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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 GOOD NEWS!

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Happy Father's Day!

Regarding Godly Fathers, Martin Luther said, "Keep an apple beside the rod to give the child when he does well." Discipline must be exercised with watchful care and constant training with much prayer. Chastening, discipline, and counsel by the Word of God, giving both reproof and encouragement, is at the core of "admonition."

Joshua 24:15

"But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

Proverbs 14:26

"He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge."

Luke 15:20

"So he got up and went to his father. 'But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.'"

Proverbs 22:6

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Psalms 103:13

"As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him."

Ephesians 6:4

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord." (NLT)

1 Timothy 3:2 - 5

"Therefore an overseer (Father) must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?"

There are many outstanding Scriptures that reference fathers in one way or the other. The ones above are some that I have found valuable and helpful over the years.

On this Father's Day, we should not only honor our earthly father, but our Heavenly Father as well.

Robert Stringfellow, Publisher, 615-815-8765
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Our Heart. Our Mission. Our “Why.”

It was great to be back in the swing of things at this year’s annual golf tournament benefiting Special Olympics Williamson County (SOWC)! Special Olympics continues to be the leading voice for athletes with intellectual disabilities, and for the last 10 years, we have proudly hosted this event. Shining a spotlight on the good work SOWC does for our community goes back to the heart of our mission, which is creating a place where our people and our communities can thrive.



We are honored to put our time, talent, and financial resources to the service of our community. We work here, we live here, and our goal is to make a meaningful contribution to the people and the communities around us.

And with SOWC’s mission statement, naturally, we’ve happily partnered with them for the past decade! “The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.”

“All of our Special Olympics athletes, families, and coaches, thank Lee Company for providing community opportunities for people to be part of a team, and to grow physically and socially through sports. The partnership between Lee Company and SOWC has benefited 4,000+ athletes through the past ten years,” said Joanne Drumright, Executive Vice President. “In addition to participation in local events and activities, many athletes train and compete in state, regional, national, and world game competitions. Thank you to Lee Company, their vendors, partners, and friends, for providing joy to so many.”

One thing’s for sure, great things happen when we work together! Thanks to our incredible network of vendors, sponsors, and supportive customers, for partnering with us to raise funds for this terrific organization each year. We’re so grateful to the golfers who participate – and to our tireless team of volunteers – we can’t do this without you!

— Emily Bonomo, Brand Specialist, www.leecompany.com

KIDS KORNER

Five Keys to Promote Reading this Summer

“I don’t like to read.”
“Reading is boring.”

As a writer and avid reader, these comments by my son wounded my literary soul. We struggled to get him to read, and he stayed below average in his reading level throughout his elementary school years.

One summer, though, I took my kids to a bookstore and let them pick out whatever they wanted. One of my son’s friends had read *Where the Red Fern Grows*, so he selected that book. A few days later, I heard him crying in his bed. When I asked what was wrong, he showed me that book cover and told me the heart-wrenching ending. I knew we had a breakthrough. Isn’t that what we want for our kids—to read not just for knowledge but for pure enjoyment?



Key #1: Make reading fun. What are your child’s interests? Find biographies about people who do those same things. Consider nonfiction on topics of interest. Create cozy nooks, crannies, and hammocks for leisurely reading. As your kids’ age and the required reading becomes more strenuous, encourage them to read books for pure delight.

Key #2: Make books accessible. For younger kids, keep books in several places and easy to reach. Place a basket of stories suitable for bedtime next to the bed or on a shelf with books at eye level. Consider giving your teenager a budget for books.

Key #3: Let your kids pick the book (you have final approval). Take them to libraries, bookstores, book sales, and discount stores. Suggest they find out what other kids are reading. Encourage your older kids to get a library card and use it. Visit the ice cream store or coffee shop after the book shopping to associate buying books with something fun.

Key #4: Read together. My youngest daughter and I read the *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Little House on the Prairie* series. When my son read *The Help* in school, I read it along with him. We were able to talk about racism and current affairs. Our family would listen to audiobooks on long car rides. We’d ask questions like, “What do you think will happen next?” “How do you think the book will end?” “What do you like or not like about the book?” Without your kids knowing it, you aid reading comprehension and promote critical thinking.

Key #5: Praise your child when you catch them reading. Show interest in the topic. Remember reading a newspaper, magazine, devotional or the Bible is still reading, so ask them what they like about an article or story. Most importantly, cheer them on when they finish a book.

— Sally Cressman writes about faith, family, and home on her website, www.sallycressman.com. You’ll receive FREE “31 Biblical Affirmations for Mom” cards when you sign up. Connect with her on Instagram at @sacressman.

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Lives Changed Through the Programs of The Salvation Army: Meet Jasmine

Last year, Jasmine lost her job and then her housing. She found herself living in her car with her two young children in the middle of the winter. At that point, she reached out for help and was directed to The Salvation Army. Three days after making contact, The Salvation Army called to tell her they had a room ready for her family.



It was a drastic and welcome change from living in their car. Both Erica and her children had their own rooms to sleep in. “I had a sense of joy and calmness come over me. I didn’t have to look over my shoulder. We had a place to call home,” Erica said.

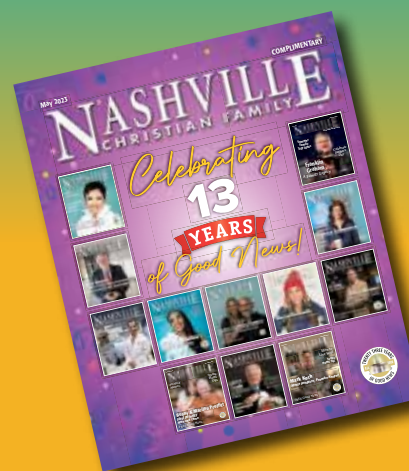
During her family’s time with The Salvation Army, in partnership with her life navigation coach, she was able to pay off her eviction debt, maintain a stable job, and find permanent housing for her family.

“That was the only thing I asked for Christmas – for me and my children to have housing...that’s all I wanted. I’m just so grateful. The Salvation Army helped me in ways that I wouldn’t have imagined – it’s the best place in the world. Everyone pitched in and helped. My family is just so grateful.”

— Misty Ratcliff, Development and Communications Manager,
The Salvation Army, Nashville Area Command
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Have You Ever Had a Life Changing Moment?

Most of us have had at least one moment that changed everything. For me the first life changing moment I recall is making Jesus the Lord of my

life. Truly everything changed once I made that commitment.

Then of course there are other moments – like the birth of a baby – a marriage – graduation – a loss etc. I sat on the Bridges set not too long ago with Sue McGray. Sue authored a book called *Life Changing Encounters and Divine Appointments*. Her book affirms how God is actively present and working in our lives in large and small ways. There are moments recorded in the Bible like the woman at the well. Her life was changed with just one conversation with Jesus.

Her Personal Life Changing Moment

As I talked with Sue, I asked her if she could share a personal life changing moment. She agreed. What I heard next surprised me. Her personal life-changing moment started with forgetting her coat. Forgetting her coat? Yes, that is what I

thought too. But that is exactly how the course of Sue McGray's life changed in just one moment.

Sue forgot her coat at a woman's house. When she talked with the woman – the woman said I will drop your coat off at a church. The church was close to Sue's house so they agreed the woman would drop the coat off and Sue would pick it up. I thought dropping a coat off at a church was odd. Don't you? It was in fact a church that Sue didn't even attend. But Sue went to the church and sure enough there was the coat she had forgotten.

As she picks up her coat Sue begins to sense a drawing of the Holy Spirit. She felt deep in her heart that God wanted her to start attending this particular church. Sue obeyed the nudge. After she started attending the new church her young daughter met a new friend. That new friendship developed into a lifelong friendship. To this day, as adults they do life together. This lifelong friendship all started with Sue forgetting her coat.

It started with something simple

As it turns out Sue's daughter isn't the only one whose life was forever changed by a forgotten coat.

Sue ended up meeting her husband Duane at that church. When we think of life changing moments we tend to think in large dramatic terms. Yet as Sue's story teaches us, a life-changing moment can start with something as simple as a forgotten coat.

Certainly, God is with us in the momentous occasions of our lives. But He is also with us and actively present in the small details. I have heard many stories on the Bridges set and I have enjoyed and learned from all of them. Sue's story spoke volumes to me about how God is always working in our lives. Today's Secret from the Studio is when you sense that small nudge in your life – be quick to obey it. God works through all things (even forgotten coats) to bring about His good plan for our lives.

— *Monica Schmelter, host of Bridges on Christian Television Network, is a recovered fixer and people pleaser. Now, chocolate and grace fill her happy space. Watch Bridges on demand at monicasmelter.com*



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Are You Ready for the Battle?

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."

Ephesians 6:10-11.

