings. This diet also brings in healthy gut-friendly food options from different countries around the world.

For lunch almost every day, I have a large salad with lots of veggies and a small amount of grilled chicken breast with grilled onions and a lot of high-phenolic extra-virgin olive oil (about four tablespoons). I don't put vinegar on it since vinegar decreases many of the polyphenols. But it is so tasty, and my wife and I have this almost every day. When your gut environment shifts from

mostly Firmicutes to Bacteroidetes, your cravings usually shift from sugars, carbs and starches to healthy foods. Now I actually crave salads with high-phenolic olive oil.

**Proteins:** You need protein from a variety of sources with almost every meal or snack. About one-fourth to one-third of each lunch and dinner should be protein.

**Everything else:** In addition to the veggies and proteins are the fruits, fats, flours, resistant starches and other things that accompany the Healthy Gut Zone diet.

It's everything else that goes along with your veggies and proteins. These are important and healthy additions.

As you know, veggies are the base of the Healthy Gut Zone diet. Protein is a side but vitally important. Everything else is a complementary but necessary addition to the Healthy Gut Zone diet. All combined, your gut bacteria thrive on this mix of ingredients. continued »

## Starving the Bad

As you focus on foods that support the growth of good gut bacteria, you simultaneously starve the bad bacteria. This is the other half of the equation, and it simply means that you avoid, minimize or eliminate foods that cause pain, inflammation, leaky gut, bloating or irritation.

If it hurts your gut, you don't eat it.

This concept of feeding the good and starving the bad is what your gut wants and needs. It is the perfect recipe for healing the gastrointestinal tract.

How do you know what to avoid, minimize or eliminate? You remember the seven causes of a leaky gut (increased intestinal permeability):

- 1) Antibiotics.
- 2) Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
- 3) Acid-blocking meds.
- 4) Genetically modified organism (GMO) foods.
- 5) Chlorine in drinking water.

## 6) Pesticides.

## 7) Intestinal infections.

Starving the bad means not putting any more of items one through six into your body if you can help it. The biggest hurdle for many will be the fact that they are taking medications (items one through three), whether doctor prescribed or over the counter. Abruptly stopping may not be advisable, and you may need to wean off meds such as antibiotics, acid blockers, NSAIDs and aspirin under your doctor's care or under the care of a functional medicine doctor, but your gut needs a break.

So what should you do? I don't recommend stopping medications right away. Focus on healing the gut and let the body respond. The end goal is to add nothing to your gut that hurts it in any way. If it takes a few weeks before you can do that, then so be it. But the sooner, the better.

Most of the problems in the gut come from the seven causes of a leaky

gut and the 10 common enemies of the gut, which are mainly foods, including gluten. Though quitting something harmful for your gut will be a wise move, it is also essential to plant the good bacteria in your gut.

When the good bacteria are in control of your gut and the gut wall has healed, that is when the inflammation usually subsides. Many times, symptoms disappear, food sensitivities decrease, and sicknesses, even diseases, usually fade away. The psyllium husk powder also feeds the good bacteria and acts similar to a broom, sweeping out the bad bacteria and yeast.

To get to that point, starving the bad is required. These first seven common enemies must first be removed from your daily diet:

- 1) Gluten
- 2) High-sugar, high-carb, high-processed foods
- 3) Dairy
- 4) Lectins
- 5) Artificial sweeteners



# Breakthrough Joint Pain Discovery

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- Grinding, crackling
- Mild joint swelling or warmth
- Enlargement of joints

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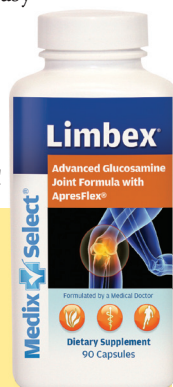
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**“This concept of feeding the good and starving the bad is what your gut wants and needs.”**

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#### **6) Emulsifiers**

#### **7) Saturated fats**

The shift away from these common enemies of the gut is more dramatic for some people than others, but it needs to happen nonetheless. The quicker, the better, but if it takes you a while, that is fine as well. When it comes to these first seven enemies of your gut, plan your escape this way:

Go less, then go low and finally, go *none* at all.

