

October 2024

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# NASHVILLE

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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

### Our Nation Stands at a Crossroads

Throughout my lifetime, I have never witnessed a clearer choice facing our nation than the one presented in the presidential election on November 5. In many ways, this presidential campaign has proven to be among the most divisive elections in our country's history.

The crucial and unavoidable question we as Christians must ask is whether we will continue down a path that increasingly distances us from God, or whether we will choose leaders who not only pledge to steer the country back to Biblical principles but are also committed to taking the necessary actions to do so through their respective offices and positions at every level and branch of government. In the process, many of us have drawn invisible lines, separating ourselves based on party affiliation or candidate preferences. This has often led to personal animosity, anger, and division. However, as Christians, there is one vital truth we must all agree on: WE MUST VOTE. We need to set aside political differences and focus on supporting candidates whose values align with godliness and Biblical truth.

As followers of Christ, we are called to uphold a delicate balance. We must stand firm in our beliefs, rooted in what we know to be Biblically and spiritually true, while also extending grace and compassion to those who may not share our views. Equally important is our duty to pray for our leaders—asking God to grant them wisdom, spiritual discernment, and protection as they serve in positions of authority.

### Scriptures that we can pray for ourselves and the leaders of our country:

- 1 Timothy 2:1-2 - *I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.*
- 1 Peter 2:17 - *Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.*
- Romans 13:1 - *Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.*
- Jeremiah 29:7 - *Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.*
- 2 Chronicles 7:14 - *if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*
- Psalms 2:10-11 - *Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.*
- Proverbs 2:1-8 - *My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2) turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— 3) indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4) and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, 5) then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. 6) For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7) He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, 8) for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.*



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## Lee Company Hosts Vans4Cans Food Drive to Help Our Hungry Neighbors

Pay the bills or put food on the table for your family. How would you decide what to do? Unfortunately, too many of our neighbors make this decision every day. They're not worried about what's for dinner. They worry about whether there is anything for dinner.

We're working hard to change this at Lee Company with our Vans4Cans Food Drive. By partnering with Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee, we'll be collecting non-perishable food items that will help feed our hungry neighbors.

Through our Vans4Cans Food Drive, we're inviting everyone to join in helping to provide the much-needed food and resources to our neighbors in need. Here are the many ways you can participate, October 21 – November 22:

- Give canned food and other non-perishables to a Lee Company technician during your next service call.



- Drop off food donations at a Lee Company office.
- Donate to our Virtual Food Drive where just \$5 provides 20 meals for a family in need. Visit [www.leecompany.com/vans4cans](http://www.leecompany.com/vans4cans) to donate today.

It is not a hidden fact that Lee Company loves to serve their communities beyond repairing an HVAC unit or fixing a burst pipe. By joining us, you too can help make a difference in the lives of our hungry neighbors. Together, we all can fight hunger and feed hope!

To see this year's Vans4Cans Food Drive's updates and results, make sure to follow Lee Company on

Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

— Emily Bonomo, Community Engagement Specialist, Lee Company  
[www.leecompany.com](http://www.leecompany.com)

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## How Do I Know If I Have A Winning Case?

Turn on your TV today and it's a safe bet that within ten minutes you will see a commercial by some local or national law firm promising that they will win your case and get you an award of big bucks. These ads allure would-be clients with high-sounding claims. "You deserve to be paid!" "We don't get paid until you do." "We specialize in winning." "Call us to find out what your case is worth."

Such claims are often misleading. Any experienced trial lawyer worth his or her salt will tell you that every case is different. They will also tell you if they are honest, that the only thing certain about litigation is uncertainty.

The American Bar Association has issued the Model Rules of Professional Conduct to govern lawyer advertising. Specifically, Rules 7.1 – 7.3 address how law firms may promote their legal services. All states, including Tennessee, have adopted these rules in some shape or form. One rule, common to all states, prohibits lawyers from making "false or misleading" communications about "the lawyer or their services."

I have tried lawsuits on behalf of clients for the last 40 plus years in state and federal courts in Tennessee and in over half of the states in the U.S. I have won cases that frankly I should never have won because of factors over which I had little to no control. I have also lost cases that I felt confident were winners, but the jury believed otherwise.

The decision to go to court is always a monumental one for any client. Here are some considerations I make it a point to discuss with my clients before filing suit.

- **What does a victory look like in your case?**

I am always suspicious when a client tells me "this is not about the money." The truth is, it is always about the money, because that is the only relief you can obtain in court. The judge will never give a jury this instruction: "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, this case is not about money, it's about principle."

- **How strong is the issue of liability?**

Liability means that somebody was responsible for something. For a case to be solid and in your favor, the other party would have to be responsible for your loss or in other words, at fault. Rarely is there a clear case of liability. Typically, the issue is much more complicated and requires hours of careful and extensive research. Take heed whenever a lawyer tells you that in your case liability is open and shut.

- **What will it cost to get the case to trial?**

Recall that in Luke 14:31 Jesus cautioned: What



king is about to go to war against another king who won't first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? It is important to consider costs. Your attorney should estimate your potential lawsuit costs, whether the case is likely

to end in a settlement or a trial, how much that the settlement would be, and whether or not there would be a recovery at all. A good lawyer will tell you that if the recovery you will receive does not cover the costs of getting to trial, then the case may not be worth it.

- **If you win, can the judgment be collected?**

Some defendants are what lawyers call "judgment-proof." Suing them is akin to drilling a dry well. If I were able to collect on all the judgments I had obtained over the years, I would be writing this article from some luxurious place in the south of France.



— *Larry L. Crain,*  
*Crain Law Group, PLLC*  
[www.crainlaw.legal](http://www.crainlaw.legal)



## MISSION MAKERS

### Helping Greenhouse Ministries Provide Thanksgiving Meals For 650 Families

Thanksgiving  
Mobile Food Pantry

Are you looking for an opportunity to give back to your community this holiday season? We invite you to join us for a special initiative that will make a real difference!

On Saturday, November 23rd, we will be providing 650 families with the essential food items they need to prepare a Thanksgiving meal for their loved ones, and we need your help!

We are calling on churches, small groups, work groups, families, friends, and individuals to help collect food for our Thanksgiving Mobile Food Pantry. Your contributions—whether food donations or financial gifts—will help ensure that every family can enjoy a delicious meal this Thanksgiving.

If you're interested in helping collect food or donating to support the purchase of these items, please scan the QR code below!

Thank you for your generosity and support. Together, we can continue to Plant Hope in the 'Boro!

— *Makayla Sanford*  
*Public Relations and Marketing Coordinator*  
[Makayla.Sanford@greenhousemin.org](mailto:Makayla.Sanford@greenhousemin.org)  
615-494-0499 ext. 128



# Medicare Open Enrollment

October 15<sup>th</sup> through December 7<sup>th</sup>

(Effective coverage date 1-1-25)



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to questions  
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know to ask.”*

**Ben Davis, CSA**

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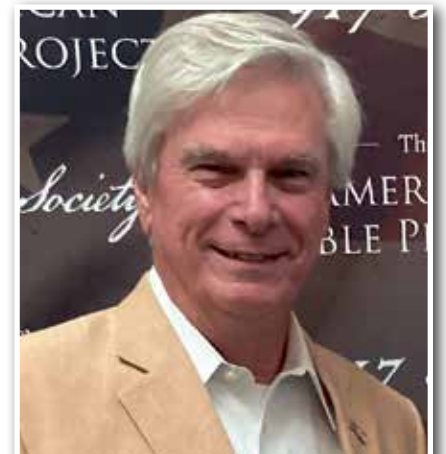
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**Ask Me About  
The Patch**

### Demonbreun? Donelson? Who Were They?

Have you ever driven on Demonbreun Street, James Robertson Parkway, or Donelson Pike, or passed an exit to Charlotte Avenue or the town of Charlotte on I-40? Who in the world were Robertson, Demonbreun, and Donelson? How did a lady named Charlotte have a street and a town named for her? These names reach back to the founding days of Nashville.

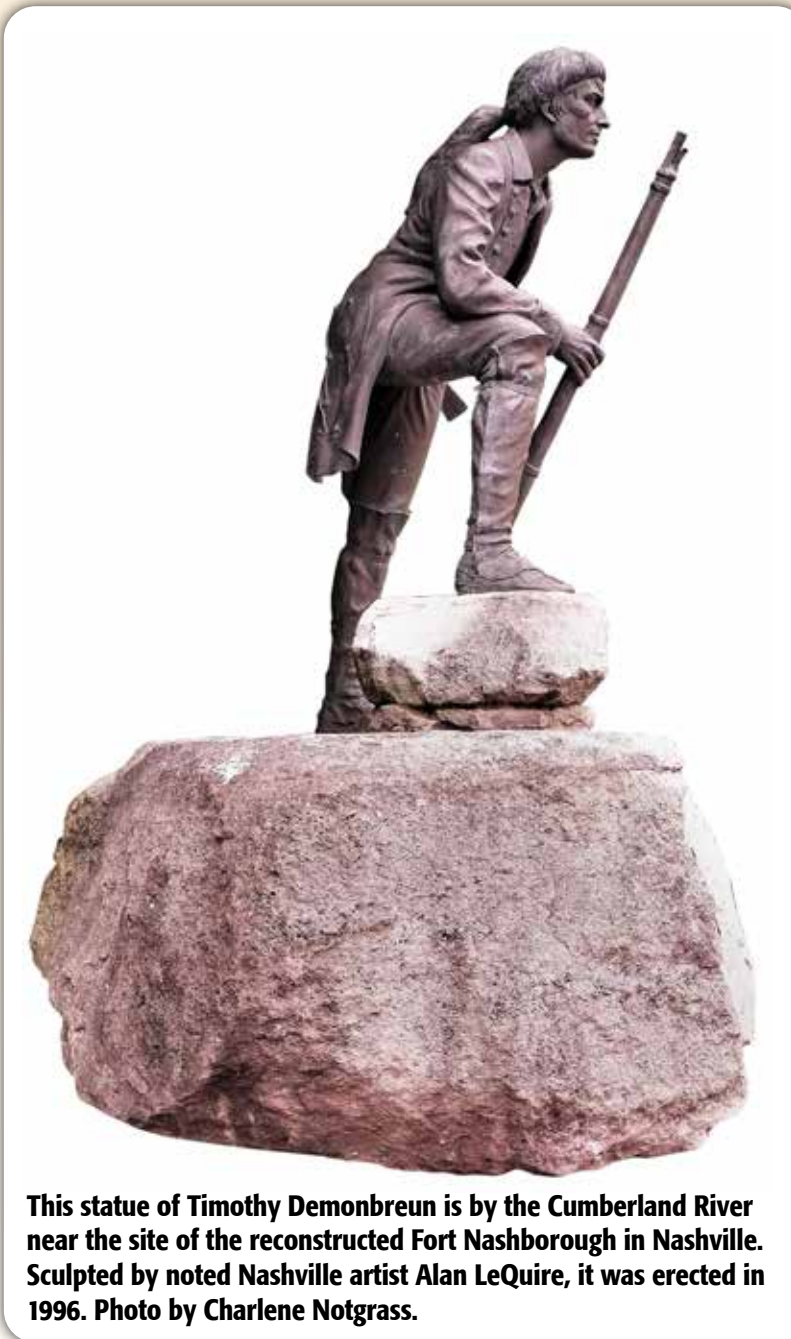
When America's founders signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776, a group of pioneers were living in the Watauga settlement of East Tennessee. After purchasing land from members of the Cherokee Nation, some of them prepared to begin a new settlement in the area around French Lick in Middle Tennessee. That new settlement would one day become Nashville.

