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OUR MISSION



Nashville Christian Family® exists to provide Christians and the community at large with ways to strengthen and grow as a part of the Middle Tennessee Christian Family. This local monthly publication is designed to promote positive living by sharing with readers of all ages relevant and timely news and information related to health, faith, parenting, youth, finances, Christian entertainment, missions, church leaders, and much more.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Gospel of Luke:

Chapter 23

The Death of Jesus

44 "It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three, because the sun's light failed. The curtain of the sanctuary was split down the middle. And Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into Your hands I entrust My spirit." Saying this, He breathed His last. When the centurion saw what happened, he began to glorify God, saying, "This man really was righteous!" All the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, went home, striking their chests.

49 But all who knew Him, including the women who had followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things."

The Burial of Jesus

50 "There was a good and righteous man named Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrin, who had not agreed with their plan and action. He was from Arimathea, a Judean town, and was looking forward to the kingdom of God. He approached Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Taking it down, he wrapped it in fine linen and placed it in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever been placed. It was preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come with Him from Galilee followed along and observed the tomb and how His body was placed. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment."

Chapter 24

Resurrection Morning

1 "On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb. They went in but did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men stood by them in dazzling clothes. So the women were terrified and bowed down to the ground. "Why are you looking for the living among the dead?" asked the men. "He is not here, but He has been resurrected! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third day'?" And they remembered His words. Returning from the tomb, they reported all these things to the Eleven and to all the rest. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them were telling the apostles these things. But these words seemed like nonsense to them, and they did not believe the women. 12 Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. When he stooped to look in, he saw only the linen cloths. So he went home, amazed at what had happened."

Above Scripture taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible

Please take time to worship with your family in the true meaning and spirit of Easter. HALLELUJAH, HE HAS RISEN!!

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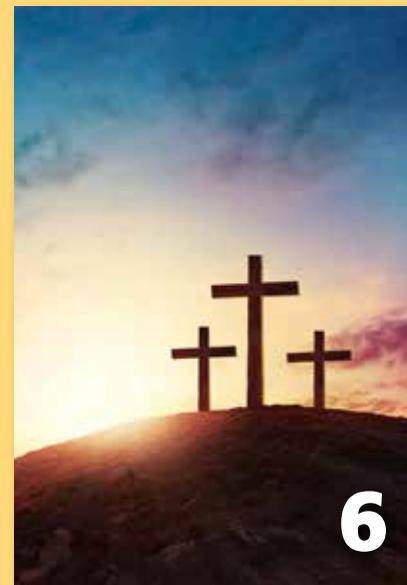
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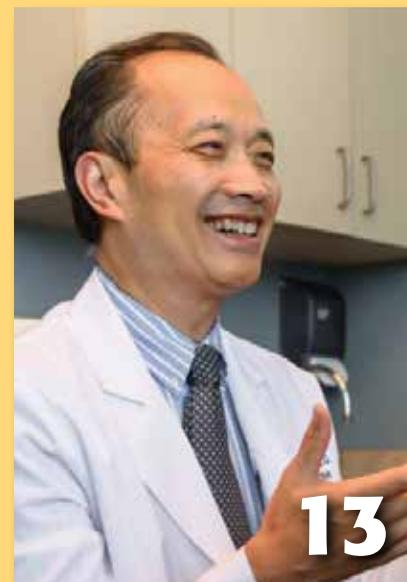
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A Heart to Serve

One of the best things you can do as a parent is encourage your children to serve. From a young age, look for opportunities where they can do something selfless for others.

Lots of research has been done, but very few scientists would say that humans tend toward selfish behavior naturally. The same is true regarding selflessness. While humans may tend toward doing whatever is necessary to ensure survival, how a person gives of them self is learned through relationships. A child does what they see modeled for them.

Selfish behavior is not always easy to identify. When a child takes a toy from another child because they don't want them to have "their things," selfishness is evident. Correction is made, apologies given, but the root is still there. As parents, we bring correction, but we don't always model the behavior we hope to see repeated.

Many children hear the mantra, "Do as I Say, not as I do." That's not the way it works. In truth,



it works like this: child sees; child does; child is corrected. Often, this is where it ends. But without vision, guidance, instruction through example, behavior doesn't change. Children are the greatest privilege of a parent. In them, you glimpse the heart the Father has for His children. You see His love for you.

Throughout scripture, Christ exemplifies a heart of service to those He encountered. He told His disciples that He came, "to serve, not to be served." (Matt 20:28) and, "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." (John 13:15) Christ desires that His followers serve oth-

ers, so He showed us how to serve again and again. It was a constant throughout His ministry. The Gospels are a testimony of His selfless service to all mankind. He didn't simply tell His followers how to live, He showed us.

As parents, if we want our children to be selfless, we should be selfless like Christ. There is no greater example. Teach them to serve. Serve alongside them. They aren't too young or too old. This is the time to start. Encourage them to give as

Christ gave, then show them how He gave. They may surprise you at how easily they adopt the heart of a servant when they see Christ alive in you.

— Toby J. Swager is a husband, father, author of two books, Non-profit director, and a pastor. He currently serves at Connection Pointe Church in Goodlettsville. Log on to his website for more information, www.walkingwithswager.com.

CITY SCENE

Do You See Me Now?

Connecting to God's heart sometimes requires opening our eyes and seeing the neglected, then reaching out in lovingkindness. What does God's Word say about children, poverty, and compassion?

Heavenly instruction became vital for me one Saturday morning in Nashville—my home now, after living most of my life as a Midwesterner. It was my first day attending French class at one of the city's public libraries. The instructor, Dr. Paul Kinshasa, said that I could jump right in. I was anxious to meet this versatile native of The Congo who fills so many roles—library manager, French instructor, missionary, interpreter, author, and translator. After putting the address in my GPS, I discovered the location was not far from Nashville's spectacular downtown. Cranes continually add towering buildings and million dollar living spaces to this vibrant cityscape.

As I got closer, however, the scenery abruptly changed. Across the street from the library was a vast public housing complex I had never seen—perhaps because I traverse the city on somewhat familiar paths. From my car, I saw tilting air conditioners surrounded by warped cardboard, framing small windows. Children played in flowerless yards next to drab dumpsters. This view?! Tourists to the "It City" never see it.

After class, I decided to drive through the maze of limited-access roadways for a closer look. Soon, it was hard to see through the tears. What?! How had I missed this? Even as a woman of color, I confess that I take visitors to the latest chef-inspired restaurants in trendy neighborhoods, down man-



sion-lined boulevards west of town, onto Music Row, and then to historic Jefferson Street—known for historically black colleges, legendary jazz, hot chicken, and ribs. Not here.

Often, God opens our eyes then asks the hard question: So, what are you going to do? How will you help vulnerable people thrive?

Prayer: *Loving Father, speak a word today so that I may see and love those who are distant from my daily encounters, especially the children. Then, lead me to make a difference in those lives, using talents and resources You have so generously provided.*

— Regina M. Prude is an inspirational speaker, SiriusXM radio host, columnist and author. E-mail comments to regina@reginaprude.com; follow her on Facebook (www.facebook.com/reginaprude) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/rprude)

Talent and Joy in the Workplace

At Lee Company, we work hard to ensure our mission statement rings true in everything we do – “To create a place where our employees can thrive.” We know people thrive when their talents are aligned with the work they do.

“The saddest thing in life is wasted talent and the choices you make will shape your life forever.”
Chazz Palminteri, actor, screenwriter, producer and playwright

We all have talents, natural aptitudes and skills, and when we put them to use, we feel joy. Are you using your talents in a way that brings you joy? Are your talents being put to work? Are your talents going to waste? Do you have talents you have not even discovered yet? Talent and joy are inseparable.

What’s holding you back? Fear that you won’t succeed at trying something new? For a lot of us, it could be complacency, and the desire to avoid change. The most complicated space is for those of us who haven’t realized or developed our talents. We need others to help us realize the talents within. We need help and encouragement, coupled with opportunity, and a bit of grace!

Does the company you spend one-third of your waking hours at hold a commitment to invest in your talents? Often, this means offering entry level positions, training programs, and capable mentors to help in the identification



and development of your talents. When you have someone help you navigate your path and bring out your best, joy in the workplace is possible – which could include lateral or upward movement.

We empower some of the finest tradesmen and women in the industry – whether it’s the construction of a high-rise building in Nashville or repairing an HVAC unit in a home in the heat of summer.

Wherever you are in your search for joy or discovering your talents, be sure to check out Lee Company at www.leecompany.com/careers – we may have what you are looking for. Feel free to contact us at careers@leecompany.com.

— Lawrence Evert, Talent Acquisition Manager with Lee Company



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EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE



The one thing that makes us really appreciate spring is that Easter is here! It's hard to believe that Christmas has passed and the earth is awakening from the cold of winter.

Easter is a time for family and renewal. Our family and staff would like to cordially invite you to attend our annual Easter Sunrise Service. This year the service will be on Sunday, April 21 at 7:00 AM. This service has been held at Williamson Memorial Gardens for several decades.