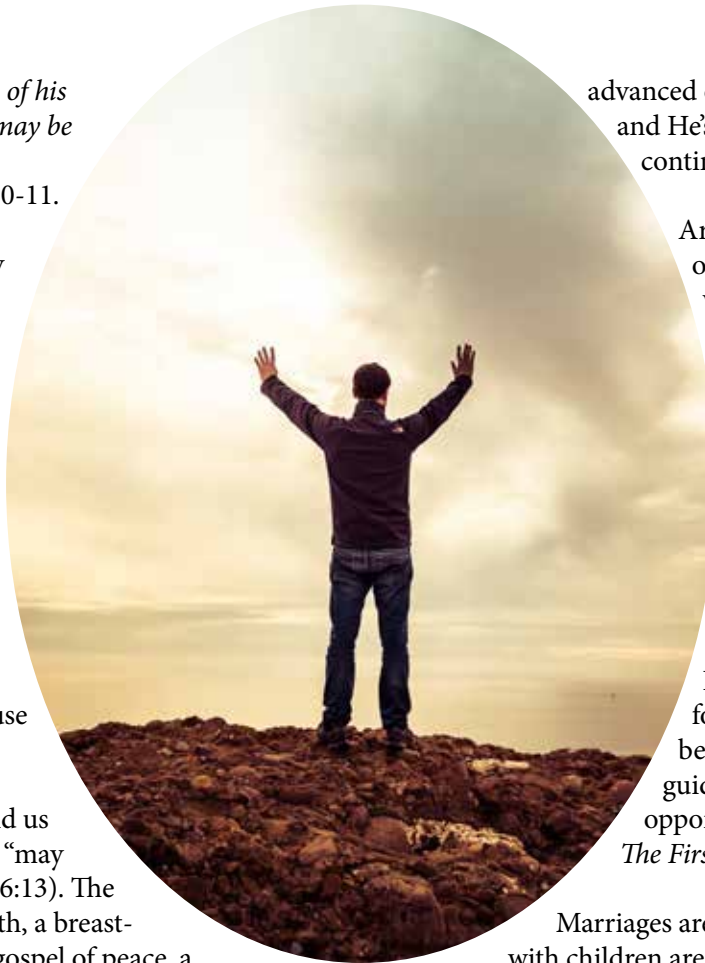
Can you imagine waking up in a war zone every day knowing the only way to survive the next 24 hours is to fight for survival? Fortunately, we live in a country where that's not a reality. Or do we?

The Bible tells us that we fight against powers and the evil forces of Satan that are relentlessly trying to destroy us (Ephesians 6:12). Genesis 4:7 says that sin is crouching at our door and desires to overpower us, and Peter warns us to *"be sober-minded and watchful. Because your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (5:8). Just because we can't see the battle doesn't mean it isn't real.

God knows we're in a battle which is why He told us to *"take up the whole armor of God,"* so that we *"may be able to withstand in the evil day"* (Ephesians 6:13). The armor equips us for battle. We have a belt of truth, a breastplate of righteousness, a readiness given by the gospel of peace, a shield of faith, a helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:14-17).

Notice something about the armor. Everything we are given is designed for the advance. God does not intend us to stand passively by and get routed by the enemy. In fact, He sends us into the world with a specific mission: *"Go and make disciples of all nations"* (Matthew 28:19).

Many American Christians either don't like to talk about the spiritual warfare that surrounds us or are oblivious to it. But think about this, if the spiritual battle wasn't the most significant war in world history, then there would have been no need for the most significant event in world history: The birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The sole reason Jesus entered this world was to defeat our greatest enemy: sin resulting in death. Jesus



advanced on the enemy to claim souls that belong to Him, and He's commanded us to advance in His name to continue that fight.

Are you ready for the battle today? Have you put on the full armor of God? Are you equipped to withstand an assault from Satan against you or your family? Pause now and take a few moments to *"be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might."* Put on the whole armor of God. Then, wake up and do it again tomorrow and every day after that. That way, you will *"be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."*

A Message From The Author:

The Bible tells us that God wants to bless our lives in ways that we cannot imagine. As our Heavenly Father, He wants to fulfill His dream for our lives. So many times we miss God's best because we don't give Him the opportunity to guide and direct us on a daily basis. Giving God an opportunity to fulfill His dream for our lives is what *The First Hour for Men* is all about.

Marriages are being healed, relationships with children are being restored, financial burdens are being lifted, miracles are happening. God is showing up and showing off in all areas of the lives of the men who are earnestly seeking Him and spending their first hour with God daily. God promises to answer the prayers of the righteous who diligently seek him. I challenge you to find out for yourself!

May God begin to abundantly bless you!

— Mark W. Koch is an Author, inspirational and Hollywood Film Producer. To order a Free Copy of, *"The First Hour" for Men 30-Day Journey*, Visit www.thefirsthour.com and use promo code NCF



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Harold Witherspoon, III
Executive Director of Development,
The Salvation Army
Nashville Area Command



Misty Ratcliff
Development & Commu-
nications Manager
The Salvation Army
Nashville Area Command



Father’s Day: A Reason for Celebration

The first national commemoration for fathers took place in a Sunday sermon at William’s Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church South, a small church in Monongah, West Virginia, on July 5, 1908. The sermon was a solemn dedication to 362 men who had perished in the worst coal mining disaster in the nation’s history. Over 1,000 children, most of them from immigrant families, lost their fathers in the massive explosion in the Fairmont Coal Company mines on December 6, 1907.

The next year, in Spokane, Washington, a woman named Sonora Smart Dodd, inspired by a Mother’s Day sermon in her local church, pushed to establish an official equivalent to Mother’s Day for fathers. Raised as one of six children, Sonora held deep admiration and respect for her father. A civil war veteran, he was a single parent to Sonora and her five brothers after her mother died during childbirth. She went to local churches, the YMCA, shopkeepers, and government officials to drum up support for her idea, and was eventually successful: Washington State celebrated the nation’s first statewide Father’s Day on June 19, 1910. Slowly, the holiday spread. In 1916, President Wilson honored the day by using telegraph signals to unfurl a flag in Spokane when he pressed a button

in Washington, D.C. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge urged all state governments to observe Father’s Day.

For those fortunate enough to have been blessed with a loving father, this holiday is a special opportunity one day a year to honor them or their memory. For those less fortunate, who perhaps never had a loving relationship with their father or a father figure, or worse, have only troubling memories of a harsh or abusive father, there is still a reason to celebrate this day.

Have you ever stopped to think about why the Lord’s prayer begins with the phrase “Our Father which art in heaven”? Many pagan religions in the world have female deities. For example, Shakti is one of the most powerful Hindu goddesses and is referred to as “The Great Divine Mother.” Celtic, Egyptian, Greek and several other cultures all worshipped female deities. Why is the Christian religion different?

The Bible refers to God “the Father” simply because that is who He is: He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3). In John 5 Jesus refers to himself as “the Son,” and he also

talks of his “Father” (5:19-23), a reference to God (5:18). Throughout scripture, God’s nature as the creator and giver of life is cast in the context of an all-knowing, all-loving, all-forgiving, all-powerful Father. The imagery of a welcoming father is perhaps best illustrated in the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15. Who has not been prodigal or felt lost or separated from God? As Christians, Paul reminds us that we are no longer slaves, but are adopted sons and daughters, joint-heirs with the Son.

We can call God “Abba Father”, a phrase that Jesus himself used in his Gethsemane prayer as he cried out for strength to face the coming day’s crucifixion. The word “Abba” in Aramaic signifies a close, intimate, endearing relationship between a child and their human father. But ponder for a moment this word in the context of our relationship with our heavenly Father. One who knows all there is to know about us; who formed us in the womb, and yet pursues a close, intimate relationship with us. What a privilege it is for us to be able to run to his arms and cry “Abba Father!”

— *Larry L. Crain,*
www.Crainlaw.legal



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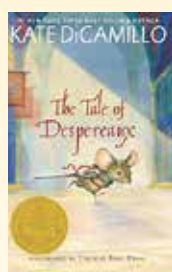
June 22-July 27: Bluegrass Nights at the Ryman

July 21-September 8: Cheekwood Concert Series: Under The Stars

August 11-12: Tomato Art Fest

And if you plan on staying put for a while, take advantage of a complementary market analysis so you can know the current value of your home. It's always helpful to know for financial planning or insurance purposes, or just to know!

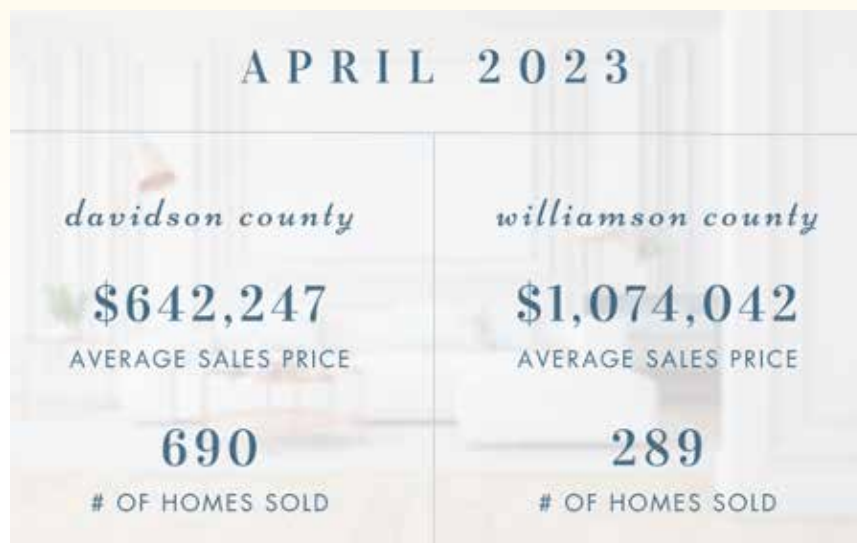
Looking for a good summer read for both kids and adults?



