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JUNE 2024

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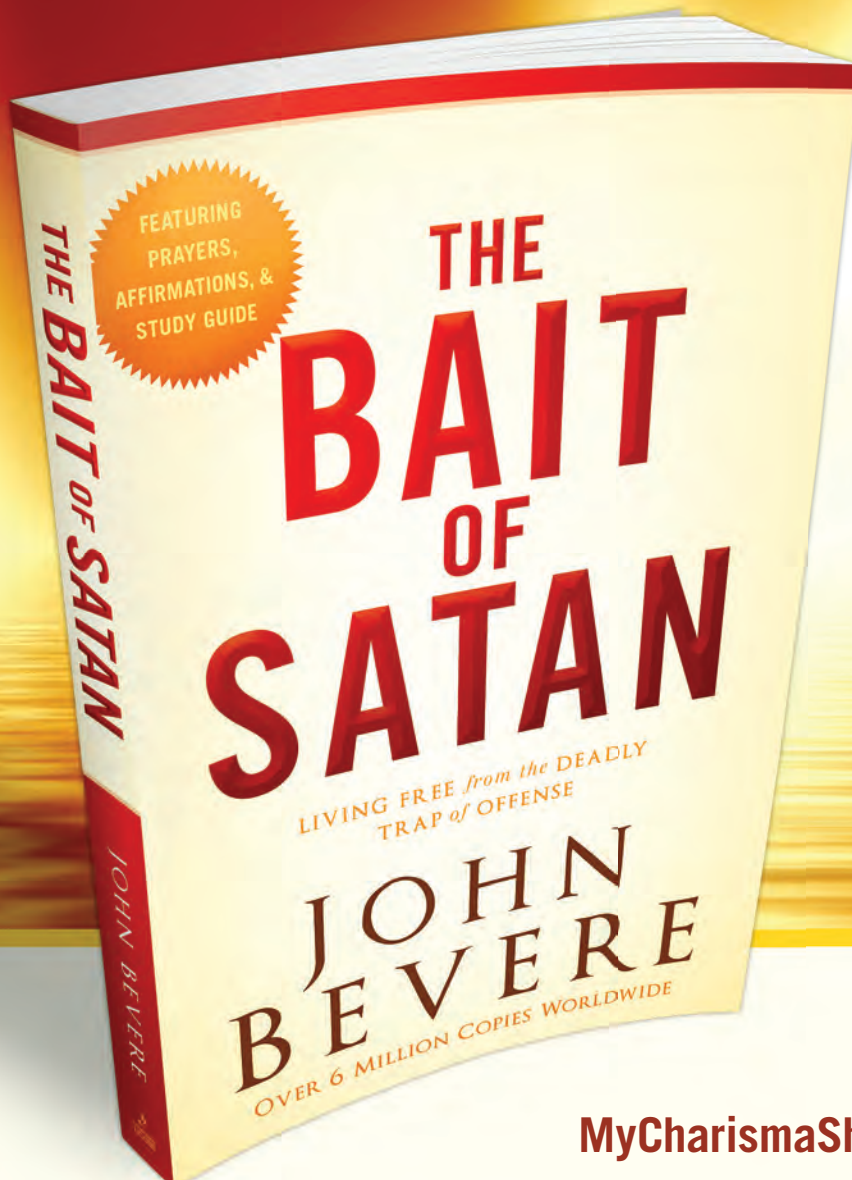
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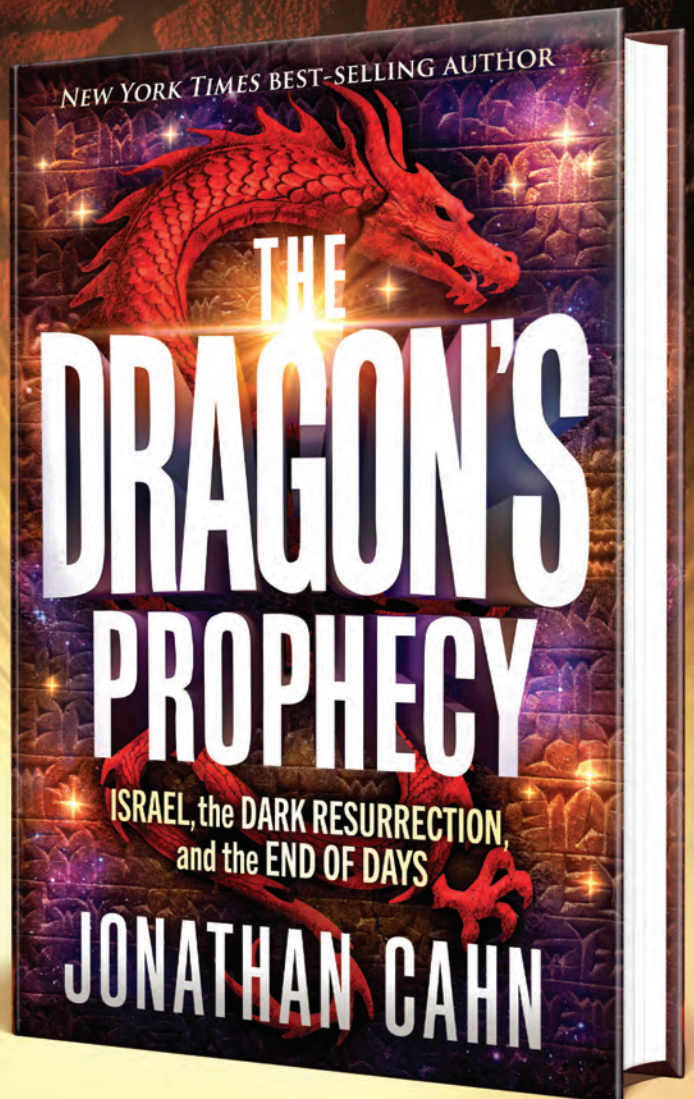
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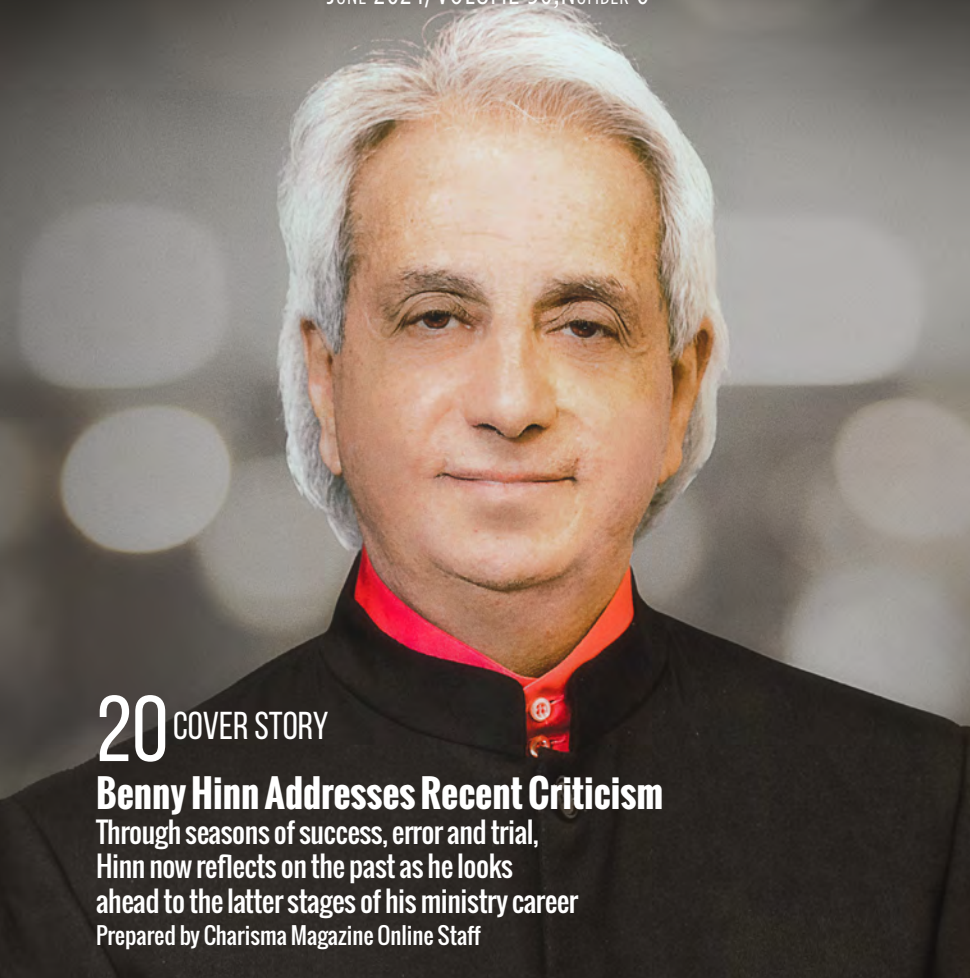
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Prepared by Charisma Magazine Online Staff

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DEAR CHARISMA



“Part of living faith is exactly as Scripture teaches, giving up the old man for being remade new in Christ.”

—Joclyen Franklin,
Memphis, TN

HELP TO DEFEND YOUR MIND

I think Kenza Haddock hit the middle of the bull’s-eye talking about defending yourself against the enemy’s lies (“5 Power Strategies to Defend Your Mind,” Charisma Magazine Online, April 2024). Not enough believers ever learn that part of living faith is exactly as Scripture teaches, giving up the old man for being remade new in Christ, and our mind and thoughts are as important in that as the body and soul.

Joclyen Franklin, Memphis, TN

ECLIPSE OF 2024

Troy Anderson’s story about the eclipse was very helpful since we were able to have it in hand when the eclipse happened on Apr. 8, (“The Great North American Eclipse,” Charisma Magazine Online, April 2024). We had a lot of fun following the eclipse with all of the extra info in his story.

John Samson, San Diego, CA

WISDOM FOR PASSOVER

Our family has a tradition of following *Charisma’s* guidance on the worship

traditions of other groups in the body of Christ. The magazine came through again with the nice story from Landry about Passover (“Should Christians Celebrate Passover?” Charisma Magazine Online, April 2024). We celebrate Passover anyway, so it was nice to read more about it.

Paul Garland, Pottsville, PA

JONI LAMB’S POWERFUL TESTIMONY

I was glad to see Joni Lamb’s story, she has been through so much (“Take My Hand,” Charisma Magazine Online, April 2024). I think it’s inspiring to see how much she’s accomplished these recent years.

Loretta Jenkins, Flagstaff, AZ

HOLY SPIRIT GIFTS

Lee Grady described Holy Spirit gifts easy to understand and clear (Fire In My Bones, “Why We Can’t Ignore the Gifts of the Holy Spirit,” Charisma Magazine Online, April 2024). I printed out a copy and used it for a bookmark in my Bible for Sunday school because I like it so much.

Amilynne O’Hara, St. Paul, MN

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Life-Changing Moments & Words In Due Season

There are many ways God leads us by His Holy Spirit, and one is through the gift of prophecy, where the Spirit shows us something that will happen or gives us direction or a warning. Prophecy is among the most misunderstood spiritual gifts but one of the most worthwhile. In the Old Testament the prophet represented God and spoke for God to the people. And they'd better not get it wrong because the penalty was death. False prophecy was and is judged harshly by the Lord. In the New Testament, only the 12 apostles carried the same authority as the Old Testament prophets to speak the very words of God.

Over the years, I've reported on many prophetic people and those who claim to be prophets. One of the significant honors of my life was knowing Oral Roberts. In my home growing up, we saw his ministry on television and always spoke of him in almost reverential tones. When we named the great evangelists of the day, they were Oral Roberts and Billy Graham, and always in that order.

I was invited to a leaders meeting at Oral Roberts University in 1981 when Oral Roberts was still president of ORU. He hosted a banquet on the top floor of what was then called the City of Faith. After the meal we stood next to our seats for a time of worship. President Roberts moved around the room, laying hands on and praying for everyone as we worshipped.

I was nervous as he approached me, wondering what he'd say. He laid hands on me and whispered in my ear, "Never doubt the gift that's within you."

That word has come to mind many times over the years and I believe it was a prophetic word—as short as it was—to me. I was still in my 20s. *Charisma* magazine was beginning to be known nationally, but I was operating beyond my league, as we were gaining a national audience and covering the Christian community.

I came from a family that believed small was better than big and preferred the status quo over taking a risk. As a result, an inbred uncertainty hounded almost every decision I made.

Jamie Buckingham, who was Roberts' good friend, is the one who introduced me to this great man of God. But he also had a prophetic word for me when I first got to know him in 1977. Someone had asked him to pitch a project to me—one many

young journalists would have jumped at. But I knew it wasn't God's will for my life, so I said thanks, but no thanks.

Buckingham said he had hoped I'd say no, and then asked how he could get involved with my fledgling magazine. I needed a mentor at that point in my life, and Buckingham was that and more—he was a friend, a spiritual leader and a confidant, and his wit and wisdom were guiding lights to me. I recently found a copy of his book *Look Out, World—I'm Me!* and enjoyed rereading many of his insights.

Buckingham was one of the most spiritual men I knew, yet he was down-to-earth. He had keen insight, saw through the hype of many ministries and loved to poke a pin into the prideful balloons of buffoons that make a laughingstock of all those who call themselves Pentecostal. He was also the most open person I knew. He lived a life that was vulnerable and transparent. He was a great man in my eyes, even though I saw his weaknesses as well as his strengths. But when I met him, I didn't think too much of myself. If anything, I was timid and overwhelmed by the challenges of starting *Charisma*. I didn't need a pin in my balloon—I

needed an encouraging word.

And here's where he gave what sounds like secular advice, but I believe it was a word prompted by the Holy Spirit. He asked me one day over lunch what I would do if I knew I could not fail. The key was "*knew you could not fail.*" I never allowed myself to dream in those terms, and his word that day changed the course of my life.

In his book *Where Eagles Soar*, Buckingham wrote: "Most of us dream dreams, however then put them aside as impossible. Yet God never puts a desire in our heart or beckons us to walk on water unless He intends for us to step out on faith and at least make the attempt. Whether we achieve or not is almost immaterial; the passing of the test lies in whether we try, in whether we're willing to be obedient to the inner call to greatness—the onward call to spiritual adventure."

Unfortunately, most Christians never learn this. Or after one attempt, they give up. They never learn that there is a price to be paid. I'm grateful for people like Buckingham who God put in my life to give me a prophetic "word spoken in due season."

*"His word that day
changed the course
of my life."*

Stephen Strang has seen major changes in the church, the culture and technology since he founded *Charisma* magazine in 1975. In addition to being CEO of Charisma Media, he hosts a Strang Report podcast live on YouTube and Rumble at 4 p.m. EST every Tuesday and Thursday. His important new book *Spirit-Led Living in an Upside-World* is available wherever fine Christian books are sold including online at mycharismashop.com.

Simply Christ

Gospel Insight

with Keith Surface

No Condemnation

The Bible tells us *"by one man sin entered into the world."* Romans 5:12. That man was Adam, and all the death, destruction, misery, and iniquity of human history is connected to his great disobedience.

Adam's transgression did not merely bring sin into the world, but his actions caused all of those who were born thereafter to be sinners. The Apostle Paul told us, *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners..."* Romans 5:19.

Added to the horrors of sin itself was something which accompanied the sin Adam brought in. That something was called *"death."* The Bible says, *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* Romans 5:12. We know that physical death entered as a result of sin, but the *"death"* spoken of in this passage is much more than this. It is a sentence of eternal death, or, damnation.

The Apostle Paul calls this death sentence *"condemnation."* He wrote, *"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;"* Romans 5:18. The Greek word translated *"condemnation"* means *"an adverse sentence."* This *"condemnation"* is the sentence of damnation which came upon every person because of sin.