Those Watauga pioneers believed that an overland route from Watauga to French Lick would be difficult for the women and children, so they divided into two groups. James Robertson would lead most of the men and older boys on an overland route over the Cumberland Mountains to French Lick. Donelson would remain at Watauga with some of the men while they built 30 flatboats to bring the women, children, and enslaved people by water. Among those who waited were James Robertson's wife, Charlotte, and John Donelson's daughter, Rachel. Rachel would one day marry Andrew Jackson, who became our seventh president.

The Robertson party set out in the fall of 1779, driving their cattle before them. Robertson planned to build a temporary settlement on the southern side of the Cumberland River, but their route took them to the north side. Robertson wondered how they would cross the river. Cold weather solved the problem. The river was frozen solid, so the pioneers and their cattle walked across the ice. This was the same cold winter when Daniel Boone established Boone's Station in Kentucky. The Middle Tennessee settlers reached their destination on the same day Boone reached Boone's Station: Christmas Day, 1779.

The men and boys began building Fort Nashborough, expecting Donelson's group to arrive in January. They soon began to venture away from the fort to build cabins for their families. They were in constant danger of attack by members of Native Nations who did not agree with the sale of their hunting lands.

Donelson and his party did not arrive in January or February or even in March. None of the settlers had ever traveled to Middle Tennessee by water. They were only guessing that it was possible. Due to delays in building the flatboats, Donelson's group did not even leave Watauga until December. The boat travelers had terrible difficulties along the way. Native Nations attacked



**This statue of Timothy Demonbreun is by the Cumberland River near the site of the reconstructed Fort Nashborough in Nashville. Sculpted by noted Nashville artist Alan LeQuire, it was erected in 1996. Photo by Charlene Notgrass.**

them. Some of the travelers contracted smallpox. They suffered through the treacherous waters of the Muscle Shoals in what is now northern Alabama.

Robertson and Donelson had believed that the Tennessee River flowed near French Lick and that the settlers could easily travel overland from the river to the new settlement. They were badly mistaken. Their route took them across what is now northern Alabama and through West Tennessee and Western Kentucky all the way to the Ohio River. They had to paddle against the Ohio's current east to the Cumberland River and then paddle against the Cumberland River's current to French Lick. They did not arrive until April after traveling 1,000 miles.

When the Robertson and Donelson parties arrived at French Lick, French Canadian longhunter Timothy Demonbreun had been hunting in the area for several years and had lived there for a brief time. Demonbreun was from a noble family in Canada, was a veteran of the American Revolution, and served as Lieutenant-Governor of the Illinois Territory. Soon after the establishment of Fort Nashborough, Demonbreun moved to the area permanently.

The Marquis de Lafayette, the French nobleman soldier who came to America to aid our cause in the American Revolution, visited Nashville in 1825 on his grand tour through America. During a dinner in Lafayette's honor, Demonbreun was toasted as "the grand old man of Tennessee and

the first white man to settle the Cumberland country." Demonbreun died the following year. A Nashville newspaper reported: "Died, in this town on Monday evening last, Captain Timothy Dumumrane, a venerable citizen of Nashville, and the first white man that ever emigrated to this vicinity?"

Now when you see those place names, you'll know that they honor the brave founders of Nashville, Tennessee.

— Charlene Notgrass, her husband Ray, and their children founded *Notgrass History* in 1999. They publish history curriculum used by homeschooling families across America. Charlene is a descendant of Timothy Demonbreun and of Moses Winters, who traveled overland with James Robertson, and of Moses' wife, Elizabeth, who traveled by flatboat with John Donelson. The Winters settled in Robertson County, which was also named for James Robertson. Charlene was born there and grew up in nearby Ashland City.





## Flexible

A few years ago, I stood before the WHTN team going over the renovations plans for the studio. As I shared

the plans, I held up a rubber band and explained that during the renovations we would all need to stretch and remain flexible. After all the walls were coming done to make room for new sets. There was drywall work, painting, and equipment installation in front of us. This type of studio project definitely requires a flexible attitude.

### I taped a rubber band to my office door

When I was finished outlining the plan, I taped the rubber band to the exterior of my office door. That rubber band would be a reminder to all of us to stay flexible in the midst of such a large project. Several weeks into the project I noticed that someone had switched out the rubber band on my office door – for a gigantic rubber band. There was also a sign next to the rubber band. The sign read - Blessed are the flexible, they shall not break. After I stopped laughing, I realized the sign spoke the truth. In every project, in every relationship, in just about every circumstance a flexible mindset can make a tremendous difference. How do we achieve this kind of flexibility?

One of the first steps is what I call the Attitude Commitment. That means that at the beginning of whatever the project, relationship, or situation we find ourselves in that we decide at the onset that our attitude will remain flexible. We all have a certain way we want things to go. But we all know that isn't how it usually plays out. Usually, we have to pivot – at least on some level and just having that flexible attitude and commitment helps us stay grounded and work our way through challenges in a healthy way.

### The Small Things and EXTRA Large Things

One of the ways to support our attitude commitment is through prayer. The Bible tells us to pray about everything. The small things. The big things. The EXTRA-large things all require prayer. We need wisdom to make the right decisions. The wisdom we need comes from God – and wisdom is ours for the asking. Here is what the Bible says we should do to get wisdom.

*“If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should*

*not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.” James 1:5-8 NLT*

Several years have passed since that sign and gigantic rubber band were taped to my office door. But the laughter and the lesson still stand. Now, when I am involved in things like large projects I remember the rubber band lesson. I think back to the WHTN studio renovation project I remind myself of this powerful truth: “Blessed are the flexible they shall not break.” The next time you find yourself thinking that nothing is going according to plan remember WHTN and the rubber band lesson. The truths found in that gigantic rubber band and sign may well help you through a challenging season. Today's Secret from the Studio: Blessed are the flexible they shall not break.

— Monica Schmelter is the host of Bridges aired on the Christian Television Network in over 50 million homes. You can also watch Bridges on ROKU and the CTN APP on demand.

Monica and her husband Joseph have one adult son. They recently welcomed a daughter in-love into their family.



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## Is There a "Cure" for Worry?

I have talked with so many people who battle anxiety and fear. Some of them lose sleep or have stomach issues while others self-medicate with prescription drugs or alcohol. Although I am not condemning those that do so, I have found that even when you do nothing or do something, they are still not "cured" from anxiety. This is not a 21st century problem.



have things you have to address, and problems don't go away by sticking your head in the sand.

So, when you get to the point of being overwhelmed, the first thing you should do is focus on God. *"Seek First His Kingdom AND His righteousness..."* Matthew 6:33

*"Do not be anxious of anything, but in prayer and supplication, with Thanksgiving, submit your requests to God."* Phil 4:6

Jesus asked, "Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?" Matthew 6:27

Worry and anxiety were tools satan used against first century Christians and his tactic hasn't changed much since then.

So, turn to Him with thanksgiving. Write on one sheet of paper a list of everything you are thankful for. The more you are anxious, the harder the first few lines will be. After about ten, the list should flow.

So, how does one handle the pressures of life?

...By being thankful...

When you end the page, get on your knees and thank God for each of the items individually. Peter tells us to cast our anxieties on him through humility. 1 Peter 5:6-7

Now, I am not saying that you can just pretend to be happy and all things will be good. You still

Then, if you are still overwhelmed and anxious, write out your problems, and ask God to help with each of the problems. Invite Him in to these as He has already taken away our shame, worry and sickness on the Cross through His Son.

Then, Be diligent. Rank them in order of importance, and start working on them one at a time doing what you can do first. *"The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty."* Proverbs 21:5

Remember, you are a child of God, well loved, highly favored. God wants more for you than to get to Heaven. He wants you to transform to the image of Christ and His righteousness. The path is hard and full of obstacles, but be diligent, and don't give up. His reward for you will be great.

— Peter Demos, President of Demos Brands, [www.afraidtotrust.com](http://www.afraidtotrust.com), 615-848-1777

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- *Philippians 4:19* -





## A Simple Plan to Heal the Nation

Over the past century, America's foundational Judeo-Christian values have been systematically eroded, leaving our Founding Fathers' vision of "One Nation Under God" almost unrecognizable. Prayer has been removed from our schools, the Ten Commandments from our courtrooms, and most importantly, God has been displaced as the center of our homes. This shift has contributed to a growing secularization, where reliance on an ever-expanding government is replacing faith in God.

At the heart of this moral decline lies a critical truth: we, as a people, have strayed from the divine principles upon which this nation was built. The fabric of our society has unraveled, and a key driver of this breakdown is the loss of integrity and moral leadership among America's men. To heal our nation, we must first focus on restoring men to their God-given roles as leaders of their families, communities, and nation.



### Introducing "The First Hour" for Men

"The First Hour for Men" is a practical and transformative tool designed to reignite the spiritual leadership of men across America. This initiative empowers men to engage in daily prayer and self-reflection, calling them to recommit to God, their families, and their country. Our ultimate aim is clear: Heal the Man... Heal the Family... Heal the Nation.