For example, going gluten-free or lectin-free or sugar-free will not be a simple flip of a switch. It will take time to replace one food with another. Relax; don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself. Some changes may be immediate (e.g., not using artificial sweeteners), but others may take a little longer (such as going without dairy).

What is most important is that you are making lifelong habits of starving the bad bacteria while feeding the good bacteria. This is an ideal lifestyle, and your gut will be happy!

### **Taking a Timeout**

Looking at the big picture of your overall health and lifestyle going forward, you recognize that the change may need to be gradual. But you do need to start somewhere. There needs

to be a break with the past and a rollout of the new. This is why the new year is such a popular time to try to make healthy changes. If you can't start at the beginning of a new year, I suggest that you embark on the Healthy Gut Zone diet as one season ends and another one begins.

When you begin, give yourself the expectation that you are jumping in completely and doing this for at least eight to 12 weeks (two to three months). You can do anything for just eight to 12 weeks, right? Naturally your body may love it so much that you wish to continue, but it is important that you mentally assign a window of time for your Healthy Gut Zone diet.

Usually the gut begins to heal within one to four weeks. I've had some patients feel the benefits immediately, but most start to feel the effects about four to seven days into it. That means symptoms often begin to fade away around the end of your first week!

While you are busy starving the bad bacteria and feeding the good bacteria, you will also be busy creating new habits that will further benefit your gut. Five complementary habits go in perfect tandem with the food-eating/food-avoiding habits you have already

started. You already know these habits:

» Psyllium husk fiber: Take fiber (1/4 to 1 teaspoon) one to two times daily, after breakfast and dinner, in 4 to 8 ounces of water.

» Probiotics: Take one to four probiotics per day or eat probiotic-rich foods. (Add supplements if needed.)

» Prebiotics: Take 12 grams of prebiotic supplements (add prebiotic-rich foods if you can) a day. Start with much less if you have bloating or gas. Use caution if you have small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO), small intestinal fungal overgrowth (SIFO), Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis; hold off, or start low and go slow.

» Polyphenols: Add as many polyphenols to your daily routine as you can.

» Resistant starches: These add options to your diet as they feed your good gut bacteria. Use caution if you have bloating, gas, SIBO, SIFO, Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis; hold off, or start low and go slow.

After eight weeks, you can begin to add back into your diet certain foods you might want to avoid completely at first. For example, I recommend that you stay off cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplant and peppers during the initial part of your Healthy Gut Zone diet. This minimizes lectins. After a couple of months, by peeling and deseeding these vegetables, you may be able to eat them with only a slight increase in lectin exposure (since lectins are more concentrated in the seeds and skins).

With beans, which are excellent sources of protein, pressure-cooking them for 7 1/2 minutes or longer after 24 hours of soaking (discard the water they are soaked in) will break down

and remove virtually all the lectins, making them safe to eat. But during the first one to two months, I would recommend not eating beans at all.

In addition to watching lectins, you always have to be aware of sugars (such as fructose in fruits), carbohydrates (such as in legumes), grains, saturated fats (such as in dairy products) and fatty cuts of meat. For your gut, while it is healing, the longer you can stay low sugar, low carb and low saturated fats, the better. As for gluten, I recommend that most people pretty much stay off gluten, though an occasional small amount of food containing gluten will usually not hurt.

When you begin to slowly increase your food options, such as adding a new food each week, keep in mind that you will want to stay within the overall Healthy Gut Zone framework of starving the bad and feeding the good. That means continually avoiding the seven causes of a leaky gut and the first seven common enemies of your

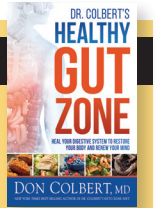
gut. You know what those are.