Check out a personal favorite by award winning author Kate DiCamillo: *The Tale of Despereaux*.

Welcome to the story of Despereaux Tilling, a mouse who is in love with music, stories, and a princess named Pea. It is also the story of a rat called Roscuro, who lives in the darkness and covets a world filled with light. And it is the story of Miggery Sow, a slow-witted serving girl who harbors a simple, impossible wish. These three characters are about to embark on a journey that will lead them

down into a horrible dungeon, up into a glittering castle, and, ultimately, into each other's lives. What happens then? As Kate DiCamillo would say: Reader, it is your destiny to find out.



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As a second generation REALTOR®, Sarah Milligan knows the ins and outs of the real estate business. She is a top producing REALTOR® helping buyers, sellers, and investors in and around Nashville since 2007.

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Question: Given your role as an Executive Director of a trust company, what do you think of counseling for special needs trust beneficiaries? Is it a practical thing for them to consider?



Answer: Personally, and professionally, I believe counseling can make a great difference in a person's life. Counseling can help a person to heal from trauma, overcome personal obstacles, and deal with life, in general. Counseling definitely is a practical request to be paid from a beneficiary's special needs trust.

— Darlene A. Kemp, MPH, MBA-HCM, Executive Director
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FELLOWSHIP SERVICE EDUCATION

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As register of deeds for Davidson County--and the first African American and woman to hold that position--Karen Johnson has proven her ability to effectively campaign for political office and succeed as a key member of the county's leadership. She attributes much of her success to her time in Trevecca's MBA program, which not only provided the tools and support to thrive in the political arena, but helped separate her from other candidates to get elected.

In fact, it was Johnson's MBA classmates at Trevecca who first inspired her to consider running for public office.

"I thought my trajectory was ultimately going to be in a corner office as senior vice president of human resources for a Fortune 500 company. That was my dream, but God saw otherwise," Johnson said. "Many of my classmates said, 'we see you as mayor.' Before that I never saw myself in the political arena, especially at the level where I am now."

In her first foray into politics after receiving her MBA, she was named to the Board of Zoning Appeals, the Metro Greenways Commission and the Board of Parks and Recreation. The experience from those appointments has continued to serve her to this day. However, it hasn't all been easy. At one point she ran for an office and lost, but the resilience she had learned at Trevecca kept her going.

"I had learned from my master's program that I had to be relentless and look at failure as an opportunity to improve," Johnson said. "Trevecca taught me that when I didn't do well, I should look at it as a chance to learn and grow, and that is what has propelled me to where I am now, to every level within the political arena."

That relentless spirit served her well, and even when her goal of becoming county register seemed elusive, she was able to fall back on the reputation of her degree and years of service to the community to garner the trust of voters.

"With this election, it was an uphill battle. I had no money, all I had was my MBA and my history of service," Johnson said. "My education was a deciding factor for voters. People saw that I had the background necessary to do an excellent job. That higher education in business made me stand out, no one else who was running had that. The voters put their trust in me to manage this operation and be service-minded, and that came from the knowledge I acquired at Trevecca."

The importance of ambition and education was instilled in Johnson at an early age. It was taught, and lived, by her parents.

"My father had a doctorate and was the chief financial officer at Fisk University and my mother was a librarian with a master's," Johnson said. "I grew up with the idea that the more education you could obtain, the more opportunities there would be available to you. My parents also taught me that no matter what you do in life, the one thing that can't be taken away from you is your education. That always stuck with me."

When she was searching for an MBA program, she explored a range of options and settled on the one that best lined up with her needs. Trevecca met all of her requirements for a school where she could thrive.



"I was looking at multiple universities like Cornell because of their programs in human resources, but when I saw Trevecca's program, I knew that is where I needed to be," Johnson said.

She appreciated that Trevecca was a smaller school that still offered the resources and technology she needed to succeed. Ultimately, her time at the University offered classes and a community that she values to this day.

"I really loved my experience at Trevecca. I loved my classmates, I still keep in touch with many of them," Johnson said. "Many of them have gone on to get their doctorates but I went into the political realm so a master's was perfect for me. I wanted to learn to look at finance and economics and that's what the program gave me."

As register of deeds, Johnson is the custodian of legal documents pertaining to property, but her job extends further. The property attached to those documents reflects the lives of real people, and she is determined to work for the good of all of her constituents, armed with years of public service experience and a degree that has transformed her views on business and service.

"I am very passionate about everybody being able to access a good quality of life. It's my experiences, the support of the people around me and my passion for community and helping people that have ultimately led me here," Johnson said. "In this political space, it is really important to have people who are instilled with that sense of service, and that's something Trevecca does: instill service to others in their whole curriculum. That helped me to grow more than anything."

— Rebeka Warren

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Benny and Marilou Proffitt, Co-Founders
First Priority Global Ministries

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2 Corinthians 4:4 describes it, *“the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they may not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*

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Mark 16:15

Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”

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Learn more about how you can be part of reaching the next generation for Jesus in every nation around the globe.

(Over the next 12 months we will be sharing amazing stories from different countries)



Whoever Wins the Next Generation, Wins

Earlier this year, we returned from training in five countries in Asia.



Pastor Don and his team, in the Philippines, are already in front of over 300,000 youth every 6 months. Their current model of ministry is traditional “Adults talking to Kids.” We trained them in our “Youth to Youth - Peer to Peer” Evangelism and Discipleship Training. They are so excited to add this to their ministry’s mission. Like us, they want every child and youth to hear about Jesus. This is what we experience everywhere we go!

First Priority Global Ministries is launching Student Led Ministries “Peer to Peer Evangelism and Discipleship” In countries around the world. It’s Amazing to see What God is doing In cities and communities In every country around the world.

It’s amazing to meet with Pastors and Youth Ministry Leaders who love Jesus and love the youth of their Nation. They are already committed to reach them for Jesus.

FAITH @ WORK

Be ready to Give an Answer

I recently heard a statement, “Religion is the best place to hide from God”. If you grew up in church like I did, sometimes the lines can get blurred between walking in an authentic relationship with Jesus versus keeping a list of rules.

Not only growing up in church, but more so growing up in church in Nashville which is considered by some to be the buckle of the Bible Belt. As a result, it can be somewhat trendy to be a member of a church or religious organization and unfortunately can cause us to become somewhat immune to the true heart of the gospel.

Relationship is at the heart of Jesus. He has an answer to the problems of the world, not religion. As a Christian, we should be prepared to give an answer when we see hopelessness and despair, not legalism. *“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect”* 1 Peter 3:15 NIV.



We are not called to be “sin managers” – what an unbelievable task religion has created. Instead, we have a hope to offer a hurting world and the Bible tells us to be prepared to have an answer those whose hearts are breaking with many problems and somewhat overwhelming circumstances.

Be willing to offer the hope that we have. A hope rooted in a dynamic relationship with a Living God, not just a list of rules. Let us be able to express, from the Word, why we believe what we believe and always let love be our guide. We have the answers.

If we lead with dogma, we do so in a pharisaical way which will surely turn off a hurting soul however, if we lead with the promises that we believe genuinely, in a heartfelt, sincere demeanor, we could introduce others to Jesus. Be prepared to have a genuine answer

when we see a problem because we do have the solution – don’t hide behind religion.

— Rhonda Smart, rhondasmart@gmail.com



We have traveled to 35 different countries in the last 8 months. We are presently working with 80 countries and First Priority Global is committed to go to every country in the World. Over 2.5 Billion Youth around the world have never heard the True Story of Jesus. We are committed

to do our part to tell Them the Good News of The Gospel.

To accomplish our goal, it will take all of us to reach all of them. Please come and join us on this mission to share Jesus with the Youth of the world. We are not able to disclose the location in some of our photos for the safety of the leaders we are training there. “Whoever Wins the Next Generation, Wins”

— Benny and Marilou Proffitt, CEO, Founders
www.FirstPriority.global



AN ENCOURAGING WORD

Asbury Revival Is A Christian Wake-Up Call: Listen To The Holy Spirit And Expect The Unexpected

I pray that all Christians will be open to spiritual realities like what we're seeing at Asbury University and pray for more revivals around the country. "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working"--Jesus (John 5:17).

I was thrilled to see the Asbury University revival spark chatter on a national level—even NBC News and The Washington Post have done write-ups about this phenomenon. While many Christians, like myself, are overjoyed and inspired by the events that took place at this small college in Kentucky, it is not lost on me that it has also stirred skepticism among non-believers and even many Christians.

As someone whose capacity to accept and embrace the supernatural has grown gradually over time, I understand those people who are on the fence— who want to believe what's happening at Asbury is real, but who have never experienced something like it firsthand and therefore can't fully get their head around it. My prayer is that all Christians, whether on the fence or not, will open their minds and hearts to these spiritual realities and pray for more revivals like this to ignite across the country, so that each of us might have an opportunity to see what they're all about firsthand. After all, some aspects of the Holy Spirit really do come down to how we experience Him on a personal level.