### Heal the Man

The moral decay we witness today stems from men neglecting their roles as spiritual leaders. When men live in disobedience, ignoring God's commandments, the repercussions are felt in their homes and across the nation. The First Hour program is dedicated to reversing this trend by fostering a closer, daily relationship with God for every man who participates. By reconnecting men with their faith, we are taking the first steps toward healing our families and our country.

Our goal is ambitious yet achievable: to distribute one million copies of The First Hour book across the United States by the end of 2024. To date, over 500,000 copies have been distributed to men nationwide, with countless testimonies affirming the transformative power of this program.

### The Three Commitments

We encourage every man who engages with The First Hour to make three vital commitments:

#### 1. Complete the 30-day program.

The First Hour is more than just a book; it's a comprehensive prayer guide and study resource designed to restore a man's relationship with God. Hundreds of

#### 2. Testimonies from men and their families reveal the life-changing impact of this 30-day commitment.

#### 3. Embrace all seven steps of the program.

Each step of The First Hour is carefully designed to foster growth in all aspects of a man's life, from spiritual renewal to practical life changes.

#### 4. Share the program with four other men.

The power of this movement lies in its ability to multiply. As each man commits to sharing this program, we broaden our reach and accelerate the healing process across the nation.

### Heal the Family

When a man returns to a solid, daily relationship with God and reclaims his role as the spiritual leader of his household, his family will naturally follow suit. The restoration of the traditional American family is crucial to realizing the vision our Founding Fathers had for a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people," rooted in divine guidance. As men lead their families back to God, we will see stronger families, and ultimately, a stronger nation.

### Heal the Nation – MOST CRITICAL AT THIS TIME!

The time is now. With millions of men praying each morning, we have the power to reclaim the spiritual and moral foundation of our country. The First Hour is not just about personal renewal—it's about national restoration. As we heal our men and families, we pave the way for a nation that returns to God, reestablishes traditional values, and embraces the principles that made America great.

### THE CALL TO ACTION

To further advance our mission, we are encouraging all men involved with The First Hour—and their families—to fulfill their patriotic duty by voting. From local school boards to national elections, we must elect leaders who respect the Constitution and uphold the godly values upon which our nation was founded. Regardless of political party, we must prioritize candidates who share our Christian values and are committed to restoring America's spiritual foundation, not just in their campaign promises, but through their actions once elected or appointed.

In every election, from local to federal, it is critical that we vote for candidates who align with biblical principles and who will, if elected, work diligently to guide America back to God's Word.

### A National Challenge

We challenge every man in this nation to renew his relationship with God, become the spiritual leader of his household, and embody the father and husband God has called him to be. Furthermore, we challenge every man to share the message of salvation through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Together, as we commit to fulfilling the Great Commission, we can help restore America as "One Nation Under God."

With God's help and your commitment, we believe this vision is not just a dream—it is our future. God bless you, and may God bless America!

— Mark W. Koch  
is an Author, inspirational speaker,  
and Hollywood Film Producer.

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## Statement of NRB President & CEO on New Barna Research on American Evangelicals

Troy A. Miller, President & CEO of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), has issued a statement on new data released by Dr. George Barna as part of the American Worldview Inventory 2024. The following statement is attributable to Troy A. Miller, President & CEO of the National Religious Broadcasters: “It is shocking to learn from a new Barna survey that ‘theologically-defined Evangelicals are no more likely than anyone else to be attentive to news about politics and government,’ with less than half reporting that they follow these kinds of current events.

“The study also confirms that around one-third of Evangelicals do not participate in elections, which means that the voices of Evangelicals may be missing by the millions in the 2024 presidential election.

“In Scripture, we are told to be ‘wise as serpents and innocent as doves.’ This critical time in the life of our nation is no time for Christians to tune out. If we relinquish our responsibility to help steward the nation we call home, conflicting and opposing values will prevail in civic life. As the saying goes, you may not have an interest in politics, but politics has an interest in you.

“Disinterest, disengagement, and disconnection by the people of God will not help lead our nation back to God. I applaud NRB’s members for using their media platforms every day to reach listeners and viewers with Biblical truth, insight, and analysis. There has never been a more important time for Christian media leaders to work together to get Evangelicals across the nation equipped and engaged.”

### About NRB

NRB is a nonpartisan, international association of Christian communicators whose member organizations represent millions of listeners, viewers, and readers. NRB’s mission is two-fold: To protect the free speech rights of our members to speak Biblical truth by advocating those rights in governmental, corporate, and media sectors; and to foster excellence, integrity, and accountability in our membership by providing networking, educational, ministry, and relational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nrb.org](http://www.nrb.org)



— NRB Staff

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### Lives Changed Through the Programs of The Salvation Army: Meet Baron



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“I had a good team that was working with me here at The Salvation Army. They were checking on me. They would make sure, you know, my mental health was in a good state, which it was.” With a sense of peace and God’s presence, Baron began attending church services and diligently applying for jobs. “During the first few days, I would go to church, and then I would just apply for jobs, and things started happening. I developed this sense of peace, and I felt God.”

Today, Baron’s life has been transformed. “I’m rejuvenated, restored and stable,” he rejoices. “If you need help and sincerely want to change your life come to The Salvation Army. You won’t regret it.”

— Misty Ratcliff, Development and Communications Manager, The Salvation Army Nashville Area Command, [uss.salvationarmy.org](http://uss.salvationarmy.org)

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— Ben Davis, CSA, Owner of Select Pointe, LLC





## Trevecca Rated Among Top Tennessee Schools in Wall Street Journal's 2025 College Pulse Rankings

Trevecca Nazarene University has earned elite classifications at the local, state and national levels, including the distinction of Middle Tennessee's top Christian university, based on its ranking in the *Wall Street Journal's* 2025 Best Colleges in the U.S. list published this week.



*The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ), College Pulse and Statista, the leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider. The award list was announced on September 4, 2024, and can be viewed on the WSJ website.

Ranked second only to Vanderbilt among colleges and universities in Middle Tennessee, Trevecca earned a national ranking of 372, making it the highest-ranked Nazarene school in the U.S. and fifth among all schools in Tennessee. "We are honored to be recognized on a broad scale for our overall strength as a university and the value we offer for a quality education," Trevecca Provost Dr. Tom Middendorf said. "I truly believe this ranking is a reflection of our commitment to educating undergraduate students with a holistic perspective and a supportive campus community."

According to the rankings, Trevecca is also the fourth-highest-rated private undergraduate institution in Tennessee. A total of 14 Tennessee schools were among the 500 colleges and universities on the list. The rankings are presented by

The Best Colleges in the U.S. ranks undergraduate institutions by the value they provide to their students. This value is assessed based on the learning environment, years to pay off the net price, degree completion rates, the likelihood of higher salaries post-graduation and diversity. The results are derived from official data from the U.S. Department of Education and the Census Bureau, along with a nationwide survey of undergraduate students and recent alumni who graduated within the past five years.

In one of the largest-ever independent surveys of verified college students in the U.S., around 110,000 undergraduates and recent undergraduate alumni were anonymously surveyed by College Pulse in cooperation with *The Wall Street Journal* and Statista. The survey covered topics like career preparation, learning opportunities, and campus life. The ranking combines students' experience in

a learning environment with an exhaustive analysis of student outcomes.

Statista publishes hundreds of worldwide industry rankings and company listings with high-profile media partners. This research and analysis service is based on the success of statista.com, the leading data and business intelligence portal that provides statistics, relevant business data, and various market and consumer studies and surveys.

Trevecca Nazarene University ([www.trevecca.edu](http://www.trevecca.edu)) is a Christian university in the heart of Nashville focused on preparing students for lives of leadership and service. Founded in 1901, Trevecca is committed to holistic education that encourages students to grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. With students from 47 states and 40 countries, Trevecca offers 17 associate degrees, 79 undergraduate majors, 22 master's programs and 4 doctoral programs as well as specialist and certificate programs.

— Rebekah M. Warren, Senior Copywriter,  
Office of Marketing and Communications,  
Trevecca Nazarene University, [www.trevecca.edu](http://www.trevecca.edu)

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## Keep Wildlife Out of Your Crawl Space: Tips and Prevention

Your home is your sanctuary, but it can also attract unwanted wildlife, especially in crawl spaces. These dark, damp, and secluded areas are appealing to animals seeking shelter, warmth, and food. Wildlife invasion in crawl spaces can lead to structural damage, health risks, and costly repairs. Here's a look at the most common culprits and how to keep them out.

### Common Wildlife in Crawl Spaces

#### 1. Raccoons

Raccoons are smart and can easily tear through weak crawl space vents. They cause damage by ripping up insulation and ducts and can leave behind harmful droppings.

Prevention: Secure vents and doors, install raccoon-proof grates, and check for damage regularly.

#### 2. Opossums

Opossums love crawl spaces for warmth and shelter. They can contaminate the area with droppings and urine.

Prevention: Block entry points, repair damaged vents, and clear debris around the home.

#### 3. Mice & Rats

Rodents chew through insulation, wires, and pipes, posing fire risks and structural damage.

Prevention: Seal cracks, install steel mesh over vents, and keep the crawl space dry.

#### 4. Snakes

Snakes, often in search of prey like rodents, may find their way into crawl spaces.

Prevention: Remove food sources, seal gaps, and use snake repellents.

#### 5. Skunks

Besides their notorious odor, skunks can weaken your foundation by digging near it.

Prevention: Install strong barriers, remove food attractants, and use motion-activated lights.

#### 6. Squirrels

Squirrels are known for chewing through wood and electrical wiring, posing serious risks.

Prevention: Repair screens and doors, trim tree branches, and use repellents.

#### 7. Bats

Though bats help with insect control, their droppings can cause respiratory diseases.

Prevention: Install bat-proof screens and seal all cracks.

#### 8. Insects & Spiders

Termites and carpenter ants can cause structural



damage, while venomous spiders can pose health risks. Prevention: Use pest control treatments and keep the area dry and ventilated.

### How to Protect Your Crawl Space

- **Install Barriers:** Use mesh to cover vents and entry points.
- **Seal Cracks:** Fix gaps in the foundation, doors, and vents.
- **Maintain Cleanliness:** Keep the area free of debris and moisture.
- **Consult Professionals:** If you suspect an invasion, call a wildlife control expert.

By following these tips, you can prevent wildlife from invading your crawl space and protect your home from the damage and health risks they bring.

— *Hannah Moulton, Content Marketing Specialist,*  
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### Position Has Been Filled!

