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#### INSIDE REPORT

OCT/NOV/DEC 2012

#### INSIDE: A WORLD OF WONDERS, PASTOR DOUG'S FIRST-EVER DAILY DEVOTIONAL! pg 15

#### THE EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

## Heaven Is for Real

**It's** a remarkable story. It's even a beautiful story. A young child with a life-threatening illness is rushed into emergency surgery. As the procedure wears on, complications arise and the little boy, Colton, slips the bonds of life. Yet amazingly, he is miraculously resuscitated and makes a complete recovery.

As the weeks after rolled by, Colton, the son of a pastor, began to convey extraordinary

revelations to his mom and dad. Colton claimed that during his surgery, he was able to look down and see his doctors working on him and also his dad praying for him in a nearby waiting room.

But more than that, he told them about his journey

into heaven. There he met a miscarried sister who no one told him about and his great grandfather who died 30 years before Colton was born—sharing convincing details no one believes he could possibly know. He even revealed information about God and Jesus and explained he saw Mary standing at Jesus' side.

These and many other remarkable episodes are revealed in the *New York Times* bestseller

jumping on the bandwagon to produce a major feature film based on the book. It's deeply saddening that a deception of this magnitude is being wrought through the innocence of a child—but it is just another devastating volley in a major campaign of

called *Heaven Is for Real*. It features a beguiling message about heaven and, ominously, warns

people to get ready because a coming last battle is just around the corner. Hollywood is already

> deception being heaped on the world. Of course, we don't know if Colton simply hallucinated nor the true source behind his claims. He's innocent. But we can compare them to Scripture and see they plainly contradict the Word.

That's why we chose to tackle the subject of what really happens after death in this issue of the *Inside Report*. Sharing the Bible truth plainly and clearly is why Amazing Facts was founded, and it's why God called you to be our partner. We need to let confused souls know that deception can come in the most seemingly innocent packages and that it's always okay to stand solely on God's Word.



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It's one of the most important topics in the Bible, yet most people today are confused about it—even Christians. Pastor Doug Batchelor sets the record straight on what really happens when we die, sharing vital light you need to know in these last days.









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#### testimonies@amazingfacts.org

#### What Donors Like You Make Possible

"I just want to say how much I love this website! It's a priceless source of comfort, encouragement, and fellowship to me. I come here all the time as I feel it's home, a retreat from the cruel world of deceit that so many have believed. When I began to grieve the death of someone very close to me, the first night alone I was afraid to fall asleep. I don't know why. The only thing that gave me comfort was listening to a sermon by Pastor Doug on this website. The sermon was about what happens when we die. His sermon was so comforting to me, I was able to fall asleep ... having total peace of mind. You've prayed for me when I requested it and answered questions when I needed it. Thank you with all my heart!" *Lucy, Ontario* 

Want Bible answers in your inbox? Inspiring articles? Latest ministry news? Testimonies showing how your support is making a difference? Or how about exclusive deals on our best products? Then sign up for our email specials and the *Inside Report* e-newsletter at subscribe.amazingfacts.org!

#### *Inside Report:* Setting Dates for Christ's Return

"I started to read this article with surprise! Where in the world did this man find a date?' I had just been preaching about Jesus' return, cautioning every man about the deceiving spirits predicting His return. But, thank God,



you ended up very beautifully—promising His return, patience in waiting, preparing yourself and others for that soon coming day. Also, I got an excellent lesson to help people for this day. Thank you very much." *Robert, website comment* 

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Amazing Facts, a nonprofit ministry, shares the saving truths of Jesus Christ around the world through literature, radio, television, the Internet, public evangelism, outreach training, and more. For operation, we depend on the gifts and prayers of caring Christians who believe in our mission.

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#### **Promoting Better Marriages**

"I have been in a bitter, unhappy relationship for the past three years.... I am always spiritually fed watching Amazing Facts' presentations. I recently watched 'Has Holy Wedlock Become Unholy Deadlock?' I have been inspired to stop the 'blame game' and overlook this wall of bitterness by applying the biblical and practical points mentioned in this presentation." *Email* 



#### Correspondence Team Encourages

"I want to thank you so much for praying for my exam. I'm grateful for the Bible verses you sent me. I wrote them down. I passed with good

marks and was so glad that I was able to make it! I just can't believe that I had the courage to answer my teacher unlike the first two times. I was leaping with joy after my test! I thank God for the grace He has shown me and for the courage He has blessed me with through you." *Elma, Russia* 

#### New Inside Report Format

"I love your smaller format of the *Inside Report*. It doesn't get damaged in the mail as easily. I wonder why you didn't do this sooner." *Conrad* 

"Just a quick note to let you know how much I liked the smaller format of the *Inside Report*! The articles are also very interesting. Way to go!" *Beth* 

The *Inside Report* welcomes all correspondence regarding Amazing Facts. Letters and other materials might be used—in whole or in part and edited for content and clarity—in future ministry publications. **If Amazing Facts has helped change your life for Christ, please** write us at testimonies@amazingfacts.org!

## PASTOR DOUG BATCHELOR CONFUSION IN THE

#### **AN AMAZING FACT:**

In 1876 a handful of mobsters botched a morbid plan to kidnap the body of Abraham Lincoln and hold it ransom. The hapless grave robbers were arrested two days later. Fearing another attempt, the government secretly hid the body of the sixteenth president in an unmarked grave for 25 years. Then in 1901, under the urging of Robert Lincoln, the president's only surviving child, Lincoln's body was dug up and placed inside a steel cage, lowered into a 10-foot-deep vault, and buried under tons of concrete. He's still there today, in his tomb, on the grounds of Oak Ridge Cemetery. So do the dead care when their remains are disturbed? There's no evidence that Abraham Lincoln ever complained about all the odd grave shuffling.