People constantly quote that "God works in mysterious ways," but I'm not convinced we as the Body of Christ have collectively accepted this as a fact, especially when it comes to the Holy Spirit. I often think about the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was first gifted to Jesus's disciples. While they were consumed by tongues of fire and speaking in different languages, certain members of the crowd outside laughed and accused them of being drunk. As believers, our response to the manifestation of the Holy Spirit might not be as brash as this example, but I think it's fair to say that many of us have shied away from the very things that occupied the majority of Jesus's earthly ministry such as healing the sick, and especially the casting out of demons.

I will be the first person to admit that the thought of casting out a demon makes me extremely uncomfortable—but Jesus did it and He commissioned His disciples to do the same through the Holy Spirit, so, realistically, why shouldn't I believe He would want His modern-day Church to embrace the spiritual authority He bestowed upon us? These gaps in our faith as "believers" are the very reason we need revivals like the one taking place at Asbury University.

The brokenness in our society is beyond repair on a strictly human level. We need God more than ever to intervene in ways only He can. I've seen testimonies of people who have been amazed and mystified by things they've witnessed in the past week at Asbury—and while God will always do more than we could ever hope or imagine (Eph 3:20)--part of me longs for a day where the majority of Christians will see God's direct actions in our world today and respond with less shock and more expectation for "even greater things" (John 14:12).

In the hit series portraying Jesus's ministry, "The Chosen," the character of Jesus often says to His followers, "Get used to different." As I continue to



watch the events at Asbury unfold, this phrase comes to the forefront of my mind. Just as Jesus presented Himself very differently from the Messiah the Jews long expected, so too the Holy Spirit often surprises Christians in the way He manifests and works.

His moves might not always feel "comfortable," at least, from the outset, and He might touch people who we never imagined He would. But we must never try to put our infinite God in a box of our finite expectations. The key things we must remember are that where He is, there is freedom (2 Cor 3:17), and such freedom brings the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

It is important to be wise as serpents, testing the fruit of said "moves of God" so that we are never led astray by any demonic influence, but let us also remember Jesus's warning that "unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 18:3).

We must remember God's call to come to Him in humility, seeking to know every aspect of His nature. And we must also have faith that God can, and does, want to use His Holy Spirit in powerful ways in each

of our individual lives. In his book "Hearing God," Christian writer Dallas Willard speaks on the nature of gatherings in the first-century church and how we can look to them as our example today.

Noting 1 Corinthians 14, he writes, "we see that they assumed that numerous people in the congregation were going to have some kind of communication from God which they would be sharing with others in the group...the ancient prophecy of Joel was fulfilled in the early church: "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:17, Joel 2:28-32).

The wish of Moses that "all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit on them" (Num 11:29) is substantially granted in the church of Jesus Christ when it functions as its Lord intended."

There you have it. When the church of Christ moves in faith-filled expectation, we operate in the fullness and reality of His Spirit living and working inside of us. Whether you are a fiery revivalist or someone who is still on the fence about the Asbury University Revival, I pray that you will ask God to show you how you can be more open to the Holy Spirit manifesting in your life. It all starts there.

— Christen Limbaugh Bloom is the co-author of "The Resurrected Jesus" and the creator of Haplous, a Christian blog and Bible study community. Her writing focuses on practical "baby steps" individuals can take while pursuing a deeper relationship with God. Christen lives with her husband, Sam, and their son in Texas. You can follow Christen's blog on Instagram at @haplous_official and her website at www.haplousofficial.com.

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FAITH UNDER FIRE

A Father's Journey; Together Life

I am not sure how many of you know about the Law of Symbiosis. It is a very interesting law that happens all around us every day of our life. The word symbiosis actually means "together life". The law refers to the three types of relationships organisms share that live in close approximation to one another; often one cannot live without the other. In extreme cases, one organism actually lives inside the other organism. This law is the basis of ecology; the study of living organisms and their environment, and it is powered by the wisdom of three.

Relationship one is Parasitism: the parasite benefits and the host is harmed.

Relationship two is Commensalism: one species benefits, the other is neither hurt nor helped.

Relationship three is Mutualism: when both species benefit.

In a family environment we see all three as an evolution from one to another. As we celebrate Father's Day let's examine each separately as they pertain to a father's relationship to the children.

Parasitism is often viewed as a negative way to live life because of the harm the parasite brings to

the host organism. Many times, in life the host organism knows the parasite is harming them but graciously allows the relationship to continue. We can site hundreds of cases where a father selflessly gave his all for his children. When the child is young, this is understandable and is a very natural occurrence. It is only when the child becomes older and knowingly "feeds" off the father's generosity, to the point of his detriment, does this affiliation become a negative situation.

As the child matures into adolescence the relationship should become one of Commensalism. The child should benefit from the father support and developmental guidance while the father is made whole through the results of these efforts. From the father's perspective it is enriching to be able to be a part of the fulfillment of their child's personal development and the rewards are great on many levels while the disadvantages are minimal.

Once the child has matured into an adult, the relationship should have reached a healthy state of Mutualism. The child and the father both benefit from the others existence without harm to either. It is here that the father can observe the start of a new cycle of relationships and the continuation of



his legacy. The child takes the lessons of the father, applying them in their lives while passing them along to the next generation. The one time parasite now becomes host to their children; the cycle of life continues and thrives.

Science proves once more the Power of the Wisdom of Three. It is our God, the Father, through the Wisdom of Three, who gives us the blueprint we need to solve our problems in raising our children. The term symbiosis, "together life", is His explanation of the steps Solutionaries should take in order to teach others the truth.

Happy Father's Day to all the fathers who selflessly leads another along their life's journey with the motto; Together Life.

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, the author of "The Bloodline of Wisdom, The Awakening of a Modern Solutionary"

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MATT MARKINS: TOUGH BEGINNINGS FOR AWANA INNOVATOR

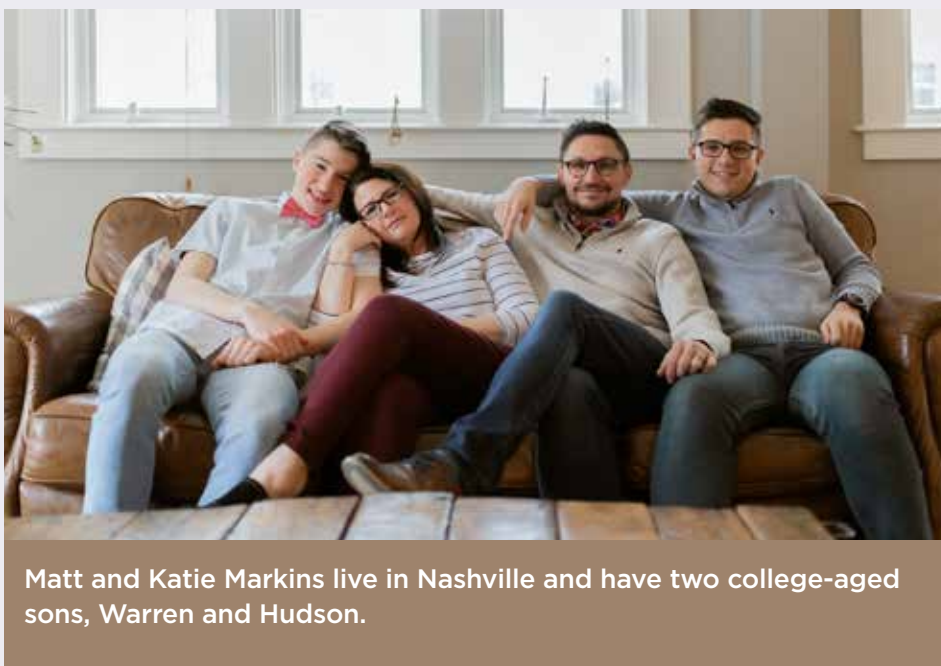
Be diligent to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed, correctly teaching the word of truth.
(2 Timothy 2:15, CSB)

Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed

Much like other children, Matt Markins began a relationship with the Lord at a young age: “One of my earliest memories is the day my father walked out of the house. He had five different marriages that I’m aware of. I remember sitting on the floor with my older brother who had a Little Golden Book—the kind with the gold spine—and he was trying to distract me from the violence of my father’s behavior. It was a rough beginning, but that was part of what propelled me into ministry. Not long after that and not surprisingly, my mother found her way into a local church. One evening the sun was reflecting through the stained-glass windows, and a man with a guitar was singing ‘Jesus Loves Me.’ Even at that young age, I knew that what he was demonstrating was different to what was in my home. I wanted that.” Earthly father walked out, but Heavenly Father walked in. “After my mother married a church-going man, my life pretty much revolved around children’s church, Sunday school, flannel-gram lessons, and youth groups. That very first exposure to Jesus was followed by pursuing Him with adult mentors, kids’ pastors, youth pastors, and people invested in discipling me.”