Congratulations! You are now a full-time caregiver! You started as a volunteer role, but because you consistently showed up with a smile on your face, and put in your best effort, you landed the job! I will also note that for some reason, all other candidates have withdrawn their interest. Here are a few details about the position. The hours are pretty much 24 hours, 7 days a week either “in person,” or “on call”. Duties include, but are not limited to, cleaning, cooking, transportation, bathing, dressing, laundry, medication management, scheduling physician appointments, taking notes at appointments, decorating and hosting all major holidays, answering various questions, entertainment, pet care, first aid, paying bills, insurance and legal concerns, cognitive brain health exercises, physical exercise, safety patrol, & spiritual and emotional support. You will need your own car and should be able to demonstrate that you can multi-task, plan ahead, and anticipate change.



The responsibilities of this position will take priority. Please go ahead and let your current employer, family, and friends know that you will be unavailable for any personal and social time for quite a while. Finally, we come to compensation. Unfortunately, the position does not pay well, actually, there is no salary. There is no PTO or paid holidays; however, you will be expected to be on call for them. We are including free onboarding and training below. These are crucial truths about your job and manager. If at all possible, commit them to memory. We are glad to have you onboard. Remember, you are not alone. Many have taken on this role, and we will be sure to connect you with a local group of caregivers to share in your experiences.

Finally, we are here to answer any of your questions and provide you with all the resources to help you on your new caregiving endeavor. You are not alone.

#### Scriptures for Caregivers:

**1. When There's No End in Sight:** *Give me neither poverty nor riches but give me only my daily bread.* – Proverbs 30:8b (NIV)

**2. When You Feel Far from God:** *The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.* – Psalm 145:18 (NIV)

**3. When You Have to Cause Pain:** *You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal.* – Isaiah 26:3-4 (NIV)

**4. When You Need Someone to Comfort You:** *I am worn out from sobbing. All night I flood my bed with weeping, drenching it with my tears. My vision is blurred by grief; my eyes are worn out because of all my enemies... The Lord has heard my plea; the Lord will answer my prayer.* – Psalm 6:6-7, 9 (NLT)

**5. When You Want a Moment to Yourself:** *Yet the news about [Jesus] spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.* – Luke 5:15-16 (NIV)

**6. When Your Care Recipient Does Not Act Like Himself:** *Love endures with patience and serenity, love is kind and thoughtful and is not jealous or envious; love does not brag and is not proud or arrogant. It is not rude; it is not self-seeking; it is not provoked [nor overly sensitive and easily angered]; it does not consider a wrong endured. It does not rejoice at injustice but rejoices with the truth [when right and truth prevail]. Love bears all things [regardless of what comes], believes all things [looking for the best in each one], hopes all things [remaining steadfast during difficult times], endures all things [without weakening].* – I Corinthians 13:4-7 (AMP)

**7. When Your Care Recipient Is in Pain:** *Now may always the Lord of peace Himself grant you His peace and in every way [that peace and spiritual well-being that comes to those who walk with Him, regardless of life's circumstances]. The Lord be with you all.* – II Thessalonians 3:16 (AMP)

**8. When You are Needed Somewhere Else:** *I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.* – Psalm 121:1-4 (NIV)

**9. When You are Too Busy to Take Care of Yourself:** *You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.* – Philippians 4:19 (MSG)

**10. When You've Lost Your Identity:** *O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I am far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord. You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.* – Psalm 139:1-5 (NLT)

— Amy Hentschel, Owner/Senior Care Advisor  
Senior Provisions, [www.seniorprovisions.com](http://www.seniorprovisions.com)



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## Medicare Open Enrollment Starts Soon

Yes, just like the trees starting to turn those beautiful colors, it will soon be time for Medicare Open enrollment.

So, let's take a look at what Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) is all about. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan or a prescription drug plan (PDP) this is the time of year you get to review how those plans have done for you. You will be receiving from your plan's carrier toward the end of September a letter called the ANOC letter (annual notice of change). It will tell you what the changes in your plan will be for 2025. Remember to open this letter from your carrier and not put it in file 13!



If you don't do mail, then hop on your computer beginning October 1st; you will be able to log on to Medicare.gov and check out your plan there. You may also see your plans info in the 2025 Medicare&You that will be mailed to you. It's available on their website but does not have local information on plans/carriers.

The open enrollment signing period is October 15th through December 7th. If you decide to make any changes, your new plan will start January 1, 2025. If you don't make any changes then your current plan will roll into 2025, and you don't have to do a thing!

Suggestion – call your Medicare Rep and discuss next year's plan with him or her! Every year we must get recertified with Medicare and the Carriers to be able to offer suggestions as to what would be the best route for you in 2025. We are blessed to have such a great healthcare system in middle TN and that attracts many companies that want to do business here.

Remember this is about your healthcare coverage for next year. It's worth taking a look!

And this time next year – we get to do it all over again!



— H. Ben Davis, III CSA, SelectPointe, LLC  
615-584-4946  
ben.davis@selectpointe.com  
www.selectpointebd.com

# BODY & SOUL

## The Gift of Knowing God, Part 2

Last month, my article, “The Gift of Knowing God”, highlighted how God has given us a wonderful gift to know Him. This is such a deep and rich advantage we have as Christians as we navigate life's daily challenges. Because my last piece only brushed the subject, I am following up with part 2. However, as previously mentioned, this is an inexhaustible subject that will always have more depths to explore and more insight to discover.



One of the foundational truths in knowing God is to realize that God wants to be known by us. He wants us to experience Him in a myriad of ways. He is not aloof. He sent His Son, Jesus, to bridge the gap that sin caused so therefore, He invites us into a dynamic relationship with Him.

Growing up in Church, I had a one-sided opinion of God and the way I related to Him as well as the way He related to me. I saw Him as an authoritarian figure that ruled with a strict and forthright attitude, ready to strike me with a lightning bolt if I stepped out of line. I saw myself as a small speck on His radar. Religion had a lot to do with my young philosophy. Even though I had well-meaning Sunday School teachers that seemed to respect God – they also gave me an unholy fear of Him. He is an authoritarian figure, but so much more. And I am not just a speck on His radar.

When I read a Scripture that He knows the very number of hairs on my head (Matthew 10:30 and Luke 12:7) or He formed me in my mother's womb (Psalms 139:13-15) or so many others that remind us of the plans He has for us, I realize that I am so much more. God created you and me with a plan. He has made us for purpose. The more we know God, the more we know about ourselves.

Like my dear Sunday School teacher, there are many well-meaning, church-going individuals that seem to know a lot about God, but they do not “know” Him. They do not know His character. Think about the many people we come across daily. We may know a lot about them. Even intimate details like their favorite color or their shoe size, or perhaps what they ate for breakfast, but we really do not know them. This is the extent of the relationship for many people with God; they may think they know a lot about Him, but they fail to know Him.

To know God is to experience Him. This is the relationship God has made us for. It is a two-way street. He wants us to know Him as much as He wants to know us. It has been said that God is a gentleman, and He will not force Himself on anyone. The truth of this statement is that God longs to have connection with us, but He will not demand it. He longs to be a part of our deepest desires, loftiest dreams, painful heartaches, etc. etc., but He will not automatically show up -- He must be invited.

God has direction, answers, comfort, and so much more. His life is an “Open Book” that He shares with us. We literally have the Bible to go deep with Him and continue have a vibrant relationship with an Almighty Savior. Are there areas of your life that are closed off? Allow God to continue to penetrate your heart so that you can know Him, and He can intimately know you.

— Rhonda L. Smart, rhondalsmart@gmail.com



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# The Fantazmical Life of Zoro

## Drummer Extraordinaire

Amid a culture that feels divided, depressed, and confused comes a formidable force of positivity. Zoro the Drummer is a man of conviction—compelled to make a difference and to let his God-light shine by every means possible.

He met Lenny Kravitz on the lawn at Beverly Hills High School while pretending to be a new student, introduced Whitney Houston to Bobby Brown, and sat on a plane next to Frankie Valli when the icon shared his “Jersey Boys” Broadway musical vision. He traveled with Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen on his Octopus, the world’s most expensive privately owned yacht, held court with Michael Jackson and the Jackson 5, and was honored at the White House; Jimmy Fallon sang Happy Birthday to him on the set of “The Tonight Show.”

However, before Zoro became one of the world’s greatest drummers who played for everyone from Lenny Kravitz, Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, and Bobby Brown, to New Edition, Philip Bailey of Earth, Wind & Fire, and Lincoln Brewster, he was abandoned by his father at six months of age. As an impoverished young boy from the streets of Compton, he helped his family move from one apartment to the next with his Radio Flyer wagon. In rural Oregon, he lived in a car and tent with his immigrant mother and six siblings, showered in city parks, rummaged through Goodwill drop-off boxes for his clothes, experienced extreme racism, and raised exotic chickens.

Zoro wanted to play the drums so desperately that with his hands, he pounded on a cardboard box for his elementary school talent show. Then, his fate changed at his after-school job as a janitor at his high school. After cleaning the band room one day, he jumped on the drums and secretly wailed away. The band director caught him and invited him to join all the school bands. That day, a future drumming star was born.

### Beyond Drumming

Zoro’s journey is not just about music but is also about faith. His belief in God, his hard work, and the unwavering love of his immigrant mother, Maria, who raised seven children alone, shaped his path. When Zoro was seven, Maria knelt beside him, tied her orange silk scarf around his neck, and whispered, “One day, my precious son, you will do something fantazmical with your life.” This moment of faith and love set the stage for Zoro’s future.



Photo by David Spagnolo



Zoro is one of the world’s most fascinating, inspiring, and encouraging men with the most amazing stories, but he is so much more. In addition to his illustrious music career, he served as a staff pastor at Bayside Church in Roseville, California, for five years. He has shared the Gospel of Jesus around the globe for the past forty years. From San Quentin Prison to Grammy and Oscar parties, Zoro has ministered to the down and outers and up and outers with equal enthusiasm. He knows his calling and carries it out unashamedly with love, grace, and great expectation. His new memoir, *Maria’s Scarf: A Memoir of a Mother’s Love, a Son’s Perseverance, and Dreaming Big*, is an incredibly inspiring and evocative read for a “time such as this” (Esther 4:14).