**ONE** of the most important subjects in life is to understand what happens when it's over. Unfortunately, there is a lot of confusion about death, inside and outside the church, which makes it very difficult for the average person to understand such a vital subject.

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Perhaps the greatest understatement ever would be to say that death is unpleasant. In our culture, when people die, we quickly cover them up and whisk them away. We don't want to think about death, especially when it comes to those we love and ourselves. But the topic must be faced, not only for the practical reason that we're all touched by it eventually, but because understanding the truth about death is actually good news if you have everlasting life.

It's not hard to see why people are so confused about what happens when we die. Even the many and varied tombstones at graveyards reveal this state of confusion. For example, one tombstone might read, "Father is sleeping now in the arms of Jesus, waiting for the resurrection trumpet." But a few tombstones over, one reads, "Mother is now singing on golden streets with the angels."

So which is it? Are the dead sleeping, waiting for the resurrection, or are they alive somewhere? If so, what are they doing? There is a debate about the afterlife, even among good and honest Christians. This brief study on death will help you see what the most important document in human history —the Holy Bible —really says about the subject.

#### Life and the Human Soul

Before we can understand what happens at death, we need to understand the basics of how life happened. The Bible tells us that when God made Adam in the garden of Eden, the man became a living soul. "The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7).

Notice it doesn't say that God "gave man a soul," but rather, "man *became* a living soul." The dust from the ground (the body), combined with the vital breath of life from God, produced a soul.

When someone dies, it is creation in reverse. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). The spirit that returns to God at death is the energizing breath of life given by God in Genesis 2:7.

"All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3). Here Job is talking about "the breath of life" mentioned in Genesis 2:7. In fact, it's the very same Hebrew word in both passages. At death, the body returns to dust, the breath of life returns to God, and the human soul ceases to exist.

#### An Eternal Reward—the Afterlife

Nobody is suffering in hellfire today, and the vast majority of people who have died are not in heaven. This might shock you, but



it's exactly what the Bible teaches.

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation

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22:12). Everyone gets his or her reward when Jesus returns. It's important to understand this because Jesus hasn't returned, has He? Judgment Day is still in the future. to Jesus. But how did they get to heaven? In 2 Kings 2:11, the Bible tells us that Elijah was caught up to heaven in a fiery chariot. Elijah went to heaven, even though he didn't

"So man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more" (Job 14:12 NKJV). The dead do "not rise" from the grave until the heavens are no more. When will the heavens be no more? "The day of the Lord will come ... in which the heavens will pass away" (2 Peter 3:10 NKJV). The heavens

pass away on the day of the Lord, when Jesus returns to the earth. Until then, the dead do "not rise" from the grave.

#### But aren't there people in heaven now?

Yes. A few. They are the exceptions. The Gospels tell the story of the transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus on



the mountaintop. They were real and in the flesh. Jesus spoke with them; the apostles saw them. They had come from heaven to offer encouragement die. Moses died first, but the Lord raised him up and took him to heaven (Jude 9).

In Matthew 27, during the time when Christ died on the cross, there was a strong earthquake, and many of the graves around Jerusalem opened up. Many of the saints who had died—patriarchs and prophets who lived prior to the time of Christ—were

raised in a special resurrection. It doesn't name names, so we don't know who they were. But the Bible says they came out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city where they appeared to many.<sup>1</sup> At the ascension of Christ, they ascended with Him.<sup>2</sup> These resurrected humans were what the Bible calls the first fruits of Jesus' successful mission.

#### **Empty Cemeteries**

When you go to the cemetery, does it ever make you feel creepy? Especially around sundown, are you afraid that some ghost is going to lunge out from the grave and grab your ankle? We've been trained in our culture to think that the dead aren't



really dead. But the Bible teaches the dead don't come back. They can't communicate. They certainly don't haunt cemeteries!

Have you ever gone to bed and

woken up, thinking you had only slept a short while, then you peek at the clock to discover it was hours longer than you thought? You have no awareness of time in sleep. That's how the Bible describes the sleep of death. For the saved and the lost, it's the same.

"Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death" (Psalms 13:3). Death is called "sleep" over and over again in the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments. Jesus clearly referred to death as "sleep" when speaking about Lazarus. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (John 11:11). The apostles took Jesus literally, so Jesus clarified for them that Lazarus was, indeed, dead.

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It took Jesus four days to get to Lazarus' tomb. Lazarus' body was decomposing, turning back into dust. Martha was even afraid of



the stench of an open tomb. They reluctantly rolled away the stone, and Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" That's what Lazarus did.

I believe Jesus allowed Lazarus to be in the grave for four days so there would be no doubt that Lazarus was very dead. Some skeptics suggest that other resurrections in the Bible were probably due to coma, arguing the people weren't really dead yet. But Lazarus had been embalmed and wrapped up. If he had been alive, he would surely have suffocated to death! The stench of his decomposing body wafted out of the open tomb and gagged them. But Lazarus came out alive at Jesus' command.

If that happened today, FoxNews and CNN would have called Lazarus for an interview. What do you think would have been their first questions?