In the 6th chapter of Romans, the Apostle Paul reveals how Jesus Christ delivered us from this death sentence by fulfilling it upon our *"old man"* of sin. He writes, *"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, (Christ) that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."*

Romans 6:6-7. Through faith in Jesus Christ, the death sentence we were under is carried out upon the sinful nature which entered our hearts through Adam's transgression. Consider the power in this one gospel passage. Our old man is crucified! The

body of sin is destroyed! And we no longer serve sin because *"he that is dead is freed from sin!"*

You cannot kill a dead man again. Since, through faith in Jesus Christ, the sentence of death has been fulfilled upon our old man of sin, we are no longer under condemnation. Just as Christ *"died unto sin once"* and *"death hath no more dominion over him"* Romans 6:9-10, damnation has no claim on those who are already dead with Christ. The word of God is clear: The redeemed are in fact *"dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Romans 6:11.

Paul confirms this deliverance from the sentence of death, saying, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus..."* Romans 8:1. This passage is simply telling us there is not a death sentence upon those who are in Christ. It is not saying a person should not feel guilt over sin in their life, but that the condemnation is gone because Christ has taken the sin away.

Paul again explains how we are delivered from both sin and its condemnation, saying, *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* Romans 8:3. The Law of Moses could kill the sinner, but it could never kill the sin which was in the sinner. This is exactly what Christ did upon the cross. He *"condemned sin in the flesh!"* The death sentence, which was due the sinner, Christ fulfilled upon the sin that dwelt in their heart and nature, and in doing so, he not only delivered us from sin, but from damnation also. For those whom Christ has made free, there truly is no condemnation!

Jesus said,
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be free
indeed!

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"Ye shall know the truth
and the truth shall make
you free." John 8:32

Message by: Leroy Surface

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Are You Letting Satan’s Mind Games Discourage You?

Many of my friends are walking through tough circumstances right now. One man’s business has failed. Another man is experiencing chronic pain, and doctors can’t find a medical solution. Another is battling an addiction. One married couple I know is struggling with infertility. And several friends are feeling they have failed as parents because their adult children have walked away from God.

Meanwhile even many pastors are experiencing discouragement. Some of my pastor friends have even been thinking of leaving the ministry because they feel like failures.

My message to them is blunt: “Don’t even think about quitting!” If a cloud of heaviness has settled over you recently, don’t let this stop you from fulfilling your mission. Take these steps to regain your strength:

Go to your secret place often. What did David do when he felt like he was sinking in a pit of depression? He took refuge in God’s presence. David said in Psalm 55:16: “As for me, I shall call upon God, and the Lord will save me. Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, and He will hear my voice.” David found the best therapy in the act of honest worship. He poured out his soul to God and placed his trust in Him alone. And he knew that God would rescue him.

Don’t let Satan’s constant assaults wear you down. Pray hard, sing loud and then pray again. Pray until you hear a refreshing word from God that will override the lies of the enemy. Sing until the darkness lifts. When the breakthrough comes, the joy of the Lord will spring up from the wells of salvation. The heavy clouds of discouragement will dissipate. You will resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Find your fellow warriors. This warfare we are engaged in is best not faced alone. I pity the lonely person who has no friends in the day of battle. David had 37 “mighty men” (2 Sam. 23:8) who fought beside him, and they loved him so much they risked their lives to protect him.

If you want to overcome discouragement, you need “foxblood buddies” who are willing to pray with you, carry your burdens and help you stay encouraged. Don’t wait until you’re ready to quit to

recruit these comrades. Like Moses, we also need Aarons and Hurs to lift up our arms when we don’t have the strength to pray alone (see Exod. 17:12-14). Don’t ever think that you have to face your trials alone. God has placed us in His family, and we are surrounded by brothers and sisters who love us.

Don’t submit to the devil’s mind games. Satan knows how to discourage us. He knows our triggers. His lies are sharp arrows that he hurls in our direction—causing us to doubt God’s promises, or to question our identity as triumphant believers in Christ. You can’t submit one moment to his psychological warfare.

Goliath’s taunts didn’t dampen David’s zeal; Sanballat’s threats didn’t coax Nehemiah off the walls of Jerusalem; and the self-righteous Pharisees who criticized Jesus’ every move didn’t stop Him from showing compassion to sinners and outcasts. Like these heroes,

you must fight the fight of faith and use the shield of faith to repel Satan’s attacks.

Satan sometimes uses people to discourage us, and some of his best tools are actually Christians who thrive on drama and negativity. Like Lucifer, they invent lies, entertain suspicions, spread toxic gossip and tear other Christians apart

with their words. I honestly believe the devil could go on a long vacation, and Christians would be happy to do his work for him!

You must tune out the irrelevant noise made by small-minded people who would rather tear down the work of God than build it up. Forgive them and move on. Don’t ever allow people’s petty weaknesses to convince you to throw in the towel.

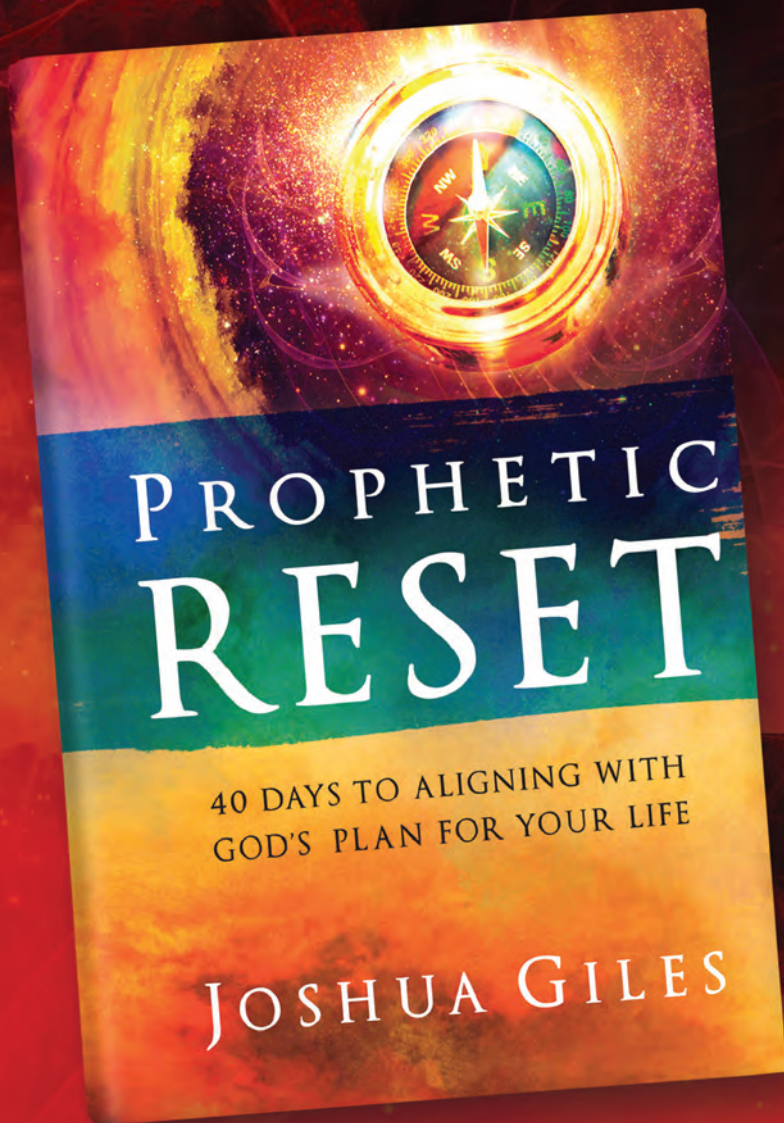
Reenlist for the war. It was Winston Churchill who said: “You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life.” Churchill knew what all seasoned leaders understand: If you are out in front, people will pick you apart like vultures eat a carcass. Opposition comes with the assignment. Accept it and move forward.

Jesus never told us that life would be free of problems. He told His disciples: “In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world,” (John 16:33). Paul told Timothy: “And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,” (2 Tim. 3:12). This is what we signed up for, but some of us need to renew our commitment to fight the good fight. Let’s pray for each other as we face the battle.

“It’s time to renew our commitment to fight the good fight.”

J. Lee Grady was editor of *Charisma* for 11 years and now serves as senior contributing editor. He directs [The Mordecai Project](#) an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest books are *Follow Me* and *Let’s Go Deeper* (Charisma House).

NAVIGATE YOUR FUTURE. ALIGN WITH HEAVEN'S AGENDA



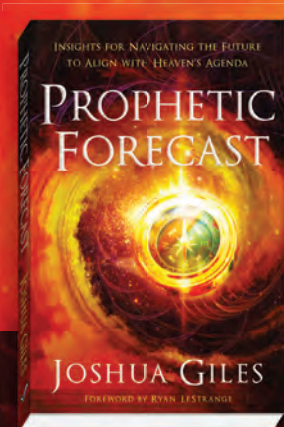
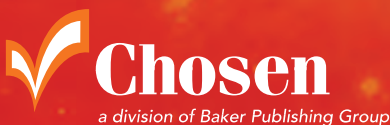
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More Than a Conqueror

Are you fighting a battle right now? I believe we all have battles to fight at different times in life. But I want to encourage you. Whatever you may be facing today, know that, in Christ, you are more than a conqueror! Romans 8:37 (AMPC) says, “Yet amid all these things we are more than conquerors and gain a surpassing victory through Him Who loved us.” Think about it. Meditate on it. Let this truth of God’s Word settle in your heart.

As I said before, we each have battles to fight at different times in our lives. Sometimes it’s a financial battle; it can be a family or relationship struggle; or we might be in a personal emotional conflict in our soul. Whatever it is, the truth is this war is spiritual...and we must learn to use spiritual weapons in the fight.

What do I mean by that? Well, 2 Corinthians 10:4 (AMPC) tells us that “the weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood], but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds.”

That word *strongholds* refers to areas where the enemy entrenches himself and takes control. It’s very important to realize that the greatest part of the fight is often in our minds. The enemy’s tactic is to gain ground and build strongholds by influencing our thoughts. Even a lie will become truth to us if we believe it. And Satan is determined to try and make us believe his lies and gradually build these strongholds in our mind.

Pay attention to the things you think about most of the time. Are they thoughts that encourage and motivate you? Or do you more often think of things that actually hinder your progress... things that don’t agree with God’s Word? If so, it may be that the enemy has gained a stronghold.

For example, I’ve often talked about when Dave and I were first married. It wasn’t very long before he wanted to know what was wrong with me...why I was so negative all the time. I was still very hurt and angry about things that had happened to me in my past. I told him that I’d come to *believe* if I didn’t expect much good to happen, then I wouldn’t be disappointed when it didn’t! That attitude was a stronghold in my mind.

These kinds of attacks are spiritual warfare, but remember, as followers of Christ, we are not fighting alone. We have a Mighty Warrior and His host of angels on our side. That makes it a totally different fight. The Holy Spirit is in each of us. He is our Helper, and that makes *us* more than conquerors (John 14:26, Romans 8:37)!

The Holy Spirit wants to lead us through each battle we face. But there are also some things we can do to prepare ourselves as well.

Eat right and get some rest. You may wonder what *that* has to do with being a conqueror. Well when you take better care of yourself, you simply *feel* better, and you will be stronger, more alert and ready.

Pay attention. Sometimes you may just have a “feeling”

about something you’re doing or thinking or saying. Many times it is the Holy Spirit trying to guide you in a certain way. I remember one morning I had been studying in my office at home. It was early and I still had on a long nightgown. I was planning to go to the ministry office that day to do some work

and I needed to carry some things downstairs. I had gathered some Bibles and a coffee mug in my hands, and just as I got to the top step, I had a “feeling” that I should probably hold up the nightgown so I wouldn’t trip over it. But I just dismissed the thought. Then just as I started down the stairs, I almost took a tumble!

Now, I know that is a very simple example, but the thing I’m trying to point out here is, that “feeling” I had was probably the Holy Spirit trying to warn me that I should do something about that gown. But I ignored it and almost paid a high price for it had it not been for God’s grace.

Needless to say, I won’t do *that* again!

Beware of thoughts like *I know I shouldn’t, but...* or, *Maybe I should, but...*

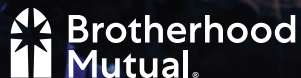
Learn to listen to that simple unction, that nudge, that knowing. It’s most likely the Holy Spirit trying to lead you in the midst of whatever your battle is. Don’t ignore Him. He wants to equip you for your battles and help you become more than a conqueror!

“Learn to listen to that simple unction, that nudge, that knowing.”

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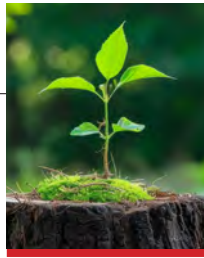
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4 Reasons to Steward Your Sabbath

In our fast-paced world, where time seems to slip through our fingers like sand, the concept of Sabbath—a day of rest and deliberately spending time with our Father in heaven—often gets lost in the shuffle of our busy lives. Yet, the practice of stewarding the Sabbath, of intentionally setting aside time, holds profound significance that goes well beyond mere resting and recharging.

The Sabbath is for renewal. Similar to yearly rites of passage and other of life’s thresholds such as birthdays, anniversaries and holidays, each Sunday is the birth of a new week with fresh opportunities for the good work the Lord equips us for, and for this reason all the more important that we may be found faithful in using our minutes and years led by His wisdom and guidance. Each new Sunday is a rebirth, a time for an accounting of the past while recommitting our future back to the Father who gifted them to us from the beginning.

Here are four compelling reasons why stewarding the Sabbath is not only beneficial but crucial for our well-being.

1) Restoring Balance in a Hectic World.

In a society that glorifies busyness and productivity, taking a day of rest may seem counterintuitive. However, the relentless pursuit of productivity often leads to burnout and diminished mental and physical health. Choosing to spend wisely your Sabbath offers a counterbalance to this frenetic pace, providing an opportunity to step back, reflect and rest.

By intentionally setting aside time for rest as God did in Genesis 1, we acknowledge the importance of balance in our lives. Just as a seesaw requires equilibrium to function properly, our lives require a balance between activity and rest. Neglecting this balance can result in negative consequences like increased stress and decreased productivity. Thus, stewarding the Sabbath becomes an essential practice for maintaining harmony and well-being in an otherwise hurried and harried world.

2) Cultivating Connection in a Digital Age.

In this era of digital distractions and constant connectivity, finding moments of true connection with the Lord has become increasingly challenging. Your Sundays offer a precious opportunity to unplug from the digital noise and cultivate deeper

connections—with Jesus, with loved ones, with your church family and among friends and neighbors where we have the chance to bring Jesus to the world starved for His peace and joy.

By disconnecting from our devices and setting aside time for face-to-face interactions, we create space for meaningful conversations, shared experiences and genuine connections. Whether it’s enjoying a leisurely meal with family, taking a nature walk with friends or spending quiet time alone in fresh study of the Scriptures, the Sabbath provides a sacred space for nurturing the relationships that truly matter.

3) Nourishing the Soul.

In our quest for material success and external achievements, it’s easy to neglect the needs of our inner selves—the deeper longings of our souls. Your Sabbath is a weekly invitation to slow down and attend to our inner thirst and hunger for God’s Word, nourishing our souls.

Whether through prayer, journaling or engaging in creative pursuits, the Sabbath offers a time for spiritual renewal and growth. By engaging in

activities that feed our souls, we deepen our sense of purpose, find greater meaning in our lives and reconnect with the Lord after a busy week which can support peace and contentment.

4) Honoring the Rhythms of Life.