When you add dairy back, start with sheep or goat milk products or A2 dairy. For example, I enjoy some feta cheese in my Greek salad. Choose low-fat, low-sugar goat milk that is fermented, such as goat milk yogurt or kefir. Eventually you can add small amounts of A2 milk or 2 to 4 ounces of low-fat cheese and rotate it every three to four days.

Usually within three months you can add back in foods you love, such as Indian basmati white rice (limit to 1/2 cup per serving) or potatoes without the skin (where the most lectins are found). Rotate this food as well as other high-lectin foods every two to four days, and avoid any high-lectin food that causes abdominal pain, excessive bloating, gas or other symptoms of leaky gut. Rotating foods that are inflammatory for you or high in lectins is a great way to still enjoy them yet limit them so they are less

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likely to harm the gut. But do not add in sugar foods, gluten, GMO foods or excessive foods high in saturated fats.

Stay with it. Most people will find that their gut is healed within three months. ◀

**DR. DON COLBERT** is a board-certified family practice doctor in Orlando, Florida, and Dallas, Texas. He is board-certified in anti-aging medicine and has extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. He is also the author of three New York Times bestselling books, including *The Seven Pillars of Health* and Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet. Learn more at [drcolbert.com](http://drcolbert.com).



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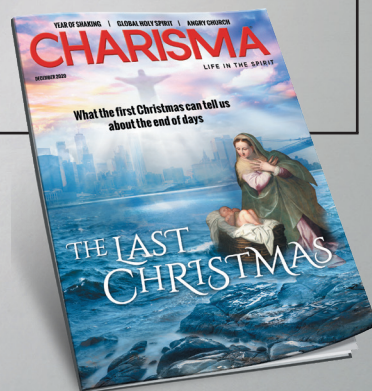
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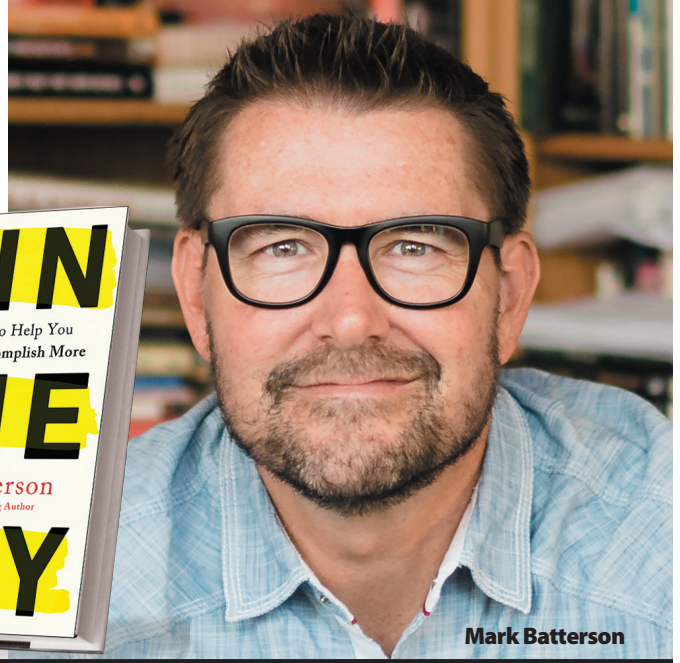
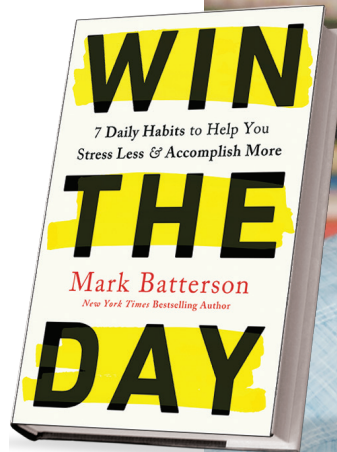
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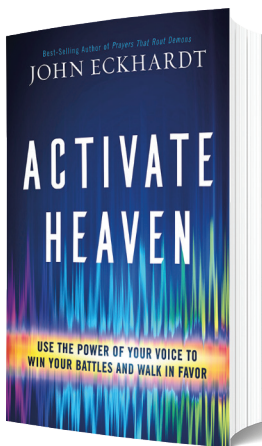
### Win the Day

**Mark Batterson**  
Multnomah

Playing it safe doesn't account for the cost of a life not fully lived. The daily habits Mark Batterson offers in *Win the Day* will help you jump-start vision, cultivate your dreams and renew your sense of wonder. This book is chock-full of helpful resources for those unsure where to start in pursuing their God-sized dreams. Transform your perspective of a single day, and sow today what you want to see tomorrow.