> What happened? What did you see? What did you do? Who'd you meet? What was it like to be dead?

Despite the fact that this is one of the most public miracles of Jesus, and all the

*Continued on page 32.* 

## A Lasting LEGACY

When considering the great accomplishments of King David, most people think about his stunning victory over Goliath or his poetic prowess revealed in the psalms. However, one of his most outstanding acts of devotion is often overlooked.

During David's eventful life, the Lord blessed him with substantial wealth. But as he looked ahead, he was deeply concerned that after his death, sufficient funds would be available for completing the temple of God. He wanted to return to God the blessings bestowed on him so abundantly.

"Now for the house of my God I have prepared with all my might gold: for things to be made of gold, silver for things of silver, ... wood for things of wood, onyx stones, stones to be set, glistening stones of various colors, ... and marble slabs in abundance. Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver."

-1 Chronicles 29:2, 3 NKJV

For more than 45 years, Amazing Facts has been faithfully working to build up the temple of God with living stones—souls saved through evangelism—by preaching a clear and powerful message of salvation from sin through Jesus. "You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). As you look to the future in your estate planning, please remember to make provision for building up the temple of the Lord, just as King David did, by remembering the ministry of Amazing Facts.

#### How do I help Amazing Facts in my estate planning?

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#### What other means of giving are there for my estate planning?

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#### MORE THAN WE DESERVE BY LAURA IM

Although born to a family with a faithful Christian mother, Robert Smith\* chose a wayward path, going through years of drinking, playing cards, and even dabbling in the occult. However, strange things soon began happening, like his bed sheets suddenly lifting up off the bed on their own!

When he told his mom about these events, she explained, "Robert, you have put yourself

on Satan's playing ground. If the enemy tries to take your life, cry out to Jesus."

One night, Robert awoke to someone choking him, except no one was there. He knew he was being attacked by a demonic spirit. As he

struggled to release himself, he remembered his mother's words. With all the breath he could muster, he cried out to the Lord to save him. Immediately, the grasp let up and he fell off the bed onto the floor. When he gathered his breath, he went to his knees and gave his life to the Lord.

When Robert recounted the incident to a friend, he was urged to attend an evangelistic series—a life-changing moment in his life. Robert first became acquainted with Amazing Facts when he heard Joe Crews on the radio.

"I am here today by God's grace and the example left to me.... I want to give back."



He also read several pamphlets and found them insightful. He continues to believe in the ministry that Amazing Facts is doing.

Robert and his wife were inspired to create a gift annuity this year. They appreciate the fact that they can give a gift and receive an income they can live on. The decision was easy for Robert, because he considers his money to be the Lord's. "I saw that if any held on to their

> property and did not inquire of the Lord as to their duty, ... in the time of trouble it would come up before them like a mountain to crush them" (Ellen White, *Counsels on Stewardship*).

Although he is retired,

Robert has been faithfully distributing Christian books for the past 20 years. He wants to continue to reach out to the lost and to create more gifts to the ministry. He says, "I am here today by God's grace and the example left to me by my mother. I want to give back. The gift annuity is just a small part of it. Truly, when you promise to give your life to Christ, He will give you more than you deserve."

\*Not his real name.



with **Pastor Doug Batchelor** 

#### In Matthew 12:31, 32, Jesus gives a very solemn warning about a specific kind of sin. He says, "All manner of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven man, except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." This sin is also commonly known as the unpardonable sin. This statement from Jesus has caused all kinds of confusion among Christians, and many who don't know what this sin is live in fear that they've actually committed it. On the other hand, others don't know how close they've come to this disastrous act. Let's

take a few moments to clear this up. In Greek, the word is *blasphemos*, and according to one dictionary's definition, it means "to vilify, to speak impiously, to defame, to rail upon, to revile, to speak evil, to hurt or blast the reputation, nature or works of God." To call God foul names and to besmirch His Son's saving grace are certainly forms of blasphemy.

How do I know I

haven't committed the

"unpardonable sin"?

Additionally, in John 10:33, we read that some leaders in Israel were trying to find a reason to stone Jesus. "The Jews answered Him, saying, 'For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God." These men accused Jesus of blasphemy when He claimed equality with God and the right to forgive sin. Of course, they would have been correct to do so if Jesus were not God.

But blasphemy itself is not the unpardonable sin. In 1 Timothy 1:13, the apostle Paul writes:

"Although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." We know Paul will be in heaven even though he was a blasphemer. God's grace to us is exceedingly abundant; it forgives even blasphemy. Remember, "Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men." God's grace is amazing!

So what about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable? Well, to answer this, we need to understand what the Holy Spirit does. Once we do that, we'll see why His function is so crucial that blasphemy against Him is so serious a sin that it cannot be forgiven.

The Holy Spirit does three things: First, He teaches us the things we need to know for our salvation (John 14:26). Second, the Spirit guides us into all truth (John 16:13). Third, the mission of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin (John 16:7, 8).

This is His work. It is logical, therefore, to conclude that as long as we allow the Holy Spirit to teach us, to guide us, and to convict us, we could never be guilty of committing the unpardonable sin.

But suppose we refuse to acknowledge these three operations of the Spirit in our personal experience with God? That is exactly when people begin to approach the deadly parameters of the worst sin on record.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is a perpetual, constant resisting of the drawing love of God's Spirit, so much so that you lose the capacity to hear the Holy Spirit's voice. The conscience becomes seared (1 Timothy 4:2). This deadly blasphemy is also called "grieving away" the Holy Spirit. Paul says to "Grieve not the Holy Spirit, wherewith you are sealed," meaning we can permanently grieve Him away.