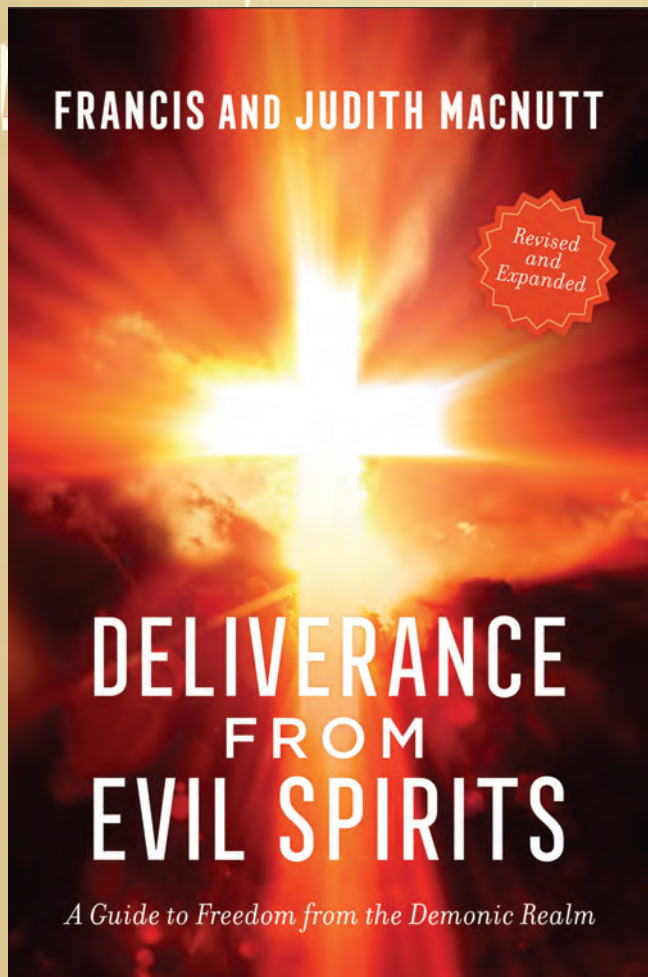
Just as the earth follows a rhythm of seasons—of growth, harvest and rest—so too do our lives follow natural rhythms of activity and rest. Stewarding the Sabbath is an acknowledgment of these rhythms, a recognition that there is a time for everything under heaven (Eccl. 3:1-8, MEV).

Can we still be saved and go to heaven if we don’t honor the Sabbath? Of course, but the value of the Sabbath is in building margin into your week. Ask God to reveal to you how you can get more done in six days of work than you can in seven. I believe He will show you.

Stewarding your Sabbath is far more than a religious obligation. It is a purposeful act of faith, a testament to the value of balance and connection, and a celebration of the renewal built into God’s design. In a world that often feels chaotic and overwhelming, the Sabbath offers a sanctuary of rest, renewal and reflection—a precious gift waiting to be embraced.

“The value of the Sabbath is in building margin into your week.”

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Kevin Sorbo (below) and Cuba Gooding, Jr. (inset) portray the transforming power of Christ in *The Firing Squad* movie



Cuba Gooding Jr. and Kevin Sorbo Star in Upcoming Faith-Based Film

The Firing Squad emphasizes the transformative power of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ

This August, celebrated Christian filmmaker Tim Chey (*Suing the Devil, Freedom*) is bringing *The Firing Squad*, an inspired movie about three convicted criminals who are sentenced to death in an Indonesian prison, to theaters nationwide. This powerful true story features acclaimed actors Kevin Sorbo (*God's Not Dead*) and Cuba Gooding Jr. (*Boys In the Hood, Jerry Maguire*) alongside breakout star James Barrington.

The Firing Squad delves into the harrowing journey of three men who find themselves on the brink of execution. As the countdown to their deaths begins, a remarkable sequence of events unfolds, revealing the transformative power of faith and the hope that transcends earthly trials. The men's journey of redemption doesn't stop at personal salvation; it ignites a spiritual revolution within the prison camp, guiding the souls

of the most hardened criminals toward the loving embrace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"At its core, this film is a story of courage, resilience and the transformative power of salvation through Jesus Christ," Chey says. "I'm an evangelist first and a filmmaker second. Beyond mere entertainment, I pray the film will serve as a catalyst for introspection, compelling audiences to embrace the grace and love of Jesus Christ."

GALLUP

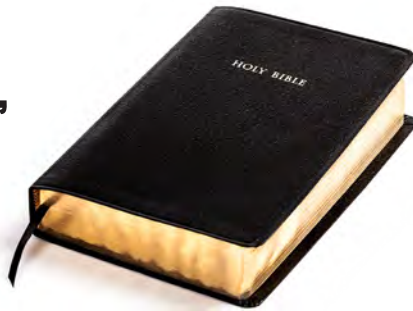
Gallup Poll Reveals Married People More Likely to Be 'Thriving'

A new Gallup survey has revealed some good news about marriage: Married adults are more likely to describe themselves as "thriving" than others. Surveying data over 14 years, Gallup found that married couples are more likely to be happy, anticipate future happiness and have a "strong and loving" relationship with their children than co-habiting partners are.

"Within the U.S., it is clear that married adults rate their lives more highly than others and have done so for the past 15 years," the survey concluded. "From 2009 to 2023, married adults aged 25 to 50 were more likely to be thriving—by double-digit margins—than adults who have never married. The 16-percentage-point gap between married adults (61%) and those who have never married (45%) in 2023 is within the range of 10 to 24 points recorded since 2009."

The statistics held true "for men and women across all major racial/ethnic groups" and could not be explained by other factors, including age or education.

Gallup's team also noted that "ideologically conservative parents report higher-quality and more harmonious relationships with their children compared with liberal or moderate parents" and that "[m]arried people are also more likely to practice a religion, and religious practice is also positively correlated with subjective wellbeing."



'Good Reason for Hope'

More adults say Bible has transformed their lives

American Bible Society has released the seventh chapter of the 14th annual "State of the Bible Report 2024," which gives some surprising news: 60 million of the 155 million non-Bible users in the U.S. still say the Bible has changed their lives. The research also shows that print Bibles are still the most popular format for Bible reading, and the most preferred method of Bible reading is to read a few verses at a time.

"While we've reported that there has been a sharp decline in Bible reading, nearly 60 million people who engage with the Bible less than three times per year say it has had a transformative impact on their lives," said John Farquhar Plake, director of ministry intelligence for ABS. "As the church, we must look for every opportunity to show our neighbors the transformational love of Jesus—which is all over the pages of the Bible.

"Our youngest adults show signs of interest in the Bible, curiosity about it and transformative interaction with it. ... If this trend continues, we have good reason for hope," he adds.

World's Top Golfer Finds Victory Off the Greens

"I'm secure forever," Scottie Scheffler says

Pro golf phenom Scottie Scheffler capped off his second green-jacket win at the Masters Tournament with a fourth victory in his last five starts the following weekend, at the RBC Heritage in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. But although the world's top golfer told a post-Masters press conference that even though he "loves winning," he knows his identity doesn't come from bogeys or birdies.

"My victory was secure on the cross," he says. "I'm secure forever, and it doesn't matter if I win this tournament or lose this tournament. My identity is secure."

That level of faith and

confidence also explains why Scheffler, 27, was willing to walk away from either tournament at any point had his wife, Meredith, then expecting the couple's first child, gone into labor.

"When it comes to having a kid, every single person says that it changes your life, and that it's the most special thing in the world," he says. "Marriage has been such a tremendous aspect of my life; I cannot even imagine what being a parent is

going to be like.

"What I'm looking forward to most about being a parent is being able to love my child like my parents loved me," Scheffler adds.



Scottie Scheffler



‘Adventure in Faith’: Evangelist Jerry Savelle Dies at 76

Through the years, he ministered in more than 3,500 churches in over 40 nations

Dr. Jerry Savelle Ministries International has announced the death of its founder, renowned charismatic evangelist, pastor and author Dr. Jerry Savelle, on Apr. 15, at age 76. He and his wife, Carolyn, were founding pastors of the Heritage of Faith Christian Center in Crowley, Texas, where the ministry is based.

As a part of its announcement, the ministry stated: “It is with both profound sorrow and divine peace that we announce Dr. Jerry Savelle, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, pastor, mentor and resolute friend, has stepped into his eternal reward ... Dr. Savelle lived a life marked by an adventure in faith.”

Savelle wrote more than 75 books, and ministered in more than 3,500 churches in over 40 nations. He was also the host of the *Jerry Savelle Ministries* television broadcast, seen in 200 countries worldwide, and the founder of Charlots of Light, an international evangelistic Christian bikers outreach. He leaves behind his wife; two daughters, Jeriann Savelle and Terri Savelle Foy; and multiple grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Jerry Savelle’s (left) journey on earth was one of immense impact, rooted in the powerful love of Jesus Christ. Below: Honoring Jerry’s long legacy.



AG Pastor Blesses Church, Community Alongside Canine Pal ‘Assistant Pastor’

Residents of Northampton, Massachusetts, recognize Beowulf, the Morkie, not only as a cute pup but as sidekick and “assistant pastor” to Pastor Margery R. Hale of Cornerstone Chapel.

Although Hale has been active in ministry service for decades, she has been ordained for only a year. She served for many years alongside her late husband, Ron, who died in 2021. Diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease several years before his death, he turned over preaching responsibilities to his wife, who was licensed to the ministry in 1996.

Hale and Beowulf’s ministry schedule includes shepherding Sunday’s worship service at Cornerstone Chapel, leading a Bible study each week at the church, completing room visits and a Bible study for residents of the extended care facility.

Not long ago, the duo ministered to a man in the care facility who had no one to be with him during his final hours. “Although he didn’t have or wouldn’t let them call anyone to come be with him, he wanted a visit from Beowulf,” Hale says. As she prayed, read Scripture and talked to the man about knowing Jesus, she recalls seeing his mouth move in agreement with her prayer.

“Beowulf brings joy and comfort,” Hale says. “He opens doors by allowing residents to touch and love him, and he goes wherever I go.”

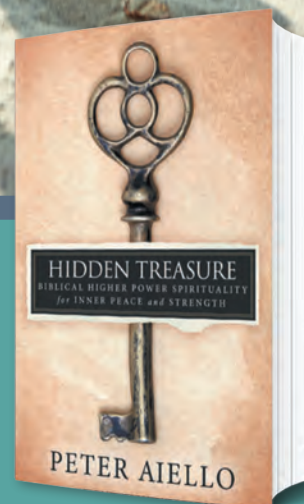
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Peter Aiello

BENNY HINN

Addresses Recent Criticisms

Reflecting on the past, looking ahead to the future

BY CHARISMA MAGAZINE ONLINE STAFF

Benny Hinn has enjoyed seasons of effective, successful ministry, and endured seasons of turbulence. To be sure, he has cut a bold figure across the evangelical and Pentecostal landscape over his nearly 50 years in ministry. As his jubilee year approaches, Hinn once more finds himself on the sharp end of a fresh batch of criticisms, few of them especially unique from the last time *Charisma* sat down with him 31 summers ago in the August 1993 issue. As Scripture teaches there's nothing new under the sun, Benny Hinn recently visited the Strang Report podcast to address recent criticisms, how he addressed sensitive times in the past, and his view of the future as he enters the latter phase of his ministry career.

CHARISMA: When people hear about you for the first time, or come across a sermon of yours, what do you want them to know about you? Who is the real Benny Hinn?

HINN: The real Benny him wants to finish better than I began. The real Benny Hinn wants to know the Bible better than I've ever known it. And the real Benny Hinn wants Jesus, to intensify His love in me for Him with His fire. My real cry is, "Lord, I want to be accepted on that day." That's all that really matters to me. That's the real me. People don't know that about me. But that's the real Benny.

CHARISMA: Why do you think that a lot of people don't know that?

HINN: I don't talk about it much. They see clips from crusades, TV programs, old clips from *This Is Your Day*, they make up their own conclusions. I think that's why. But when I started in ministry, it was a very simple beginning. And I want to finish with a simple finish.

CHARISMA: Talk to me about the Gospel, in your own words, what is the Gospel? Why is the Gospel so important in this hour?

HINN: The gospel is simple. God so loved the world, He sent His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have life eternal. Jesus came to this world, God in the flesh, died on a cruel cross, shed His blood for our salvation,



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rose from the dead on the third day, ascended on high. And today is seated at God's right hand and one day He'll return as King of kings and Lord of lords, and we who believe in Him—not about him, *in* him—will have life eternal.

Today the message you hear is “that”: I believe *that* Jesus came, believe *that* Jesus died, *that* He shed His blood, *that* He rose from the dead. Well, so does the devil. But to live, to believe *in* means trusting Him with your life, trusting Him with your soul. Trusting Him to save you. The devil does not believe in God because then he'd have to trust Him. And he doesn't. He believes *that*. But not *in*. And a lot of people today are preaching messages *that* Jesus came, *that* Jesus died,

that Jesus rose from the dead. And it's giving a lot of people false, not real, hope of salvation. Jesus is our salvation and we have to trust *in* him. Surrender, totally and spiritually, to Him. And that's what I believe.

CHARISMA: You held miracle crusades, and a lot of people come to see miracles, usually healings. I've heard you say that the greatest miracle is salvation to change lives.

HINN: That's correct. It is the greatest miracle because what else is greater than that? When people are healed, sometimes that doesn't last long. Salvation is Jesus Himself. We have to receive Him. It's not

about heaven, it's about the Lord.

One of the pastors that used to work with me once asked me, “What do you want from the Lord when you're gone?” I said, to see His smile. That's all I want, just to see Him smile, because He is my reward.

CHARISMA: How important is the Word of God in the life of a believer? And how has the Word of God impacted your own life?

HINN: Without the Word of God we will perish. It's our life—God's Word is life. God's Word is Him, He is the living Word.

continued »



Stephen Strang (left) interviewing Benny Hinn (right)

I've always loved the Bible, since I was a little boy. Because I lived in Israel, it wasn't mandatory in school to read the Bible. I actually copied the New Testament by hand, and this was before my salvation. I was an altar boy and after I got saved, the life of God came into my soul and being and spirit, and it was an amazing time in my life.

Now, at this stage in my life, I've decided to begin reading the Bible three times a year. And then I decided to learn Hebrew. I did speak Hebrew when I was living in Israel and I wanted to learn Hebrew again. So, I went to Hebrew University online. I read my Bible now in Hebrew every morning, and it's really changing me because the Hebrew language is so deep. It's hard to describe the depth of it. There's living water in it, I guess is the only way to say it. It's just very alive, it hits you really hard and beautifully, too.

I would say that anyone who does not read Scripture is in danger of being destroyed, especially in this time. Because without the Bible, we have no protection. We have no longevity. And now, longevity is, I've been in ministry 50 years this year, I think that's a testimony itself.

CHARISMA: You have been following Christ for decades. As you reflect on those years, do you have any regrets?

HINN: Absolutely. I'm a human being. I've made mistakes. The two things I regret most in ministry, I was not too wise a number of times with prophecy. I had guests come to the crusades that, I think, brought harm to not only people's lives, but also to my own reputation. Because their prophecies were not really a prophecy. They went outside the borders of redemption. Prophecy is for edification, exhortation and comfort, but it must be within

redemption. And when people go beyond that, we should not allow that. I allowed it and then I stopped it, but that was years ago when I stopped.

There were times when I thought God had showed me something that He wasn't showing me. And I spoke it out. But in 1 Corinthians 13, we see very clearly that we all prophesy in part. That means we don't see the full picture. I wish I could go back and fix it, but sadly there were some prophecies I gave that were not accurate or from the Lord. And for that I asked people to forgive me. It's sad when people focus on the times you missed it. But that's just the way it is.

And the other one is prosperity. And that's been a very difficult one for me. When I started, ministry was simple. And then the ministry grew. I was invited to go to what they called Praise Advance, and I think that's when my troubles began. But sadly, you get in a place that becomes difficult, you don't know what to do and how to get out of it. So, I came to the conclusion in 2019 that I did not want to be a part of the gimmickry of it. And I still stand by that. But sadly, a few times I let pressure get the best of me. For that, I'm very sorry. Because of that pressure, I said and did things I should not have, and for that I am sorry. And I ask people to forgive me for that. I'm striving with all my heart to be as biblical as possible with that.

And frankly, you know, I'm kind of at the end of my road, but right now my focus is the Lord and only the Lord. And if I may have to raise funds for our ministry, I will do it as biblically as I know how.