Markins grew up in the corn fields of central Indiana with his mother, step-father, and two older siblings until he moved to Nashville for college in 1994. For a short stint, he worked with Awana in Chicago until the board approved his moving back to Nashville in 2020. Awana is a world-wide non-profit ministry focused on providing Bible-based evangelism and discipleship solutions for ages 2-18. As the global leaders in child and youth discipleship, Awana gives children the opportunity to know, love, and serve Jesus, no matter their background. The Nashville office opens in 2023.

Today, Matt and wife Katie have two college-aged sons, Warren and Hudson, who attend Welch College, a private four-year college in Nashville and Gallatin, Tennessee, affiliated with the National Association of Free Will Baptists. The mission of Welch College is to educate leaders to serve Christ, His Church, and His world through Biblical thought and life. Markins holds a bachelor’s degree in Intercultural Studies and Theology from Welch College.



Matt and Katie Markins live in Nashville and have two college-aged sons, Warren and Hudson.

Matt and Katie have been involved in children’s ministry for more than 25 years and spend their time in Nashville with their two sons. The boys grew up under the tutelage of parents engaging in conversations and actions surrounding child discipleship, a mainstay in their family and later in their business and ministry association through Awana. As a leading researcher in child discipleship and children’s ministry, Matt has commissioned nine research projects since 2013, including a study, Children’s Ministry in a New Reality, conducted by the Barna Group. He is the co-author of three books, most notably Resilient: Child Discipleship and the Fearless Future of the Church. Markins is also the co-founder of the Child

Discipleship Forum and the D6 Conference. Enjoying travel is a plus for Markins since his missional work with Awana requires much travel nationally and internationally. He serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Awana.

Matt fell into the publishing world through Randall Publishing House via Welch College and then into Thomas Nelson where he “got a lot of knowledge and then came back to Randall House and founded a family ministry, D6 Conference, based on Deuteronomy 6.” The ministry is now 15 years old and is in several countries. D6 focuses on the church and home working together to disciple children.

When Pastor Robert J. Morgan of Donelson Fellowship brought Awana into the church along with D6, Markins developed professional and personal experience with both. He was invited into the Awana environment as Vice President of Marketing, Strategy, and U.S. Publishing. Awana’s vision is that every child would come to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Currently, Awana is happening in 133 countries worldwide through almost 70,000 churches, reaching over 5.3 million kids equipping them toward lasting faith in Christ. No matter where they live, all children need the life-altering hope found in Jesus.

Primarily an innovator, Markins now focuses on “updating and energizing

Awana's somewhat antiquated material bringing it into the twenty-first century with full assurance that it is still founded on the gospel and rooted in scripture." Matt describes Katie as "the most influential, non-paid contributor of the Awana organization for sure; she's my partner in ministry. In all my writings, she's my think partner and has a brilliant mind and a great heart. On the Myer-Briggs Indicator (MBTI), Katie and I are thinkers. This mode serves us well as we dive into options in our life, ministry, and business decisions. We call it mental gymnastics. It's almost like Katie is on the front lines—more so because I travel a great deal—and I'm on the supply lines in the back working in the research space. We're always swapping stories and practical anecdotal information and encounters to help each other.

"We're a good team. We like each other, and we love each other, and we make a pretty good couple. And by the grace of God our two sons are faithfully following Jesus. We're very grateful they love Him and are growing in their faith. We realize they are about to break the family huddle, so this summer we're taking them to one of our special places, Norway, where Katie and I co-founded Awana.

Using life skills, along with on-the-job-training with Katie's dad teaching his carpentry and other skills. Matt appreciates art and carpentry and design. Over the years, he and Katie have renovated their homes, and in 2004-5 even built a house. Matt himself contracted it and says, "we had no clue, no business doing that, but it was the best experience of our lives. Essentially, it taught us how to run an organization and helped prepare me to do what I do now. Then, in 2010, all that area flooded. "Another of our projects was an 1890s house in Chicago where we lived in 2013. Home renovation and building have been a part of our story. Currently, we're working with an architect and have 90 percent renovated our historical home in Gallatin. The theme of building art and craft and beauty has long been in our lives. We think about the parallels between the craftsmanship of discipling a human life and the craftsmanship of building a home. We have poured our lives into both." Add persistence to these thinkers' characteristics.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure is one of Matt's guiding biblical verses: The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy, went and sold all he had and bought that field. (Matthew 13:44 NIV) "The human side of me likes that verse because it's a movie all in one verse. The call to follow Jesus is most valuable because He is that treasure. There's nothing in our lives that we couldn't or shouldn't give up to pursue Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven."

Markins familiarizes that parable with "selling out to Jesus and being totally committed to Him. The major desire of my heart is to be a faithful disciple of Christ regardless of what's happening in the world around me." To that effect he dedicates his life to discipling kids to stand firm in their Christian convictions regardless of their surroundings.

Prayerfully consider meeting with great minds in this year's think tank for the future of discipleship for our children.

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"Influencers. Conflict. Noise. Since there's so much fighting for our kids' hearts, the battle to anchor those hearts to Jesus in a culture that puts everything else first is sometimes exhausting and lonely. Our children are worth it. God's Kingdom is worth it. Whether we're ministers, parents, or volunteers, our kids are looking to us to help them walk in His ways."

This generation is not the first to be challenged in its faith; throughout the Bible and Church history, men and women have courageously followed God even amid persecution. What was different about them? More pressing, how can we rear children with a spirit like that?

There remains the challenge to our greater community to make a decision, to get involved, to actually do something with our concerns for our children. Daily, we hear and see turmoil—even evil—in our schools, libraries, and social encounters. Can we not explore these avenues with some of the greatest minds coming to Nashville? Will we take a step to deal with two prominent questions:

1. What are the dominant cultures today and how are those cultures shaping our children (anything that's pressing in on our children: technology, AI, DEI, gender dysphoria, LGBTQ, etc.). Articulating those things is crucial so that parents and church leaders gain insight into how to help children.
2. What primary factors lead to lasting faith in children?

Engage in Child Discipleship Forum 23 to hear from Bible-minded leaders in child advocacy and learn to cultivate a different spirit in our kids—one of conviction, courage, compassion, and commitment.

Engage with this year's most intentional conversations about child discipleship—the challenges, the joy, and the hope that inspire us to seek better ways to serve the children God places in our lives.

Become equipped and encouraged by thought-provoking content as you process, pray, and worship with others whose hearts are set on shaping kids with lifelong faith in Jesus Christ.

Perhaps this equipping is a step in Jesus' calling you to—or deepening you in—ministry with His children.

— *Sheila E. Moss: author of Living to Matter: Mothers, Singles, and the Weary and Broken; Interrupting Women: Ten Conversations with Jesus; and international publications derived from teaching Bible and Christian ethics in Africa, Ukraine, Venezuela, and England; teacher of Bible classes for 35+ years; mother of five adult children and grandmother of eleven.*



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FAMILY MATTERS

Fathers Come in Many Shapes and Sizes

“Grand” fathers and “Step” fathers and “Biological” fathers and “God” fathers - - these are just a few of the various types of fathers that will be celebrated on Father’s Day this year. There are also uncles, brothers and mentors that have impacted kids in a very special way as well as sporting coaches, band leaders and teachers. No matter what we call the people that played the role of “father” in our lives, their time and investment in our childhood is priceless!

I am grateful for my father, my stepfather, my grandfathers, and a very special college professor who became friends over 30 years ago and we will be friends through Eternity. Each of these men played a role in who I became as a woman. From my father I learned the truth about showing up and working hard. Though my dad lived over an hour away, he always showed up and made a significant effort to be at every piano recital, sporting event, choir performance and dance recital. He made the effort. He also worked very hard and was



great at his job. He loves people and is an extrovert who has never met a stranger. From my dad I have gained many things that I carry forward in my life today.

From my stepfather I learned about laughter – he was always doing crazy things to make me laugh! He was also great at art, and I have several keepsakes he made for me as a kid. From my grandfathers

I learned more than I could say, however, one grandfather always prayed before meals, and I remember that – it was important and is still important now. My other grandfather would play Santa every year in his small farm town and the whole community knew him because of it – he rode in the parade; he went to the library and to the senior citizen homes dressed as Santa and always brought people joy!

And then there is my college professor who was a teacher and a boss while I went to school in southern California – he and his wife both taught at the Christian college I attended and what stood out to

me most about them is how they loved each other and how much they valued their marriage. I was amazed at the depth of how they cared about each other, and it made a life-changing impact on me. I can still remember how he would come into class and bring his wife a flower while she was teaching, and she would bring him an apple or snack he was teaching. They let us all “in” to their love story and let us see, firsthand, what love-in-action looked like. I am grateful for their continued friendship of 36 years!

I want to say thank you to everyone who has taken time to mentor or spend time with someone who is not your child – the love and the influence you share with them can make a life changing difference. To my dad and all the people who have been like a dad, Happy Father’s Day 365 days a year!

— Tammy Daughtry, MMFT, Founder,
Coparenting International and
The Center for Modern
Family Dynamics

www.CoParentingInternational.com



HEALTHY LIVING

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Be Happy, Be Healthy, Be Whole

A monthly column on diet, exercise and my weight loss journey.

Summertime, and the livin’ is easy

Fish are jumpin’ and the cotton is high ...