Zoro’s memoir, *Maria’s Scarf*, was years in the making. The adage, “Behind every great man is a strong woman” sets the stage for Zoro’s life—that woman is this man’s mother. “My mother was my hero and taught me the rhythm of battle, the march of audacity, and the cadence of persistence until I could finally climb out of our beat-up coupe where we lived for a time and onto the world stage. I promised to write a book to honor her one day, but I also wanted to pay tribute to my siblings, friends, and mentors who impacted my life



most. We live in a culture that worships fame and celebrity and that places little value on the gatekeepers of our well-being, the guardians of our souls, and the people most responsible for our survival and thriving.

“That burning desire to give honor led to my studying for fifteen years the craft of writing a memoir. In truth, I’ve been writing this memoir all my life. At ten, I started a diary that I kept writing in through early adulthood. There are many diary entries in my memoir from my formative years, each a personal reflection of my journey. Some will have you bursting with laughter; others will reduce you to tears. All will entertain you. I also narrated the audiobook for people who prefer listening to a book.”

Some of the most heartbreaking, heart-warming, hilarious, and hopeful moments that took a boy from the slums to the spotlight sprinkle the narrative. Through the love story of a family, a mother who gave her very best, and a boy who refused to give up his dream, Zoro “wants to touch the hearts of all and inspire people not to give up in the face of adversity.” *Maria’s Scarf* is a ticket to a fantasmical excursion that will lift your spirits and inspire you to reach for the stars by showing what’s possible when we dare to dream, work hard, and refuse to give up.

### Family Update

“I have been married to Renée, the love of my life, for the past 29 years. Our 25-year-old son Jarod is in his second year of law school. Our 22-year-old daughter Jordan is in her third year of school in New York City studying to be a writer and writing teacher. The best part of my story is not that I was able to achieve my goal of becoming a world-renowned drummer. It’s that I became the father—whom I never had—to my children and the husband—whom my mother never had—to my wife. With God’s grace, the love of others, and a pulsing heart conviction, I broke the curse, becoming the patriarch of a new generation. Family is everything to me, and I’ve built my life around that priority because it will forever change my children’s and future descendants’ destinies.”

### Zoro’s Ministry

“I have been in ministry most of my life. Still, in 2007, I founded Zoro International Ministries to lead as many people as possible to Christ and to equip them with the tools necessary to live out God’s purposes for their lives (Jeremiah 29:11-12)—to help them discover and develop their talents to impact the world the way God intended. The most powerful people are those confidently walking in their calling with courage, clarity, and conviction. My passion and where I find significance come through inspiring, uplifting, and influencing others.



**To order Zoro’s memoir and learn more about him and his ministry go to:**

[zorothe drummer.com/marias-scarf-book](http://zorothe drummer.com/marias-scarf-book)

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Photo by Mick Waller

“Ministry is people, and God uses my background, experiences, failures, successes, and spiritual DNA to encourage them. He fashioned me after five men in the Bible. I’m a radical evangelist like John the Baptist, a teacher like the apostle Paul, an encourager like Barnabas, and a musician like David—all inside this one man who desires to do everything with a spirit of excellence like Daniel. My talents and platforms as a drummer, speaker, teacher, writer, and mentor are merely conduits to express God’s love to different people groups.”

### Sharing My Story in His

“Stories are an essential part of our survival, much like food, clothing, and shelter. Stories mark our humanity; they preserve our history and bring us timeless wisdom. A good book can spark hope, healing, and imagination like nothing else. God’s word in Mark 4:2 says, ‘And He taught them many things in parables.’ Jesus taught primarily through stories because that’s how we all relate.

“I am a Christian-cultural-influencer, and I’m committed to sharing the story God gave me in as many venues and forums as possible to inspire believers to never give up, to influence our Godless culture, and to point their hearts toward their heavenly Father and His goodness.

“My memoir is my most significant accomplishment because, in person, I can impact only so many people with music, speaking, or teaching. There are only so many one-on-one encounters I’ll have

during my lifespan. I pray this memoir and its audiobook will impact people across the globe who I’ll never meet. I pray my story will outlive me and affect future generations because of its universal themes. My true-life tale is filled with twists and turns—trauma and triumph, love and hate, adventures and misadventures, and great acts of sacrifice. It is a story for both the young and the old—the sinner and the saint—the dreamer and the schemer. I was blessed to live it. I hope it blesses people who read it.”

— Sheila E. Moss is the 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 40 years; mother of five adult children and grandmother of eleven.*

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### Kids on Mission: Taking and Sending Your Kids on Mission Trips

When Jesus commanded believers to go into all the world and preach the gospel (Matt 28:18-20), He didn't put any age limits on it. With innocent faith and endless energy, kids make great missionaries! Sometimes it's us parents who need more convincing.

I get it. Finances, communication, safety, health, distance – the concerns and risks are real. But before we cover those, let's look at the benefits of taking and sending our kids on mission trips.

#### Taking Kids on Mission

Jared Belton, Senior Project Manager at Medi-Share, recently took his 11-year-old daughter Emma on a mission trip to Ecuador. The father-daughter duo went with a team from church; it was the first international mission trip for both of them.

Jared was excited to share the trip with Emma, knowing that they would be able to worship with people from a different culture who share our same faith. He says, "I wanted to bring my daughter and get her to experience another country and understand a different perspective. It's good to experience things from a non-Western perspective, to witness all the blessings we have."

While in Ecuador, their team assisted a partner church through Vacation Bible School activities like teaching, crafts and recreation. Because there were so many children involved, Emma jumped right in, making friends and serving easily despite the language barrier.

Sharing a mission trip together created great faith-building memories for the Beltons, a practice that the family hopes to continue as their other children get older. As a dad, Jared counted it a privilege to watch his daughter rise to challenges and develop new levels of maturity and gratitude. "It was everything I could have hoped for in being able to share this with her," he says.

#### Sending Kids on Mission

My teenage sons Isaac and Caleb went on a mission trip to Guatemala last spring – a first for them. I was excited for many of the same reasons as Jared. I wanted them to witness faith through the perspective of a different culture, and to stretch their own faith by stepping into uncomfortable situations.

While there, they were able to do just that. Their work in Guatemala included ministering to orphans, sharing their testimonies, organizing soccer games, distributing water filters and more.

They slept in jungle hammocks and traveled for hours in unairconditioned buses. Their team battled sickness, danger, dehydration and extreme delays.

Yet upon return, my boys' first words were, "I wanna go back!" Their photos and videos were filled with sweaty smiles and bilingual praise songs. As they debriefed, it was clear their heart for the nations had expanded in ways that could only happen in an unfamiliar environment. They spoke of trials through a lens of joy, and blessings through a filter of newfound humility. As a mom, I'm so proud and grateful.

#### Overcoming Hesitations

As church-goers, we hear many stories like these – a mission team will give their report, concluding the trip was "hard-but-good." So, while Jared and I both attest that taking and sending kids on mission trips is great, valid hesitations remain. As parents we're compelled to care for our children physically and spiritually, and when it comes to overseas missions, sometimes those aspects of care seem at odds. Is it worth risking their safety for their spiritual growth? There's no good answer except through prayer and discernment.

Before sending my sons on their trip, I worried about access to health care. If they got sick or injured, they'd be hours from a hospital. Through prayer, I felt the Lord telling me I should let them go. That may not be the answer He gives every time, but it was the answer He gave me, so I had to obey and let them go.

Finances were another concern for both myself and Jared. Funds for overseas mission trips can be steep. However, we both discerned it would be wise for our kids to take ownership of fundraising. Trusting God to provide for the trips was another way to strengthen their faith.

Jared learned how blessed we are and that the ministry he and Emma did could never happen in reverse – the people of Ecuador don't have the means to travel to the United States for similar fellowship and encouragement.



There are legitimate reasons not to take or send your child on mission trips. "I recognize not everybody is called to serve internationally," Jared says. "But if you're just trying to find a reason not to go, turn that around and just go." Taking and sending kids on mission trips is certainly life-changing and faith-stretching for all involved.

— Melissa Richeson is a writer and editor for Medi-Share. She regularly contributes content as an encouragement for Medi-Share's 350,000 members as well as the broader Body of Christ. Her work has been featured in places like *The Washington Post*, *Florida Today*, *Sunlight Press*, *BiggerPockets Wealth Magazine*, *WDW Magazine*, and many other outlets. Melissa can often be found in real life at the beach, or virtually on her freelance website.





A movie poster for "Sight" featuring Dr. Ming Wang. The title "SIGHT" is at the top in large, orange, sans-serif letters. Below it is a black rectangular box. The main image shows Dr. Ming Wang in a white lab coat, looking to the right. To his right is another man with glasses and a goatee, looking forward. In the foreground, two children are sitting on a rock, looking towards the water. The background is a scenic view of a city with a pagoda and a bridge over a body of water. A small inset image shows the book cover for "FROM DARKNESS TO SIGHT" by Ming Wang, with the subtitle "A JOURNEY FROM HARDSHIP TO HEALING". The book cover also mentions "FOREWORD BY SENATOR WILLIAM FRIST, MD" and "MING WANG (Harvard M.D., M.D.) P.S.D. (Laser physics)". At the bottom, it says "ANGEL STUDIOS". The text "Watch 'Sight' at home! angel.com/sight" is at the bottom right.



# THE GREAT COMMISSION

## Student, Teacher or Both

When we see or hear these two words, apostle and disciple, our mind likely goes straight to the religious connotations, but they also have distinct meanings in our personal and professional lives. They are tied together by a great teacher. Thankfully, the Power of the Wisdom of Three shows us the way.



A disciple is generally considered a follower, student, or learner. In the Bible this term is used to describe all the followers of Jesus, regardless of their role or level of leadership. It comes from the root meaning of being a "student" or a "learner" and implies someone who is constantly learning, following, growing, and putting into practice the teachings they are learning. This should be our mindset in all aspects of our life.