There will be special music and local ministers from various denominations offering words of encouragement. The service typically lasts forty-five minutes so that you will be able to attend your regular church's Easter Service. This year is very special, it is the 60th Anniversary of Williamson Memorial Gardens. Everyone attending this Sunrise Service will receive a special gift from the Stephens family and the staff.

This is a time that families feel comfort with those who have gone before them and to remember loved ones. If you attended a service in the past, you know that it is a heartfelt and uplifting time to help during the Easter season. It will be held outside in our cemetery unless there is inclement weather. If that happens, the service is moved into the chapel of the funeral home. Regardless if your loved one is here at our cemetery or not, we want you to feel welcome to come and join in this Easter Sunrise Service tradition. You will not want to miss this community wide event.

Please visit with our family and the staff of both of our funeral homes, Williamson Memorial and Spring Hill Memorial. There will be coffee and doughnuts served before and after the service.

— The Stephens Family

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The Wonder and History of the Easter Egg



Have you ever wondered why eggs became associated with the celebration of the Resurrection? Me too! So, I went on an Easter Egg History Hunt and traveled back to the year A.D. 1000. It was a dark time in the history of the world. Although the gospel of Jesus Christ had spread to much of the known world, only a few people could read and most had no access to the Bible. Much of their understanding was cloaked in mystery and derived from nature.

Historians tell us that in the regions now known as Northern Europe and Russia, a very strange thing happened. People noticed in the late fall, as the days grew shorter and darker, chickens, ducks and other poultry stopped laying eggs. This meant less food for the long, cold winter. Now, imagine their JOY when these animals suddenly began laying eggs again about the time of the celebration of Passover and of the Resurrection! Today, we understand this coincides with the spring equinox. But, those hungry medieval people had no explanation for it; they accepted the eggs as a GIFT from God! Miraculous food appearing during the hungriest time of the year became intertwined with the idea of new life (just like the Resurrection!). In Russia, this was called “the Miracle of the Eggs.” As a result, Russians make the world’s most beautiful Easter eggs, which are often covered with Christian symbols of life and resurrection.

So, this explains how chicks, baby ducks, and eggs became associated with the Christian celebration of Easter. The eggs were a symbol of God’s provision and a promise of life for another year.

WOW! Isn’t it marvelous to see how God used something as simple as an egg to shine His light into a dark world? Amazing...the natural order of creation reveals the greatness of our God!

So, as you celebrate Easter this year with your children, look for ways to use common decorations to remind them of the NEW LIFE we can have through Jesus. My Miss PattyCake song says, “!-2-3-4-5-6-7...Jesus made a way to Heaven.” You can find my “ EGGSTRAVAGANZA video here, shopmisspattycake.com. Get a DVD, or stream it on any device.

The companion resource is FamilyLife’s Resurrection Eggs (also available on my site, or at Hobby Lobby and LifeWay stores) Using songs that coordinate with the brightly colored eggs, follow Jesus journey beginning with the DONKEY, the CUP for the last supper, PRAYING HANDS in the garden... the CROSS, and the STONE that was rolled away on the Mighty Resurrection Day! The last egg is EMPTY... Jesus grave was empty inside because he’s not dead, He is ALIVE!

— Jean Thomason

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The Trial of Jesus: A Perspective From A Trial Lawyer

This month, as we celebrate Easter, I invite you to pause and consider one important event leading up to the Passion: the trial of Jesus Christ. The Gospels provide four narratives of this trial. Matt. 26:47-68; Mark 14:43-65; Luke 22:47-71 and John 18:3-38. To better understand this remarkable trial, one of the most remarkable in the judicial history of mankind, one must look at the legal underpinnings of the case, and the Hebrew jurisprudence that governed a trial before the Great Sanhedrin – the Supreme Court of Israel in the time of Christ. The following are but a few of the procedural irregularities committed in the indictment and conviction of Jesus of Nazareth.

An Illegal Arrest At Night. Jesus had just celebrated the Passover Feast, probably in the home of Mark on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Scripture tells us that after that feast, Jesus and the eleven went to Gethsemane to pray. At the approach of midnight, a mob led by Roman soldiers, members of the Temple Guard carrying swords and torches, accompanied by Judas, arrest Jesus.

Privately Examined. Jesus was taken to Annas’ house, the brother of the High Priest Caiaphas, and there examined in private – a violation of Hebrew law.

The Proceedings Were Conducted At Night. The trial of a capital case was strictly forbidden at night. The analogy used in the Talmud was like the treating of a wound. Care was required to examine the evidence in the clear light of day.

Court Convened Before The Morning Sacrifice. The Great Sanhedrin convened court at the close of the morning sacrifice and had to conclude before the evening sacrifice.

The Proceedings Were Conducted On The Day Preceding The Jewish Sabbath. Court could not be held on the Sabbath, or a feast day, or any holy day.

Trial Was Conducted In One Day. To assure due deliberation and reflection, particularly where a human life was at stake, Hebrew law required that the trial should last a minimum of two days to allow time for the judges to sleep, fast, meditate and pray.

Sentence Was Pronounced On Uncorroborated Confession. A fundamental principle of Hebrew law prohibited conviction of a crime based solely on the confession of the accused; the law required corroboration by two witnesses.

The Verdict Was Unanimous. A simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilt rendered on the day of trial had the effect of an acquittal. Bear in mind there were no advocates. The judges were deemed the defenders of the accused. Thus, a unanimous verdict meant the accused had no friend or defender on the panel. To the Jewish mind, this was the equivalent of mob violence. Scripture tells us: “And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered Him to Pilate.” (Mark 15:1).

This travesty of justice by the highest court in the land was little more than a political show trial in which a conviction for the capital offense of blasphemy was a foregone conclusion. And while we look back with disdain on this mockery of justice, this historic guilty verdict pronounced upon the One who embodied innocence was but a stepping stone in God’s plan of redemption through the sentence of the cross. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” Ps. 85:10.

— *Larry Crain is a trial attorney specializing in civil rights and constitutional law. He is a frequent speaker on the trial of Christ to church groups and gatherings.*

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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Why 40 Days?

Through the passage of time we can lose the understanding of the relevance of why our ancestors did the things that became a tradition for us. Those observing the Christian calendar find themselves in the season of Lent; a season filled with tradition.



The word lent comes from the German verbiage, "lenctentid" which means the time of lengthening and flowering or Spring. Even before these German Christians gave the name to the season we know as Lent; Christians and Jews followed the lessons taught to us by Moses some two thousand years earlier.

Today, the word "generation" is considered thirty years because of the average period between the birth of the parents and the birth of their children. In ancient times the word was tied to the life span of the father. People lived forty years past their twenty first birthday; this was called a generation. Remember, the Jewish people wandered for forty years in the desert so that the new generation would be allowed into the promise land? This number became associated with the passing from the old to the new. People came to believe that the number was associated with new birth. Today the same can be said about someone who spends forty days changing their habits, a new person will be born to replace the old "generation". Isn't it interesting that an ancient tradition can still hold value today when we apply the ancient truth to each of our three personas; our Personal, Professional and Spiritual lives.

Just as the number forty has meaning so does the number three. During this period of holy observance, as with many natural and spiritual laws, we see the Power of the Wisdom of Three at work. To help us change into a new, more loving creation we are asked to follow the Three Lenten Principles:

- Prayer
- Fasting
- Almsgiving

In today's fast paced, modern society it is harder than it used to be for us to tie all three of these together but that is exactly what we are called to do if we want to change. Any change also requires three things; commitment or motivation, perspective and location. This is what I call the Cycle of the Vision of Life. Our vision, regardless of what it is; requires our Motivation, which in turn changes our Perspectives that then driving our desire to change our Location. This location can be physical, mental or spiritual in nature. Once reached the cycle starts all over again.

The physical, mental, and spiritual visions that we enjoy are unique to where we are in our life, creating internal motivations, forcing a change of perspectives which fuels where we want to be!

My Lenten prayer for you is that whenever you hear the bible stories that reference forty days, months or years, you will be mindful to make positive changes from the old you into the new you. Hopefully, through this year's Lenten observance, the new you will also learn to solve problems by the Power of the Wisdom of Three.

If this is my last post, I want all to know there was only one purpose for all that I have written; to have made a positive difference in the lives of others.

— Anthony "Tony" Boquet, Author of
"The Bloodline of Wisdom, The Awakening of a Modern Solutionary"
www.modernsolutionary.com

HEALTHY LIVING

Be Happy, Be Healthy, Be Whole

How is your weight-loss journey going? We have shared tips on diet and calories in part issues, this month the focus is on adding muscle. Did you know that for every pound of muscle you add to your body you burn an extra 50 calories per day (on average)? It's true!

The really good news is that when you exercise, your body begins turning stored fat into glucose for fuel before it begins breaking down muscle for fuel. This is why high-level athletes can eat so much and still stay sleek.

Take Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps' 12,000-calorie-a-day diet, for example. Because he has such a low percentage of body fat, he has to provide his body with enough fuel or his body will begin breaking down proteins in muscle, since it's pretty much out of body fat to go to for fuel.