Can you hear Ella Fitzgerald singing her song “Summertime” in your head? I can. Ella, this month I would alter those lines to read

Summertime, and the temp is too high

The AC is calling, and my exercise routine gone by

Is it me, or is it too hot to exercise?

My family moved to Tennessee 25 years ago, from Northern California and I’ve always struggled with weather being an excuse for exercising. It’s either, too hot or too cold – with just a few days in Spring and Fall being optimal for sweating but exercise is still something we all need to do – year round – so I’m encouraging myself, and you, to get out and move.

Doing a daily radio show, I’m connected to a lot of information and much of that has to do with being healthy and losing weight. Here’s a few interesting reports I found for us to consider.

Most & Least Addictive Foods

The most addictive foods are highly processed, according to a study published in PLoS ONE, a research journal, of what people find hardest to resist. Here’s the list (in order): pizza, chocolate, chips, cookies, ice cream, French fries, cheeseburger, non-diet soda, cake, and cheese. Which foods are the hardest to get addicted to? Strawberries, corn (no butter or salt), salmon, banana, broccoli, brown rice, apple, beans, carrots, and cucumbers (no dip).

No Standing And Eating

One of the easiest ways to lose weight? Don’t stand up when you eat. Accord-



ing to a report in Men’s Health, try to always eat meals and snacks off a plate, at a table, seated in a chair. It helps you pay more attention to what you’re eating instead of simply standing in the pantry and snacking while you decide what to eat.

Not To Scale

This should put a shudder into everyone that’s dieting, according to a report in Obesity Research, a scientific journal, one-quarter of all scales are off by as much as three-and-a-half pounds, and up to half of all scales in doctor’s offices are wrong by at least a pound or

two.

Of course, another big help in weight loss is accountability and NOT going it alone! I attribute my weight loss success to Dr Lodge and the staff at Cool Springs MD. From nutrition counseling to personal trainers and more, you won’t have to go it alone with Cool Springs MD. Dr Lodge and his team are ready to help you with their stated goal for everyone to be “Happy, Healthy and Whole”

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.

— Doug Griffin

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



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

What Kind Of Ant Is This?

Have you ever been in your kitchen and suddenly spotted a tiny black ant crawling on your counter? Or have you ever felt a sting while sitting outside and realized a small, red ant was responsible? These pesky ants can disrupt the dog days of a summer afternoon. Unfortunately, in our humid environment, ants have the potential to become a nuisance and multiply quickly, so it's crucial to identify them to take the correct preventative measures. Here's how to recognize common ants and how to keep them from becoming a nuisance.

Carpenter Ants

Identification: Carpenter ants are typically red, black, or a combination of both, and their length ranges from 0.5 to 0.625 inches. They bore through the wood to build nests, so you may notice sawdust, small holes, and insect parts near damaged wood. Prevention: Carpenter ants are attracted to moisture, so eliminate all sources of standing water. They can enter through small openings, so seal any cracks and holes. Avoid storing firewood near your home.

Odorous House Ants

Identification: Odorous house ants are tiny, ranging from 0.0625 to 0.125 inches, and brown or black. They prefer water sources indoors and wood sources outdoors. They have a sweet tooth, with honeydew being their favorite. These are quite common in the South, where you'll often find them hanging around your bathroom sink or near windows after a storm. Prevention: Odorous house ants use tree branches to enter homes, so trim any tree limbs that hang over your home. Seal any small openings they may use to enter, although they'll find their way in after a rain shower. Keep firewood away from your home.

BUSINESS TODAY

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A New Approach To Health Care

When Dr. Jae Hitson first opened Blue Umbrella Medical Center of Middle Tennessee several years ago, she had a vision of offering our community the most effective and innovative treatment options for our most common chronic conditions (especially arthritis, obesity, diabetes, and heart disease).

Along the way, she developed an amazing team of Medical Doctors, Chiropractors, Physical Therapists, Holistic Physicians, Registered Dieticians, Nurses, and Wound Care Specialists. No longer are you forced to choose your style of medicine or be shuffled doctor to doctor or waiting room to waiting room. Now an entire team is waiting to treat you, and all from one location. All under one Blue Umbrella! That explains the name, but what makes Blue Umbrella so different medically?

Let's start with neuropathy treatment, for example. Neuropathy is a nerve problem that's acute, chronic and crippling. We use cutting edge regenerative treatments to stimulate, reactivate, and regenerate the damaged tissue, resulting in a fast and effective health solution with long term relief!

Then there's our Regenerative Sports Medicine which is protecting our young athletes and restoring our older athletes... keeping them both in the game! By offering comprehensive physical diagnostic evaluations, training on how to compensate for overuse, and using PRP to regenerate any damaged or vulnerable tissues, this can be accomplished.

Knee Treatment: While we have been successfully working with knees for years now, we are incorporating some highly effective additional services to get even better results!

Whole Health Restoration Treatment: Sick and tired of being sick and tired? No energy? Are you experiencing increased joint pain, loss or thinning of hair, brittle or slow growing nails, or changes in your skin? Can't lose weight? These are all signs of underlying conditions. Our Whole Health Restoration Program uses exploratory blood panels to uncover these issues and provides a customized 12-month program to restore you



from the inside out. And, coming this summer, we will be rolling out our WOUNDCARE Program. We will be incorporating biological wound care and hyperbaric chambers to help patients who suffer from unhealing sores, bone necrosis, and open wounds.

These are just a few examples of the innovative, integrated health solutions we provide under the Blue Umbrella Medical Center of Middle Tennessee. Health care doesn't have to be frustrating or ineffective. Using advanced diagnostics and cutting edge treatments, we provide actual relief and results. To learn more about Blue Umbrella Medical Center of Middle Tennessee, visit our website at www.blueumbrellamedical.com, or call 615-610-6937 for a free initial consultation.

"No longer are you forced to choose your style of medicine or be shuffled doctor to doctor or waiting room to waiting room. Now an entire team is waiting to treat you under one Blue Umbrella!"

— Brett Tuttle



Sugar Ants

Identification: Sugar ants are a catch-all phrase for ants that like sweets. Whether they are attracted to the piece of dessert left on your counter or a sweet houseplant, such as an aphid, they can become pests quickly. Prevention: Sugar ants have an advantage in our Southern climate with a long growing season and our love for sweet tea and sweet treats. Make sure you are keeping foods properly sealed and select your houseplant carefully.

Fire Ants

Identification: Fire ants are easy to recognize due to their red color, with a length ranging from 0.125 to 0.375 inches. They build large mounds and sting rather than just bite. Fire ants are among the most despised because their sting hurts both humans and dogs. Prevention: Avoid disturbing fire ant nests and seal any cracks in your home's structure to prevent them from entering. You can pour boiling water or insecticides deep into their nests to try and kill them.

Need a professional?

Ants are a nuisance year-round in our Southeastern climate, and a sighting can quickly become an infestation. You, the kids, and the pups can't enjoy the great outdoors if ants intrude on your yard. If you've tried these preventative measures and still have an ant infestation, seek professional help. At Waynes, we offer environmentally friendly pest control services and strive to give you peace of mind. Contact us at callwaynes.com or 866.WAYNES1!

— Meredith Boyd, Social Media and Marketing Specialist
www.callwaynes.com



FAMILY FLICKS

Sight won the best picture at the International Christian Film Award ICVM

In May 2023, the film *Sight* (based on the autobiography *From Darkness to Sight* of Dr. Ming Wang, Harvard & MIT (MD, magna cum laude); PhD (laser physics), co-starring Greg Kinnear) won the two biggest prizes at the 50th ICVM International Christian Film Award, the best picture and the best feature film! Universal Studios will release the film in theaters across the United States in October.



Sight, starring Oscar-nominated and Emmy-winning Greg Kinnear and Terry Chen (*Almost Famous*, *Falling*), is based on the true story of Dr. Ming Wang, a poor Chinese immigrant, who defies all odds to become a world-renowned eye surgeon in the United States. Set in 1970's rural China, a young Ming faces persecution and despair at every turn, but through the support of his dedicated family and his own unwavering determination, he finds his way to America, attends Harvard and MIT and helps develop an innovative technology that restores sight in millions. Taking on the seemingly impossible challenge of helping a blind orphan, the resilient Dr. Wang must reconcile with his own traumatic past and face the harsh reality that the strength of his own will can only go so far.

About Dr. Ming Wang, MD, PhD

Dr. Ming Wang, Harvard & MIT (MD, magna cum laude); PhD (laser physics), is a world-renowned laser eye surgeon, philanthropist, and a co-founder with Dr. Rice Brooks of the non-profit Common Ground Network.

As a teenager, Ming fought valiantly to escape China's Cultural Revolution – during which millions of innocent youth were deported to remote areas to face a life sentence of hard labor and poverty. He came to America with only \$50 and earned two doctorate degrees, one in laser physics and one in medicine, and graduated with the highest honors from Harvard Medical School and MIT.

The amniotic membrane contact lens, which Dr. Wang has invented (and holds two U.S. patents), has been used by tens of thousands of eye doctors throughout the world in nearly every nation, and millions have had their eyesight restored.

Wang Foundation for Sight Restoration has helped patients from over 40 states in the U.S. and 55 countries, with all sight restoration surgeries performed free-of-charge. Dr. Wang was named the Kiwanis Nashvillian of the Year for his lifelong dedication to help blind orphaned children from around the world.