If it's not about the Lord, I want nothing to do with it; it has to be about Jesus and the Gospel. I want that teaching to be about Jesus, and only Jesus and the Gospel. Because the heart of prosperity has to be the gospel through biblical prosperity.

And that is what I will strive to do for the rest of my life.

CHARISMA: Looking back on your life, if you were able to give advice to an 18-year-old Benny Hinn, or really to any 18-year-old, what would you tell them, knowing what you know now at this stage in life?

HINN: I would say three things. Number one, build a reservoir of the Word of God in your heart. So, when troubles come, you'll know what to do. Number two, cling to the Lord with all your mind, and only the Word within your heart can help you cling to the Lord. And number three, make sure you know your call before you get into ministry and stay within your call.

So, the most important thing that any young 18-year-old can really do is know the mind of God. And the Bible is really clear in Psalm 119, about how does the Word of God help us live holy? And this is when prayer becomes real in our life, because the Word of God is in us.

I pray the Lord will give His precious people hunger and desire to learn Hebrew because there's such depth in it, it is life changing. But let's begin knowing the Word of God in English, first.

“
There were some prophecies I gave that were not accurate or from the Lord—and for that I asked people to forgive me.”

CHARISMA: Let me ask you about success in ministry. What does that look like to you?

HINN: If Jesus is glorified, that's success, because His presence in our life is

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what brings results to the kingdom. This is why souls are saved. Bodies are healed. Lives are changed. He is liberty in you and through you. And I think about a lot of precious people that have touched my life, from Kathryn Kuhlman to Corrie Ten Boom; David DuPlessis and others. They really walked in that freedom that God's presence gives. And just to be around them, was liberating. For me as a young Christian, I remember hearing Corrie in Holland when I was 20, and when she came on that platform, the atmosphere changed. And suddenly, I felt like I was in heaven. I was liberated. And DuPlessis, who I think is one of the greatest men that ever lived. I went to Singapore once when I was in my early 20s. That sweet man was talking about the power of forgiveness. I'll never forget the impact it had on my life. And that, I think, is what success is. It's not

HINN: Well, we have to grow. We have to change. And sometimes change is slow. And it's not easy to change at times, with some things. But, the older I've gotten, the more serious I've become about how I will finish. Sadly, our humanity fights us, this body fights us. You really want to fulfill what you say. Things happen that don't help you fulfill it, then you try again.

The most important thing is, how will we finish the race? That's what matters in life, and that's what I'm focused on.

CHARISMA: What things have you put in place to move forward in a way that you desire, especially as you enter the final season in your life and ministry?

HINN: When I started in ministry, the Lord sent wonderful people my way, who really helped me in my beginning.

I had a vision years ago. In my vision, I saw myself as a disabled person. And I saw the Lord standing across the way, tall and wonderful, beautiful, wearing a white robe, with His arms outstretched toward me. And He said, "Come." That's all He said, was, "Come." Now, I'm on my knees in prayer, outside the vision, and I said, "Dear Jesus, can You help him?" Because I'm looking at the Benny Hinn in the vision. And suddenly, the Benny Hinn in the vision began to walk with difficulty, slowly, and the Lord began to move toward him in the same way, slowly. And suddenly that Benny Hinn came closer and closer and as he got closer, he got straighter and straighter, freer and freer. And then suddenly, they both came together. And when the Lord put His arms around that Benny in the vision, something amazing happened. That Benny disappeared in Jesus.

And I came out of my vision. I believe that's my end.

CHARISMA: I want to give you the last word.

HINN: In this world, Jesus said, "You shall have tribulation," and we will be persecuted. But if we focus on that, we will not succeed. We have to look up. This is a must for all of us. Not to pay attention to the persecution and trials of life. We just focus on the Lord. Really, that's all.

And there are people today I'm sure who are going through some problem. That's just a part of life. And you grow in the valley, not on the mountain. We have to keep our eyes on the Lord.

This world is getting darker and darker, more and more dangerous. Without the presence of the Lord, daily and continually in our life, we will not survive. And I believe only His Word enables us to know Him like that. And I don't mean just reading the Word of God, I mean really knowing it, living it. That will give us great peace. That's the secret. ♦



I came to the conclusion in 2019 that I did not want to be a part of the gimmickry of it.



about numbers and crowds and money and all that. It's about the Lord in someone's life. What more can we ask for? He is all in all to us.

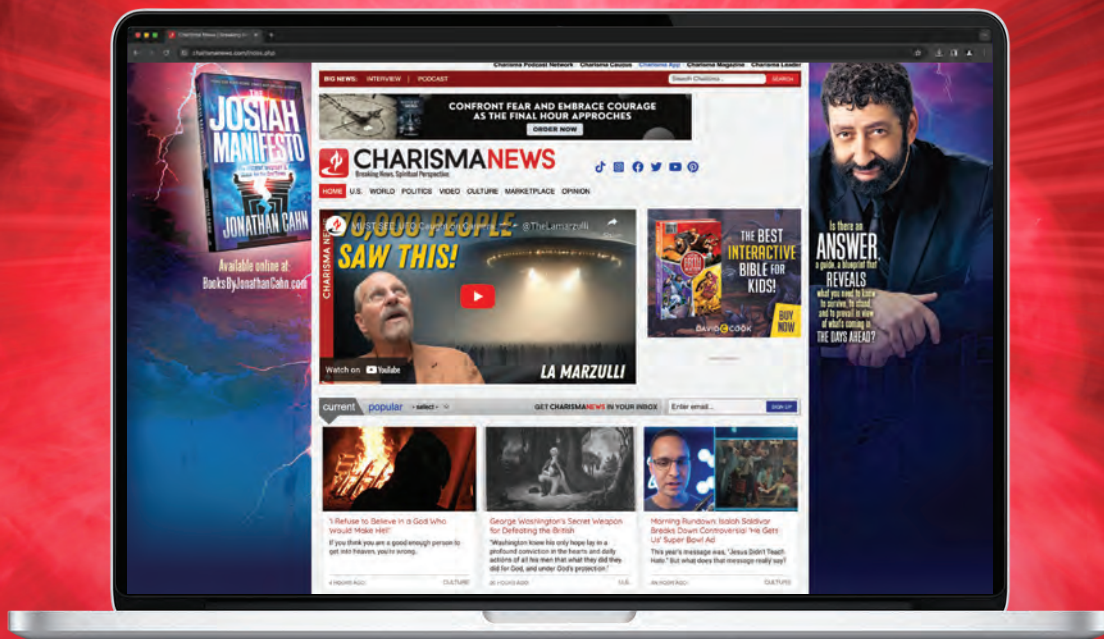
CHARISMA: There have been points in your ministry in the past where you have apologized for some things, or answered critics. In fact, I did an interview with you in 1993, and then in 2019 I did a podcast with you about the whole issue of prosperity. So, my question is—you understand that people might be a little doubtful when you've already apologized—what would you like to say to those people who might be doubting what they're hearing?

A lot of these people are gone now, and with the Lord. And the Lord has been so gracious to me that recently the Lord has sent some others to help me finish well. I think we need to put in place in ministry to be answerable to individuals we trust and respect in the Spirit. And that's what I've done.

CHARISMA: And finally, what is burning in your heart, as you enter the latter season of your life and ministry, what can we expect from Benny Hinn?

HINN: That's a wonderful question. What's burning in my heart is one thing. Jesus.

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SPIRIT or SPECTACLE?

5 risks & 4 solutions to keep your church grounded in the Gospel

BY MANNY ROSARIO

Are you not entertained? The famous quote from Russell Crowe's character in *Gladiator* echoes the sentiment many pastors experience as they strive to engage congregations and maintain attendance.

"Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it," as Sir Winston Churchill said.

Throughout church history, leaders have grappled with the tension between spiritual depth and the allure of spectacle. In the early centuries of Christianity, as the faith gained prominence in the Roman Empire, there was a temptation to incorporate elements of Roman paganism into Christian worship to attract converts. However, wise leaders recognized the dangers of compromising spiritual integrity for popularity.

One notable example is found in the life of Augustine of Hippo, a fourth-century theologian and bishop. Augustine emphasized the importance of spiritual formation and discipleship, warning against the distractions of worldly entertainment. He urged believers to seek fulfillment in God alone rather than fleeting pleasures.

During the Victorian era, amidst the bustling streets of London, Charles Spurgeon emerged as one of the most influential preachers of his time. With a voice that thundered against complacency and compromise, Spurgeon warned against the dangers of excessive church amusement and entertainment.

However, as Spurgeon wisely noted, "While recreation has its place, it's not the primary business of the Christian church to supply the world with mere amusements."

In an era marked by industrialization and rapid societal change, the church faced the temptation to cater to popular culture rather than uphold spiritual integrity. Spurgeon observed this trend with concern, recognizing that while recreation had its place, it should not overshadow the church's primary purpose: to proclaim the Gospel and nurture genuine spiritual growth.

Spurgeon's sermons and writings echoed his deep convictions about the church's role in society. He believed the church should be a beacon of light in a dark world, offering hope and salvation to all who would listen. However, he cautioned against compromising biblical truth for worldly acclaim.

During Spurgeon's time, various forms of entertainment, such as theater productions and music halls, competed for people's attention. The church, in an effort to remain relevant, sometimes adopted similar strategies to attract crowds. Yet, Spurgeon saw through the facade, recognizing that true spiritual transformation could not be achieved through mere spectacle.

Instead, Spurgeon advocated for a return to the fundamentals of the Christian faith: fervent prayer, faithful preaching of the Word and genuine discipleship. He believed that these timeless principles were the keys to a vibrant and thriving church.

Today, Spurgeon's warnings about the dangers of excessive church amusement remain as relevant as ever. In a culture saturated with entertainment options, the church must resist the temptation to prioritize spectacle over substance. Like Spurgeon, we are called to uphold the truth of the Gospel with unwavering conviction, trusting that God will work through His Word to bring about lasting change in hearts and lives.

My Journey from Spectacle to Authentic and Healthy Ministry

My journey in ministry began in Brooklyn, New York City, where I was raised as a Pastor's kid. Witnessing the long-suffering my parents endured in ministry, I was initially deterred from following in their footsteps. Relocating to Orlando as a teenager, I was resolute in avoiding ministry, opting instead for a corporate career path driven by the promise of success. However, despite my intentions, the persistent call of God eventually led me to serve churches in Central Florida.

In the heart of Orlando, where entertainment reigns supreme, the allure of attracting and retaining congregants through captivating experiences was ever-present. Faced with the challenge of maintaining attendance, I, like many church leaders, initially succumbed to the temptation of prioritizing entertainment over spiritual depth. Drawing from my corporate strategies and the city's vibrant entertainment culture, I endeavored to create experiences that would keep attendees returning for more.

Yet, despite my best efforts and numerous attempts, I soon realized that the pursuit of entertainment-driven church experiences was not fulfilling the deeper spiritual needs of the congregation. It became evident that while flashy productions and engaging events could draw a crowd, they often failed to

cultivate genuine spiritual growth and transformation.

Through this realization, I underwent a paradigm shift, recognizing the importance of leading congregations toward authentic spiritual growth and mobilization for impactful ministry.

Here are five pitfalls to avoid along your way:

1) Emphasis on Spectacle. When churches prioritize elaborate productions, performances or events, they risk shifting the focus away from fostering genuine spiritual growth and community engagement. While impressive entertainment may draw crowds, it can often overshadow the essence of authentic spirituality.

2) Consumerist Culture. In today's consumer-driven society, churchgoers may come to expect to be entertained rather than challenged. This mindset hinders the church's ability to mobilize for outreach and service, as attendees view the church as a place for entertainment rather than transformation.

3) Drift in Resource Allocation. Dedicating significant resources solely to entertainment-oriented programs can detract from initiatives focused on community outreach, social justice and missions. It's essential to ensure that resources are allocated in a way that aligns with the church's mission and values.

4) Lack Leadership Priorities. Church leaders play a vital role in shaping the priorities of the congregation. If leaders prioritize attracting larger crowds through entertaining activities over equipping individuals for service and mission work, the congregation may become passive spectators rather than active participants in advancing God's kingdom.

5) Lack of Discipleship. When entertainment becomes the primary focus, opportunities for meaningful discipleship and mentorship can be overlooked. Discipleship is crucial for nurturing spiritual growth and equipping believers to live out their faith in authentic ways.

How to Shift Back to the Gospel

Rather than focusing solely on building an audience, I redirected my efforts toward equipping and empowering believers to reach people both locally and globally with the transformative message of the Gospel.

Today, my journey has led me to serve in an organization dedicated to leading humanitarian efforts on a global scale. Guided by a commitment to fostering genuine spiritual growth and mobilizing individuals for effective ministry, I've discovered that true fulfillment lies not in entertaining audiences but in empowering communities and changing lives through the love and message of Jesus Christ.

In recent years, the dichotomy between spectacle-driven churches and spirit-driven churches has become increasingly pronounced within Christian ministry. While some churches have adeptly utilized modern technology and innovative approaches to share the Gospel with large audiences, others have faced criticism for prioritizing entertainment over spiritual depth.

Spectacle-driven churches often rely on flashy productions, celebrities or personalities and elaborate events to attract and retain congregants. While these strategies may initially draw crowds, studies suggest that many attendees remain transient, seeking entertainment rather than spiritual nourishment. Consequently, these churches may struggle with long-term sustainability and fail to achieve meaningful community transformation or global impact.

In contrast, spirit-driven churches prioritize authenticity, spiritual depth and discipleship. Rather than focusing solely on attracting large crowds, they prioritize genuine spiritual growth and equipping believers for engaging ministry. These churches recognize that true community transformation and global impact require more than just spectacle—they require a deep commitment to the power of the Gospel.

Statistics underscore the importance of spirit-driven ministry approaches. Despite advances in technology and communication, over 40% of the global population remains unreached or under-engaged with the message of Jesus Christ. This sobering reality underscores the inadequacy of a "me-centered" gospel that prioritizes individual satisfaction over the broader mission of sharing God's love with the world.

As church leaders navigate these challenges, they must prioritize authenticity and spiritual depth in their ministry efforts. By focusing on cultivating genuine discipleship, fostering meaningful community engagement and sharing the Gospel with humility and love, churches can truly make a lasting impact—both locally and globally. Ultimately, it is the spirit-driven churches that have the potential to bring about genuine community transformation and global change in the name of Christ.

Through my experiences, I've learned several key lessons to keep churches focused on their mission:

1) Prioritize Spiritual Depth. Above all else, prioritize fostering genuine spiritual growth within the congregation. This involves creating opportunities for meaningful worship, prayer and discipleship that go beyond mere entertainment.

2) Engage in Meaningful Outreach. Encourage congregants to actively participate in outreach and service projects that



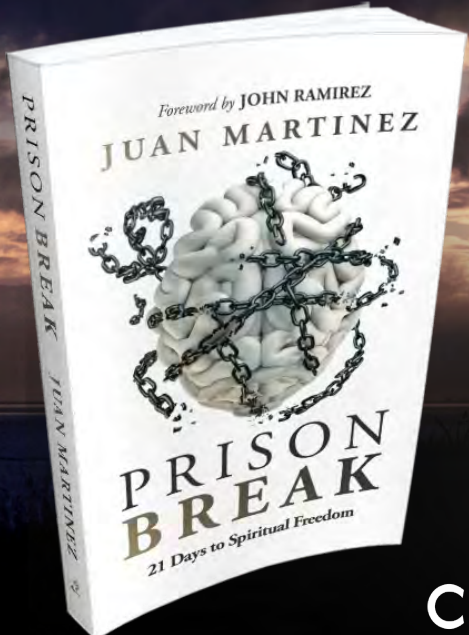
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make a tangible difference in the community. This helps to shift the focus from passive spectatorship to active engagement in transforming the world.

3) Lead by Example. As church leaders, it's essential to lead by example and prioritize spiritual depth and mission-focused initiatives in our own lives. By modeling authentic Christian living, we inspire others to do the same.

4) Stay Flexible. Recognize that the needs of the congregation may evolve, and be willing to adapt ministry strategies accordingly. Stay open to feedback and be willing to make adjustments as needed to keep the focus on spiritual growth and mission.

Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing

In the dynamic landscape of church ministry, finding the balance between spirit and spectacle is essential. By prioritizing spiritual depth, meaningful outreach and authentic leadership, churches can stay true to their mission of transforming lives and communities for the glory of God.

Maintaining the momentum of churches built around grand spectacles requires a constant infusion of energy and resources. Yet amidst the spectacle, it's crucial to revisit the core purpose, asking ourselves the fundamental question of "Why?"

We must reconnect with the underlying motivation behind our actions. Remembering that those distanced from God hold significance in His eyes compels us to prioritize reaching out to them. Their importance to God must translate into our actions, making them a priority in our efforts and endeavors.

Let us heed the lessons learned from church history and strive to lead congregations toward a deeper, more meaningful relationship with Christ while still offering valuable and substantive opportunities for fellowship and enjoyment. ◀

MANNY ROSARIO is a leader in church mobilization. He pastored in Central Florida, where he led congregations toward city-wide outreaches, for 18 years.

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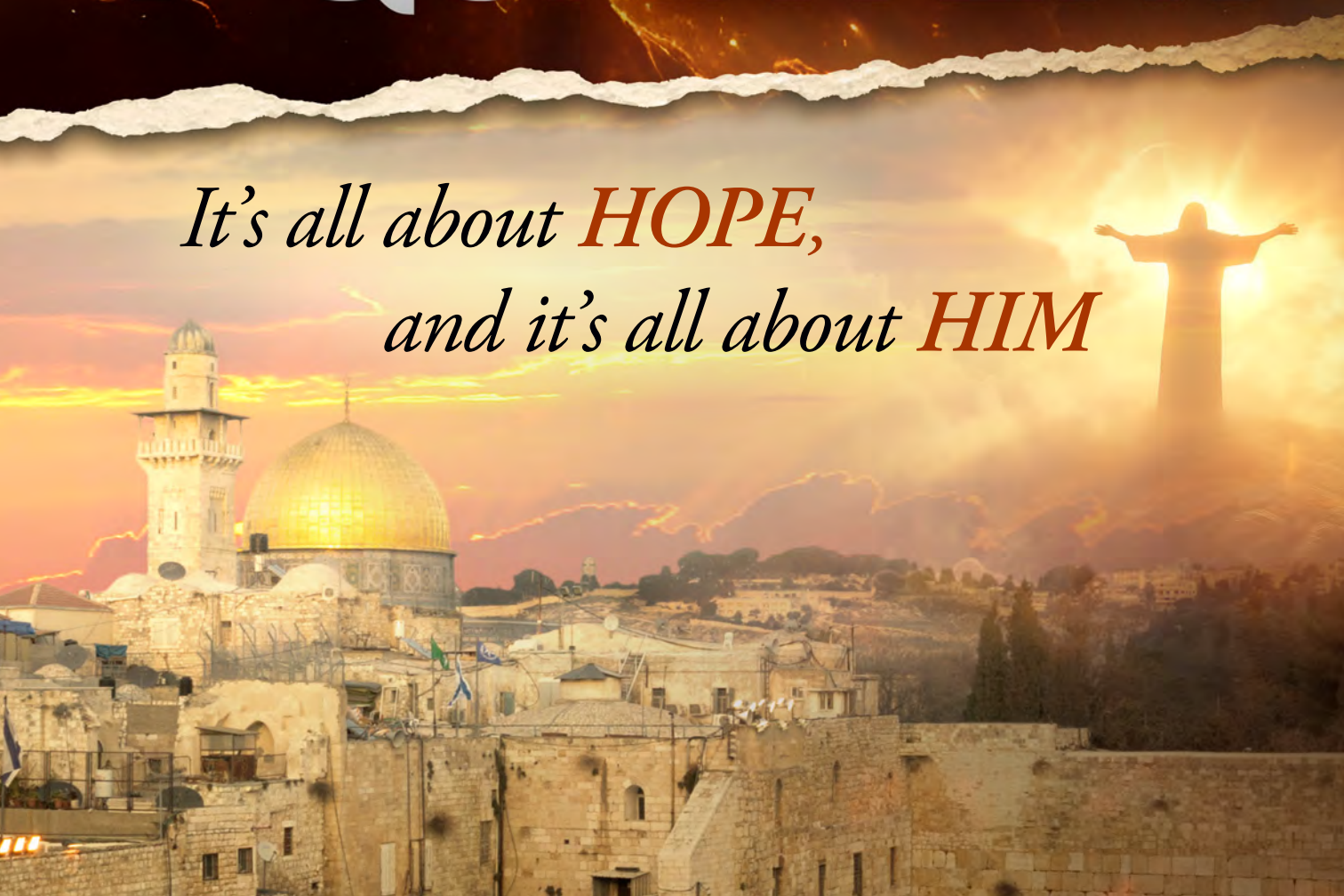
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| END TIMES IN THE PROPHETIC

Is THIS the 4th QUARTER?

*It's all about HOPE,
and it's all about HIM*



BY MAX LUCADO

I believe it is.

Something happened on Friday, May 14, 1948, that differentiates this era from any other in human history.

On that day two men sat in a quiet corner of the F Street Club in Washington, D.C., and worked out the wording of a statement soon to be released by the White House. One of the men was Harry Truman. He became president of the United States when Franklin Roosevelt died early in his fourth term. The next few years led Truman into one of the most tumultuous chapters of American history. Under his leadership World War II came to an end, the United Nations was formed, the US military was desegregated and the Marshall Plan was born. He was president during the surrenders of Germany and Japan. He witnessed the fall of the Iron Curtain over Eastern Europe and the Bamboo Curtain over China and parts of Eastern Asia.

Yet, of all Truman's decisions, none more hearkened into the past or bore more implications for the eternal future than the one he and his special counsel Clark Clifford had met to discuss. At issue was the confirmation of a Jewish state. Though much of his administration, including his secretary of state, opposed such a step, Truman was resolved. Himself a Christian, he had sought the counsel of prominent pastor J. Frank Norris of Fort Worth, Texas.

Norris reminded the president of God's promise to Isaac: "Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants, just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father," (Gen. 26:3, NLT).

Truman sent Pastor Norris a thank-you note. Shortly thereafter he made his decision.

Having hammered out the best wording for the statement: "Clifford put through a hurried call to Elihu Epstein, an official at the Jewish agency in Washington, to tell him that recognition would occur later that day. "The New Jewish state—the first Jewish state in nearly 2,000 years—was declared on schedule at midnight in Jerusalem, 6:00 p.m. in Washington. Eleven minutes later at the White House, Charlie Ross announced de facto recognition by the United States."

The president signed a two-paragraph proclamation that read: "This government has been informed that a Jewish state has been proclaimed in Palestine, and recognition has been requested by the provisional government thereof. The United States recognizes the provisional government as the de facto authority of the state of Israel."

The name "state of Israel" was handwritten because the name of the nation was not chosen until the last minute.

No Other Land But the Promised Land

What other nation has been promised land by God, been removed from the land, and then returned to it? The answer: none. Yet, this reinstatement was promised in Scripture.

From Ezekiel, 650 years before Christ: "For I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land," (Ezek. 36:24, NLT).

From Isaiah, 740 years before Christ: "He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth," (Isa. 11:12).

May 14, 1948, saw a page turn in the calendar of prophetic history. Circumstances changed when the Jews were given their land. Almost all the key events of the end times hinge upon the existence of Israel as a nation:

Continued »

» The book of Daniel prophesies a covenant between the Antichrist and Israel (Daniel 9:27). This can only happen if the nation of Israel exists.

» Scripture prophesies a rebuilding of the temple (Isa. 2:1–4; 2 Thess. 2:4). Again, Israel must exist for this to happen.

» Daniel and Jesus forecast an act of utter sacrilege in the temple (Dan. 12:11; Mark 13:14). No Israel,

has occurred. We've always had wars, disasters and deceptions. But now that the milestone moment has happened and Israel is restored, the other signs progressively signal the impending end.

If history is a year, the leaves are autumn gold.

If history is a day, the sun has begun to set.

If history is an hour, the hands of the clock are nearing full circle.

Christ could come at any moment. I believe that with all my heart—not just because of what I read in the Scriptures, but also because of what I read in the news. To be clear, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father,” (Matt. 24:36, Berean Standard Bible). The exact time remains hidden. While we cannot know the day or hour, we can know the signs. Wouldn't you agree that the signs of our day warrant our vigilance?

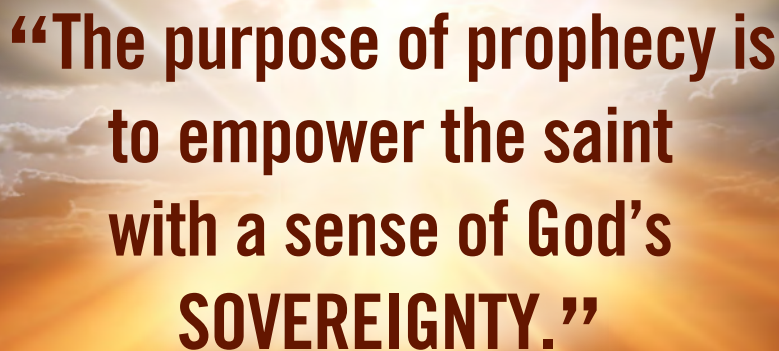
Are You Getting Ready Yet?

We have a choice. We can view the future through the eyes of fear or faith. The eyes of fear see little reason for hope and ample reason for anxiety. The eyes of faith see history inching closer and closer to a new era, a heavenly destiny. God tells us what to expect not to scare us, but to prepare us. He is the pilot on the intercom telling the passengers about impending turbulence. A good pilot keeps his travelers informed. Our good Father does the same.

Between now and the end of this age we can expect some severe instability. But we will arrive safely. Maybe you are a bit leery about this discussion. End-times studies have left you confused, perhaps cynical. I understand. Prophecy is to the Bible what the Serengeti is to Africa—vast, expansive and intimidating. It's a world of numbers and symbols, bears and tigers. Most students prefer the domesticated, well-traveled streets of Scripture: the teachings of Jesus, the doctrines of Paul, the biographies of the Patriarchs. Prophecy intimidates many Bible students.

It infatuates others. If Bible prophecy is the Serengeti, some Christians are big-game hunters. They never leave the bush. They find prophecy on every page, symbolism in every story and clues in every verse. They can be a great source of help, but they can also be stubbornly opinionated. Prophetic experts tend to be very confident; they walk with a game-hunter swagger. They always seem to know (and enjoy knowing) what others don't.

Somewhere in between these two positions is a healthy posture. Believers



“The purpose of prophecy is to empower the saint with a sense of God’s SOVEREIGNTY.”

no temple.

» The war of Armageddon only makes sense if Israel is occupying the land where that particular valley (called Megiddo) is found.

Prior to 1948 a Jewish repopulation of Israel as a state was unthinkable. Jews were dispersed to more than 70 countries for more than 20 centuries. Yet since 1948 we have seen them return. For the first time since A.D. 135, there are more Jews living in Israel than in any other place on earth.

Age of the SuperSigns

This resettlement is often referred to as a “super sign.” The Bible repeatedly presents the regathering of Jewish people as a watershed event that must occur before other end-times events take place (Jer. 30:1–5; Ezek. 34:11–24; Ezek. 37; Zech. 10:6–10).

It is akin to the flag wave at a NASCAR race signaling the final lap. Other signs take on heightened importance now that the super sign

We have entered the last days. So, let us be looking. Let us be declaring: the end is near. This was my job on the high school football team. I was one of the players who declared the onset of the fourth quarter. There were five of us, maybe six. We were the misfits on the varsity squad. Not bad enough to be cut. By no means good enough to play. In the football dog pound, we were the mongrels.

But we had our moment. And that moment came at the opening of the fourth quarter of each game. Our assignment, on the coach's signal, was to run up and down the sideline with four fingers in the air shouting, “Fourth quarter! Fourth quarter!” Teams tend to grow weary as the game wears on. The minutes take their toll. Players need a wake-up call. This is the last push before the end. Dig deep! Be alert! Someone needed to yell, “Fourth quarter!” So, we did.

Doesn't the same need to be declared today?

who avoid utter ignorance on one hand and total arrogance on the other. Who seek what God intends: a deep-seated confidence that our tomorrow is in our Lord's hands. The purpose of prophecy is to empower the saint with a sense of God's sovereignty. As Paul wrote: "But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them," (1 Cor. 14:3, NLT). Prophecy prepares us to face the future with faith.

Five hundred years ago sailors feared the horizon. Sail too far and risk falling off the edge, they reasoned. The common wisdom of the ancients warned against the unseen. So did the monument at the Strait of Gibraltar, where Spaniards held dominion over both sides of the strait. At its narrowest margin, where Africa can see Europe, they erected the Pillar of Hercules, a huge marker that bore in its stone the three-word Latin slogan "Ne plus ultra." "No More Beyond."

But then came Columbus and the voyage of 1492. The discovery of the new world swung open the western doors of Spain. They took the Latin phrase "No More Beyond," removed the first word and impressed this slogan onto their coins: "More Beyond."

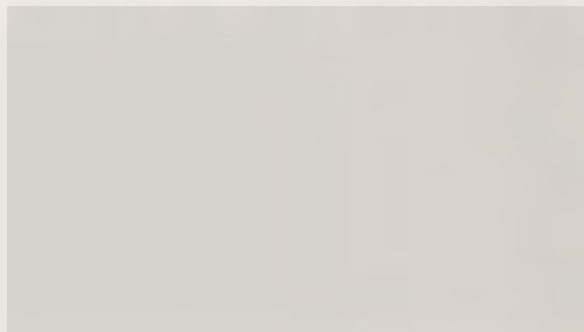
Remove the "no" from your future. Open your heart and open your life to the great assurances. You were made to explore what happens next. It's all about hope. It's all about Him.

Let's make sure we are good to go. ◀

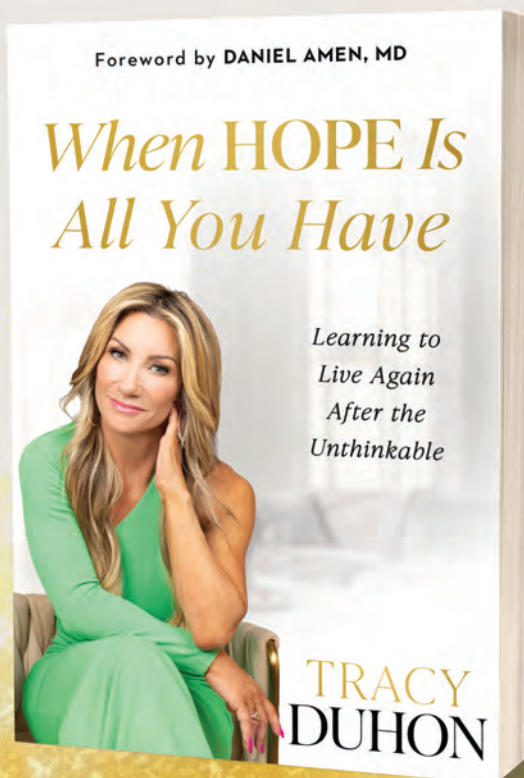
Excerpt taken from *What Happens Next: A Traveler's Guide Through the End of This Age* by Max Lucado (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee © 2024).

Since entering the ministry in 1978, **MAX LUCADO** has served churches in Miami, Florida; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and San Antonio, Texas. He currently serves as Teaching Minister of Oak Hills Church in San Antonio. He is the recipient of the 2021 ECPA Pinnacle Award for his outstanding contribution to the publishing industry and society at large. He is America's bestselling inspirational author with over 145 million products in print. His latest book is *What Happens Next: A Traveler's Guide Through the End of This Age*. Visit www.MaxLucado.com.

