

Walking WITH THE LORD



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Hide God's

Word in Your Heart



Memorize:

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither
shall anyone snatch them out of My hand (John 10:27, 28).

Jesus gave you this promise to defend your heart against the devil's lies. These verses are a reminder that if you are following Jesus, then you have the assurance of eternal life, no matter what anyone else does. What this also means is that your salvation is conditional upon your choice. You have the free will to follow or not follow the Good Shepherd.

Previous to this passage, Christ defined what a thief does: He steals, kills, and destroys (John 10:10). Who is this thief? The devil, who "snatches away" the Word of God when it falls on deaf ears, "by the wayside" (Matthew 13:19). But these memory verses declare that our Savior is stronger than any thief, including the devil.

Notice the three components Jesus listed in verse 27. First, a person must hear Jesus' voice, which indicates that Jesus did the initiating; He called you. To whom does Christ extend the invitation of salvation? He calls everyone to be saved: "If *anyone* thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (7:37, emphasis added); "look to Me, and be saved,

all you ends of the earth!" (Isaiah 45:22, emphasis added). Your job is to "hear" when He calls.

Second, Jesus knows His sheep personally (John 10:14). The Lord says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jeremiah 1:5). He knows the darkest hidden parts of you—and He still loves you. In fact, it is because He knows your sins that He invites you to follow Him, for through Him alone will your sins be forgiven and cleansed, through Christ alone will you gain eternity.

The third component is your response to hearing His call: "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). When you realize all Jesus did and is doing for you, you begin to love Him. And when you love Him, you follow Him. And if you continue to follow Him, He will lead you home. These memory verses describe the road to salvation.


Learn more about what it means to practically follow Jesus in Pastor Doug's article "Walking with the Lord." 

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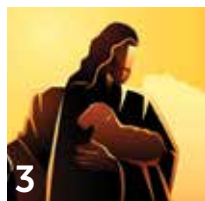
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Connect with Amazing Facts

From the Mail Bag



Inviting God into Your Reality

I graduated from the Amazing Facts Bible School, and I'd like to thank your crew and all who made these studies possible. Through this website, my husband and I were led to a Sabbath-keeping church, and we were baptized. Now we faithfully attend the church on Sabbath, getting involved and doing studies in our home with Bible

workers. My husband also completed your studies through our church. I have since done many other studies, and yours have been my favorite. If only more could be made! Your website and media programs have been such a blessing to us. Our lives have been forever changed! Though it is the work of God's hands, we sincerely thank the programs and workers. We both always knew about God and believed in Him and Jesus, but we never made Him and the words of the Bible our reality. We knew Jesus as a good man and told people that He's important and they should know about Him too. But knowing about Him and to know, trust, and obey Him is a totally different story. And now, we do truly know and obey Him! Our lives have never been easy, and they never will be—but with God, He's made it possible to get us through it till He's back. *Cameron, Pennsylvania*

Hello from Timor-Leste

We've lived in Timor-Leste since 2017, and we always watch your online series and sermons. Such a blessing. Before Timor, we were in Panama, Mali, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Cambodia, and your programs have been nourishing us ever since. Now we are watching *Panorama of Prophecy!* My boys really like when you share your amazing facts, your humor, and Bible knowledge. Thank you for sharing God's Word in a way that even pre-teens and teens can understand—and be assured of God's promises in uncertain times like this. Your programs are a blessing for us here. We thank God for your ministry that can reach us and many others in isolated places like Timor-Leste. Maranatha! *Karla, Gabriel, and Nicolas*



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Walking LORD

WITH THE

By Doug Batchelor

An Amazing Fact: *It took David Kunst from June 20, 1970, to October 5, 1974, to circumnavigate the globe—on foot. He went through 21 pairs of shoes walking 14,452 miles.*

On average, a person takes 7,000 to 8,000 steps a day, which would amount to approximately 2.5 million steps a year and 115,000 miles in a lifetime.



All that walking is sure to take you lots of places—but are you walking with God?

The Bible tells us, “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6). Well, that doesn’t sound like just any walk. The verse isn’t necessarily talking about how far to walk or how fast to walk—it’s talking about *how* to walk, period.