The film *Sight* is based on Dr. Wang's autobiography *From Darkness to Sight* and co-stars Greg Kinnear.

— Leona Walthorn

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How to Deep Clean Your Floors

Cleaning Hardwood Floors and Keeping the Dirt Out

Unless you adopt a strict no-shoes policy in your home, dirt will get tracked in and onto your hardwood floors. And even if the humans in the house take off their shoes at the door, your pets can't do the same. Follow these simple steps to clean dirty floors, then learn a few easy tricks for keeping as much dirt as possible off hardwoods during the muddy spring season and year-round.

Sweep, Then Vacuum

Start the cleaning process by sweeping your hardwood floor with a high-quality broom with rubber bristles; these bristles prove less abrasive than straw, which can scratch the finish on your floors. Start at one end of the room and move backward, getting into every corner and as far under furniture and appliances as you can. Gather the dust and debris into a pile. Use a vacuum without a beater bar to suck up the pile, then clean the floor again with the vacuum, paying special attention to gaps between boards. Sweep then vacuum at least once a week and spot clean dirty floors when accidents, or muddy footprints, happen.

Clean Only as Necessary

If you regularly sweep, then vacuum your hardwood floors, only spot cleaning should be required. Use a professional cleaner made for hardwood floors and a soft cloth to clean up marks from shoes and toys. Clean sticky messes with a damp sponge or soft cloth. Whatever you do, do not use excessive water, as it can cause the boards to expand and splinter, and do not use wood soap, as it will dull the finish of your floors. If you have laminate floors and not real hardwood, follow the cleaning directions provided by the manufacturer or installer.

Stop Dirt at the Door

Lay down a floor mat at each entry point in your home, both inside and out, and encourage everyone to wipe their feet. Choose a heavy-duty mat that can withstand the elements, such as rubber, for the outside. Opt for a natural-fiber floor mat for the inside; rubber-backed mats can lead to dirt trapped underneath scratching your hardwood floors. Shake the rugs outside when you clean your dirty floors each week.

Keep Your Pup's Feet Clean

Before allowing Spot into the house, give his paws a quick cleaning with a towel or pre-moistened doggie wipes. Keep the towel or wipes in a basket by the door and make paw care part of his walks by cleaning him up outside before taking off his leash. If you live in an area that lends itself to muddy messes year-round, consider investing in a portable paw bath. These canisters have soft bristles inside that you dip each your dog's paws into before letting him inside.

Provide Additional Protection

Prevent other types of damage to your hardwood floors by installing floor protectors on furniture, both heavy and light pieces, and by using window treatments to protect the floors from harsh sunlight during the day. Also, don't forget to trim your pet's nails regularly.



How to Clean Grout: Get the Grime Out of Your Tile Floor

Although grout cleaning isn't the most glamorous topic, it is a vital step in keeping a clean home. Because it is a task that isn't a part of your weekly cleaning routine, it can be easily forgotten. But trust us, there is nothing to fear when it comes to cleaning your grout — well, other than the potential build up of dirt and bacteria your grout might be accumulating. Typical grout needs to be cleaned every four to six months, but can stay clean longer with proper technique and sealant.

There's an assortment of options in getting the grime out of your grout. Homemade solutions include baking soda, hydrogen peroxide, and even shaving cream! Any common household grout cleaner should do the trick as well. But if you have small children or pets, we recommend using oxygen bleach. Oxygen bleach is a non-toxic, fume-free alternative to chlorine that will kill bacteria and brighten your tile at the same time.

Using a spray bottle filled with water, wet your grout. Next, spoon your oxygen bleach along the grout to create a paste-like consistency. If your grout seems particularly stained or dirty, try using lemon juice in the place of water for a natural whitener that will make your grout sparkle! After your oxygen bleach and water paste is on your grout, practice the art of patience. Spend fifteen minutes on something else: meditate, run around the block, make a pot of coffee, or even cut coupons. The point is let the oxygen bleach work its magic. After fifteen minutes or so, come back with an old toothbrush or grout brush and you'll be amazed at how easy the dirt and mildew wipe away. Rinse the now brown, possibly black, oxygen bleach solution away with a damp cotton cloth and your grout should now be as good as new. You could even find your grout a color you've never seen it! To keep your grout mildew and dirt free for longer, make sure you treat your tile floor with a grout sealant once a year. Keep in mind, however, that sealed grout will still need cleaning about every six months.

Your now sparkling white grout will brighten up your room and the rest of your day!

— Ashley Farrar

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MS. MOLLY FOUNDATION

A portion of Molly Maid's sales support victims of domestic violence in the communities we serve. To date, Ms. Molly has proudly raised more than \$3 million – and we are not slowing down! This non-profit organization aims to increase public awareness of domestic violence and to provide victims with support. We believe everyone deserves to feel safe in their homes. The Ms. Molly Foundation strives to empower communities to end the cycle of violence in the home. It's our goal to help give victims of domestic violence a second chance at happiness.



BODY & SOUL

A Simple Filter For What We Do In Health



Knowing what we should do to live a healthy lifestyle can be a challenge. There is so much information out there. Should we do keto? How many times should we work out per week? Weight lifting or running? And how do we add a solid Biblical worldview to what we are doing? These are all questions we are asked all the time. In this article, I

will give you a very simple framework that can help you have confidence in your health.

Many people we work with felt like in the past they had to sift through information or go on YouTube to find content they hoped was correct. So as we develop resources for our F.O.R.M. curriculum we wanted to have a simple filter to run all of the content through to ensure we are getting the best information so they can put that information into practice immediately. Let's dive into that framework.

We must look at the topic through three main lenses: historical evidence, Biblical principles, and current evidence-based research. Without all 3 of these filters, we only get a partial picture of how to understand a particular topic in health. It is only when we look through all three of these lenses that we see the full picture.

Biblical- What are the motives and mindsets behind the topic? How does it line up with biblical principles? Is this topic consistent with the Word of God and/or the proven character of God? Are we THINKING rightly about the topic?

Historical- When and where did a topic originate? What are its results throughout history? Looking at the past reputation of a topic is crucial in determining its validity today. Many times we get so stuck in our current day and culture and we don't look back to see what people have done over the years and how that has changed into practices today.

Current Research- Do current scholarly studies provide evidence to support the topic? What are the cold, hard, objective facts about the topic and its effects? What is the truth about how the body is made and how we can partner with our body to steward it well?

Take a look at your current health plan. Does it check all the boxes in this filter? If it doesn't, that's ok! Now that you have this filter you can find resources that check all of these boxes so you can build a lasting foundation in your health.

— Ashton Tate is the founder of Glory to Glory Fitness and the creator of The F.O.R.M. Curriculum. He works with schools all over the country to help students build a solid foundation in their health.



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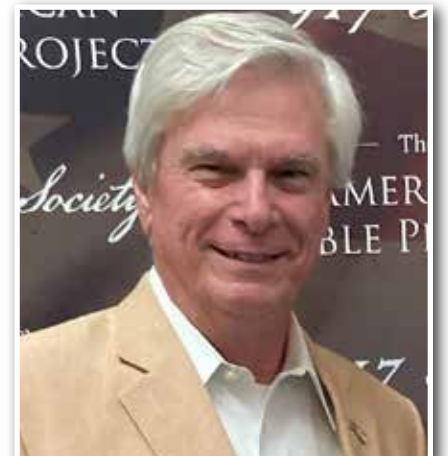
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“helping you know which way to go”

Why Christian Prayers for Israel Matter

There's an incredible, phenomenal, global phenomenon taking place with millions of Christians fasting and praying for Israel this month. While the phenomenon of Christians praying for Israel is not new, this may be the first time that there has been a formal organized effort to garner Christian support for Israel, all at the same time, over a period of three weeks.

Known as the Isaiah 62 Fast, the effort has been spearheaded by Pastor Mike Bickel. If it comes at a time that is monumental historically with Israel celebrating its 75th anniversary of independence, and the 56th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem. Jews celebrate Shavuot, the Biblical festival on which Moses brought, and the Jewish people received, the Law, which Christians know and celebrate as Pentecost. It's a redemptive season.

It also comes at a time during which Israel continues to experience violence and terror causing the harm and murder of many citizens and even one tourist from Italy. In the midst of these prayers, Islamic Jihad terrorists in Gaza have fired more than 500 rockets at Israeli communities, putting millions in their crosshairs, canceling public events and celebrations, and creating fear, stress, and trauma. (As of this writing it has neither escalated to a ground operation, nor has there been a cease fire, and we pray that the wanton and evil terrorist fire will cease, and God will change their hearts.)

It also comes at a time when Israel has also been engaged in domestic political strife and division, the level of which is something that Israelis have not experienced in many years, if ever.

While the economy remains strong and tourism has largely rebounded since the pandemic, Israel is also experiencing increases of prices on basic staples, housing, energy, and other items that stretch the hard-earned shekel of millions.

Outside Israel's borders, its enemies in Iran, who make no secret of its goal to annihilate Israel, are churning away at their centrifuges and arming themselves with long range rockets and other weapons that put all of Israel at risk and pose an existential threat. Islamic terrorists in Lebanon and Syria have an estimated 150,000 long range missiles that can strike all of Israel.