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Equip yourself
to recognize
patterns before
they spread
into traps



3 Depression Traps You Can Beat

BY KENZA HADDOCK LPCS, BCPC

Depression is the second most prevalent mental health diagnosis in the United States, affecting an estimated 21.0 million adults. Among those affected are born-again believers, who profess Jesus as their Lord and Savior, who at times struggle to experience the joy mentioned in Romans 15:13.

As a clinical and a pastoral counselor, through the years I've had the privilege of treating many who were feeling like they were living beneath a dark cloud. Others felt like they lacked a sense of meaning and purpose in life. Some just felt flat-out numb, like nothing they did mattered, and proceeded to ask questions like "What's the point in all of this, anyway?" or, "Is this all that there is to life?"

In each of these scenarios, the person's depression looked different. Contrary to popular belief, depression is not a one size fits all issue. And in light of Mandisa's tragic recent passing, and in honor of the incredible courage she has shown

through the years in sharing her journey through depression, I want to shed light on this topic and give you practical ways to deal with depression in your own life.

I want to clarify that depression is the result of us living in a fallen world. A world where we may encounter conflict, divorce, heartbreak, wars, grief. A world where loss *is* inevitable, which leads us to the first type of depression we can encounter: situational depression.

Situational Depression

Situational depression occurs when you experience sadness due to losing someone or something important in your life. This can include losing a friend, job, going through a divorce or the devastating loss of a parent or child. Mental health professionals call this type of depression "situational" because it is directly related to a specific event that occurred in your life. Your natural inclination in reaction to the loss may be to go into protective mode and isolate yourself. If this is where you are, I'd like to urge you to please fight

against this inclination and reach out to people in your community.

The enemy of our souls, Satan, wants you to isolate so he can whisper lies to you in the dark knowing that you won't have anyone to process through those lies with. It is common that during weeks and months following a situation that has led to your depressed state (ie: loss), the enemy will try to insert lies like, "God is mad at you, that's why this happened to you," or "You did XYZ, so this is your pay back."

The Bible warns us to be vigilant (see 1 Pet. 5:8), because as believers we are in an active spiritual war (see Eph. 6:12) with an enemy who seeks to steal, kill and destroy us (see John 10:10).

If you find you've encountered a loss of any kind, one effective method to combat isolation is by getting in the habit of calling one friend a week and talk about how you are processing through the loss. So rather than bottle it up and become weighed down by it, talking through this loss with a friend or

two will help you emotionally digest the loss in a way that you feel supported and cared about.

Situational Depression Prayer: Lord God, in Jesus' name I trust in You to guide me through this season of loss, and to return beauty for ashes as You promise in Your Word, amen.

Oppression and Seasonal Depression

Sometimes your depression doesn't have much to do with the situation changing in your life, but rather, difficulty getting out of your own head. In other words, you feel oppressed, like you're a prisoner of your own thoughts. My friend, this is demonic oppression. The symptoms of demonic oppression include self-deprecating thoughts like, "I'm stupid," constantly judging yourself and wondering if you said or did the right thing, wondering what people think of you. You may even get to the point where you've convinced yourself that people are talking badly about you. If this sounds familiar, let me assure you that I've heard it over and over in the counseling room. And I want you to be aware that this is a tactic of the enemy of your soul.

First, he tries to isolate you by convincing you that you're not good enough. And if that doesn't work, he'll play scenarios in your mind to convince you that people don't like you. Why does he do this? Because he knows that you and I are wired for relationships. It is through relationships that we can edify one another, and exhort one another. We can encourage one another, and intercede for one another. And your enemy hates that. So, the next time you start feeling like "I'm stupid," or, "Nobody likes me," do not accept those words as true. Our enemy is a liar (see Rev. 12:9).

Part of his plan to destroy you (see John 10:10) is his use of self-deprecating thoughts. Self-deprecating thoughts left unchallenged can lead to suicidal ideations. In other words, when we accept and receive what the enemy is whispering long enough, we begin to believe it. Before we know it, we believe people are better off without us; falling right into the enemy's plan. Before your thoughts get to this point, realize when the enemy is attacking. Reach out for counseling. Tell

people that you're under spiritual attack, and definitely don't act on any self-harming thoughts that come to mind.

Avoiding isolation is also crucial when it comes to seasonal depression, officially recognized as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and otherwise known as "winter blues." This type of depression is known to onset beginning in the fall, peak around the second week of November and last through January. Over the years, many have speculated on the origins of SAD. As winter approaches, our daylight hours get shorter, holidays draw closer, our lists of "to dos" becomes endless and our stress levels can zoom, combined with the fact that we don't go outside as much so we're getting less sunlight. It can also seem as though our community interactions like Bible study or fellowship groups we could turn to for support often take a break during the holidays, adding to the isolation risk.

Oppression and Seasonal Depression Prayer: Lord God, in Jesus' name I trust in You to surround me with Your hedge of protection, to cover me from the enemy's attacks, and guide me to appreciate and steward the uniqueness of each season as You designed them, that I may be found faithful and holy in Your sight, amen.

Purpose, Meaning and Direction

Last but certainly not least, is depression that deals with your sense of purpose. This type of depression often arises out of frustration when we feel like our life lacks meaning. God has placed a sense of purpose in the heart of each one of us (see Eph. 2:10). We all want to feel like we make a difference somehow, somewhere; whether big or small. In our fast-paced culture, even as believers we often fall into the habit-like ritual asking God: "What do You want me to do?" or, "Where do You want me?" Many times, we get frustrated when we don't have a sense of direction. So, we become frustrated with God. Before long, we may even wonder if our prayers hit the ceiling or if God is taking a hiatus from our prayers.

It is during this time that we're tempted to act on our own understanding because God is not "acting fast enough" or not doing things "the way" we would do them. And when God, in

His sovereign Fatherly protection continues to close the door to the opportunity you've been chasing after, you fall into despair, or begin to believe the lie that maybe even God is against you.

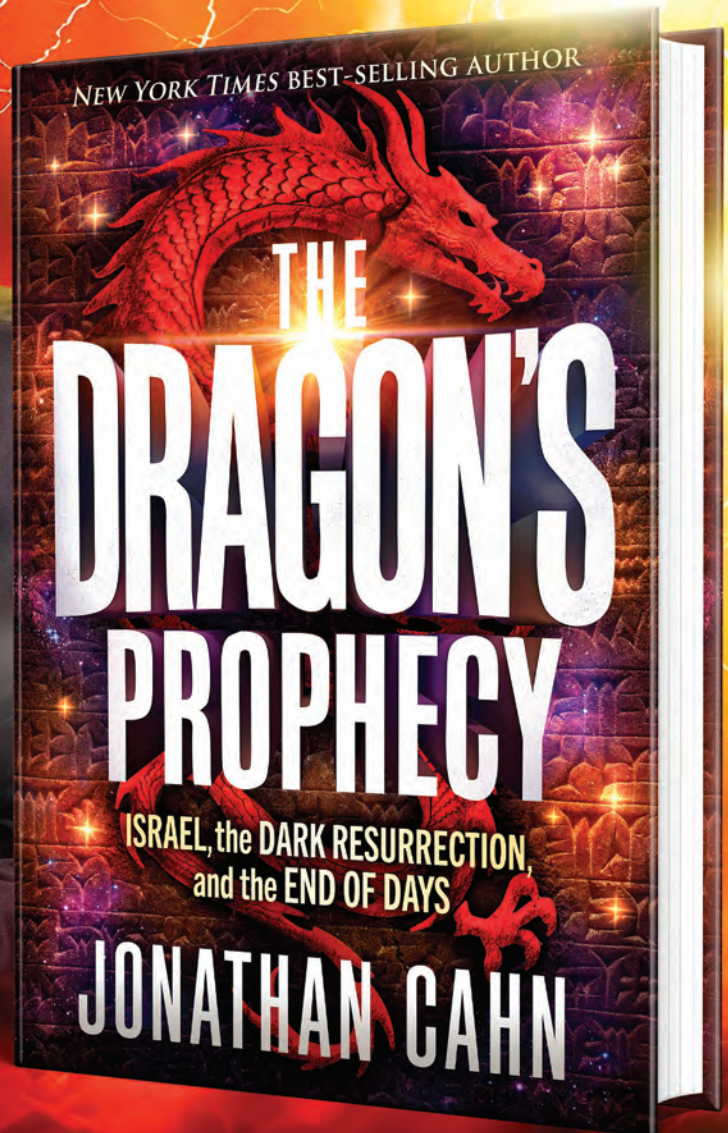
The reality is, the very reason God often closes certain doors is He knows opening them wouldn't be good for us, no matter how "good for us" they seem (at the time). It is in these moments that we must press in and exercise every bit of our faith. We can remind ourselves that though we don't understand this "no," in Jesus the Father has given us the best "yes" (see Rom. 8:32). Therefore, His closing this door has nothing to do with our self-worth or our self-esteem, it's that this opportunity is not attached to His plans and purposes for us.

Whatever the Lord God has planned for you is for you, and when the time comes for your door to be open, you will have gone through the necessary preparation He deemed necessary for you to take hold of the role He called you to. In the meantime, we renew our foundation in His Word and live the truth of Galatians 6:9, "And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not give up," (MEV).

Purpose, Meaning and Direction Prayer: Lord God, in Jesus' name I trust in Your mighty plan that You created me for, to guide me through each decision and each moment to glorify You and be Your "good and faithful servant," amen. ♣

KENZA HADDOCK, LPCS, BCPC, is a licensed professional counselor supervisor and an accredited clinical trauma specialist with expertise in treating complex mental health conditions through both clinical and biblical methods. A former Muslim, she has spoken at conferences and churches and been featured in numerous news outlets regarding the intersection of Christianity and mental health counseling. Haddock and her husband own Oceanic Counseling Group LLC, an outpatient mental health agency headquartered in South Carolina. She also was a co-founder of the #healSC campaign, which raised awareness about mental health issues. Her new book, *The Three Enemies of Your Mental Health*, releases this October and is available now to be pre-ordered through Amazon.

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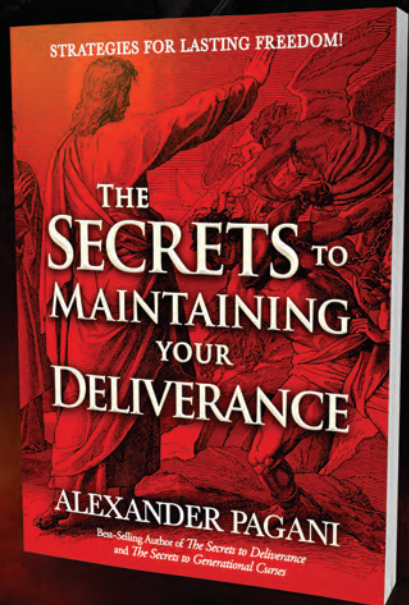
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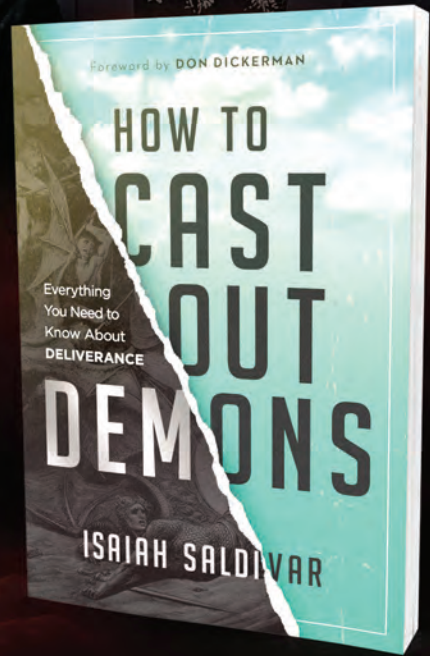
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STRENGTHENING YOUR *Spiritual* DISCIPLINE

How to humble your flesh, grow in meekness and inherit the kingdom

BY FRANCIS FRANGIPANE

There are two ways to enter meekness: humble ourselves or be led through the wilderness. Either path is designed to ultimately lead to a condition of our hearts that will allow us to hear God.

Most of us have gone through times when life's circumstances humbled us. When faced with a difficult situation, we may be humbled, but like a cork in water, we rise back up to the surface, our pride returning when the issue resolves. God doesn't want our lives filled with pride that dissipates during intermittent periods of shame due to external circumstances or even sometimes painful experiences. He wants us to be humble by choice, humble because we want to be like Jesus.

Foundations of Humility

In the kingdom, there are no great men or women of God, just humble people whom God has chosen to use greatly. How do we know when we are humble? When God speaks, we tremble. God is looking for men and women who tremble at His word. Such people will find the Spirit of God resting on them; they will become a dwelling place for the Almighty.

The divine pursuit begins with the humbling of self. Fleshly desires, soulish fears and human ambitions try to rule us. Thus, when true meekness emerges in our hearts, it silences the clamor of our fleshly minds. The voice of our fears and inadequacies becomes a whisper. To humble our earthly perspectives and opinions, we must relegate them to a lower priority; they become mere background noise as our

focus turns increasingly toward God. No pretense prevails; we come humbling ourselves. We bow on our faces before the holy gaze of God. And in His light, we finally perceive the darkness of our souls.

Thus humility, at its root, starts with honesty. The humbled heart is truly and deeply acquainted with its need, and in the beginning the awareness of one's need becomes the voice of prayer. This confession, "I have sinned," puts us on the side of God concerning it. We agree with our Father that our behavior is wrong. Thus, the process of healing begins during this moment of self-discovery. We are working with God to defeat sin in our lives, and in this process of humbling ourselves the Lord grants us peace, covering and transforming grace.

Yet with humility we not only acknowledge our need but also take full responsibility for it. We offer no defense to God for our fallen condition. We've come not to explain ourselves but to be cleansed.

The Word says, "Humble yourselves." This means we are choosing it rather than God doing it for us. Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart," (Matt. 11:28–29, MEV). If we want to know the essence of Jesus, we must recognize that He is meek and lowly of heart. He identifies with the lowly. Jesus Christ is humble by choice, by nature. If we will be shaped and conformed to His image, then we too must choose the way of humility and meekness.



“Humility of heart you choose now awakens hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ.”

The Pattern of Meekness

In this process of spiritual training, God desires to create within us the necessary attitudes that will shape us and condition us to experience the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives. As we become humble of heart, this step will qualify and prepare us to reach a purity of heart that enables us to see God, have fellowship with Him and interact spiritually with Him. Then, when He speaks, we will be ready to change.

God explained this process to the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 8:2–3, when He described the wilderness season. The purpose of the wilderness is not merely to adjust us to living in a place of oppression and scarcity; the purpose of the wilderness is to teach us that man does not live by bread alone. In other words, we don't live by our own efforts; the people of God live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

This stage of development of humility and meekness in us is not to make us timid or fearful—it is to give us a humble spirit that can hear the voice of God and follow His leading. The sign of true humility is obedience, trying to live out every utterance, every whisper that comes from God's heart.

The successive stages of spiritual training—recognizing our need, coming through godly sorrow to deep repentance—bring us to true humility of heart and hearing the voice of God speaking

to us. The process of God humbling us in the wilderness enables us to hear His voice and be genuinely led by Him.

The Voice of the Holy Spirit

God speaks to His followers through the Holy Spirit, and our ability to hear His voice is evidence of our humility. Don't miss that important truth: our humility is measured by our capacity to hear His voice. And the way to hear God's voice, the process of coming into that, is acknowledging our need, repenting and becoming pure in heart. As you continue to embrace that cleansing process, you will become more and more sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

True humility brings joy when we listen to His voice. His voice may not be audible. The fruit of meekness and humility allows a greater ability to hear the Spirit speaking. Jesus told His followers, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me,” (John 10:27, NIV). In Psalm 95:7–8 (NIV), David warned the people, “Today, if only you would hear his voice, ‘Do not harden your hearts as you did...in the wilderness.’” He is speaking the same words to us: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts,” (Heb. 4:7, NIV). A person characterized by humility hears and responds to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The opposite is also true: if we don't hear the voice of God, it is evidence that we have not embraced the changes God

called us into. Eventually we become hypocrites or phony Christians. If we're not changing and going on in the things of God, then we're living with two faces. God wants us to have one face—the face of Christ. He wants us to have one heart—the heart of Christ. He doesn't want us to have duplicity. He wants us to have sincerity of heart, which is one focus, one heart.