In other words, the way I walk is the way I live. If I say I’m a Christian, then I should live like Christ. Jesus said, “For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15). The plainest way to put it is that we are to follow Christ. He said to those who would be His disciples, “Follow Me” (Luke 9:59).

So how do I do that? We’re going to look at what it realistically means to walk with God.

The Material World

Here are the common areas that usually make up a person’s life: work, relationships, food, sleep—not necessarily in that order. These are what seem to make our material world go around. And we do live in a material world; we are a consumer society. What’s the best car or phone or sofa to buy? What new product is the latest social media influencer pushing? Many are preoccupied with

To follow Christ means to walk with Him, and the Bible shows us exactly how to do that.





paying their mortgage, getting that promotion at work, saving for retirement. And these are not bad, per se.

But the citizens of heaven live by a different code. When Jesus was on earth, He didn't live like we'd think the Son of God would have lived. He wasn't a head of state; He wasn't a wealthy investor; He didn't even own a home. "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (v. 58), He said to a man who desired to follow Him wherever He went.

Our social construct dictates that as divinity on earth, Jesus would have been a Fortune 500 CEO, living on a private island, being served hand and foot, and traveling the world on a private jet. The reality is that Jesus had to borrow a donkey to get around (Matthew 21:2, 3) and a room for dinner (Luke 22:10–12)—even the manger in which He was placed as an infant belonged to the innkeeper's animals (2:7). He was crucified on someone else's cross (Mark 15:7–15); He was buried in someone else's tomb (Matthew 27:57–60). He owned nothing save the clothes on His back, and even those were seized and gambled for as He hung dying upon the cross (John 19:23, 24).

The Savior didn't come to earth to make people rich, no matter what some televangelists are preaching. The Bible says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matthew 6:19, 20).

In one instance, a rich and young ruler ran after Jesus and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17). That's the question every one of us should be asking.

In response, Jesus listed the section of the Ten Commandments pertaining to human relations. These are the six from the second table of testimony: "'Do not

commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal'" (v. 19), and so on and so forth.

"Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth," said the young man (v. 20). He knew about God and conscientiously kept His will.

But then Jesus added, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me" (v. 21). Jesus was now addressing the man's relationship to Him, the first four of the Ten Commandments. This was where the issue lay—what the man loved most was not God but his earthly treasure.


Scripture tells us, "He was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions" (v. 22).

Can you imagine? The young ruler chose things, stuff—dead objects—over eternal life with Christ. That is how strong the pull of the material world is. From this we see that the power, the prestige, the perks, the things of value in this earthly life, are diametrically opposed to the things of the heavenly.

"How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" (v. 23), said Christ to His disciples after the man left. "And the disciples were astonished at His words" (v. 24), for in the social construct of their day was the assumption that rich men were also righteous men. "Who then can be saved?" (v. 26) they wondered.

And the answer was given them shortly, when they arrived in the city of Jericho, and Zacchaeus, "a chief tax collector" (Luke 19:2), "received [Jesus] joyfully" (v. 6), eagerly telling the Savior, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold" (v. 8). This other rich man's love for Christ was shown in what he did with his earthly goods. See the direct contrast to the young ruler: When received by Jesus, Zacchaeus gave away instead of hoarded his money. As such, his experience with the Savior was joyful rather than sad. His love for Christ brought him





to follow His commandments. All of this was the result of Zacchaeus' decision to become a follower of Christ.

"Today salvation has come to this house" (v. 9), replied Jesus.

Thicker than Water

People say that blood is thicker than water, that family comes before anyone else. Family is important. We are given only a handful of people who make up our life—our spouse, our children, our parents. These are the people with whom you spend every day, the people who raised you and who you have raised, the ones who know you better than anyone else. You wouldn't be who you are today without them. Yet Jesus clearly said, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37).

Now, does this mean that you must forsake your family, leave your wife, neglect your son, disrespect your parents? When Jesus invited one would-be disciple to follow Him, the man requested, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father" (Luke 9:59). In reply Jesus stated, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God" (v. 60).

That seems rather harsh, to forbid a man from arranging his own father's funeral. But that's not what Jesus was doing at all. The man's father hadn't died yet. He was

using his father's old age as an excuse. The issue was not whether he loved his dad but that he did not love the gospel.