Have you ever noticed an ammonia-like smell after working out? That smell is indicative of the protein breakdown that occurs when their new elite, low-fat bodies have begun tapping into muscle for fuel. It generally means that they need to start eating more to make it through the workouts—a problem most of us would love to have! Most of us aren't dealing with the problems of elite athletes trying to get enough fuel; we're just trying to get our bodies to approach that kind of shape.

One popular exercise myth is that if we're trying to lose body fat, we should just do lots of cardio and sweat and burn fat, then build muscle later. That's a sort of "lose weight now, get in shape later" approach. There's some truth there. The more we exercise, the more calories we expend and the sooner our bodies tap into our fat stores for energy. But by building up muscle, in addition to doing cardio activity, we can burn a lot more calories, even while we're at rest, and maximize the calorie burn during cardio. Plus, when the stored fat begins to melt off, there will be lean muscle in its place.

If you aren't sure how to get started or don't think you have the time or equipment to build muscle on your body the crew at Cool Springs MD can help.

What has helped you lose weight? Any tips you would like to share? I welcome your feedback, thoughts and ideas and look forward to sharing them in a future article. You can email me at Doug@94FMTheFish.net or feel free to call me during my live radio show – weekdays between 3 pm – 7 pm on 94 FM The Fish. (800) 826-3637

— Doug Griffin





What Can I Do For Jason?

Jason was born with Down's Syndrome back in 1948. "When I look back at his life, I am so glad I have had so much time with him. He has made my life so beautiful by what I have seen through his eyes. Now, it is time for me to do something meaningful for Jason", remarked Sandy.



I was sitting with Sandy as she told me this story. Jason was her big brother. They had been inseparable all through childhood. Then, Sandy left for college. As soon as she graduated, Sandy made plans and took over the responsibility of caring for Jason so their parents could live out their dream of traveling the U.S. in their RV. For years, Sandy, Jason and their parents lived a comfortable life.

As Sandy and I sat in the coffee shop, she told me she was diagnosed with cancer. It was terminal. Sandy continued by stating her parents were now deceased. She had not expected Jason to live longer than her, due to his condition. She wanted to know how to leave an inheritance for her brother so he could continue to live a good life and have someone care for him.

One of the greatest worries for Sandy was how her brother, living with a disability, would fare after she passed. I was grateful to be able to give Sandy some suggestions that I knew would benefit Jason and relieve Sandy's concerns. My first suggestion was to find a group home for Jason to move into while Sandy was alive. This would give Jason the opportunity to adjust to living away from home and allow Sandy to see how well Jason assimilated to living with others and having others care for him. Sandy said she had thought of doing this, many times, but felt guilty. Now, she knew it was time.

The second suggestion, for Sandy, was to create a third-party supplemental needs trust for Jason. This type of trust would preserve Jason's eligibility for government benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid. I continued by explaining Jason would not own the assets in the trust thereby making eligibility for government benefit programs accessible.

Some items or services that could be paid from the trust would include noncovered or additional medical expenses, alternative therapies, recreational and cultural experiences, a vehicle, clothing and other services or items that would enrich Jason's life, which are not covered under government benefits.

Further discussion, about a third-party supplemental needs trust, carried us through another hour. I explained how the trust is funded with assets belonging to a person other than Jason. In fact, no assets belonging to Jason may ever be used to fund the trust. Third-party supplemental needs trusts are an ideal estate planning vehicle whereby a parent or other family members and friends can leave an inheritance to a loved one or fund the trust while alive, as well.

Sandy's concern for Jason's well-being, after she passed, is a concern many people have for their family member who is living with a disability. Not only would a third-party special needs trust shelter an intended inheritance, it could provide for Jason's lifelong needs, if funded with sufficient assets and managed properly. I added, as Sandy and I finished our coffee, with third-party special needs trusts, there is no Medicaid payback required upon Jason's death; rather, Sandy, who would be creating the trust, decides how the remaining assets are distributed.

Sandy expressed how much this information had relieved her concerns for Jason and his future well-being. Before we left the coffee shop, she said she would be talking with her other family members about establishing a third-party supplemental needs trust for Jason. In fact, she wanted to fund the trust now, before she passed, with some money she had saved. She looked forward to finding Jason a group home that fit his needs. Sandy knew she didn't have much time remaining. She was eager to get started.

For more information, please contact Vista Points, Inc. at www.vistapoints.org or call 615-758-4660.

— *Darlene A. Kemp, MPH, MBA-HCM, Executive Director, Vista Points, Inc.*

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3D Lasik

Dr. Ming Wang, MD, PhD, of Wang Vision 3D Cataract & LASIK Center, Nashville, TN, introduced to the state the latest LASIK technology. Dr. Wang is currently the only surgeon in the state who performs 3D LASIK.

“We were very excited to be the first to perform the 3D LASIK procedure,” said Dr. Wang, a clinical associate professor of ophthalmology for the University of Tennessee and the director of Wang Vision 3D Cataract & LASIK Center, Nashville, TN.

LASIK is a surgical procedure that corrects nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism. Since the advent of LASIK 20 years ago, nearly 30 million LASIK procedures have been performed worldwide. However, despite the popularity of the procedure, the technology itself that has been used for LASIK has remained largely unchanged for many years.

The new 3D image-guided high-definition LASIK represents an innovative improvement of LASIK. Dr. Wang explained, “In a standard LASIK procedure, the surgeon looks through a traditional microscope with the naked eye. What you see is what you get. There is no image processing or signal enhancement. Therefore, since the eyeball is very small, there is limited resolution and accuracy in the surgical procedure. In contrast, with the new 3D LASIK, the surgeon uses the state-of-the-art high-definition microsurgical system. This provides a stereoscopic and digitally signal-enhanced view of the entire surgical field. It allows the surgeon to achieve more precision with the laser focusing on the eye, and thus improves the accuracy of the LASIK procedure and the quality of vision for our patients.”



“The driving force of modern 21st century technology is digitalization. This is more accurate and precise than the traditional analog technologies. Using the 3D LASIK digital signal enhancement technology, we digitally overlap preoperative eye maps and match that with the image of eye in real time during surgery. This gives us unprecedented accuracy and precision to treat eye conditions such as astigmatism. Our 3D LASIK patients have been thrilled with their new vision and we have patients from all over the U.S. and world who have come to Nashville for 3D LASIK”, Dr. Wang added.



About Ming Wang, MD, PhD:

Dr. Ming Wang, a graduate of Harvard & MIT (MD, magna cum laude), is one of the few cataract and LASIK surgeons in the world today who holds a doctorate degree in laser physics. He has performed over 55,000 procedures, including on over 4,000 doctors. Today, he is a world-class eye surgeon. He is the **ONLY** surgeon in the state who performs 3D SMILE & 3D LASIK (18+), 3D Implantable Contact Lens (45+), 3D Forever Young Lens (50+), and 3D Laser Cataract Surgery (60+). He has published 9 major textbooks and a paper in the world-renowned journal “Nature”. He holds several U.S. patents and performed the world’s first laser artificial cornea implantation. Dr. Wang

founded two 501c(3) non-profit organizations, which have helped patients from over 40 states in the U.S. and 55 countries, with all sight restoration surgeries performed free-of-charge. You can reach Dr. Wang at www.wangvisioninstitute.com, or by calling 615-321-8881. ☎

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SENIOR SCENE

Timing Is Everything

Ten steps for Seniors Moving, Downsizing and Simplifying Their World



To move or not to move ... it is a very personal decision and can sometimes bring much angst. There are many pros and cons for either. For the sake of this article, let's say the decision has been made and you want to move! It may have taken years to get here. It is quite possible that you may have lived in your present dwelling for the last 10+ years so there is no need to put unwanted pressure for a timeline of when to move – (e.g., one month, three months or even one year) – start slowly but early – if possible. There are things you can begin to do now without completely disrupting your life ...

- 1) Go out and take a drive around or visit a completely new city – consider the options – it can be exciting to see new developments, new communities and new areas
- 2) It is important to plan your lifestyle. What is your motivation? Do you want to be closer to children/grandchildren? Do you want to live in a home without steps? Do you want to be around an active community? Have the conversations with your loved ones, significant others and friends to discuss your options. This is your decision so be involved.
- 3) Meet with a qualified realtor® – how much is your current home worth? Go “shopping” and consider your options as well as the items that you deem as non-negotiable. Consider retirement communities vs. centers. 55+ developments. Condominium vs. homes, in law suites, etc. Spend the night in a community if possible. See yourself living there and not just visiting. Make a decision on 1st preference, 2nd preference. Your finances will also play a role.

4) It is never too soon to start the de-cluttering process. Keep, sell or give it away – This is one of the hardest steps ... what to get rid of and what to keep. Give yourself permission to let go of your “stuff”. Only have a YES/NO pile. Have family members decide what they would like, get rid of duplicates; eliminate entire rooms that you no longer use. There are many options of estate sellers, professional organizers, etc. (I will be happy to send my recommendations if you will email me).

5) If you are having a hard time letting it go, consider making a scrap book and take photos of the items, what is your favorite? Write about it – when it was acquired – what it means to you. Motivation for keeping? A scrapbook doesn't take up as much space.