Eventually, a person loses the capacity to repent, and therefore cannot be saved. It is for this sin that a person cannot be forgiven, because they have rejected the Spirit that convicts of sin (John 16:8). So if you still feel convicted of sin and have the desire to repent, then you have probably not committed the unpardonable sin.

Unfortunately, there is so much more I could cover—but, alas, space does not allow. However, I've just written a book entitled

Beyond Mercy: What Is the Unpardonable Sin?, which covers a lot more ground. I encourage you to order it today from afbookstore.com.



Tune in to **Bible Answers Live**, Amazing Facts' live, nationwide call-in radio program, and listen to Pastor Doug give biblical, straightforward answers to difficult Bible questions. To get times and stations in your area, or to listen to answers online, visit www.amazingfacts.org. You can also request a free program guide by phone or mail.

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**ONLY** 

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#### Announcing Our New Website!

» NEWS

We are thrilled to introduce to you a fresh new design of our official website at amazingfacts.org! The completely redesigned site features an all-new look with simpler navigation to help thousands of daily visitors find the Bible information they need. And with over 4,880 pages available, guests can find just about everything they need *fast*!

Says Pastor Doug, "It is our desire to stay on the cutting edge of technology that will bring the truth within everyone's reach with greater ease and speed. We are excited how our new site offers a vast and growing library of truth with just a few mouse clicks. It's an economical way to conduct global evangelism at lightning speed!"

Some of the new features include a Current Events Blog, better social media integration (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and an updated media library with every sermon of Pastor Doug's all in one place. The sophisticated search engine will allow you to find messages by topic, language, Bible verse, or key words. Even the video quality has also been enhanced. Please join us today to check out the new site!

#### **A Special Birthday**

Pastor Doug traveled to Southern California as a surprise guest to celebrate the 100th birthday of Byron Spears, the legendary evangelist known as the "Walking Bible." Pastor Spears



could quote as many as 100 Bible passages in a sermon—all from memory! Today, Pastor Spears calls Doug Batchelor his pastor because he watches Amazing Facts' church services on AFTV.

Life for Byron began July 3, 1912, in Topeka, Kansas. At the young age of 24, he was stricken with polio and meningitis. This rare case of having both diseases was the only one known in the county. For many years, he walked with two canes, but he always held his head high and kept his faith in the heavenly Father. Amazing Facts carries Pastor Spears' *The Trumpet of Truth* 31-CD series at afbookstore.com.

#### **TV Broadcast Expansion**

Amazing Facts programming can now be seen and heard on more networks in North America and around the world! Please pray that God will reap a wonderful harvest through these new networks.

- Fox 40 Sacramento, California
- PT TV Port Townsend, Washington
- KVBA Alamogordo, New Mexico
- KAZQ Albuquerque, New Mexico
- ASAM American Samoa (Internet/TV)
- HCBN Indonesia (Internet/TV)

## Project Opportunities

Building His Kingdom Together

#### **Revelation: Prophecy's Hidden History**

The next chapter in our *Final Events* and *Cosmic Conflict* series, *Revelation: Prophecy's Hidden History*, is almost here—and your support will ensure Amazing Facts can complete this vital project. Your gift will be used



to share the pivotal moments
of the rise of the church from
after Christ's ascension to the
Reformation and educate
seekers on what the conflict
between good and evil means to

their lives today. You can help Amazing Facts get the best Bible commentators and create our most professional documentary to date and share the three angels' messages with millions around the globe.



#### China

If you could reach more than a billion people for Jesus, would you step out in faith to do it? That's

the door of opportunity that God has opened to you and Amazing Facts in the beautiful but spiritually dark nation of China. Your support can help Amazing Facts continue to reach China with a sophisticated outreach program using websites, literature, and on-the-ground outreach in a nation where sharing the gospel is forbidden.

#### **Bible Timeline**

Amazing Facts' next great Bible resource is the Bible Prophecy Timeline, an amazing study tool for novice and advanced students of the Bible, letting them scroll through the entire epic panorama of Bible history from Creation to the second coming! Your support will make it possible for seekers to see that the Bible is trustworthy and to understand God's full plan of salvation. The new Timeline is designed as both an iOS app and website, which means you can help give millions in-depth Bible information at the click of a button!

#### >> More Ways to Support God's End-Time Work



You can now further the gospel through even more giving options! Do you have a non-cash gift you would like to donate to help reach souls lost in darkness?

Amazing Facts gladly accepts vehicles, stocks, mutual fund shares, and real estate that we can convert into soulwinning resources.



Call us at 1-800-436-2695, ext. 8, and we'll assist you with the paperwork and how you can benefit with the best possible tax deduction.



## EvangelismTeam



Doug Batchelor



Emanuel Baek



Darrin Bartell



Lowell Hargreaves





Dennis Priebe



Tim

lones

Tyler Long



Dave Steward

• Our Bible prophecy seminars now feature can't-beat price breaks and a marketing team that will help you advertise your event. This is a great time to book an Amazing Facts evangelist and grow your church! Call today to get more details.

Doug Batchelor October 26 – 27 Fallbrook, California

**November 30** AFCOE graduation Sacramento, California

#### Darrin Bartell

October 12 – November 18 Spokane, Washington Call 916-434-3880 for details.

Lowell Hargreaves On assignment in the Philippines for AFCOE.