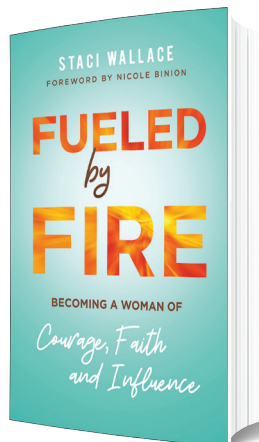


**Mark Batterson**



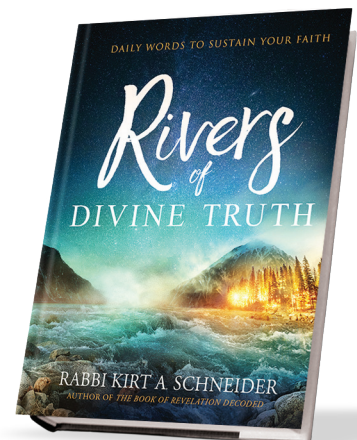
**Activate Heaven**  
**John Eckhardt**  
Charisma House

John Eckhardt's latest book proves this truth: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21a). When you own your own voice as a believer, heaven is shaken, and the enemy trembles. When negativity paints your words, it taints your spirit. Use your words to bring heaven to your situation and release the Holy Spirit's power.



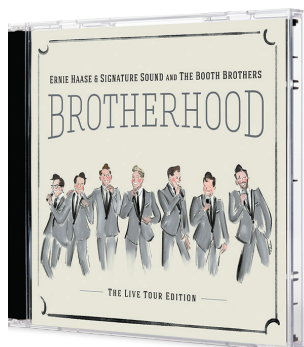
**Fueled by Fire**  
**Staci Wallace**  
Chosen/Baker Publishing Group

When the world says women aren't good enough, Jesus says they are His masterpiece. When the enemy tries to take away their courage and strength, Jesus says they are known, seen and loved. As Staci Wallace points out, the stories of the women in the Bible encourage us to believe that with God, everything is possible.



**Rivers of Divine Truth**  
**Rabbi Kirt A. Schneider**  
Charisma House

Truth isn't a matter of opinion. Truth is found in God's Word. And only when we are grounded in that truth are we able to walk in the strength, peace and victory of God's promises. Rabbi Schneider uses *Rivers of Divine Truth* to remind believers of the strength that can be found in standing on the Word that never fails.



### Brotherhood Live!

**Ernie Haase & Signature Sound  
and The Booth Brothers  
StowTown Records**

Ernie Haase & Signature Sound and The Booth Brothers teamed up for a concert tour that saw sellout crowds each night. Due to its success, these two groups are bringing the event to an album. Experience live renditions of hits, including “I’ll Fly Away” and “Sweet Beulah Land,” and new gospel harmonies backed by an acoustic band that brings these Southern gospel groups together.



### Say It

**Jordan Feliz  
Centricity Music**

Jordan Feliz suffered his first panic attack as he and his wife, Jamie, welcomed their second child. He struggled to carry the weight of his career on his shoulders. Born out of his trials, *Say It* speaks to those in seasons of anxiety as Feliz seeks to find his identity in the Father’s view, not the world’s. Feliz offers listeners his signature creative blend of pop, gospel and soul with personal and relatable lyrics.