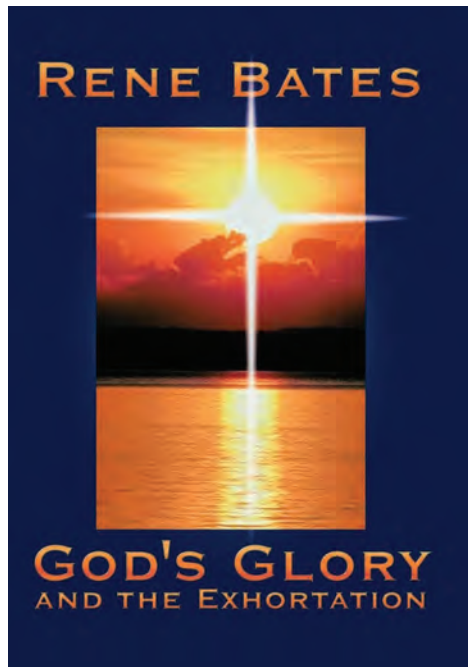
Until you give yourself over to God's process of change, you will continue to live in a cave of darkness on mountains meant for the presence of God that have been inhabited by the enemy. God wants you to live a life of humility. You might pray, “O Lord, humble me”—and He can arrange that—but you must choose an attitude of humility through which He can work.

The humility of heart that you choose now will awaken a hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ to be evident within you. Today, choose the humble path. ◀

FRANCIS FRANGIPANE is the founder of River of Life Ministries and has traveled throughout the world ministering to thousands of pastors and intercessors. He is the author of 15 books, including his newest releasing last month, *The Heart the See God*. He is currently devoting himself to prayer and the ministry of God's Word, and his daughter, Joy, works alongside him as he continues to seek the heart of God.

Refresh Your Spirit

Summer Reading Guide



THE FINAL TESTAMENT

A Warning from God to the Saved and Lost.

To the Lost: Receive Jesus Now.

To the Saved: Get Rid of Your "Traditions of Men" Before the Soon Coming of Christ.

God's Glory and the Exhortation is an astute and provocative point of view on the ways and follies of the modern church.

Brother Rene speaks God's truth, refusing to bow to the weight of misguided tradition. His work is in line with the great but opposed prophets of the Old Testament as well as the hard-pressed apostles of the New. His writings bear the same weight of divine wisdom to both bless and course-correct the faithful few.

Available for purchase on Amazon and Barnes & Noble



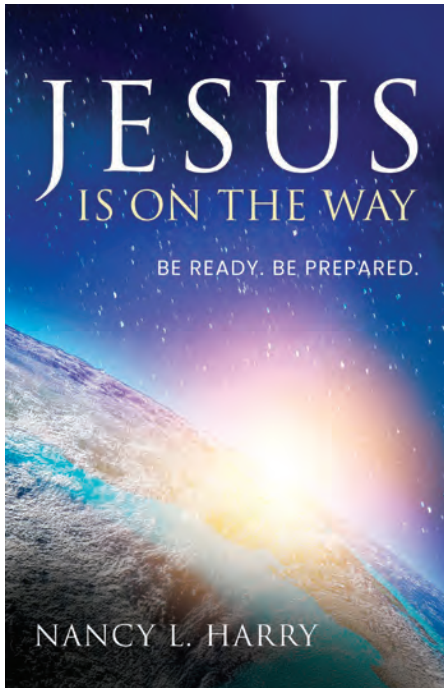
Every Man's Bible

Every Man's Bible is designed to help every man develop a fuller, richer relationship with Jesus by understanding what the Bible says about the challenges men face. It is packed with thousands of notes, trusted advice from the pros, book introductions, one-sentence book summaries, charts, relationship notes, profiles of great and not-so-great men of the Bible, a topical index, and more.

All of the features and notes were written specifically for men. They cover a variety of relevant topics including integrity, courage, temptation, leadership, pride, excellence, work, competition, sex, and beyond.

Discover the bestselling Bible for men at EveryMansBible.com.

PURCHASE YOUR COPY



Don't Be Caught Off Guard. We Are In The Homestretch.

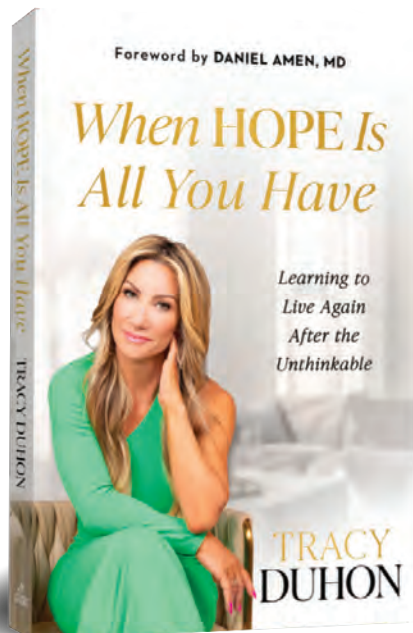
An exciting book that has been a number of years in the making. Is the return of Jesus on the horizon? – Answered by Christ Himself. Will it confirm what He has been saying to you, too? Know His heart concerning His coming.

We are in a day of change. Is the end of our world as we know it around the corner or is a new one on the way? Can we be prepared for what the future holds? This book says we can. Find out how now. There is no time to spare.

God's greatest desire is for us to be ready to greet His Son, our King. Discover what He expects from His church and from you. Learn how to be prepared. You don't want to be left out. Jesus is ready and waiting for you.

Luke 21:31 says "when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near."

[Be Ready. Click Here TODAY!](#)



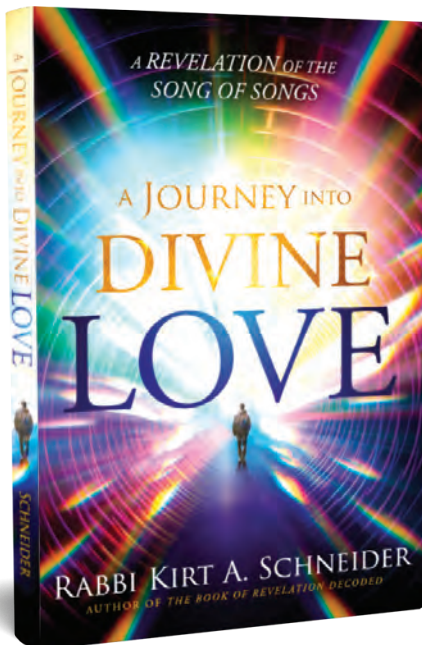
When Hope Is All You Have by Tracy Duhon

What if your greatest pain could point you to your greatest purpose? Tracy Duhon's *When Hope Is All You Have* is about looking back on the moments you cannot imagine you survived, but you did. It is realizing that from the depths of that pain came your purpose. From the depths of darkness, came light. From the place of hurt, came hope. It is the story of unwavering faith and trusting in God, and holding onto a hope that does not disappoint, even when you walk through the unthinkable. With God as your anchor, there is always hope—even during your greatest pain *when hope is all you have*. By reading this book, you will not only gain a hope for your future but also view the world from God's perspective instead of your own. Ultimately, you will witness how God is working all things together for good.

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Refresh Your Spirit

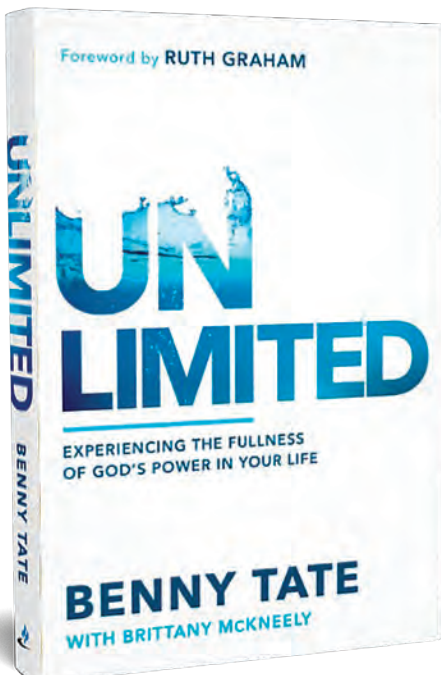
Summer Reading Guide



A Journey Into Divine Love by Rabbi Kirt A. Schneider

What if the point of the cross wasn't just to be saved but to be loved? Rabbi Kirt A. Schneider's *A Journey Into Divine Love* draws from his deep understanding of Scripture to unlock the mysteries of one of the most beautiful portions of God's Word—the Song of Songs. In what he considers one of the most important teachings the Lord has ever given him, Rabbi Schneider will help you discover new depths of intimacy with the Lord to better understand how much God loves you. The Song of Songs (or the Song of Solomon) is not just a poetic love story but also a prophetic message of God's love for His church. Throughout *A Journey Into Divine Love*, you will see the purpose and power behind a deep and meaningful relationship with Christ and find the spiritual refreshment that you need to walk forward in your faith.

MyCharismaShop.com



Unlimited by Benny Tate

After watching God change his entire congregation for the better during a sermon series on the Holy Spirit, Benny Tate is now sharing the satisfaction and joy that comes from a relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Tate shows that when you allow the Holy Spirit to fill and direct your life, everything will change: relationships will be healed, self-esteem will be lifted, purpose will be revealed, direction will become clear, hope will overflow, peace will reign in your heart, and God's goodness and faithfulness in your life will be undeniable!

After seeing God's limitless power and love for them, readers will find true growth and meaning with the Holy Spirit.

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Spirit-Led Living in an Upside-Down World by Stephen Strang

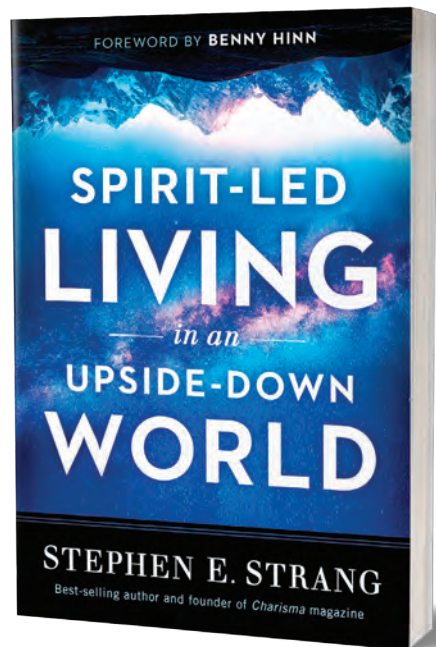
Best-selling author and founder of *Charisma* magazine, Stephen E. Strang's newest book will guide you to walk confidently in the power of the Holy Spirit for a life of abundance and joy. When he was a young newspaper reporter, Strang experienced this power in a way "exceedingly abundantly above" all he could have asked or thought (Eph. 3:20), and you will too.

Sharing stories from his own experience and from dozens of modern heroes of the faith, Strang will uplift you and inspire you to:

- connect with God in new, fresh ways;
- be a powerful influence on your family, friends, and community;
- deepen your faith so you can move mountains;
- learn to be led by the Spirit to uncover your heart's deepest desires;
- overcome challenges and fulfill your dreams and purpose in life.

Regardless of what's happening in the world, you will be able to see how God desires to perfect His will in your life.

SteveStrangBooks.com



The World Is Not Falling Apart. IT IS FALLING INTO PLACE.

The church has been in a slumber, and now, God is calling us to wake up.

With Phil Hotsenpiller's *It's Midnight in America*, you'll see how it's time for the church to let go of fear and embrace biblical and practical wisdom and solutions to help us overcome the challenges of the present and the future.

Now is the moment to embrace our calling and PREPARE FOR THE IMMINENT RETURN OF CHRIST.

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Refresh Your Spirit

Summer Reading Guide



Woodley Wiley Pierre: Starting over in a new world, Woodley Wiley Pierre embodies what it means to be rejected. She is an immigrant who will inspire laughter and love as she takes you along on her journey.

Little RockStar: Come follow Little Star's journey as she discovers her limitless potential—with some loving help from Mama—and transforms into a dazzling Rock Star!

I AM: Adults, grab your kiddos and say, 'I AM!' In this book, kids will be guided through a seven-day journey to discover more about themselves and their connection to God, whom I call Abba.

[Download Now to Get Your Free E-Book](#)

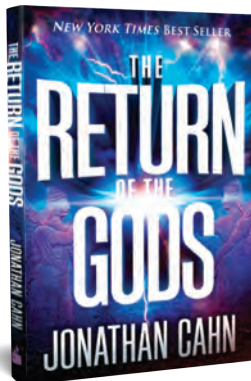
[Click to Add Books to Cart Now](#)



But Ask the Animals and They Will Teach You...

During Jesus's earthly ministry, he employed a teaching practice using parables, telling earthly stories and using them as a means of illustrating profound, divine truths. For those who have ears to hear and eyes to see, a parable is a rich way of illustrating the deeper things of God.

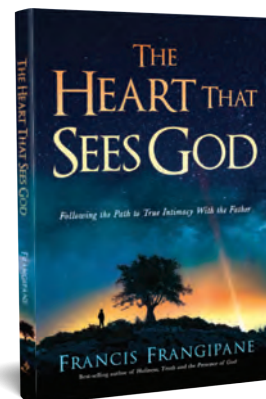
This collection of true stories about horses is both entertaining and insightful. May your ears be open to hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit, teaching and instructing you as you read these captivating stories.



The Return of the Gods by Jonathan Cahn

Are you ready to embark on an **EPIC**, never-before-seen journey to the **ANCIENT PAST**? Eight-time *New York Times* Bestselling author Jonathan Cahn **will blow you away** with *The Return of the Gods*! From the ancient inscriptions in Sumer, Assyria, and Babylonia to the final decisions of the Supreme Court, the **LINK** between **PRESENT** and **PAST** is **undeniable**. The **gods of the old** are not just distant figures, they are **ALIVE** today! Who or what do they affect? **EVERYONE, EVERYTHING, EVERYWHERE**. Be prepared for a rollercoaster of emotions, as you read Cahn's **RIVETING** and **PROFOUND** book.

BooksbyJonathanCahn.com



The Heart That Sees God by Francis Frangipane

What if everything you think you know about the Sermon on the Mount has only scratched the surface? The Sermon on the Mount is more than a list of blessings—it's the recipe to becoming who God created you to be. In this captivating book by Francis Frangipane, revisit Jesus' most famous teaching and discover the amazing life-transforming truths hidden behind the words He shared. As you delve into *The Heart That Sees God*, you'll learn what it looks like to live the authentic, fulfilling Christian life you've always wanted to live.

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CHARISMA





A Small Tribute (October 1986)

I can take you to the exact place, and re-enact the exact scene, where the lights flickered back on in my life.

Twenty of us, from all over the nation, arrived that Sunday afternoon at the huge stone mansion called Wainwright House, located above New York City on Long Island Sound. We were guest of *Guideposts* magazine and had come to attend a week-long writer's workshop.

Normal Vincent Peale, the publisher, and Catherine Marshall, wife of *Guideposts* editor Leonard LeSourd, had planned the workshop. They had asked writers—and writers-to-be—to submit a manuscript. It would be judged, and 20 writers would be selected to attend an all-expense paid week studying under the magazine's editors.

When I spotted the notice in the magazine, it was like Moses seeing the burning bush. Two years earlier I would have passed it by. But during the past 24 months I had been fired from two churches as pastor. The first time was in South Carolina. I had escaped, just one step in front of the T&F Committee (tar and feathers gang), to start over in Florida in another church. There I lasted 15 months and was fired again.

I did the only thing there was to do: I walked through whatever door opened. In this case I submitted a manuscript to *Guideposts*. If no one would listen to my sermons, maybe they would read my stories.