6) Make a point to have a place for everything you keep – don't be tempted to get a storage unit where you have to pay a monthly fee to keep the things you do not use.

7) Allow yourself time to grieve and to separate and go through emotions – its okay to cry.

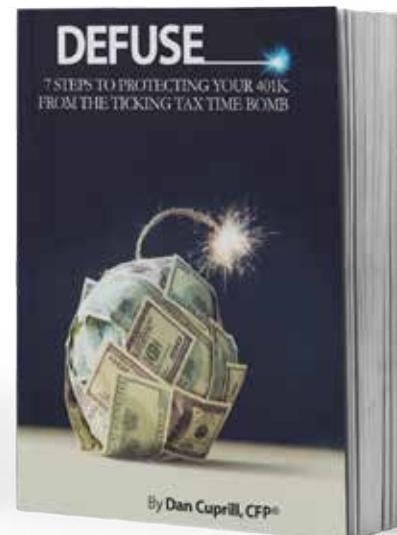
8) Instead of looking at what you are leaving behind – consider the new environment – focus on the positives – maybe it's no more yard work, smaller space to clean, less stuff to deal with, closer to your grandkids, less expensive overhead and many other gains. Focus on the gain!

9) Get excited! Move!

— Rhonda Smart

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Monica Schmelter, CTN, and “People like Us”



Monica Schmelter is best known as the host of Christian Television Network's (CTN's) daily television program, *Bridges*. A project that represents Schmelter's childhood dreams of using television to make a difference in the world, the program goes beyond the typical TV “talk and magazine” shows: It goes to the root of today's challenges and issues and embraces a Christian worldview. Broadcast weekly in over 50 million homes across the USA, its goal is to mend the brokenness of contemporary culture by building connections between God and people. *Bridges* has been on the air for more than 20 years, showcasing the hearts, struggles, and triumphs of Christians living everyday life.

TRAINING GROUNDS

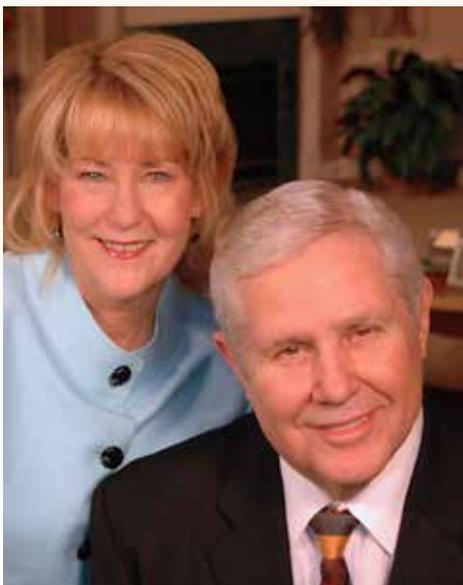
Frolicking in childish play, Monica gleefully announces again and again, “I'm going to be on TV and tell people about God”—odd, since the only thing she knows about God is His name's being used as a swear word. Another bit of her knowledge at this tender age is her family's mastery of the “f” bomb. To her declaration of TV-and-God, Monica's mother, probably wishing to protect her daughter on some level, factually rebuts: “No, Baby, you're not; we're a poor family; things like that don't happen to people like us.” Monica testifies that she becomes a bratty, angry, “f” bombing kid running away twice, skipping school, and flunking every class in seventh grade, but the dream still nestles in the recesses of her little-girl dramas. The one bright spot in her confused life is the little brother the doctors say to institutionalize—her Down's Syndrome brother with heart defects—the brother who greatly influences her life.

Amidst these challenges, God brings to Monica's attention Psalm 2:8: “Ask Me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.” How can that verse possibly become important in Monica's poor and very messy life? In time, God's circle of train-

ing brings nations and the ends of the earth into the little girl's TV-and-God dreams.

“When I first considered studying television in college, I thought God wanted me to be a news anchor,” Monica says. “It was not until I graduated from college that I realized Christian television was God's plan for me.”

Preparation for His ministry continues in Monica's first real work position after college: working with the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries where she heads up the recruitment program and writes copy for volunteers. Even though many folks consider such a position odd and offer negative comments, “Writing radio ads and doing ‘voice-overs’ for the Mission was the ‘icing on the cake’ part of the job,” she remembers. “I recruited volunteers from churches to serve in the Mission's medical and dental clinics and to serve as prayer volunteers in the chapel.” Recalling Monica's background in television, her boss asks her to produce a telethon. Even though “I had no idea how to produce a telethon, I knew God would help me do it.” That experience leads to her next assignment in God's preparation.



Jane and Robert D'Andrea, CTN Founder and President

In one of the planning meetings for the telethon, Monica meets the president of the local Christian television station in Detroit. After those meetings, the president of the station offers Monica a full-time position. The Mission's telethon is a tremendous success, and after lots of prayer and with the Mission's support, she accepts the position. “I loved my early years in Christian television,” Monica says. “I did on-air work, produced shows, and answered the phones. It was God's training ground for my work in Christian television.” She describes that season of her life as “the rebirth of passion in my soul melded with the messiness of WHTN,” the Christian Television Network's Nashville affiliate. When first acquainted with WHTN, Monica hears, “We've never had a female manager; we

don't think much can be done with [WHTN], but will you try to do something?" She decides not to let other people's attitudes affect her and instead clings to "The prayer of the righteous is very powerful in its effect" (James 5:16) and to her belief that there is "no separation between the mainstream and ministry: Work is holy because we are holy. Love God. Love people. My work at WHTN is an extension of my faith and my life. I can't do everything, but I can do what God puts before me. I have to let the rest go."

FROM TRANSITION TO FRUITION

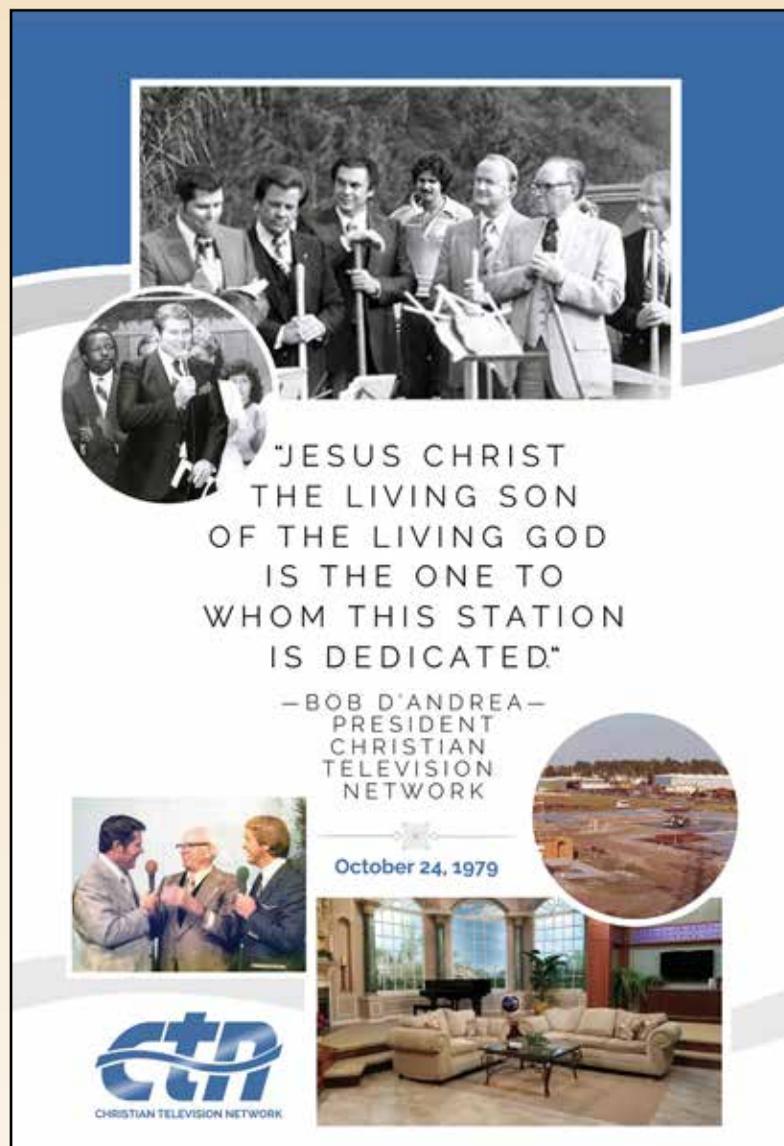
Transitioning to another of God's huge training boot camps, Monica experiences being a stay-at-home mom following the birth of son Joe. Later, along with husband's nudging, God calls her back to Christian broadcasting where she continues to serve as station manager at WHTN.

"I have served WHTN as a volunteer, camera operator, traffic manager, program host, and station manager," Monica says. "I've worked 22 years at WHTN, and it is one of the biggest blessings of my life and career." She feels strongly that Christian media is even more important now than when she first sensed God's call and says: "The world is a dark place, and things are changing rapidly. All people need the hope and truth that Christian television provides. We get calls and emails every single day from people whose lives are changed through Christian television."