### **A disciple chooses to follow the teacher.**

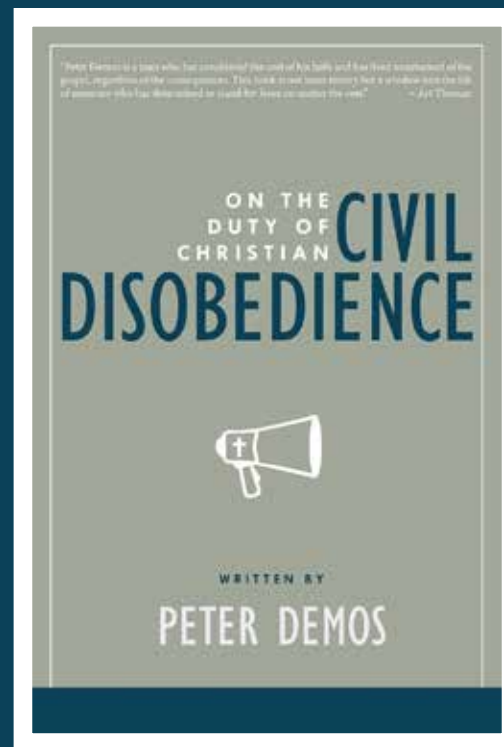
An apostle, on the other hand, is derived from the Greek term meaning "one who is sent off." Apostles are those who are on a mission to accomplish something specific. In the Bible, it applies to the twelve closest followers of Jesus whom He sent out into the world to preach the Good News of salvation. In today's church, this mission has been handed down to their successors, our modern-day bishops. However, in a broader sense, anyone sent on a mission to proclaim the Good News, profess the truth, while being a positive example to others can also be considered an apostle. We are each charged with spreading the truth.

### **An apostle is chosen by the teacher.**

This indicates that while all apostles are disciples, not all disciples are apostles. The twelve closest followers of Jesus were his disciples first and later became apostles spreading the gospel. Our children, while young, are disciples of their parents and once they go out on their own, they should become apostles of their parents. A person starting a new job is a disciple, once promoted to a supervisor position, they become an apostle of the business. The big take away of this lesson is that once elevated to apostle status, discipleship never ends! Mentors of whom we follow, be it our God, our parents, or a businessperson, should be a constant source of learning for us. Learning is a lifelong endeavor. The experiences we encounter as an apostle will be accompanied by new questions, and who better to turn to than those who sent you out, and who you selected to follow in the first place.

In most cases, your teacher or mentor will have bonded with you, built a solid relationship of trust, respect, and eventually one of love. This trust, respect, and love combination brings with it total honesty and true loyalty. When doubts arise, who better to turn to than people who showed you love throughout your growth journey.

— Anthony "Tony" Boquet, the author of *The Bloodline of Wisdom, The Awakening of a Modern Solutionary*



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## FAMILY MATTERS

### Family Fun this Fall

It's coming—fall that is. Fall is the best time for outdoor activities with the family or some one-on-one time with the kids. Kids need unstructured playtime, and fall provides a plethora of outdoor activities that even the youngest can do.



Here are a few outdoor ideas to get the creative juices flowing:

**Camping was one of my family's favorite activities.** We'd go to a state park for a weekend and let the kids climb rocks, play with sticks, and tell stories around the campfire. You could teach kids to identify leaves and tree types. Older kids can learn how to light a campfire and cook over it. Of course, you don't need to visit a state park. You can camp in your backyard, especially if you have little ones. These times create memories and strengthen family bonds.

**Go for a bike ride.** Greenways for Nashville boasts nearly one hundred miles of paved, multi-use greenways. These paths are usually flat and easy for all ages to ride. Make sure to bring water and snacks. Of course, your neighborhood or a nearby park might be the perfect place for a family bike ride. This is a time to teach safety and how to use hand signals and put a chain back on a bike (it happens). Lots of parks also have playgrounds where the youngest can burn off some steam.

**Visit a pumpkin farm.** Check out farms that provide pumpkin patches or corn mazes. There's usually a cost and crowds, but the time is worth it. Many provide apple cider, hot chocolate, and other fun activities.

**Go to church together** (okay, not an outdoor activity). Sports and other extracurricular activities can eat into a weekend, but many churches hold services on Saturday night or other times, providing families flexibility. Our church has a chili cookoff in the fall and provides activities for the kids. This outdoor event provides a relaxed atmosphere and community.

**Attend a local high school football game.** These events are cheaper than professional or college sports and give kids a glimpse of what's to come in their future. There's also food, cheerleaders, and a band to provide entertainment.

**Leaf jumping.** If you have many mature trees in your yard, leaf jumping is a favorite activity. There's only a short window of time to do this, so let your kids take advantage. Of course, you can have them rake the piles and help clean the yard.

The outdoors provides vitamin D, which helps with bone, nerve, and immune health. Just thirty minutes of sun can make a difference in your child's well-being (as well as yours). Choose to play outside this fall with your family.

— Sally Cressman is the author of "The Dance of Easter." She writes about faith, family, and home on her website, [www.sallycressman.com](http://www.sallycressman.com). Check out the family conversation starters on Instagram and Facebook.





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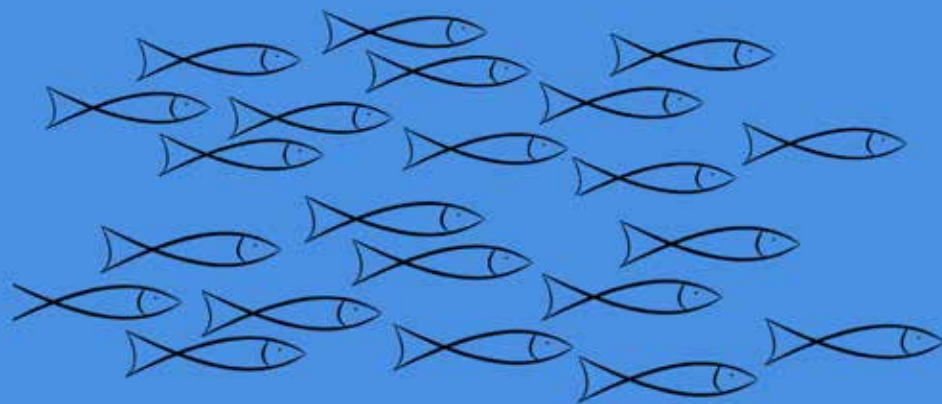
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## How to Pack a Neat & Tidy Suitcase

Are you cramming every last bit of clothing into your bag, only to arrive at your destination with wrinkled clothes and an unorganized mess? Packing a suitcase so it's neat and tidy is easy with a few simple steps. Here are some valuable tips on how to pack a suitcase efficiently and neatly.

### Eliminate Excess

Do you unpack from a vacation and realize how much of the stuff you lugged around you didn't even end up using? Overpacking is a tidy suitcase's biggest enemy. Identify and eliminate excess items and clothing before you even begin to pack. Lay everything you think you might need next to your suitcase, and brutally assess it all. We bet you can eliminate at least a quarter of it. It might be hard to let go of that perfect outfit, but you'll thank yourself later when you have wrinkle-free clothes to wear at your destination and room on your return trip for items you purchased while away.

### Nooks & Crannies

Bulky items quickly swallow valuable suitcase real estate. To save space, pack shoes heel-to-toe, the same way they come in a shoebox. Then fill shoes with rolled-up socks and underwear. For those who crave extra organization, packing cubes allow you to separate clothing for different occasions, weather or outfit ensembles. This makes it easy to stay organized if you'll be packing and unpacking several times on your trip.

### Origami

Rolling-up T-shirts and pants saves space, but don't do this with collared dress shirts. Save those for last. Fold them nicely and place them on top of your clothing. Run your belts around the perimeter of the inside of your suitcase to prevent creases and folds in the leather. Finally, stack folded clothes in an alternating direction to equalize the amount of space they take up on each side. Wow! You've created a masterpiece!

### Simplify

Look for ways to save space by finding items that serve multiple purposes. For example, outlet extenders that turn one outlet into multiple USB ports save clutter from multiple chargers. And that sweatshirt or pashmina you're wearing? Say hello to your pillow, blanket, eyeshade and casual jacket. You may even consider leaving toiletries at home if your hotel can supply the basics for a few nights.

Pro Tip: Leave the steamer at home. Hang your dress clothes in the bathroom at the hotel while you take a long, hot shower with the fan off. The steam will eliminate any wrinkles.

### Pack Smart

Packing well isn't just what you pack, but how you pack and even what you wear to the airport. Shoes take up a lot of space in luggage. Plan on wearing your largest, bulkiest shoes while traveling — pack another pair or two in your luggage. For carry-on luggage with wheels, place heavy items like toilet-



ries and shoes at the base towards the wheels. This makes it easier to roll through the airport, and lowers the center of gravity so it stays upright. And remember to place items you might need while in transit in an easy-to-access spot. That way you don't have to unpack your well-made puzzle just to get a granola bar or a paperback.

For the return trip, a separate bag or even a compressor bag for your dirty clothes creates valuable space for items you want to bring home, and makes repacking quicker and easier.

Give those suitcase zippers a break. Follow these useful packing tips, and you'll have more room to bring stuff home and arrive with wrinkle-free clothes. It will also save unnecessary wear and tear on your luggage. We're looking at you, person pouncing on their luggage to force it shut. After a few trips it'll get easier and you'll be a packing pro in no time.



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UPLIFTING



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## A Visit to a Leper Colony?

I am often asked, “Why do you go to Guatemala?” It’s sort of ironic, because within myself-body, emotions, and my soul, I want to shout, “How could I NOT go to Guatemala”? Perhaps this story about Maria encapsulates a new Hope in emotional healing.

I believe it was my second visit to Guatemala that I had a very unusual person visit the orphanage to consult with me. Her name was Maria, and she was about 50 years old. I was very fortunate that there were excellent translators on hand, typically the young adult who participate with Rotary in Guatemala. Maria began to share the horrific troubles which had led her to be depressed for most of her life. When I asked Maria specifically to share with me what troubled her so deeply, she began to share the pain and trauma she experienced, primarily stemming from being assaulted by gangs and raped five times in her life. After each assault she had been left near dead and it took a long time to recover physically and emotionally. She had many scars from the assaults and was missing most of her teeth, but she was very articulate as she shared her pain with me.

In the trauma world which I frequently work in, an individual identifies the level of the trauma by “suds” -subjective units of disturbance- which range from 0, the lowest, to 10, the highest. Ms. Maria was profoundly stuck at 10! Over the years I have studied the numerous dimensions of treatment and healing in the field psychology, and I have remained especially eager to incorporate meaningful ways to help others rapidly as possible heal from such traumatic emotional injury. Over the years I have studied the numerous dimensions of treatment and healing in the field of energy psychology and especially eager to incorporate meaningful ways to help others to as rapidly as possible heal from such traumatic emotional injury.