This all comes shortly after Israel was ranked the fourth happiest nation in the world, something that if you read the challenges that we face above, it's hard to comprehend but it is the reality. Israelis are happy because our lives have a purpose and destiny. We don't just exist and live for the next day, but rather exist because of our past, because of God's promises and covenant, with all the promises and responsibilities that entails, and mindful of our destiny.

When speaking with Christian friends around the globe, and being interviewed by various Christian media about the significance of the Isaiah 62 Fast, one common theme that recurred in these conversations is a sense that while Christians genuinely love and support Israel and their prayers for Israel are indeed heartfelt and sincere, most Christians have little to no deep connection to Israel or with average Israelis. They may truly love us, but they don't know us.

They don't know about these basic challenges and other facets of life from sending our children to the military, economic issues that make making ends meet sometimes a challenge, or the issues that threaten to divide us, and more.



And they don't experience our joy and pride in having built the incredible society that we have over the past 75 years. Sometimes it is a necessary blessing to have Christian friends to remind us of that because we are caught up in the day today realities of just living in the Land and not contemplating significance or bigger picture all the time.

So, when Christians around the world unite in prayer for our country and our people, it is indeed remarkable, miraculous, and something for which we are grateful. That is why the Genesis 123 Foundation initiated a complementary initiative to help Christians praying for Israel focus on the prayer points that are needed the most. Dozens of Jews and Christians in the Land have already joined us in important conversations about why that's important, and what to pray for. Each video is being shared on its Facebook page and YouTube channel, and praying that these will be shared widely to focus and motivate the millions praying for Israel daily.

When you watch, follow, and share these you will be inspired by how everyone acknowledges the significance of this global effort. You will also note the wide range of thoughts are about what one should be praying for. Some of the prayer points are intuitive and some of them are innovative but all of them are important and inspiring. These include an in depth view of what praying for the peace of Jerusalem means; for Israel to continue to be a light unto the nations and blessing to the families of the world; for true friendship between Jews and Christians; to pray for what's important to the Jewish people: what makes our hearts sing and what breaks our hearts; to turn the hatred by our enemies into hearts of love; to protect the Land of Israel, its citizens, and the soldiers; that the Jewish people should be more united and cohesive. Basically, we're looking to flood God's inbox with prayers from those who are devoted to Him, to preserve the wellbeing, safety, and Biblical destiny of Israel and the Jewish people.

The Genesis 123 Foundation is urging Christians around the world to take a few minutes each day and watch a different video before praying in order to focus and engage your prayers on the things for which Israel needs your prayers the most.

— Jonathan Feldstein,
Founder and President,
Genesis 123 Foundation
www.genesis123.co



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TECH TALK

2023 Is The Year We Hold Big Tech Accountable

Grace McComas endured torture from a man who had previously drugged and assaulted her. He used social media to make Grace feel isolated, afraid, and worthless. Her parents fought to save her, but there was nothing they could do to force those digital platforms to ban Grace's tormenter. She ultimately ended her life at 15-years-old.

16-year-old Carson Bride ended his life after receiving hundreds of harassing, threatening and sexually explicit messages from classmates who hid their identities with anonymous apps. Carson asked his tormentors to identify themselves so that they could talk things out in person, but no one ever did. The last search on Carson's phone was for hacks to find out who was doing this to him.

Mason Bogard was an adventurous 15-year-old boy who lost his life after attempting the viral "choking challenge."



These are just a few of the hundreds of heartbreaking stories that have become far too common in the age of social media. It has become impossible to deny that our children are suffering at the hands of Big Tech. Meanwhile, dozens of executives have sat before Senate committees unable to explain

what their companies are doing to reverse course. They would much rather deflect and continue raking in profits than make sure their platforms are safe for young users.

If Big Tech cannot hold themselves accountable, Congress must step in. Over the last several years, Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal and I, and our teams, have met with countless parents, young people, psychologists, pediatricians, mental health experts, nurses, consumer advocates, faith groups, tech experts, and so many others to hear from them about the harms of social media. In response, we introduced the Kids Online Safety Act last Congress, a bipartisan solution that will require online platforms to put the interests of kids first, creating a duty of care for companies that know their products cater to young users. The bill will give families the safeguards, tools, and transparency they need to protect young people's health and well-being online, and expose Big Tech's pernicious practices by requiring independent audits and supporting access to important data for experts and academic researchers.

Unfortunately, Big Tech's lobbyists were successful in their efforts to obstruct passage of this bill last year, but that won't stop us. Passing the Kids Online Safety Act and holding Big Tech accountable cannot wait. School is winding down and kids will soon be out for the summer, which increases the potential for more device time, more online interactions, and more online harms. Let's get this done for Grace, Carson, Mason, and the hundreds of kids who have been injured or died at the hands of social media companies.

— Tennessee United States Senator Marsha Blackburn and her husband Chuck live in Williamson County, Tennessee. They have two children, Mary Morgan (Paul) Ketchel and Chad (Hillary) Blackburn, two grandsons, and a granddaughter.



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OUR HOUSE

That Small Crack In the Basement Wall, No Problem, Right?

So, that foundation crack in your basement- the one you discovered last summer? You know the one: just a few inches long, barely there, probably just due to your home “settling.” Well, if you check again the next time you are doing laundry, you will notice that it is a little bit bigger than it was last year. Not much, grant you, but definitely bigger.

But there are so many things that are more pressing, right? There’s the sticking windows and doors on the second floor and the ceiling gap that is developed near the fireplace. You should probably attend to those and put off fixing your foundation for another year or two... right?

Well, you could. But here is the thing: foundation problems do not get better with time. That means they will never be less expensive to fix than they are today. And you will need to fix them eventually. Either when they become so bad your home’s structure is in danger or when you sell your home. And those sticking doors and windows and ceiling gap? The good news is, they are likely caused by your home’s foundation problems and can be fixed when your foundation is lifted back to its original position.



Speaking of selling your home, realtors tell us that foundation problems force them to discount homes up to 30 percent come sale time—so the cost of a repair is usually much less than the amount you will lose on a discounted sale. And you can forget about hoping the prospective buyer will not notice if you do not tell them; the Real Estate.

Seller Disclosure Act requires you to make any foundation issues known before selling your home. So, you need to really think long and hard about this. Do you fix

your foundation problems now, or do you wait and fix them later when they are much more expensive?

You have probably already realized that, both financially and structurally, it just makes sense to fix your foundation problems right now. Yes, foundation repair can seem daunting, and it can be somewhat expensive, depending on the extent of the problem. But most reputable foundation repair contractors will offer financing that can divide your cost into easy-to-handle monthly payments. So, there is really no reason not to do it sooner rather than later.

— Frontier Foundation and Crawl Space Repair, www.trustfrontier.com
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Spiritual Goal For The Month

Jeremiah 14: REPENT...be transformed.

It seems that we are "shocked" almost every day with some craziness in our country or in the world. How can it be? Scripture reminds us that when people refuse to follow God...the answer is certain. People will grow wiser and wiser...but evil will flourish because the enemy is real. Jesus said satan is a liar...a thief...who wants to destroy anything that represents God. Though the enemy's fate is sealed...he is hard at work today and during the time he has.

The prophet Jeremiah faced similar situations. He stood for God's Truth...and the people hated him. They wanted to embrace lies...not Truth. Does that sound familiar? Jeremiah prayed, "O Lord, do something for the sake of Your Name. For the backsliding is great. We have sinned against You. We bear Your Name...You are among us. Do not forsake us."

Let's pray for our country...our leaders...and let's also pray for the Holy Spirit to give us sight and sound that we may navigate "the fog" and not grow weary...but keep on keeping on for the Cause of Christ until we see Him face-to-face. Let's be people of faith...not people of fear.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for being here to hear our requests. You know what we need...and how to guide us. Forgive us when we whine. Help us to be a reflection of Your Light in a dark world. Let it be Lord Jesus. Let it be...please.

— Ralph E. Vaughn

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?

If so, below is a simple outline for someone of any age who is not a Believer to act on their desire to accept Jesus Christ into their heart as their Savior.

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.

If you do not have your own Bible, email publisher@nashchristian.com and we will make sure you receive one.

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Psalm 32:7-8



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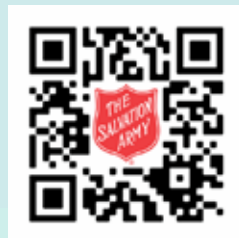


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The Salvation Army firmly believes that camp has the ability to change lives and futures. Camp Paradise Valley, located on the shore of Dale Hollow Lake, provides an opportunity for our campers, ages 7 to 17, to get outside of the city breathe some fresh air, and embark on a trail to self-discovery. Throughout their stay at our sleep-away camp, campers get to enjoy a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Campers have the ability to experience sports, small-scale farming, wildlife, rock wall climbing, music, art, and archery. Of course, Dale Hollow Lake provides a multitude of opportunities for our campers to get up close and personal with nature! Boating, fishing, and hiking are all on the agenda for our campers. Campers also have an option to become “seekers” who have decided to change their life through a personal relationship with God.

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