### Space

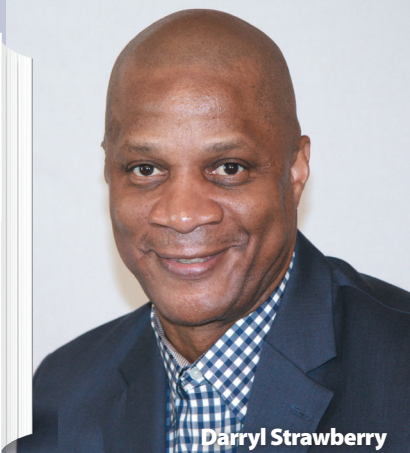
**Mack Brock  
Capitol CMG**

Mack Brock told *CCM* magazine his hope for *Space* is that “these songs will help you to enter into a new intimacy with God.” Centered on the idea of faith competing with life’s distractions, Brock feels as if we have forgotten how to give God space, so we have come to believe the same is true about Him. He believes this album will serve to remind us Jesus will always make space for us.

## Turn Your Season Around

**Darryl Strawberry  
Zondervan**

With real-life examples and scriptural insights, former baseball star Darryl Strawberry shares the practices that transformed his life—engaging in prayer, cultivating healthy friendships, weathering trials without losing heart, refreshing your thinking and letting God change your life for good. An addict-turned-pastor, Strawberry celebrates the miracles God works in us for healing, cleansing and leading us to new beginnings.



**Darryl Strawberry**

## Louder Than The Lies

### Joel Vaughn

Joel Vaughn's *Louder Than the Lies* may only have four tracks, but the album packs a hard punch. The album's first cut, "Make the Most of It," is triumphant with a Rend Collective vibe. However, the lyric "I have questions and fears I've never had before" hints at the struggle individuals must go through even when they walk with the Lord. Continuing that theme, "Already Done" is a catchy Christian radio hit that fans of Tauren Wells' "Known" will love. The lighthearted yet poignant message—"Impossible things are where His faithfulness can shine"—casts a bright light of hope over 2020, the year many have said was their toughest yet. The reference in "I Would Be Lost" to the Parable of the Lost Sheep in Matthew 18:10-12 and the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 takes a familiar twist with the lyrics, "I'm prone to walk away/ it seems like every day/ I'm searching for something brand new" and "You'd leave the 99/ and go anywhere to find/ Me when I'm running from you." The deeply personal message is hidden well in a track with musical qualities reminiscent of pop hits. "It's OK" features a strong ballad with moving strings and acoustic djembe accompaniment.



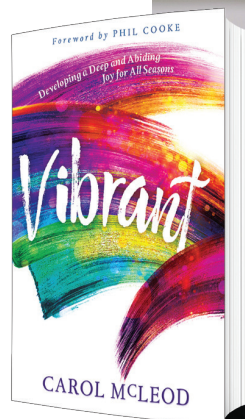
*Louder Than the Lies* carries the energy of friends jamming in their basement who end up worshipping together.  
—Nadia Joy Schult

## Vibrant

### Carol McLeod

#### Whitaker House

Hidden in the pages of the fun-loving and purposeful *Vibrant* are gems of truth about making the choice to find your identity in God. Carol McLeod is an immersive storyteller who knows how to get to the heart of a problem in the kindest way possible. Her words, "The foundation of our life is ... in the definitive and resolute choices we make" show readers she means business. A vibrant life is one we must choose. And through Bible study and witty reflection on her own life, McLeod reveals the steps to "work in tandem with God" to make that choice possible. Each chapter allows readers a glimpse into a life on fire for the Lord, but it seems impossible to imagine McLeod living any other way. Readers will see a vibrant life is not without pain, heartache or suffering, yet in the midst of life's challenges, she shares the abundant hope and joy of following Jesus. The structure of the book follows that of an informal Bible study, but McLeod's commentary on how she's seen the passages at work in her life—along with anecdotes from her childhood—yields a more personal understanding of the Scripture. Armed with a love for life and a personality that



could melt the hardest of hearts, McLeod offers more than just a self-help book. Rather, her book provides a safe place to work through life's messes, a source of comfort with a biblical foundation and a must-read for those searching for soul-deep joy.  
—Nadia Joy Schult