Over the past several years of study and experience I have found the field of energy psychology, often referred to as acupuncture without needles, to be the most remarkable, consistent, and profoundly effective process for healing the terribly troubled spirit of the person who is experiencing profound trauma.

Maria was technically the last client of the morning, but it was not very long that I realized that treatment would move well into lunchtime because I could see that Maria was finding hope for herself for the first time. As Maria slowly, painfully, and exhaustively shared the traumas in her life, she progressed quite well and finally arrived that suds score of 4. I typically do my best to help an individual to come to suds score of 2, because that will often progress further with practice and time. Sometimes by evening, the client arrives at suds score 1 or 0, as the trauma becomes resolved within the psyche. I just did not feel right as I looked into Maria’s eyes and I said, “Ms. Maria, I believe I



have missed something very important or perhaps you have not shared with me yet another part of your loss?” Maria burst into tears and screamed with pain, “I became pregnant with each assault and my family, made me give up all my children!”

I continued the process of energy healing for some time, addressing each event, and finally we arrived at an acceptable score of 2 suds. I believed it would be important to connect with Ms. Maria the next day (which was our last day of treatment) due to the intensity of what Maria had processed. But Maria sadly stated that she lived many miles away and she would not be able to come. I was particularly concerned about this because she shared with me that she suffered from night terrors, intrusive horrific dreams, and panic most nights as she tried to sleep. In our work treating our patients in Guatemala, most often it was a one-Time opportunity to do all that one can do. I graciously thanked Maria for allowing me to assist her with

so many painful challenges in her life with her many years of anguish and suffering. And as we closed, I presented Ms. Maria with a copy of my written template called GUTT (Guatemala urgent trauma treatment) and encourage her to follow the tapping treatment protocol so that she can continue to manage her trauma and her symptoms as they occur. As I reviewed this treatment template with Maria we simultaneously smiled and she said, “I got it, Gracias”!

The next day, being our last clinic time at the orphanage for the year, was understandably busy and quite demanding. And yet, the last day is always extremely productive and meaningful for just about everyone we treated. A couple of times during the day, Ms. Maria popped into my mind, and I wondered how she was doing.

As we were wrapping up our final consultation, the nurse came over to me with a big smile on her face and told me that Ms. Maria had walked back several miles to the orphanage that day! With a beautiful smile on her face, Maria had told the nurse to please tell me “Please tell my friend Dr. Tim that I am at 0 suds, I slept all night with no night terrors, and I am at peace. Thank you!” I was so excited to hear her good news from Maria that the nurse relayed. Though we were quite exhausted, everyone on our team was amazed, inspired, and ironically energized. Is that not one of the great paradoxes of life? And that is why I believe I can always positively answer the question: “Why do I go to Guatemala each year?”

— Tim Lynch Ph.D.

Lorraine Mary Clare Lynch (DOB: 9-2-1941) This article written on 9-2-2024 is in Honor and Love Memorial of my late wife Clare, who was always my #1 support for Rotary Missions throughout the world, but especially in Guatemala Central America!



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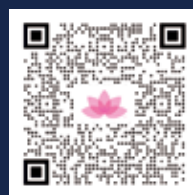
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Bat maternity season ended on August 14th, which means Waynes Pest Control can now start bat exclusion services for commercial properties in Alabama and Tennessee. From April to August, exclusion work is prohibited to protect young bats during their maternity period. With the season over, now is the perfect time to secure your property and keep bats out! Our wildlife control experts specialize in bat exclusion—a humane and effective method to remove bats and prevent their return. We seal off entry points and safely relocate bats without causing them harm, ensuring your property remains compliant with wildlife laws.

#### Why Choose Waynes

A minor bat issue can quickly become a significant threat to your building's integrity, your employees' health, and your bottom line. Proactively addressing bat problems is key to maintaining a safe, efficient, and secure commercial environment.

If you suspect bats have made their home in your building or want to prevent an infestation, don't wait. Contact Waynes Pest Control's expert wildlife team today. Our specialized bat exclusion services will quickly and effectively resolve your bat issues, ensuring your property stays bat-free.

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— Meredith Boyd, Social Media and Marketing Specialist  
[www.callwaynes.com](http://www.callwaynes.com)

## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

### American Girls in Sports Day



Across our country, more than 3 million female high school and college athletes compete, practice, and train every day to achieve athletic success. For many of these young women and girls, athletic participation is more than just a game: It is a life-long passion that improves their physical health, boosts their self-confidence, and teaches them the discipline and leadership skills to succeed on and off the field.

In many ways, the success of women's athletics would have been impossible without Title IX, the landmark civil rights law that codified protections on the basis of sex. By requiring equal resources for facilities, training, recruitment, and scholarships for female athletic programs, the law opened the floodgates for women in sports. In fact, since 1972, the year Title IX became law, the number of female college athletes increased by a factor of seven, while the number of female high school athletes has increased more than ten-fold.

Despite the incredible outcomes for women, for years we have seen the Biden-Harris administration wage a war on the very Title IX provisions that enabled greater women's participation in sports. On the 50th anniversary of Title IX in 2022, for example, the Department of Education announced new rules that allow students to participate in activities that do not align with their sex—essentially forcing schools to allow biological males to play on female teams. To make matters worse, just in April the administration redefined “discrimination” to allow biological men to use women-only locker rooms and bathrooms.

Make no mistake: With its radical interpretation of Title IX, the Biden-Harris administration is erasing women's achievements and changing the world of athletics as we know it. You do not need to be a biologist to understand that there are inherent biological differences between men and women that put women at a competitive disadvantage in sports and jeopardize their safety during competition. In fact, since 2003, biological men have wrongfully displaced women and girls from more than 1,000 championship titles, medals, scholarships, and records, including at least 28 women's sports titles in volleyball, swimming, mountain biking, track and field, weightlifting, and cycling—with much of this happening in just the last few years. The results are tragic: Young women—who often dedicate their entire lives to their sports—miss out on scholarships, career opportunities, and the hard-earned records that they deserve.

Thankfully, many of these young women are bravely speaking out against the Biden-Harris administration's radical agenda, including Tennessee's Riley Gaines, a former University of Kentucky swimmer who was forced to compete against and share a locker room with a biological male during the NCAA Women's Swimming & Diving Championships. Now more than ever, Congress should stand with the female athletes fighting for fairplay and celebrate the incredible contributions women have made to the world of sports. That's why, in the U.S. Senate, I introduced a resolution to establish October 10 as “American Girls in Sports Day.” Of course, we picked that date for a special reason: As the 10th day of the 10th month, October 10 is represented by the roman numerals XX—the same numerals of the female sex chromosome. In addition to establishing “American Girls in Sports Day,” this resolution would call on sports-governing bodies in the United States and abroad to protect biological women and girls in sports. Just last month, I led 22 of my Republican colleagues in demanding that the NCAA prohibit biological males from participating in women's sports to restore fair competition.

In the last 50 years, female athletes have gone from the sidelines to the center stage of competition. As we continue to fight for women's participation in sports, we must keep in mind what is at stake—and the “American Girls in Sports Day” resolution will help ensure that happens.

— 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.



### “Dogs Don’t Bark at Tombstones”

It was a hot June day in Tulsa, 35 years ago, and I was attending a regional Christian conference. One of the speakers was Alan Bryan – a good old boy with a heavy Alabama accent who began his presentation with those words.

It was almost delicious – these remarkable words, contorted through the deep Southern accent that was almost a caricature, laid out over the audience and catching us up as if in a butterfly net. We all stared at him, wondering what was coming next. Alan went on to explain, and then defend his title. Dogs don’t bark at tombstones. So, if you are figurately dead, content to stay within your comfort zones, afraid to verbalize your Christianity, then the dogs won’t bark at you. You will have no verbal enemies, and no one will bark, growl or bite at you.

However, if you take a stand for Christ, verbally giving God the glory, holding tight to your morals and focusing on him – if you actually try to live out your Christianity -- you’ll have detractors. It comes with the territory. If you are alive and active, you will attract the dogs who will accuse you, criticize you and belittle you.

While the dogs have been around since the beginning of time, in our time, the dogs have been unleashed and are running loose. Those dogs include the legions of social media addicts who find it so much easier to anonymously criticize someone online than to actually talk with someone in person. Those dogs include the hordes of Hollywoodians who live in their secluded homes, employ their servants and pontificate on what other people should do. Those dogs include the talking heads on mainstream media who are more content with shoring up their distorted view of reality than accurately reporting on anything. The dogs include the godless radicals who decide what can and cannot be discussed on social media.

And of course, the relatively new breed of politician whose ideal world is a Marxist godless society where all personal responsibility has been obliterated and bureaucrats’ rule without accountability. These dogs have multiplied in recent years and have gotten more and more aggressive in the pursuit of their goals, and in the attacks on those who don’t agree with them. Most Christians find themselves in that category. While the attacks on Christians have been irregular, the frequency and intensity will continue to grow.

At first, it has been, and will continue to be, attacks on Christian morals. Christian businesses, like Chick-fil-a and Hobby Lobby, to name some of the most visible, have had to endure dog attacks because of their stand on moral issues. That will eventually morph from attacks on Christian morals to attacks on Christians themselves.

Unless God intervenes and Christians rise up, the specter of economic isolation and marginalization – persecution – is very real. All of these dogs are sniffing around, looking for Christians to criticize and Christian principles and ideals to belittle. We are to blame, of course. 21st Century western Christians. We have been content to believe some very convenient distortions that have become so common as to be accepted as unassailable truth. We’ve been content to remain lifeless and beyond the notice of the dogs.



Probably the biggest distortion is this – Christianity is about being involved with a local institutional church and has little to do with our lives in the marketplace. As long as we are active in a church, we can live pretty much under the radar screen, and no one need to know that we are Christians. That is one of the greatest lies in history.

We’ve substituted churchianity for Christianity, and the impact has been devastating. Literally millions of people, across geographies and generations, have been lost because the Christians in their workplace were hiding under the cover of churchianity.

Instead of active Christians sharing the resources God has entrusted to us with needy people around us, we’ve been content to write a check to the local church and see the money used to maintain church buildings and pay professional staff. Millions of people could have been touched with the real expression of God’s grace through a gift by an individual Christian and were not. Instead of real relationship with God, we’ve been content to be ‘fed’ by a legion of professional Christian pastors. The impact has been to instill the idea that the only truth we know must come through the lips of a professional Christian, and to encourage passive pew sitting instead of active involvement.