Monica summarizes, "Whether I'm praying for a viewer, leading the team, or speaking on television or at an event, I depend on the Lord for strength and wisdom. I have no desire to be hip, cool, or clever. I don't have a brand or a gimmick. I speak God's Word with boldness because of His unconditional love for all people. He is good, and He desires that all people come to salvation through His Son Christ. I don't let ministry or life get more complicated than that." Being guided by Jesus' prayer is crucial for ministry: "I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in Me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as You and I are one—as You are in Me, Father, and I am in You. And may they be in Us so that the world will believe You sent Me" (John 17:20-21). Monica Schmelter says she has learned the fine art of "KISS—Keep It Simple Schmelter—the job is not more important than the people."

CTN—CHRISTIAN TELEVISION NETWORK—CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

According to Bob D'Andrea, CTN Founder and President (1979), "The Christian Television Network is equipped to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to every home in the world by satellite broadcasting, local on-air television stations, and many cable stations. Through television, we present the gospel in unique ways to motivate believers and provide them with helpful information about issues and current events." The philosophy behind WHTN is that "Christ wants us to lead our community to unite, bringing our cities and people together in His name. We want to host a conversation about real ways that believers in this area can be a part of building lasting unity, of bringing together the community of faith in Middle Tennessee." WHTN is part of a much larger network called the Christian Television Network (CTN), which is headquartered in Clearwater, Florida. It has 16 affiliate stations in the United States. Under D'Andrea's supervision, every station has been launched with the following sign-on: "Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is the one to whom this television station is dedicated."



Nashville's CTN has been broadcasting the gospel since June of 1986 and strives to provide programs brimming with unique and wholesome values. These award-winning programs provide families and individuals from all walks of life with the best in Christian television today. Local ministries can even broadcast on CTN-WHTN to give their ministry an expanded platform to reach multitudes with their message. And that's where WHTN Station Manager, Monica Schmelter, enters your ministry, too. She will receive your call.

MESSY TO MEANINGFUL

Messy to Meaningful is a delightful rendition of personal stories depicting what can be learned from our junk drawers—a way to sort through the junk, keep what's needed, throw out what's unnecessary, and move forward less hindered, less weighed down, and more spiritually organized. Powerful truths in God's Word get people to that very place. Looking back over her life, Monica affirms that much of it has been really messy, but even messy can be used by God to help others bridge to a meaningful life.

How long does it take to complete God's training circle? In Ephesians 2:10 God assures us that "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, to do those good works which He has prepared beforehand that we should accomplish." For petite Monica Schmelter, the self-described bratty, angry, "f" bombing kid who ran away twice, skipped school, and flunked every class in seventh grade, "being on TV and telling people about God" expands His circle still. Her circle confirms that when it's God's circle, some things DO happen to people like us. God's circle for Monica epitomizes "discovering your most beautiful life one biblical truth at a time."

What about your circle, your dream that God designs exactly for you?

WHTN is sponsoring its "Keep HOPE on TV" Open House Tuesday, April 9, 2019, 10 AM-1 PM at 9582 Lebanon Road, Mount Juliet, TN 37122. (RSVP: 615-754-0039 or at ctntv.org.) Since it's CTN's 40th Anniversary Year, WHTN wants to celebrate by sharing HOPE stories. Checkout the web site (www.ctntv.org) for inspiration and revelations of God's circle of ministries.

— Sheila E. Moss: author of *Living to Matter: Mothers, Singles, and the Weary and Broken*; *Interrupting Women: Ten Conversations with Jesus*; and *international publications from teaching Bible and Christian ethics in Africa, Ukraine, and Venezuela*; teacher of Bible classes for over 35 years; mother of three daughters and two sons and grandmother of seven granddaughters and four grandsons.



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How to Maximize Space in Small Bedrooms & Closets

Mini, oh my! We as people are often fascinated with tiny things, or miniature versions of the things we're used to seeing. Puppies? Adorable. Babies? So cute! Tiny bedrooms/closets? Not so much. Neighborly has some great ideas to maximize your space in small bedrooms and closets. You can fall in love with tiny spaces!

Keep, Toss, Donate

Just like you'd begin any other organization project, the best place to start is by taking inventory of the items you'll be organizing. Because you're working with very small spaces, this step is more important than ever! It's crucial to eliminate any unnecessary items before you can maximize the minimal storage space in your bedroom and closet.

Need help determining which closet items to ditch? At the beginning of the month, hang your clothes and turn all hangers in one direction. When you wear a piece of clothing, flip the hanger in the opposite direction. At the end of the month, whatever hangers haven't been "flipped" should be evaluated for tossing/donating

Maximize Your Spaces

Once you've thrown away/donated necessary items, you can put things back smarter. Check out the following tips on maximizing the small spaces

in your life:

- **Look Up** – Your square footage might not be anything to boast about, but don't underestimate the power of "up!" Incorporating stacking bins, crates and wall hooks will help you add value to the "vertical" in your bedroom and closet.

- **Tuck Under** – Clear the dust bunnies! Random misplaced objects likely occupy the space under your bed now, but that's about to change. Utilize this valuable space with rolling storage bins to stow away seasonal clothing and shoes.

- **Dress the Door** – Are you getting the most out of your closet and bedroom doors? "Dress" your door for success by adding over-the-door storage systems, such as shoe racks and baskets. Take it Outside – Do you have a covered porch, patio, or balcony? Take it outside! If you have items that could be safely stored outdoors, you'll be able to free up valuable indoor storage space.

- **Work the Wall** – Walls aren't just for décor! Not only can walls serve as useful storage systems, but they can help free up valuable floor space. For example, if you have a short wall inside your closet, hang a towel bar to store scarves. The possibilities are endless!

- **Separate the Shelf** – Do you have shelf space



above the rod? Consider separating the space with shelf dividers. This way, you can compartmentalize your items and more efficiently use the space.

- **Color Psychology** – What color are your bedroom walls? Painting your walls cool, light colors will dramatically open your spaces by making them feel bigger. Mirror, Mirror – When all else fails, add a mirror! Like light paint colors, Mirrors create the illusion of a larger space

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— Ashley Farrar

ENCOURAGING WORD

Spring (And Romance) Are In The Air

Dear friends, I minister at a lot of marriage events. Retreats, married couple gatherings, all kinds of venues where marriages want something fresh to continue stronger, and where budding romances can find constructive encouragement.

I came across this drill that I want you to participate in. Folks were asked to try to summarize their marriage and their romance using just six words. I GOT INSPIRED READING THESE. SO, COME UP WITH YOURS. Send it to mark_simpson53@hotmail.com and (if it is not vulgar!) we will add it to a future publication. Here is some food to get the motor running:

Wife her husband's joy and crown

— Prov. 12:4

Made a wish—she came true

— Anonymous

He's still a first-class male

— Anonymous

The first the last my everything

— Barry White song

Always and forever, forever and always

— Ken & Raye Provencher

A snuggle party can fix everything

— Kristen Bell

What a lady what a night

— (song by the Four Seasons)

Lasting marriage: among the fine arts

— Anonymous

4 great nights: 4 million more?

— Written on someone's Honeymoon

Never stop loving at same time

— Butch & Frieda Prewett

When we fell, we fell forever

— Anonymous

The force is strong with us

— Anonymous Star Wars fan

Three stranded cord not easily broken

— Robbie Parker

Ours, the greatest story ever told

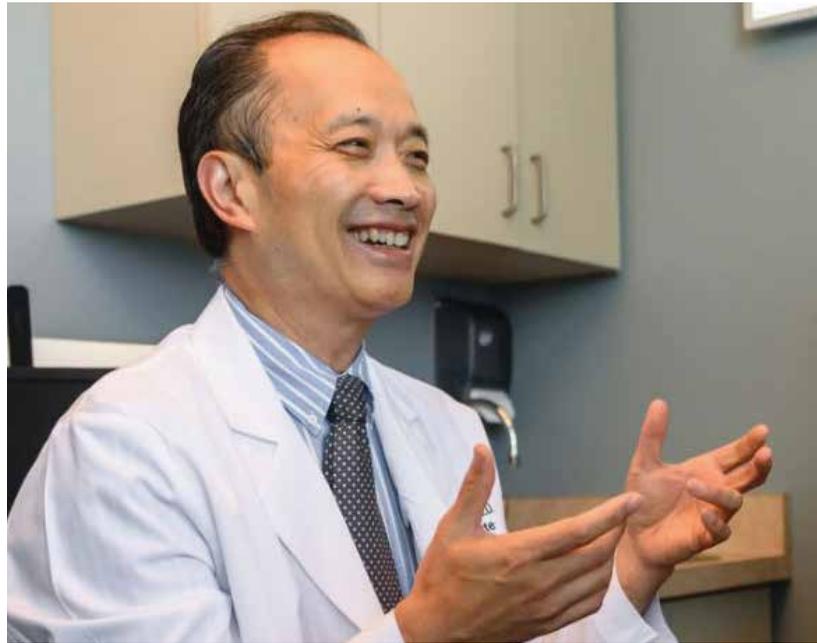
— Anonymous

After all I'd still have you

— Mark Simpson

OK. Got the idea? Go to work and send me those inspiring six-word summaries!!