I once had a church member who was married to a man who wasn't Christian. Sometimes she showed up to worship on Sabbath, sometimes not. When I talked with her about it, she told me that her husband wanted to go out some weekends, shopping, eating, what have you. And she went because she loved him and wanted to be a good wife and to please him.

One day, she called me in a panic. Her husband had gotten into a terrible accident at work. We prayed together at the ICU. As her husband teetered between life and death, God gave her a realization. She was putting her earthly husband before her heavenly Father. Thankfully, her husband survived. From then on, that dear lady was at church every week without fail—and so was her husband.

If God is calling you to do something or go somewhere, is there anyone who would stop you from responding to that call? Is your loyalty to a loved one disloyalty to God? Jesus had a family on earth. His father, Joseph, was older than His mother, Mary, and had passed away first. But having a



widowed mother at home did not stop Jesus from leaving to begin His ministry.

"Who is My mother, or My brothers?" Jesus asked when informed that Mary and His half-siblings had arrived looking for Him (Mark 3:33). "Here are My mother and My brothers!" He continued, referring to "those who sat about Him" listening to His teachings (v. 34). "For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother" (v. 35).

That is a fascinating admission. It means that in reality, every follower of God is part of the family of God. Every Christian can claim Jesus as his Brother and God the Father as his heavenly Father. Blood indeed *is* thicker than water—the blood of Jesus Christ, which has the power to change our fate from certain death to everlasting life! (Leviticus 17:11).

Drop Everything

When Jesus called His original apostles, notice that though these were very different kinds of men, they all responded the same way—affirmatively and immediately. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men," the Lord said to Peter and Andrew (Matthew 4:19). The Bible tells us, "They immediately left their nets and followed Him" (v. 20).

Next, Jesus invited James and John. Likewise, these two also "immediately ... left the boat and their father, and followed Him" (v. 22). Notice that this pair of brothers chose God's will over both their earthly gain and their family ties.

Later, the Savior said to Matthew, a tax collector, "Follow Me" (9:9). The Bible doesn't say that Matthew brought along his cash register or even put away his money. It simply states, "So he arose and followed Him." That doesn't mean you don't give your boss two weeks' notice if God is calling you to be a missionary. The point is to surrender to God's will instead of your own.

So many times, we give the keys to God but then take the wheel from Him—and then we end up in a fender bender and wonder how it happened. "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3). So many times we try to fit God into our calendar—and think we've given Him enough if we've done our due diligence at church for three hours. I've flown home from evangelistic series where the Holy Spirit has pricked my heart to witness to the person next to me, and my first thought has been, "Lord, I've just preached 30 times in 20 days. I'm off the clock now." And this has been the Holy Spirit's response: "Doug, you're never off the clock."

Following God isn't a nine-to-five job. Neither is it just a one-and-done decision you make when you get baptized. That's why it's called *following* God, *walking* with God.

It's an ongoing, moment-by-moment process. It's to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17); it's to "[abide] in the vine" (John 15:4), Jesus Christ, "for without [Him] you can do nothing" (v. 5). As Christ said to His disciples after His resurrection, "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20). Walking with God means being with a Companion who never abandons you. It means allowing Him to drive *and* to hold the map. It means that God *is* your calendar.



As You Are

If you come to God when He calls, it goes without saying that you come to Him rough around the edges. Peter was arrogant (26:33, 35); James and John were vengeful (Luke 9:54); all 12 apostles were competitive and envious (Matthew 20:20–24; Mark 9:34; 10:37–41; Luke 9:46; 22:24). And the more they walked with Him, the more those uglier traits of theirs were shown for what they really were. It doesn't make sense any other way. A person follows God to be made new; he doesn't make himself new in order to come to God. That's like parents telling their child to clean up in order to take a bath, instead of taking a bath in order to get clean.