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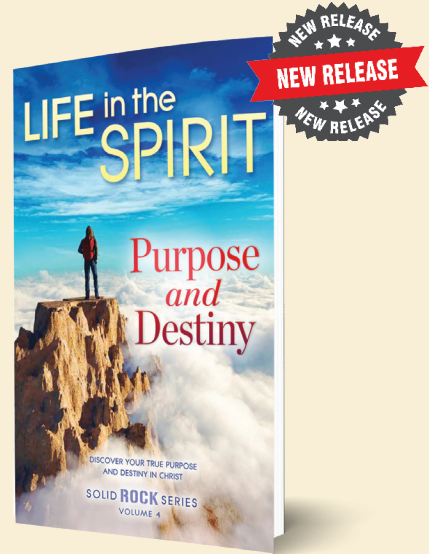
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## The Original Spirit-Led Crowdfunder Moves Into 2021

How you can help Christian Life Missions support vital ministries today

**B**efore there was *Charisma*, there was *Christian Life*, founded in 1948 by the late Robert Walker. In its day, it was the magazine that reported what the Holy Spirit was doing in the church. In the mid-1980s, we acquired *Christian Life* and have carried on that tradition in a new generation.

In 1952, *Christian Life* reported on how Christians in Korea were suffering during the Korean War. Many were so fervent for the Lord they neglected to get food for their families. The magazine invited readers to help, and Christian Life Missions (CLM) was born. I like to say CLM was the original “crowdfunder” in that people who did not know the person needing help were reached through media (in this case a print magazine), were touched by their story and donated money that was passed along to the recipient. Today through social media, crowdfunding raises multiplied millions of dollars, and now CLM also raises money through [christianlifemissions.org](http://christianlifemissions.org).

The best-known ministry CLM has supported has been that of missionary Bruce Olson, who left Minnesota at age 19 in 1960 to serve tribes in Colombia never before reached with the gospel and who, until then, had no interaction with modern civilization. He taught himself their languages and although he faced death several times—including when guerillas captured and held him—has reached not only the Motilone tribe but approximately 40 other language groups as well.

Olson accomplished this by relating to the Motilone culture. The Motilone had a story about one of them becoming an ant to communicate with the ants. That became the story of God becoming man in the form of Jesus. Through the years, Olson's ministry has paid to educate more than 400 Motilone Indians, some of whom have become doctors, lawyers and other professionals. These educated believers go back to serve their people and evangelize other tribes.

Olson's story is so amazing that when it was put into book form with the title *Bruchko* (how the Motilone pronounce “Bruce”), it became a classic for people studying to become missionaries. Soon we will publish an update on his ministry, which he continues today at age 79.

Because Olson has no U.S.-based ministry, people who want to support him do so through Christian Life Missions, which as a 501(c)(3) sends the donors a receipt for tax purposes and sends 100% of the money to him.

But Olson's is only one of scores, perhaps hundreds, of ministries CLM has supported over the years. I have served as its president since the late 1980s, and CLM is how *Charisma*



**“Together we can do more to support small ministries than we can separately.”**

does anything charitable in nature. Though I am a donor, this nonprofit draws from thousands of others each year to support causes such as Standing With Israel, providing disaster relief and helping the needy through orphanages and in other ways. Check out [christianlifemissions.org](http://christianlifemissions.org) to see the other ministries, such as Olson's, who are doing important work but are too small to have a sponsoring organization.