#### Tim Jones

October 11 – November 10 Church Auditorium 589 SW Birch Street Dallas, Oregon Call 503-623-5872 for details.

#### <u>Martin Kim</u>

October 5 – November 3 Church Auditorium 20400 1st Avenue South Des Moines, Washington Email southcentersda@gmail.com for details.

You are invited to meet the members of our dynamic evangelism team at our many seminars and revivals throughout the year—and please invite a friend! Go to prophecyseminars.com to get exact times and locations!

Times and locations are subject to change. Please confirm at **prophecyseminars.com** prior to attending.

Martin Kim



Contact us at 916-209-7220 to schedule an Amazing Facts evangelistic prophecy series or revival weekend in your church!

#### **Tyler Long**

October 18 – November 17 Cicero, Indiana Call 402-305-8229 for details.

January 11 – February 2, 2013 Bellingham, Washington Call 360-708-3657 for details.

February 8 – March 9, 2013 McKinleyville, California Call 707-839-3832 for details.

**March 14 – April 13, 2013** Fort Smith, Arkansas Call 479-646-8567 for details.

April 26 – May 25, 2013 Guildford, British Columbia Call 604-575-1597 for details.

#### Dave Steward

October 12 – November 10 Missouri State Fair Youth Building Dining Room 2503 W. 16th Street Sedalia, Missouri

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Inside Report 23 4Q 2012



by Steve Binus

Sharing the light of Jesus through His Word is an obligation that God has placed on every professed believer, especially in these last days. As a theology graduate, I felt it was time for me to do just that, but for some reason I found myself not knowing how to do it in a practical way. While the academic studies of biblical languages and systematic theology enhanced my understanding of Scripture, I realized that they did not prepare me for the real soul-winning work of evangelism.

MAZING FACTS

AFCOR

At that time in my life, I was running my vegan bakery and café in College Place, Washington, called His Garden. I utilized this business for years to distribute literature and teach people about health, but because of the intense daily work that had to be done, I didn't really have time to study with people and



Photo by Debbie Thompson Kippel

bring them to Christ. As the daily hustle and bustle began wearing on me, God kept on impressing me that I needed to take a break from the health food work in order to learn how to provide people with spiritual food in a practical way. But where could I go to learn how to do this kind of work?

#### Old Friends, New Path

One day, I received a phone call from one of my best friends, Jonny. Now Jonny and I

had gone to high school together, where we got into a lot of trouble. Back then, we ran with a crew of gangsters that dominated southeast Portland. Our days and nights were consistently spent smoking weed and drinking booze. Shortly after high school, after years of living rebelliously, I realized that my life was out of control and that I needed help from something greater than myself. Through a series of providential experiences, God brought me to my knees on a backpacking trip, where for the first time I made a full surrender to Christ. It was awesome!

Immediately after my conversion experience, I came back to my gangster friends to encourage them to also give their lives to Christ. Out of all of my friends, Jonny was the most supportive of my change. He wasn't ready to completely change himself yet, but he was happy for me and open to hear my newly discovered truths. It wasn't until after I moved away to go to college that Jonny would have his own conversion experience. About seven years had passed, when finally Jonny called me to notify me that the following week he would be attending the Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism (AFCOE).

Up to this point, I had never heard of AFCOE, but when Jonny explained it to me, I knew it was the place I needed to go. But classes were about to begin, and I had no money, no time, and no one to run my businesses while I would be gone.

#### **God Clears the Way**

It looked impossible for me to attend, but fortunately, we serve a God who specializes in turning impossibilities into possibilities. I laid my dilemma before the Lord and made a deal with Him. I prayed, "Lord, I know that you want me to acquire the skills of evangelism, and I am willing to go to AFCOE if you want me to. But you know that this cannot happen unless you



take care of the issues keeping me here. Please open the doors for me to go, and I promise that I will walk through those doors. Amen."

With this prayer and many others, the strong arm of God began working in a mighty way. I filled out the application for the school, sent it in, and began informing my family and friends that I wanted to go to AFCOE. Within one week, I had received more than \$4,000 in donations, an amazing manager to run the businesses, and a free flight to Sacramento, California, where I would begin the adventure of a lifetime. I arrived in Sacramento three days after class began, and Jonny was at the airport to pick me up.

It was so good to see my old friend on fire for the Lord, and we both realized that God had put us there at the same time to redeem our past record together. This time around, Jonny and I would not be hanging out to cause trouble but would be working together to bring souls to Christ!

#### **AFCOE** and **Beyond**

Jonny and I were outreach partners for the AFCOE training. We got to witness conversion after conversion during our time together, and it was the most incredible experience of my life. Shortly after graduating from AFCOE, Jonny went on to score a position as a Bible worker and teacher at an academy in the San Jose area, while I went back to my businesses with a new focus-EVANGELISM. Right away I began going door to door with little loaves of bread to tell people about the Bread of Life. I got to preach five full evangelistic series and was able to witness many lives changed by the simple work of one-on-one Bible study. I had acquired the long-lost skills that some universities no longer teach, and I was now fulfilling the obligation of Christ's Great Commission. Praise the Lord! Since my experience at AFCOE, God has led me back down to

Sacramento, where I currently work as a youth pastor for Pastor Doug's church in Sacramento. I now get to work with the teachers and preachers who trained me at AFCOE, and I'm actually getting paid to do the work I love most. God's providential leading has been amazing in my life, and I want to encourage everyone reading this testimony to let Him lead mightily in your life too. Maybe the Lord has been convicting you that you need to step out in faith and go through an AFCOE training session. Maybe your means, time, and situation are making it look like an impossibility to go. Well, it is under these circumstances that God works in mysterious and marvelous ways. Won't you present your case to the Lord and ask Him to make a way for you? God wants you to be a rightly trained gospel worker, and AFCOE will give you that training! He will open up the doors as long as you whole-heartedly decide to walk through them. May God bless you on your path of evangelism.