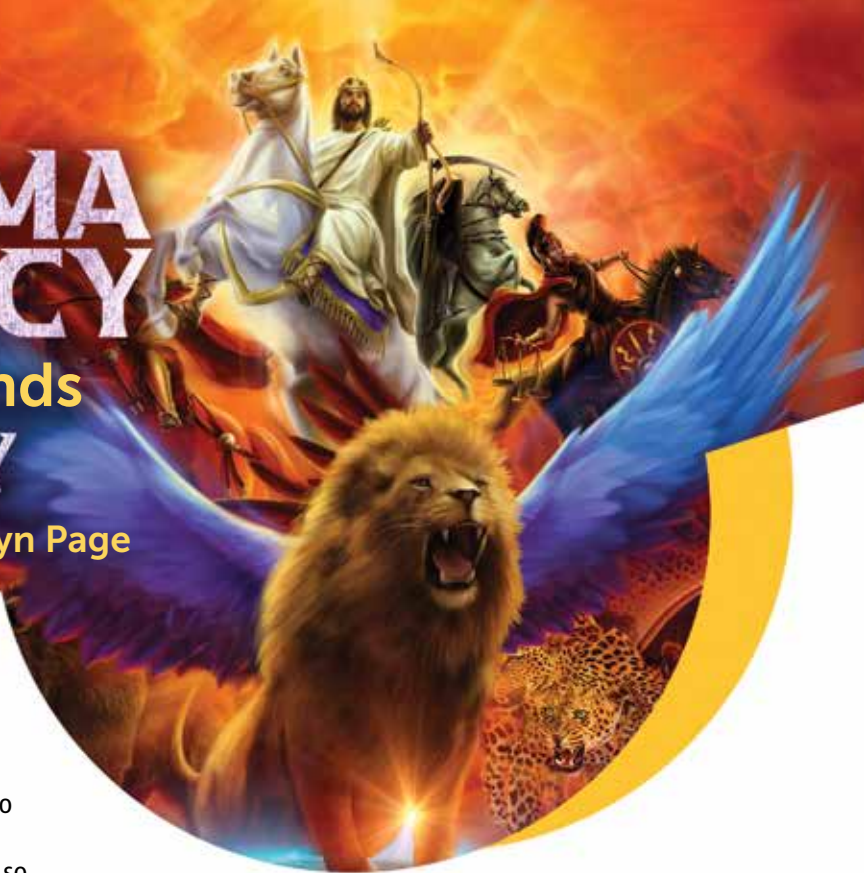
Yet how many of us are too ashamed of our sinfulness to come to Jesus as we are? We placate our consciences by making promises we can't keep. *Just as soon as I stop smoking, I'll start going to church. Just as soon as I think I can live like a Christian, I'll become a Christian.* When it comes down to it, that's really just our feeble attempt to save ourselves, instead of looking to Jesus Christ, the one "name

(Continued on page 16.)

PANORAMA OF PROPHECY

Reaches Thousands GLOBALLY

By Shenalyn Page



By God's amazing grace, more than 100,000 people from 120 countries watched *Panorama of Prophecy: A Bible Study Spectacular* with speaker Doug Batchelor, president of Amazing Facts International, presented live from October 15 to November 13, 2021.

"It's so thrilling to see God's Word going out to so many souls at once," says Pastor Doug. "We've heard from people all over the world telling us how excited they are to learn the truth. There is power in the Word. We preach it—and then stand back and watch God work."

Amazing Facts broadcast the 25-part series from the W.O.R.D. Center in Granite Bay, California, and in cooperation with 3ABN and Hope Channel. The programs were also viewed online by tens of thousands through Facebook, YouTube, AFTV, Good News TV, and SUMTV. A live Spanish translation further expanded the reach.

And according to Greg Morikone, president of 3ABN, "Our potential audience spans 95 percent of the globe. We've had a fantastic response to *Panorama of Prophecy*. People are really seeking for truth."

AMAZING RESULTS

One viewer, Shirley, shares, "I was watching with my husband, who has dementia, and when he heard your call to repent, he responded and confessed. He is a Christian, but it has been so long since he has even responded to me. What a miracle!"

Another viewer drove to the W.O.R.D. Center after the final meeting to fill out a decision card, expressing his desire to be baptized. A couple from Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates attended the final weekend in person and told how they watch Amazing Facts online regularly.

"Our donors, who made this series possible, truly are making a difference in eternity," says Pastor Doug. "I wish I could transport them here so they could see the genuine conversions. And testimonies of lives that have been transformed by these messages will continue to come in for years."