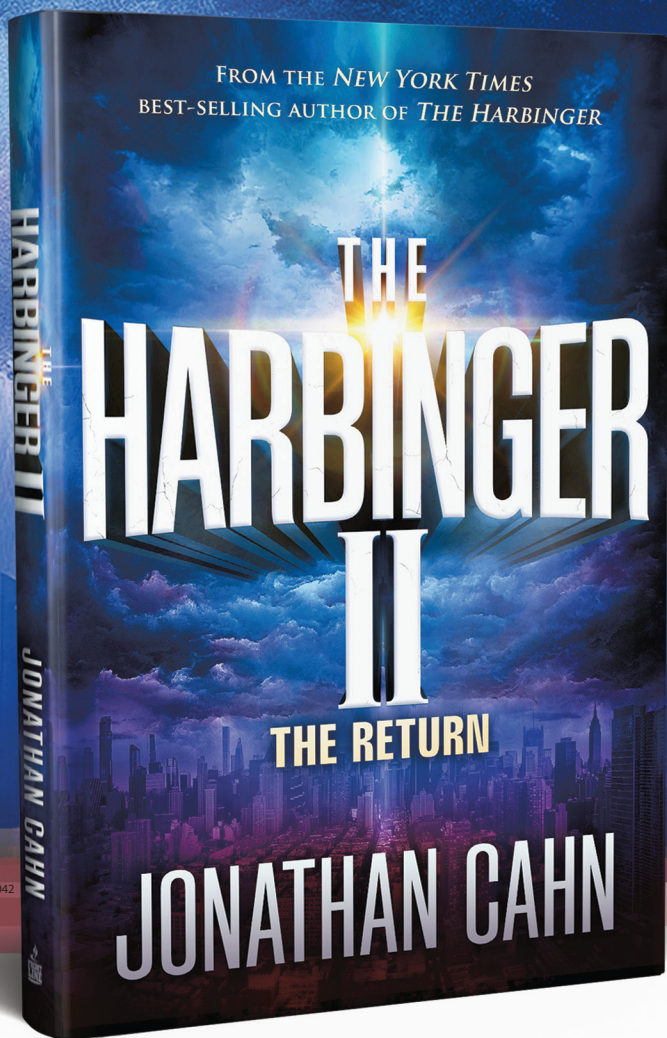
One of the ministries dearest to my heart aids prisoners by providing Christian books and Bibles. CLM has done this for decades. Today we accomplish this task through Ray Hall and Prison Book Project of Titusville, Florida. See the article on p. 18 about our goal to raise \$20,000 for this worthy project.

Speaking of goals, CLM has a brand-new website and a plan to get behind the ministries we support each month and raise \$1 million in 2021 through not only our *Charisma* readers but also our websites. We need your help—both by becoming a donor and by helping the articles we write and post to go viral. That's how crowdfunding works.

You can give to Christian Life Missions with confidence, knowing 100% of what we receive goes to the cause you want to support. CLM is also a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. I urge you to support Prison Book Outreach, Bruce Olson or one of the other causes at [christianlifemissions.org](http://christianlifemissions.org).

Together we can do more to support small ministries than we can separately. It's a nearly seven-decade tradition of encouraging readers of *Christian Life* and now *Charisma* to support ministries we feature.

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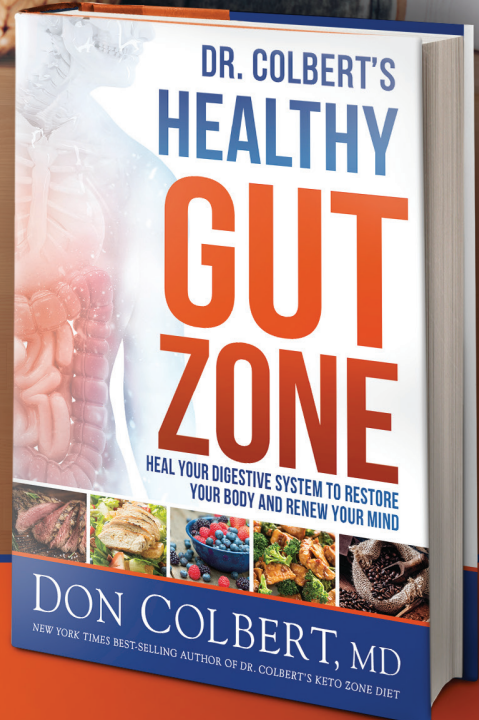
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