## Next session begins January 24, 2013

AFCOE





#### Sharing the Good News About the Last Days

inistry friend Volker Schmidt is thrilled that God has given him the opportunity to distribute copies of *Final Events* of *Bible Prophecy*, *Storacles of Prophecy*, and other inspirational resources to his community.

Every Wednesday after work, he gathers up eight *Final Events* DVDs, eight folders of the *Storacles of Prophecy* lessons, and eight copies of *Finding Peace Within* (*Steps to Christ*).

He then gets on his knees and prays that God will prepare the hearts of those he visits. He especially thanks the Lord that he can have a part in helping to finish the work so Jesus can come. He also thanks God for His presence, His angels, and the Holy Spirit. He says, "Satan always gives you negative thoughts why you really don't want to go, so it is very important to remember that God is with you and you aren't alone."

Volker carries about four of each resource with him when he approaches a home. He rings the doorbell, steps back, and waits for an answer. He takes a moment to look around for nice flowers or anything else he can comment on to break the ice.

When the door opens, he says, "Good afternoon, I am Volker and I live on [his street]. I wanted to share

## "Every TRUE DISCIPLE IS BORN INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD as a MISSIONARY. The receiver GIVER." becomes a GIVER."

something with you that has meant a lot to me." Volker then hands them the *Storacles of Prophecy* folder, which includes an address if they want to learn more or set up a Bible study. "My main thrust is to give them Then it's on to the next house! If no one is home, he leaves the items inside the screen door or some sheltered place.

After Volker completes his day, he returns to his car and again prays for the truth-filled

everything they need to accept Jesus. I believe that the Holy Spirit will help everyone who is longing and willing to follow truth." Volker

then explains that he



literature and the people, that God will direct in a providential way to save them. "In your daily talk with the Lord, remember these people and ask God's blessing on them."

attended a seminar about the prophecies of the Bible and learned a lot. He asks if the person has a Bible, which could reveal a

lot about their interest in spiritual things. He then explains, "From my study of the Bible prophecies, I have come to the conclusion that we are living in the very end of time."

Next, he says, "They just came out with this *Final Events* DVD and I would like to leave it with you." He also gives them a copy of a book. With that, Volker tells them God loves them very much and "God bless you."

"My main mission is to hand them this good news in book and DVD form so they have a chance to get ready." knowing this precious truth and love it more. We need to pray that God will give us a burden to carry the good news to save the

friends around you."

F resou uses fo at afbo

Volker explains, "One of the benefits of this work is that you will come away

recognizing how very blessed you are

Find the resources Volker uses for witnessing at afbookstore.com!

#### TV AND RADID BROADCAST SCHEDULE

Spiritually uplifting messages are available every day on Amazing Facts radio, television, and Internet!

#### AMAZING FACTS PRESENTS

A weekly 30-minute program with Pastor Doug that explores the Bible in depth, offering practical guidance and information for Christian living, prophecy, and more!

#### OCTOBER 14 MORE PRAISE IN YOUR DAYS

You know that eating right and exercising are keys to better health. But did you know that simply being thankful can also add to your days? An inspiring message you don't want to miss!

#### OCTOBER 21 SIGNS AND WONDERS

Pastor Doug explores the many facets of Christ's message of warning about the signs and wonders to come in the last days. Understand their true purpose so you won't be deceived!

#### DCTOBER 28 DEATH DELUSIONS

What happens when we die? Open the pages of the Bible for an eye-opening true picture of life after death that goes against everything you've ever heard!

#### NOVEMBER 4 THE RICHEST CAVEMAN

Pastor Doug's personal testimony shows how God's power can change lives! The incredible witness of a cave-dwelling hermit who's become an international soul-winner. Tell your friends!

#### NOVEMBER 11 2012 DOOMSDAY MYTHS

. . . . . . . . . . .

Get all the up-to-date facts you need about the major prophecy headlines today—from Nostradamus to the December 21, 2012, Mayan calendar prediction. You don't want to miss this timely message!

#### NOVEMBER 18 HOW PERFECT SHOULD A CHRISTIAN BE?

In a world with moral values eroding away, what should be the response of the Christian? Is it possible for a human to stop sinning? Pastor Doug's lesson will inspire and encourage you!

#### NOVEMBER 25 INSIDE THE LOST ARK

Take an incredible adventure into ancient Bible history and the spiritual mysteries of the Ark of the Covenant. A fascinating exploration of how the deep past meets our present-day religious life!

#### DECEMBER 2 & 9 THE SABBATH, PARTS 1 & 2

What is the Sabbath? And is it still an important day for Christians? This is the perfect program to get a refresher on the Sabbath and to share with your friends and neighbors.

#### DECEMBER 16 A LOST SHEEP

No matter how far you have wandered from the fold, God wants you back—and He sent a Shepherd to find you. If you feel lost in this dark world, please join Pastor Doug for this heartfelt message.