— Mark Simpson began his ministry as a missionary to Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru's Amazon jungles, followed by 15 years of pastoring churches, returned to world missions almost 20 years ago, where he now trains and mentors pastors and church leaders in many nations through a ministry he directs called River of Life www.RiverOfLifeMinistries.com



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Dr. Ming Wang

*Harvard & MIT (MD, magna cum laude);
PhD (laser physics)*

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drwang@wangvisioninstitute.com



Dr. Ming Wang is one of the few cataract and LASIK eye surgeons in the world today who holds a doctorate degree in laser physics. He has performed over 55,000 procedures, including on over 4,000 doctors. He is called, "The doctors' doctor". Dr. Wang has published 9 textbooks, holds several U.S. patents, and performed the world's first laser artificial cornea implantation

The Never Ending Fight Against (Spiritual) Weeds

I love the tranquility of early morning sunrises. Not a creature is stirring at my house when I slip outside with our Golden Retriever, Dakota, to enjoy a hot cup of coffee.

But then, I see them. Under cover of the morning dew, the enemy infiltrated my fescue seemingly overnight. Weeds. Sometimes they crop up like a single sniper weed and other times it seems an entire weed battalion storms my yard. It's all the usual suspects; you probably know most of them by name even if you aren't sure what they look like. Dandelions. Crabgrass. Dogfennel. Dollarweed. Ground Ivy. Nutsedge. And on the list goes. More than 100 weeds take root in yards across the South every year.

Don't wait; take action!

Have you ever wondered why you don't have to do anything for weeds to thrive? Weeds just inherently take over. It's frustrating, isn't it? Take dandelions for instance. Left untreated, dandelions can develop a taproot that extends 10 to 15 feet and shoot secondary roots that spawn other plants. Even though their leaves die in winter, the plant is alive through its root, waiting to revive itself when the climate is agreeable to germination. It is going to cost you time, money, and effort to eradicate the

weeds in your yard. You've got to keep fighting.

But what have we gained if we eradicate the weeds in our yards but not the weeds in our spiritual lives? Left unchecked, the spiritual weeds – sin – can choke out the life the Holy Spirit gives. Think about it, our natural state is to be dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). It took the Master Gardener, Jesus, to come in and eradicate the weeds through His death on the cross. It cost Him dearly to eliminate the natural cause of our sin. He did it willingly to redeem us.

However, "weeds" still crop up in our lives. Just like weeds pop up in an unmaintained yard, sin pops up in our lives if we don't tend our spiritual gardens. Like the Apostle Paul recounts in Romans 7, we tend to return to our natural selves if we are not moving forward in the gospel and grace of Jesus Christ. The influential English theologian John Owen called it the "mortification of sin," and said, "This renewing of us by the Holy Ghost, as it is called, is one great way of mortification: he causes us to grow, thrive, flourish and abound in those graces which are contrary, opposite, and destructive to all the fruits of the flesh, and to the



quiet or thriving of indwelling sin."

It is a never-ending fight against spiritual weeds. But just as a thriving turf bed chokes out weeds and won't let them take root, a thriving spiritual life directed by the Holy Spirit chokes out sin while also producing the healthy spiritual fruit that allows us to thrive in Christ (Galatians 5).

How about you? How's your spiritual garden growing? Attack those weeds and allow the Holy Spirit to fertilize your soul with the goodness of the gospel.

— Chris Turner is Director of Communications for the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board. He and his family live in Franklin where he aspires to make his grass grow green and thick.



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God's Plan For Service: INVESTING IN YOURSELF

This month let's talk about investing in yourself. When we think of investing we tend to think of investing money in something so that there will be good financial return to us. Or we might think of an investment of time and energy in a project in hopes that the project will meet our expectations and return some benefit to us. What about investing in yourself to increase your capability to do the right things at the right time with the right results? How can you invest in yourself? Here are some thoughts.

1. Learn about something that you either don't understand or something in which you have limited knowledge. It could be a course, reading a book, planning an experience, talking to a person, watching something happen or discussing something with a group. It might mean research to write something for others to read. It might mean travel. It might mean creating or restoring something. We tend to learn when we get out of our box and do something constructively different. When you do something different, give thought first as to what you should do that would help you to learn. Then plan to share your new knowledge or experience with others.

2. Volunteer at your church, civic club, local school or some charitable organization. The new experience could give you a new perspective on

many things in life including your perspective of who you are. Remember the television program in which the head of an organization goes to work in his or her organization at the lowest level in disguise? How did that leader's perspective change?

3. Donate some assets like money or possessions to a person or an organization that needs help. Get up close to those receiving it by going there instead of mailing a check to help you understand what they do. Your outlook on life will change.

4. Talk with, not to, people you don't normally exchange many words with in the normal course of events. Stop and ask someone how he or she is doing and listen to what they say. Think about ways in which you might invest in their lives through showing an interest in them or helping them to achieve a goal that is important to them. Include talking to a child or a teenager and listen intently to what they say.

Note that while you are investing in yourself, you are also investing in others. When investing in yourself, it also helps us to come closer to being the person God intended us to be. Yet notice in the suggestions above how much of the activity is reaching out to new information, new experiences, and new people. By reaching out we find new

ways to extend our positive influence in the world. And when we positively impact other people, we magnify our efforts through the positive things that they in turn do for and with others.

An important part of you includes the gifts from God that each person receives. This unique set of gifts makes you unique. Discover how you are unique and then build upon it through education, experiences and contemplative thought. The more deeply you understand your potential and your interests, the greater the probability of discovering a new avenue of life. An investment of time and energy could create a new you. Take the time and energy to invest in yourself to move toward the person God wants you to be and the person who finds joy every day.

— Kenneth Oosting, Ph D

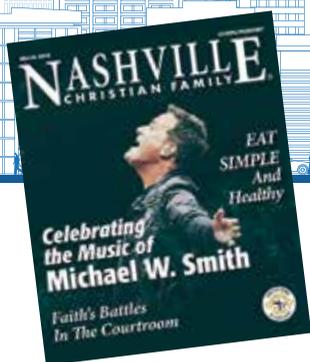


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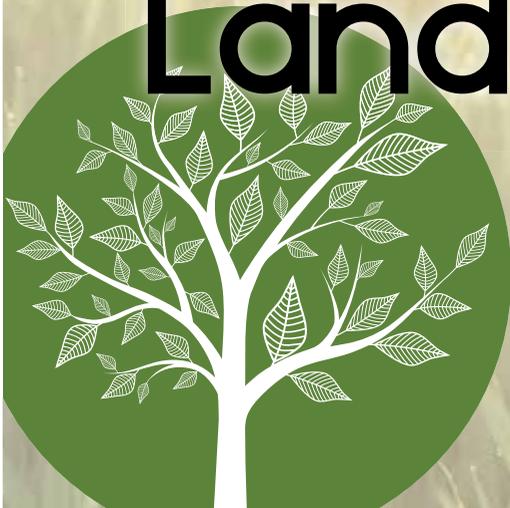
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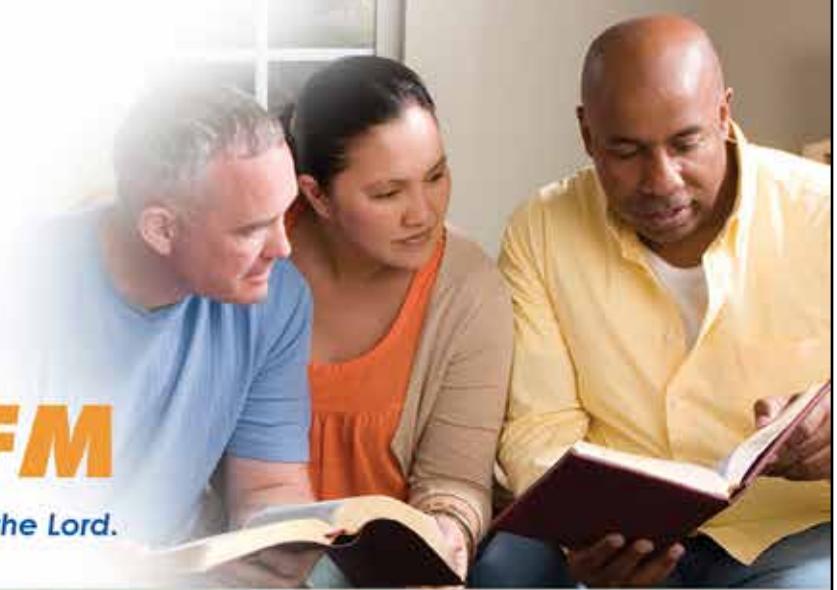


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(from left) Jim Daly, Chuck Swindoll, Anne Graham Lotz, Tony Evans, Alistair Begg, James MacDonald, Crawford Loritts, Ravi Zacharias, David Jeremiah, John MacArthur And More!

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My 8-Year-Old's Discovery Of God In His Passport Points To A Solution For the Battle At the Border

The late television personality Art Linkletter rose to fame and made a fortune by drawing out simple but often profound truths from the lips of unjaded and innocent children. As the host of "House Party" for a quarter-century beginning in the 1950s, the show's popular segment, "Kids Say the Darndest Things," became something of a national sensation.