I could go on and on, but you get the idea. We’ve allowed the dogs to multiply because our sights were focused elsewhere. We could justify being anonymous at work because we were invested in a church. Since we were occupied with the vagaries of the local institution, we felt absolved of any need to be visible in the marketplace. We attend every Sunday morning and serve on the worship committee. Isn’t that enough?

This substitute of churchianity for Christianity has taken its toll on our day-to-day behavior. For example... We could ask someone going through a difficult time if we can pray for or with them, and we don’t, because by doing so we unveil ourselves as Christians. Better to let the moment go by then risk an awkward, self-revealing scene. We are occasionally tempted to post something on social media that holds up God, and we don’t, because we don’t want to have the internet dogs barking at us.

When the conversation meanders around to world-views and belief in God, and the consensus is that “all roads lead to God,” or all religions are the same, we nod in soft affirmation instead of voicing Christ’s claim that “I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes to the father except through me.” (John 14:6)

Alas, the dogs have multiplied because of our indifference. The remedy is obvious. Accept the dogs barking as a necessary consequence of living a visible Christian life. The louder and more vociferously they bark, the greater is your threat to them. It is time to venture out of the grave and onto the field. Don’t be a tombstone.

— Dave Kahle

*This was originally published in the  
Biblical Business Blog*

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## The Beauty of Christian Service: Embracing Our Unique Callings

Serving Jesus is a profound privilege and a transformative journey that allows us to lift His name in every aspect of our lives. As Christians, we are called to be His hands and feet, reaching out to those around us with love, compassion, and grace. Yet, many of us find ourselves hesitant, unsure of how to step into our callings. It is important to remember that these callings are uniquely tailored to our personalities and chosen by the One who created us. He knows precisely how to use our particular talents to fulfill His good and perfect will.

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 4:10-11 (New International Version)*

Every calling, whether grand or seemingly small, plays a significant role in God's divine plan. When we align ourselves with His purpose, we find that He uses us in extraordinary ways, often beyond what we could ever imagine. This blog post aims to inspire and encourage those who are timid about stepping into their God-given roles. God calls us individually and uses our uniqueness to make a difference in the world.

Growing up, I was a timid child with a mean-spirited father who often made me feel scared. This experience caused me to think that I had little value. I attended a church where the wrath of God was often preached and taught. These two oppressive influences made me uncertain about wanting to know God personally, even though I had accepted Jesus into my heart at the age of nine.

As an adult, after leaving that church and joining one where God's love was preached, taught, and demonstrated through the people's caring actions, I started to develop a personal relationship with Jesus. I started singing in the choir early in my faith journey. The church members encouraged me to perform solos, and I often had the opportunity to do so. Although I was still working through feelings of low self-worth, I felt God urging me to use my talent for outreach. Though hesitant and fearful, I knew deep down He was calling me to take a step of faith and allow Him to work through me. In the end, I pledged to the Lord that if He granted me the opportunity to sing outside the walls of the church I attended, I would devote every moment to Him and His perfect will. I invested hours in finding new songs with soundtracks, waiting until I felt the Lord's anointing on a particular song that encouraged me to learn it.

Then, I spent additional hours practicing until I memorized each word, ensuring that I was fully prepared to perform under the guidance and anointing of Holy Spirit. I approached this calling with the belief, "I need to prepare thoroughly as if everything relies on me, while knowing that ultimately everything is in the hands of the Lord."



He began giving me many opportunities to sing. Often before singing, I received a message from the Lord to share, and many times, that message felt even more important than the song. I believed it was crucial to make every interaction with the congregation or audience meaningful, and I recognized that without the anointing of Holy Spirit, my efforts would be in vain. I dedicated much time to prayer and praise, allowing Jesus to lead me, even rewriting some song lyrics to better honor Him.

Reflecting on that period of about 20 years, I am certain it was His calling for me, bringing irreplaceable peace and joy along with a deepened sense of His love for me. This convinced me that if the King of the Universe valued me, I should value myself too. This time deepened my reliance on Him, and my prayer became, "Jesus, I can't do it, but you can. Use me to bring you glory and let others know your presence." I often said, "I am a nobody from nowhere, but He has made me a somebody going somewhere." I also learned a very valuable lesson in humility, which is that I am not defined by who I am but by whose I am. The King of the Universe created and restored me, and I belong to Him.

In closing, let us always remember that our ultimate goal in serving is to lift up Jesus. Whether we are called to sing, teach, serve in any way, or lead, each action is an opportunity to glorify Him and make His presence known in our lives and the lives of others. He uses us to fulfill His purpose in both small and great ways every day. A calling might occur just once, providing a unique opportunity to uplift someone He brings across your path with precisely what will bring them joy. By embracing our unique callings and stepping out in faith, we become vessels through which His love and power can flow.



So, my dear brothers and sisters, do not shy away from the call that God has placed on your heart. Trust that He has equipped you for the task and that He will walk with you every step of the way. Remember, your calling is personal and

specific, chosen by the Creator who knows you intimately. Let us lift Jesus up in all that we do and watch as He works through us to accomplish His magnificent plan.

*Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21 (NIV)*

— Danny Willis – [www.godslovegiveslife.com](http://www.godslovegiveslife.com)

# Spiritual Goal for October

## Choose the Voice of Faith!

*If only you carefully listen to the voice of the Lord your God...* (Deuteronomy 15:5, AMP)

All through the day there are two voices that compete for our attention - the voice of faith and the voice of defeat. You'll hear a voice saying, "You'll never rise any higher. You don't have what it takes. You've reached your limit." But if you listen carefully, you'll hear another voice saying, "You are well able. You can do all things through Christ. Your best days are still up ahead." You are the one who gets to choose which voice comes to life by speaking it out of your own mouth.

The moment you verbalize that thought, you give it the right to come to pass. When you speak faith, you're in agreement with God. When you speak defeat, you're in agreement with the enemy. God-talk brings God on the scene. Enemy-talk brings the enemy on the scene.

Why don't you get in agreement with God today? That negative voice may be louder, but you can override it. You can take away all of its power by simply choosing the voice of faith. Choose to declare favor, blessing, and increase over your life so that you can walk in the victory the Lord has in store for you.

*A Prayer for Today: Heavenly Father, today and everyday, I choose the voice of faith and victory. I declare that today I am rising up higher in You, that I can do all things because You give me strength. I praise You in everything I do. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*

— Mark Koch

## 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.*

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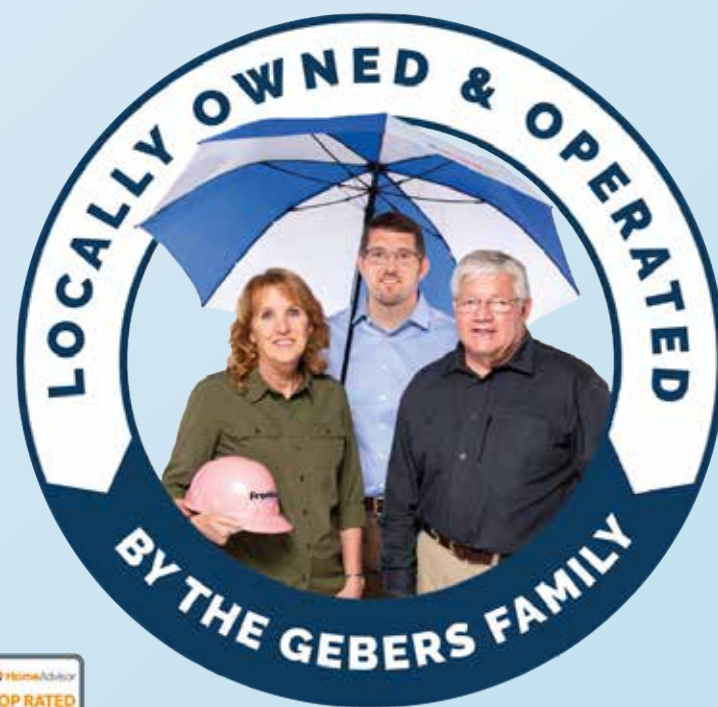
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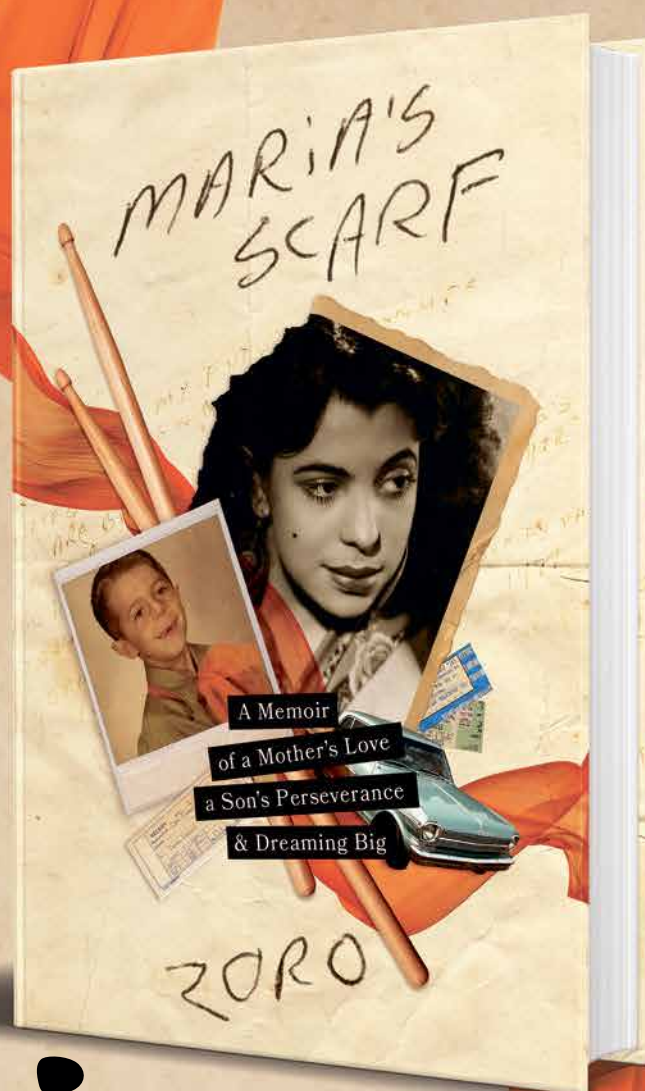
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