#### DECEMBER 23 GOD WITH US

Do you feel as if the love and mercy of Jesus is beyond reach? Fear not! Jesus knows who you are and how you feel—and He came to this planet for you. The perfect salve for the lonely and disheartened.

Schedules are subject to change. Television broadcast includes national broadcast only; visit amazingfacts.org for more information.

## RADIO

**BIBLE ANSWERS LIVE** — Airs weekly on Sunday at 7:00 P.M. Pacific. A live call-in radio program where you can ask Pastor Doug any Bible question and get a biblical answer in return. Call 1-800-GOD-SAYS during program hours to participate.





Watch Bible programming you can trust at www.amazingfacts.tv. Streaming online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on your computer, iPhone, iPad, and more!



You can enjoy Amazing Facts radio and TV broadcasts at www.amazingfacts.org anytime, day or night!

#### FREE PODCASTS!

Watch & listen to Pastor Doug anytime on your computer or MP3 player! Find out more online.

Be sure to visit our website for more audio Bible lessons!

#### Misunderstood BIBLE PASSAGE DEATH REGARDING

How do we explain what Jesus told the thief on the cross? "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). It seems, at first glance, that Jesus is telling the thief that on that very day, both of them will be in heaven together. This is an unfortunate mistranslation. The original Greek had no punctuation, so translators had to guess about where to place a comma. They decided on the common rendering of the text.

But they got it wrong. It should read: "Verily I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with me in paradise." Jesus is saying, even though right now I don't look like a king, I'm telling you right now that because you called me Lord and King, you're going to be with me in heaven.

We know it's a misplaced comma because Jesus didn't go to heaven that day! Three days after that promise, Mary saw Jesus after His resurrection and grabbed hold of His ankles. He said, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father" (John 20:17). He could not have been in heaven on Friday! The Bible makes it clear that the thief did not go to heaven with Jesus Friday afternoon. Gospel writers knew about it, we find nothing regarding Lazarus commenting on his experience.

Lazarus has the answer to the biggest question in history! But there's no comment. Why? Jesus tells us Lazarus was asleep. Lazarus had a fever, he was sick, he lost consciousness, and eventually he died. He didn't know anything until, all of a sudden, he woke up feeling great, wrapped up in something like perfumed first-aid bandages. He didn't know what was going on. He was hearing Jesus call him. That's all he knew. He stumbled to his feet and shuffled to the shiny entrance. To him it was like waking up from a nap.

Some believe that while the body might perish, the soul remains conscious. But the Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their



hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun."

#### Talking to the Dead

Paul, to the Thessalonians, writes about death, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep" (4:13). Paul

wants you to understand the truth about death because not understanding this opens you up to deception in the last days.

In fact, there are several prominent television programs that feature folks who allegedly talk to or "channel" the dead. Some of them reveal things only loved ones would know. According to the Bible, it's not dead people. It is either trickery or Satan's minions. They know a lot about us, even our secrets. They can use these bits of knowledge to trick you into thinking you're talking to your dead loved one.

I miss my brother Falcon and would love to talk to him. But I can't. He's dead. If anyone appears to me with red hair and freckles claiming to be my brother, as much as I miss him, I know from the Bible it's not my



brother. Either my mind is playing tricks on me or it's the devil.

There are *hundreds* of scriptures on the subject of death, so how can the church be so confused on this topic? How has the devil been able to bamboozle Christians? Why has he bothered to put so much energy into deceiving the church on this subject? *Because he's going to use it to his advantage before Jesus comes again!* "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Timothy 4:1).

#### Why the Truth About Death Is So Important

Of course, you've heard reports of near-death experiences, of people on the operating table who floated around the room. Yet researchers have shown that when people temporarily stop breathing, they will quickly build up too much carbon dioxide in their system and hallucinate. Some have interpreted these events as visions, but it's dangerous to base your theology on an operating table dream or hallucination.

"He said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets" (1 Kings 22:22). There are going to be in the last days lying spirits in the mouths of false prophets. Revelation 16 says these unclean spirits go forth to the kings of the earth, working miracles to deceive. That will have a trickle-down effect and deceive people into thinking they should embrace a certain theology based on the testimony of demons posing to be the spirits of the dead.

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders" (Matthew 24:24). The spiritualism infecting the church today is going to be used by the devil in the last days to deceive,

similar to how he deceived Saul. Israel's troubled king, in the desperation of his last days, went to see a witch. He saw a devilish apparition, not the dead prophet Samuel, that greatly discouraged him, and he committed suicide the next day.



How can we avoid being deceived in the last days? "They received the word of God with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). The Word of God is our only sure foundation. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). It doesn't matter if it looks and sounds just like your departed grandma or Mary the mother of Jesus, and it knows all the intimate secrets only they would know. If someone dead appears to you, it's of the devil or your brain is not functioning properly.

#### The Fate of the Righteous

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Jesus made it very clear that this resurrection is in the last days ...

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life;" [the first resurrection] "and they that have coming" (1 Corinthians 15:22, 23 NKJV). The dead believers are raised at Jesus' coming!

The Bible promises that one day, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Revelation 21:4). Unfortunately, death is a reality in our world today—and it does and should cause us sorrow. But, most important, you don't

done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" [the second resurrection, at the end of the thousand years] (John 5:28, 29).



need to be afraid of death. Jesus promises, "He who has the Son has life" (1 John 5:12 NKJV).