In a world of polished, prepared and politically-correct sound bites, our children can provide a refreshingly candid, albeit unsophisticated and unvarnished perspective of world events.

At the completion of the long weekend, we had returned to Pearson Airport and began the lengthy check-in process through ticketing, security and finally, U.S. Customs.

This had been Will and Alex's first trip outside the United States and the procedures, along with the questioning from the Custom agents, were new to them. They began to wither a bit in the long line, but the promise of lunch on the other side of the screening buoyed their spirits. The last step complete, Will, who is 8, turned to me and exclaimed, "Man, if it takes that much for them to let me back into my own country, why is everyone so mad at Donald Trump for trying to make it hard for the bad guys to sneak in?"

He wasn't finished.

With our return flight to Denver delayed for two hours, Will asked to look through his newly minted passport. He seemed mesmerized by the novelty of the small blue booklet and gazed at his picture and personal information inscribed inside. But he seemed particularly intrigued with something else.

Recently diagnosed with dyslexia, he asked for help reading the numerous patriotic and inspirational quotes that appear throughout the passport. It sparked meaningful conversation and became a history lesson, right there beside Gate F55. We talked about the importance of honesty (George Washington), free government (Daniel Webster), freedom (Thomas Jefferson), oppressed dreams and equality (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.) and liberty (John F. Kennedy).

But then we turned the page to a quote that's inscribed on the "Golden Spike" that both symbolically and literally connected the west to the east via the completion in 1869 of the first transcontinental railroad at Promontory Point, Utah. It reads: "May God continue the unity of our country as the railroad unites the two great oceans of the world."

Squinting his eyes in the late afternoon sunlight, Will looked up at me quizzically, his nose and lips rolling in unison. "Why would a country that doesn't allow God to be talked about in public schools," he said, "talk about God connecting the tracks of a railroad?" Of course, Will was exactly right, and we proceeded to talk in simple terms about the increasing secularization of the nation, and how years ago, deeply and widely held religious beliefs once helped unite and strengthen the United States – even to the point of invoking the Almighty upon the completion of a cross-country rail line.

"That's crazy and too bad," he said. "I just don't get it."



I couldn't disagree with him. I don't get it either. The freedom to express one's faith, the pursuit of societal unity and the quest for border security are perennial challenges -- age-old battles that are neither unique to the United States nor problems of recent-making. In many ways, though, they are inextricably linked together, a triad of foundational principles upon which the Republic was built and by which it has prospered for nearly a quarter of a millennia.

Conflicts over these principles have led to world wars and a seemingly endless stream of legal flaps and feuds that won't soon end. But in the midst of the bickering and brawling, it might be a good idea to

once in a while stop and step back. Take a fresh look at centuries old conflicts and controversies – and instead see them through the eyes of an 8-year-old boy's innocence – a kid who loves his country and has a heart so big that he'll happily give his Legos and the money in his piggy-bank to anyone who asks.

If we're serious about solving the current battle at the border, if we're truly interested in solutions rather than soundbites and political posturing, we'll acknowledge that the current crisis is rooted in an abandonment of basic beliefs – specifically that laws matter and a disrespect for God always leads to eventual disrespect for others.

Time will tell how Will matures and sees the world a decade or two from now. But until then, I like the purity and simplicity of his perspective – the belief that God should be warmly welcomed in the public square, the nation unified by its founding principles, its borders protected and its agents celebrated and respected for working overtime to keep its citizens safe.

Paul J. Batura is vice president of communications at Focus on the Family and the author of GOOD DAY! The Paul Harvey Story.

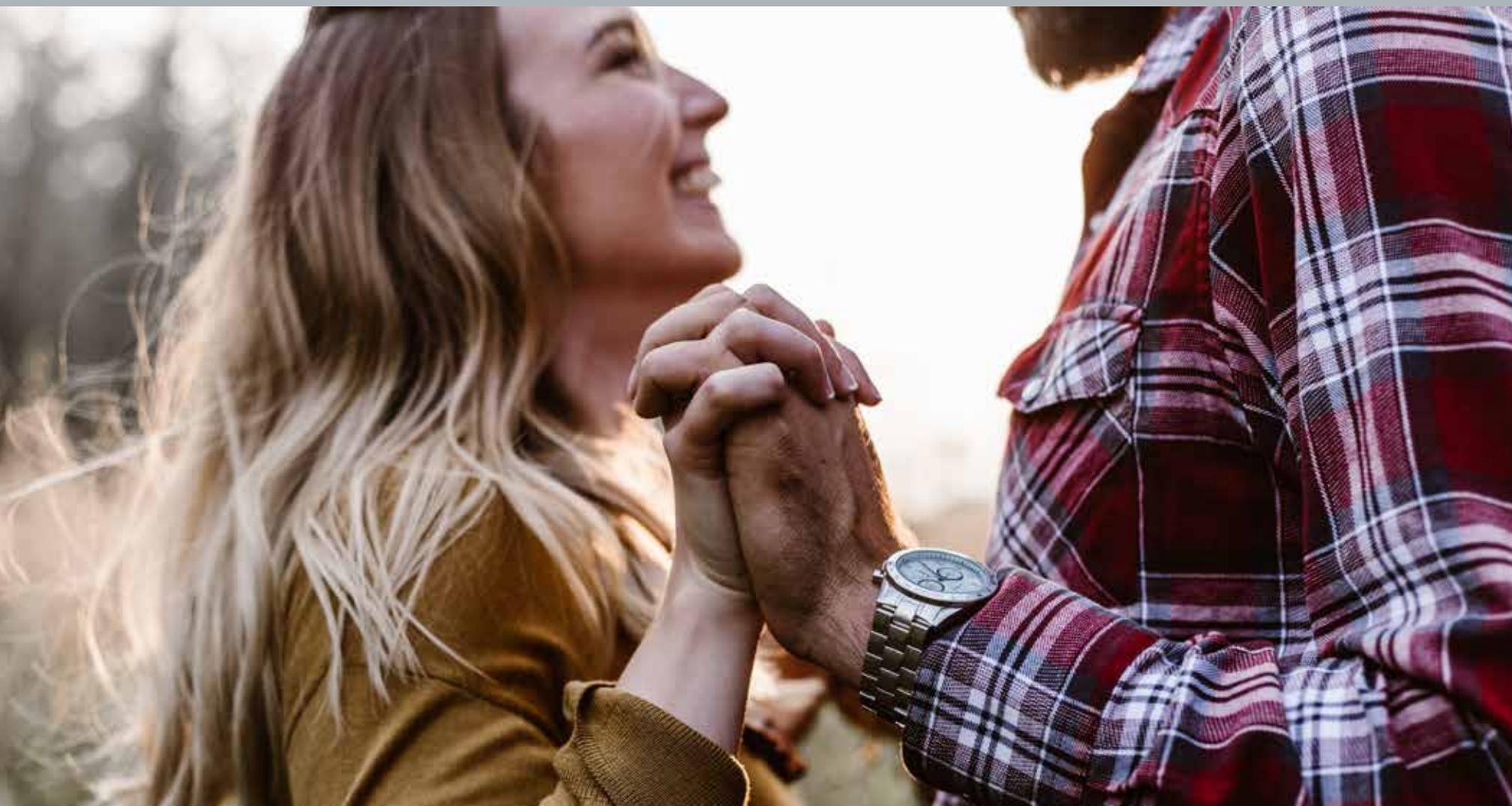
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PLAN OF SALVATION

Has something in the magazine or something you have discussed with someone or some thoughts that you have had or something that you have heard, brought you to a point of realizing that you want and need to know Christ in the truest and personal sense?

God's Plan of Salvation

God created us to honor and serve Him

Revelation 4:11: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist[b] and were created

Each of us has sinned against God

Romans 3:10: As it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one"
Romans 3:23: For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

The penalty for sin is eternal separation from God and Heaven

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Good works cannot ever earn God's forgiveness and Salvation

Titus 3:5: not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

God loves each of us

John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus Christ died on the cross in our place, paying the penalty for our sin

Romans 5:8: But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

We each must accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior

Romans 10:9: that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:13: For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

To accept Christ into your heart and life, pray a simple prayer along these lines - *"Dear God, I know that I am a sinner and I am sorry for my sins. I know that Jesus died for my sins and the sins of the world. Right now, I ask Jesus into my heart and receive Him as my personal Savior. Forgive me of my sins, thank you for saving me through the blood of Jesus. Please Lord, help me live for you. In Jesus name, amen."*

All scriptures are taken from The New King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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THE HOME FRONT

Having to Wait Can Be a Good Thing

With multiple specialty contractors in the market now, it's hard to know what to look for when choosing your waterproofing and foundation contractor. My advice. Do your research but don't be afraid to wait for a company with a longer wait time. If they are busy there is a good reason for it. Most contractors who have been in business for any length of time are in demand. There will be a wait. Most are about a 2-week minimum during one of their slower seasons. Consider the experience and history of the company. How long have they been in business as the current company, some claim tenure of a previous company? Have there been multiple changes of ownership and/or company name? How long have they been offering these services? Is this something they have been doing for a long time or a new service they just started? The contractor should take the time to hear and understand your concerns. He or she will be able to explain the solution and answer all your questions.