In late September 1967, I received a telegram from LeSourd. (I still have it, framed, on the wall of my writing studio.) Out of many entrants, I, along with 19 others, had been chosen. That night after dinner we gathered in the huge walnut-paneled great room of the old stone mansion. A fire was crackling in the fireplace. Outside the autumn leaves brushed against the leaded glass windows. We sat in easy chairs around the room. All 20 of us. All strangers.

The editors were introduced: John and Elizabeth Sherrill, who had written books I had never read; Catherine Marshall and her husband, Leonard LeSourd. Arthur Gordon, who later replaced LeSourd as editor, was there. So was Van Varner, who succeeded him. But dominating the room was Peale.

I was impressed but struggled with my feelings. For years I had warned others about his writings. I thought of all the times I had stood in my pulpits (before I was fired...) and made fun of his positive thinking. Now here I was—his guest.

Jovial, relaxed, he started by saying, "Since I'm paying the bill, I should find out who you are."

We started around the room, introducing ourselves. Everyone present was a professional; I had never written anything but sermons.

As they listed their credits, I panicked. What could I say? Surely not the truth. It was almost my turn. I whispered to my neighbor, "You go next. I've got to use the bathroom."

I slipped out of the room, too embarrassed to introduce myself as the failure I was.

I waited behind a velvet curtain near the door until Peale was talking again. Only then did I slip back to my chair. I had never felt so lonely. I wanted to go home, but home was even lonelier.

"No one is here by accident," Peale was saying. "You have each been chosen."

*"No man can survive
without hope."*

Then (and to this day I believe he looked straight at me) he said, "Not only did our editors choose you. God has chosen you. He has called you to something greater than you've ever dreamed. Tonight is the beginning of something bigger than any of us can imagine." He said more, but that was all I needed. The lights had flickered back on in my life.

A man can live without faith and love. But no man can survive without hope. That night Normal Vincent Peale gave me hope. My bush was burning.

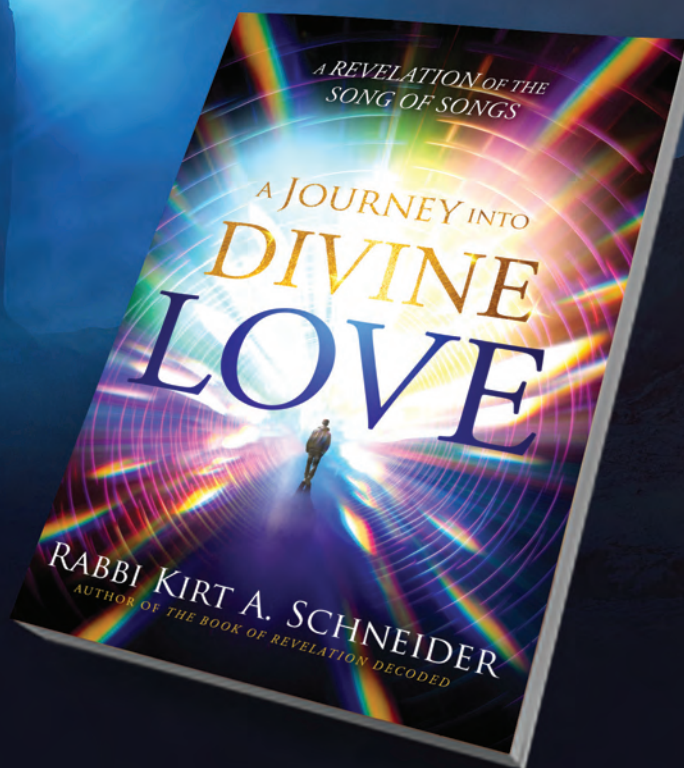
The next afternoon John Sherrill pulled me aside. A New Jersey publisher, he said, was looking for someone who could write a book. He recommended me. I walked through that door, too, simply because it opened. That was the first of 47 books—and the bush burns brightly, still not consumed.

It was Michaelangelo who reportedly said of sculpture, that "the finished form exists within the uncut stone; the sculptor need only release it." That night Normal Vincent Peale picked up mallet and chisel. Looking across the room at a flawed stone, he struck a gentle blow of hope.

I heard the old sculptor was once again under attack by men such as I used to be. This time he was accused of being part of a worldwide conspiracy to seduce Christianity. I do not need to defend him. God, and history, will do that. I just wanted to write this small tribute and say, "For looking beyond the flawed surface to the finished form within, thank you."

Jamie Buckingham wrote 153 columns for *Charisma* over 13 years, first known as "Dry Bones" but later as its most recognized "Last Word." His singular voice was animated by a heart for Jesus baptized in the power of the Holy Spirit in 1967 at a Full Gospel Businessmen's convention. Buckingham provided a steadying force during the scandals of the 1980s, penning the seminal article on the PTL scandal, "God Is Shaking His Church" in May 1986.

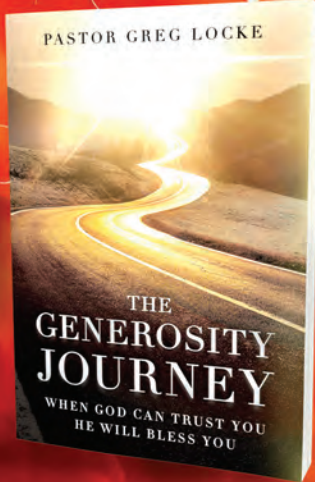
What if the point of the cross
wasn't just to be saved but
to be loved?



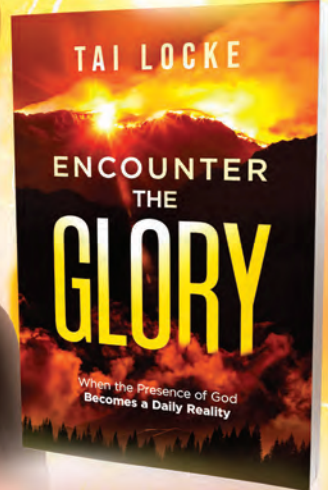
ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL and misunderstood portions of the Bible is the Song of Songs. But what if there's more to this love story than what meets the eye?

In his newest book, Rabbi Kirt Schneider draws deep from his understanding of Scripture to unlock the mysteries hidden in this text. Whether you are seeking to deepen your relationship with God or just want to understand this passage better, you will experience a renewal in your own relationship with God once you read *A Journey Into Divine Love*. You don't have to just wonder about the power of God's love—you can experience it.

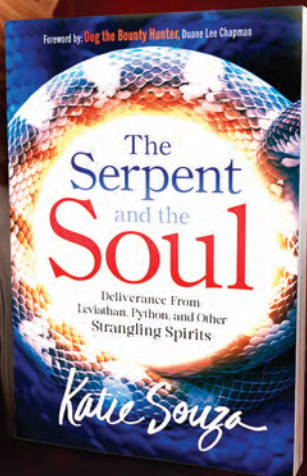
THE GRAND FALL



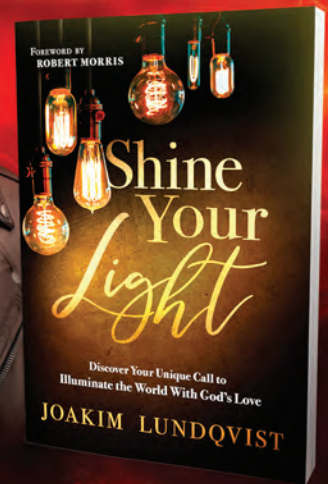
Unlock the secrets of biblical giving as Pastor Greg Locke explores the spiritual principles behind generosity and the incredible blessings that follow when God finds someone He can trust.



We do not need fancier church services, bulletins packed with all the right talking points, or a better worship team. The church of the living God needs to encounter the glory of the Lord—like never before.

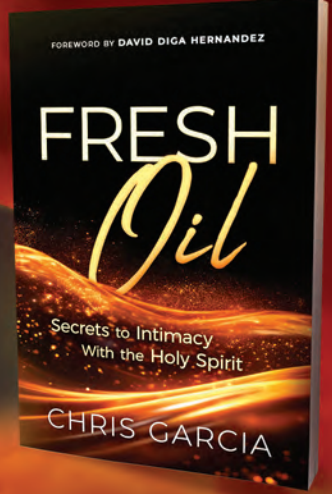
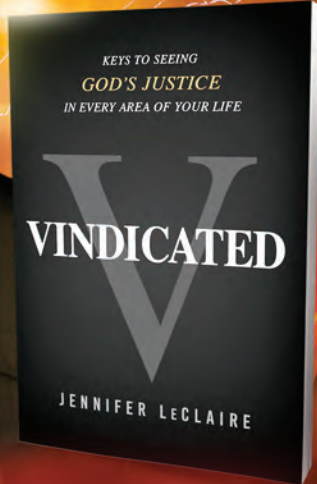


The serpents' deadly grip on your life can be broken through blocking the door to your soul. What awaits you after is God's healing, restoration, and prosperity.



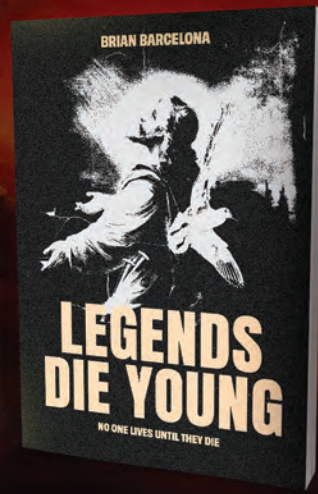
The greatness of God cannot be contained in mere words. It must be shared through the light He's given each of us. Embrace your light! Once you uncover the profound purpose and unique shine gifted to you by God, you will transform the world.

HARVEST 2024

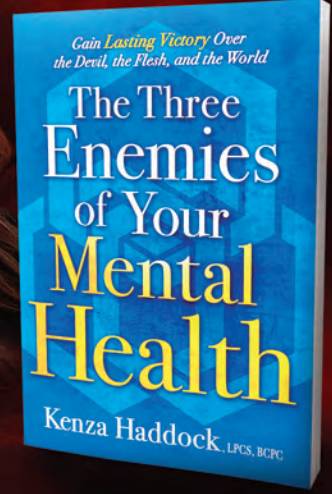


Have you ever been wronged? Even in the face of physical, emotional, and spiritual injustices, God will fulfill His promise and take what the enemy meant for evil and turn it to good for your life.

We are severely lacking fresh oil in our personal fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Be drawn into a greater awareness of God's presence, transforming our churches from famine into abundance.



Every martyr had surrendered long before their ultimate sacrifice, death. Embark on an epic journey, following the lives of brave and selfless martyrs, **who left their marks on the world.**



The link between mental health and spiritual warfare is as strong as ever. Armed with biblical knowledge and practical tools, you can overcome anything – **from evil schemes to fleshly desires to worldly challenges.**

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Surf through Summer with *The Holy Scriptures*

Ready for a
Spirit-filled summer?

CHARISMA MAGAZINE ONLINE is surging forth with exclusive content that will dive deep into the vast sea of Scriptures. Get ready to explore everything from the depths of God's Divine Love to the heights of God's mountain-moving promises.



Don't just go with
the flow. Be part
of the change!

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BIBLE READING GUIDE

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 mycharisma.com/bible-reading-guide/.

"If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."—2 Chronicles 7:14

JUNE

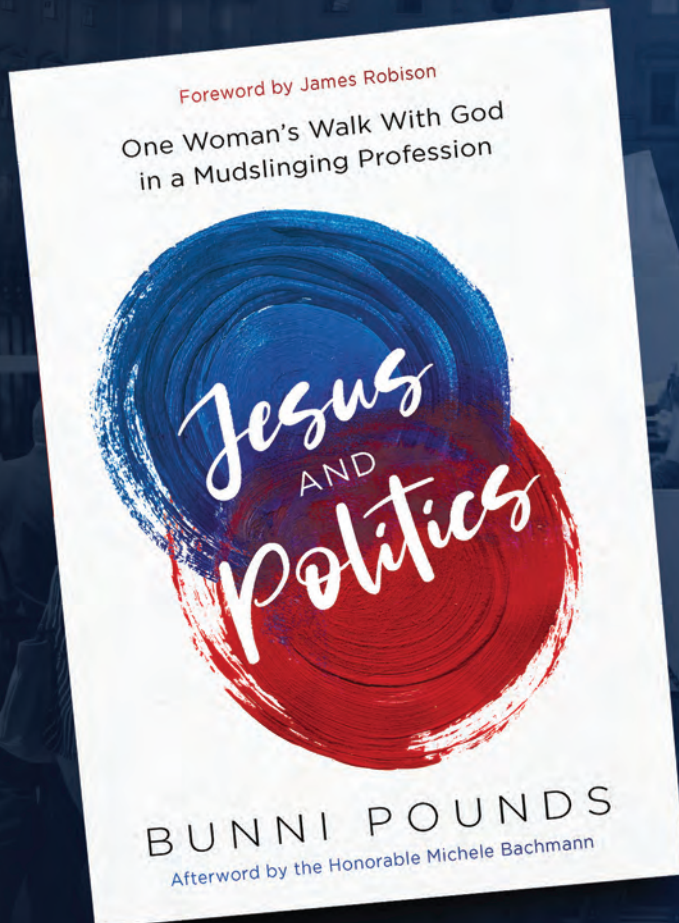
June 1	Prov. 19-21; Rom. 13
June 2	Prov. 22-24; Rom. 14
June 3	Prov. 25-27; Rom. 15
June 4	Prov. 28-29; Ps. 60; Rom. 16
June 5	Prov. 30-31; Ps. 33; Eph. 1
June 6	Eccl. 1-3; Ps. 45; Eph. 2
June 7	Eccl. 4-6; Ps. 18; Eph. 3
June 8	Eccl. 7-9; Eph. 4
June 9	Eccl. 10-12; Ps. 94; Eph. 5
June 10	Song 1-4; Eph. 6
June 11	Song 5-8; Phil. 1
June 12	1 Kin. 12; 2 Chr. 10-11; Phil. 2
June 13	1 Kin. 13-14; 2 Chr. 12; Phil. 3
June 14	1 Kin. 15; 2 Chr. 13-14; Phil. 4
June 15	1 Kin. 16; 2 Chr. 15-16; Col. 1
June 16	1 Kin. 17-19; Col. 2
June 17	1 Kin. 20-21; 2 Chr. 17; Col. 3
June 18	1 Kin. 22; 2 Chr. 18-19; Col. 4
June 19	2 Kin. 1-3; Ps. 82; 1Tim. 1
June 20	2 Kin. 4-5; Ps. 83; 1Tim. 2
June 21	2 Kin. 6-7; 2 Chr. 20; 1Tim. 3
June 22	2 Kin. 8-9; 2 Chr. 21; 1Tim. 4
June 23	2 Kin. 10; 2 Chr. 22-23; 1Tim. 5
June 24	2 Kin. 11-12; 2 Chr. 24; 1Tim. 6
June 25	Joel 1-3; 2Tim. 1
June 26	Jon. 1-4; 2Tim. 2
June 27	2 Kin. 13-14; 2 Chr. 25; 2Tim. 3
June 28	Amos 1-3; Ps. 80; 2Tim. 4
June 29	Amos 4-6; Ps. 86; Titus 1
June 30	Amos 7-9; Ps. 104; Titus 2

The Christian life isn't about doing things the easy way—

it's about living as Christ even in a hostile environment.

Living out the Christian life isn't just a suggestion; it's something we are each called to do. With *Jesus and Politics*, you'll discover how to disciple a nation, one heart at a time by:

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- **Engaging in politics and various spheres of government to protect liberty in America.**



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What if the most beautiful kind of **faith** is the type that has been tested and tried?



As the visionary and cofounder of Daystar Television Network, Joni Lamb has had a remarkable journey. In her new book, *Through the Storm*, Joni candidly opens up about the relentless challenges she's overcome of establishing and growing the network to the personal struggles she's faced. But even in the midst of each obstacle, she unwaveringly sought the Lord to find rest in His goodness and mercy.

Discover how you can have this same resilience and redemption present in your own life and testimony!