That life begins now because Christians don't die permanently! You might experience a momentary

"This is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone

who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up *at the last day*" (John 6:40 NKJV, my emphasis). The words of Jesus could not be clearer! How many are raised when they die? None. The saved are raised up at the "last day."

One more: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His dreamless sleep, but Jesus will awaken you on that great day. You don't need to be afraid of death if you have Jesus. So I invite you today to accept the fullness of His Word and take His grace into your life.

For more information on this subject, visit www.truthaboutdeath.com.

1. Matthew 27:51,52 2. Ephesians 4:8

#### In Loving Memory of

Douglas Ackermann from June Ackermann, his wife

Micah Batchelor from Don Park; from Teresa Lynd John Becher from Terrie Becher, his wife Les Bergstrom from Jim and Judy Culpepper Barry Blanchfield from Jon and Linda Carleton Teddy Borrelli from Joyce Jaisingh Ed Bowen from June Ackermann Shannon Burton from Emanuel and Cathy Pavlik, her parents

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 Verne Hunter from Jarold and Beth Mason

Michael Willi Ikeda from Jutta Ikeda-Mackay, his mother

Hazel Kester from Mr. and Mrs. James Land David Kingry from Jim and Judy Culpepper

Albert and Evelyn Lacey from Olive White, their sister Marven Lang from Olga Lang Rodin, his wife John Leland Sr. from Joleen Horine, his daughter; from his friends at Gainesville SDA Church William Lowe from Anita Lowe, his wife Homer Lynd from Teresa Lynd, his wife

Amazing Facts recognizes contributions made as a tribute to the deceased or as an honorarium celebrating significant milestones in the lives of loved ones. Please type or print legibly to ensure correct spelling; we are unable to verify confusing spellings due to volume.

Edna Mantz from Alberta Ballard, her cousin Lester Marcussen from Bette Marcussen, his wife Myleen McCullock from James McCullock, her husband Bill Murphy from Beulah Keeler, his sister

Kathy Osborne from Beulah Keeler, her mother-in-law

Bea Parfitt from Karen Snyder Delbert Pearson from his family Gertrude Olson Peterson from Donna and James Reese Naomi Poyner from Marjorie Quade

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Earl and Grace Reuss from Barbara Qualley, their daughter Raymond Rouse from Darlene Rouse, his wife Pansy Ruddle from Francis Ruddle Harry and Irma Rushold from Marlin and Udene Allen, their children

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 Lloyd Joe Wilson from Jim and Judy Culpepper

Dale Zumwalt from Barbara Zumwalt, his wife

#### Happy Birthday

Sarah Cowles from Diane and Ivan Cowles Thelma Herzberg (90th) from Michael and Debra Fechik

#### <u>In Honor of</u>

Judy Evenson from Arden and Dorothy Mote Ron Mote from Arden and Dorothy Mote Don Mote from Arden and Dorothy Mote





BARBARA WATSON



FOR A LONGER AND

of the worst tragedies regarding the American health crisis is that through poor lifestyle habits, most people actually invite the unsavory assortment of disabling diseases bent on killing them. Plagued with a pandemic of diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, many seem to spend their last 10 or even 20 years dying rather than really living! Worse, these self-destructive habits have led to astronomical medical costs.

It doesn't need to be this way. It can change. Not only for America, but for you personally and for those you love!

Most people want good health, but they are confused about where to find it. Did you know that the public indulges on the nearly 30,000 quick-fix health supplements available on the market? It's a multibillion dollar industry. More than 150 million Americans take some form of supplement each year. While taking a vitamin pill might be helpful at times, it's not a substitute for a healthy lifestyle. It's not worth spending a fortune on something that doesn't get to the core of the problem.

But the Bible has the answers, and a brand-new cookbook from Barbara Watson and Amazing Facts not only shares the basic secrets of health—nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight, rest, and more—it also offers a good place for even the novice to start: a better life through better eating.

Lots of people who seek a healthier lifestyle wonder, "What in the world do I eat?" They simply don't know the recipes and cooking strategies to get them on the right path. So the *Amazing Health Cookbook* was designed specifically to get you off to a great start by offering nutritious but tasty recipes, helping you lay a proper foundation for health. And don't worry ... these meals are designed to be enjoyed!

Beverages • Breakfast Breads • Spreads and Dips Salads and Dressings Soups and Stews • Entrees Foods for Kids • Sides and Sauces and an incredible array of Desserts!

Order a copy today—in fact, order more than one and share the good news about God's plan for better health. Start preparing the meals and share them with friends and neighbors, so they, too, can enjoy amazing health! You can start participating in the healing ministry of Jesus in no time!

See ad on page16.



#### Cranberry Oat Muffins

Freeze some cranberries when they are available and you won't have to wait until the holidays to serve these muffins. Dense but delicious!

#### INGREDIENTS

1	cup	drained, crushed pineapple
1		ripe banana, mashed
1⁄4	cup	almond butter
1⁄4	cup	honey
1⁄2	tsp	salt
1	tsp	coriander
2	cups	quick oats
1⁄4	cup	chopped walnuts
1⁄2	cup	unsweetened coconut
1	cup	date pieces
1	cup	halved, fresh cranberries

#### STEPS

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 2 Mix together pineapple, banana, almond butter, and honey in a large bowl.
- 3 Add remaining ingredients and mix well.
- 4 Spoon into oil-sprayed muffin tin. Heap mixture into the shape of a muffin, as they do not rise.
- 5 Bake for 45 minutes.

MAKES 1 DOZEN MUFFINS



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