Ratings. See what others are saying. How do they measure up? Are the reviews real? Every company that has been in business for a while will have a few less than stellar reviews. So, look and see how the company responds to those customers. Look for the overall picture when you compare all the reviews. Check multiple sites.

Warranty. What happens when something goes wrong? Regardless if the fault is either human error or product error it is important you know the company has your back. Most companies do offer a warranty but pay close attention to the weight of that warranty. There is a difference between a warranty offered by the current company and a nationally backed warranty. The basic warranty offered by a company is only as good as that company name. If something happens to that company or even a name changes the warranty is null and void. A nationally backed warranty protects you even if something happens to the company or its owners. The organization or network they purchase products from will still cover any warranty issues.

Contractor License. A License is important for anyone working on your home. It protects you as the home owner.

Insurance. The dollar amount the contractor is covered for a project is very important especially in larger projects. Your project is only insured for as much as that contractor is insured.

BBB. A credible organization that mandates the company meet specific requirements, will show honest reviews and complaints. Also act as mediator between a business and customer as needed. You can learn a lot about the company a business keeps. Being a part of other organizations within the industry shows invested interest as well as continued education. Networking with these like-minded groups keeps both parties aware of new developments and trends of the industry. The experience of others is a valuable resource. It is important to know that your contractor is using the best products and techniques. Do your research find out who designs their products as well as search for reviews on those products. Are the products outdated or are they exceeding the standards?

Employees. Look at the employees; they should be genuinely happy, enjoy what they do, and truly believe they are providing a valuable service to the customers. Turn over is normal in every industry but tenure and workplace awards are also indicators of a healthy work environment. At the end of the day your contractor should communicate with you, you should feel comfortable and trust them. The contractor should be able to provide a service you feel confident in and make your life easier.



— Brittney Gruffy, Marketing Manager, Frontier Basement System, 615-547-8701

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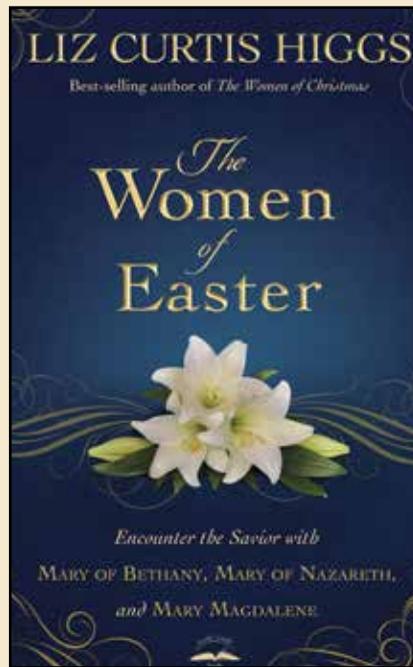
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BEST BOOKS

The Women of Easter

The first person to preach an Easter sermon was a former demoniac. If that isn't scandalous enough, the aforementioned host of seven demons was also, dare I say it...a woman. Mary Magdalene has a powerful, yet mysterious presence in the gospel narratives. While most of the disciples were cowering in fear and hiding from the authorities, Mary was a fortress of faith. She followed Jesus to Calvary, bravely escorting his mother down the Via Dolorosa. She stood before his cross, watching Jesus absorb the entirety of humanity's evil upon himself before he died a shameful death. It is Mary who tells Peter and John about the resurrection, thus making her the first to share the good news of Easter. Women were the last at the cross and the first at the tomb, and Mary Magdalene was at the center of it all.



A study guide is included with *The Women of Easter* which allows you the opportunity to look more intently at the lives of the three Marys and the One they loved.

were beloved insiders, people who Jesus traveled and lived with. They ate meals with him, walked with him, and touched him. They slept in the same house with him, sat at his feet as he described the forthcoming kingdom, and traveled before dawn to anoint his dead body, a task usually reserved for the closest relative.

The silence about these leading women in the post-resurrection literature of the New Testament is rather strange. What happens to the women after the resurrection is a mystery. But we do know this - when God determined who Jesus would appear to first and entrust with the first announcement that Christ had risen, he did not choose any of the eleven apostles, nor did he select a high priest or a Roman ruler. He chose Mary Magdalene, a woman who loved him enough to seek out his tomb in the darkness, when all hopes were dashed, and faith was dead and buried. He chose the women of Easter.

— Darrel Holcombe

The Women of Easter, by Liz Curtis Higgs, is an inspiring account of three women who were witnesses to the week that changed the world. Mary of Bethany, Mary of Nazareth, and Mary Magdalene are the source for much of the information recorded in the gospels. They were not just followers - they

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April 1-30

Register Now For Wcpr Summer Activities -

Williamson County Parks and Recreation (WCPR) offers hundreds of summer programs for kids and teens. Highlights include art, science, technology, theatre, dance and day camps; plus Boredom Buster and J.E.A.P.S (Junior Excursion Adventure Program) day trips; Summer Day Camp; Camp Will; sports and fitness camps. Camps will be offered at several locations across Williamson County from late May through early August. Online registration and the complete Summer Activity Guide is available at www.wcparksandrec.com.

Summer Jobs Available With Williamson County Parks And Recreation -

The Williamson County Parks and Recreation Department is accepting applications for temporary/seasonal jobs for summer 2019. Temporary, part-time positions are available in several divisions. If you are interested in working in the field of recreation, please apply! To apply for a summer job, contact the Williamson County Government Human Resources Department at (615) 768-0192 or visit www.williamsoncounty-tn.gov/jobs.aspx.

April 21 Easter Sunday

**April 30
Celebrating the Music of Michael W. Smith -** Friends and fellow musicians will pay tribute to Smith on April 30, 2019, at the Bridgestone Arena

in Nashville, Tennessee. Celebrating his remarkable 35-year career will include Amy Grant, Bob Goff, Brian Littrell from the the Backstreet Boys, CeCe Winans, Chonda Pierce, Danny Gokey, Donnie McClurkin, Francesca Battistelli, The Gatlin Brothers, The Isaacs, Jars of Clay, Jason Crabb, Jim Brickman, Jordan Smith, Jordin Sparks, Justin Flom, Laura Story, Lee Greenwood, Mac Powell, Matt Maher, Matthew West, MercyMe, Natalie Grant, Newsboys, The Oak Ridge Boys, Phillips, Craig and Dean, Randy Travis, Ricky Skaggs, Russ Taff, Sandi Patty, Scott Hamilton, Vince Gill, Wayne Kirkpatrick and the Original MWS Band, Wynonna and more to be announced soon. For more information and tickets, visit www.michaelwsmith.com.

April 30 "Shine Your Light" Youth Vocal Competition Application Due -

Williamson County Parks and Recreation and Dreams Do Come True Princess Parties will partner together to host "Shine Your Light", a youth vocal competition to benefit Vanderbilt Children's Hospital in honor of Ray of Light. Auditions will be held Monday, May 6 from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Williamson County Performing Arts Center at Academy Park, 110 Everbright Ave., Franklin. The competition will be divided into three age divisions: Youth Ages 5-8; Middle Ages 9-13; Teen Ages 14-18. The audition application and competition rules are available at www.rayoflighttn.com. An application fee of \$30 must be included when application is submitted. Preliminary entries must be received by April 30. The competition will be

Saturday, May 25 at 6:00 p.m. at the Williamson County Performing Arts Center at Academy Park, 110 Everbright Ave., Franklin. Tickets are \$10 and available at www.academyparktn.wcparksandrec.com.

ONGOING

Tennessee Christian Chamber of Commerce - Monthly Luncheon Last Tuesday of every month except December. Connection Groups - Networking/Leads Meetings held in these locations: Brentwood, Cool Springs/Franklin, Downtown, Hendersonville, Mt. Juliet, Murfreesboro. For meeting locations, times and dates or for more information about the Chamber and events, visit www.tnchristianchamber.org or email rstringfellow@yahoo.com.

Healthy Living Potluck - Join us the First Friday of each month for Biblically based Inspiration, Motivation and Information on living a consistent and sustainable healthy lifestyle. For women and men of all ages. Time: 6:30-8:30 pm at the Cloister Community Center, 105 Emma Neuhoff Ct, Nashville, TN, behind St. Henry's church. Cost: \$5 plus a healthy dish to share, bring your recipe! Each month has a topic and a theme. You can find more on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/benourished4life Or email Celeste - thewellnessworkshop@msn.com

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These cutting-edge tax reduction strategies – including Roth IRA conversions, Trusts, life insurance and many other strategies are purposefully underpublicized.

Here's something amazing...

In order to share these strategies with as many Americans as possible, Dan Cuprill has made his latest book, *Defuse: 7 Steps to Protecting Your 401(k) From the Ticking Tax Time Bomb* available for FREE.

As an added bonus, Dan will include his Tax Free Retirement Toolkit, packed with valuable reports, DVD and CD, revealing exactly how you can get as close to paying zero taxes in retirement as possible.

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