A TIMELY MESSAGE

Panorama of Prophecy showed viewers a broad sweep of prophetic history and answered the question: Does the

Bible have anything to say about the times in which we live? Topics included the mark of the beast, steps to salvation, the Sabbath, the afterlife, and the signs of the times. Each was a vital message for the world in these challenging times. "People are very much attuned to what's happening in the world right now," adds Morikone. "With all the uncertainty, we're seeing a higher interest in prophecy than ever before."

Each night included Bible Q&As with Pastor Doug and his wife, Karen; uplifting music with John Lomacang and Kelly Mowrer; and a power-packed Bible

"The most important thing in the world to Jesus is saving people. When you're involved in something where His Word goes out, the Lord is extremely interested, and you see Him move in new ways. We saw that, and it's always exciting."

—Pastor Doug

study. The presentations will now be edited into 30-minute segments to air on national television in the coming years. Says Pastor Doug, "We don't know how much longer we'll

be able to share truth like this. Restrictions and cancel culture are even preventing us from sharing openly in some places, so we've tried to do our best."

MIRACULOUS INTERVENTIONS

Producing a series like this and broadcasting it live around the world is no small undertaking. Amazing Facts began planning for *Panorama* in 2019. Significant preparations included coordination with the networks that hosted the live broadcasts, engineering the W.O.R.D. Center's audio and visual capabilities to host the meetings, extensive marketing, coordinating volunteers from the local church, and more.

Not everything went smoothly. Shipping delays kept stage pieces and important equipment from being delivered on time. And Pastor Doug came down with COVID-19 two months before the event. "Anytime you do a meeting like this, you can see spiritual battles happening," Pastor Doug explains. "But it's exciting to see how the Lord removes the obstacles."

"There are so many things that should not work in a live production," says series producer Wayne Leman. "To see it all come together shows how God is orchestrating. There is no way this kind of production would work without Him."

BILL FROM ROSEVILLE, CA

"Can you take off your mask for a moment?" It was an unusual request at the racquetball court in the middle of a pandemic, but Pastor Doug obliged.



"Doug Batchelor!" the man exclaimed. "I recognized your voice. I've been listening to you for years. I'm Bill." That odd beginning led to a friendship, and more recently, to Bill running the audio board for the *Panorama* meetings. "I've


studied the Bible a lot," says Bill, who has been a Christian since 1995, "but I've never seen the whole view of prophecy like this before. These meetings took my understanding to a whole new level and made me rethink things."



JENNY FROM NORTH BEND, OR

"Our church experienced a split about 20 years ago. My friend left the church but still kept the Sabbath. I hadn't seen her in a long time, but we ran into each other at the store recently. She told me that a group of her Sunday-keeping friends told her that they are now planning to keep the Sabbath as a result of *Panorama of Prophecy*. I see the Holy Spirit being poured out through these meetings. I'm looking forward to studying the Bible with her and her friends."

HENRY AND CHRISTINA FROM COLFAX, CA

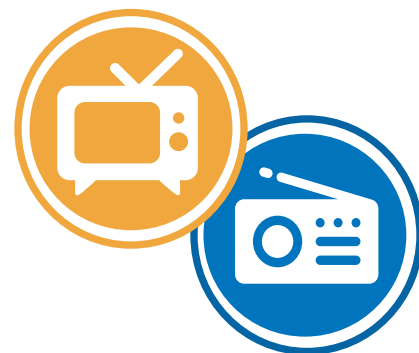
The Escamillas have been sharing God with their friend for over ten years. They've invited him to their home and to health and Bible programs at their church. Recently, life challenges have given Braden a new interest in the Bible. When the Escamillas invited him to attend *Panorama* with them, he readily agreed. "He attended all but one or two meetings and is starting to connect with other people in the church," they share. "We're praying for him. It's exciting to see him grow in the Lord." 

New Live Events Coming Soon

Amazing Facts is preparing a new revival event in the first quarter of 2022, tentatively titled *The Fundamentals of Faith*. And beginning January 14, the Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism will present *Revelation's Final Warning*, an intensive seminar about the three angels' messages. Be sure to look for details at amazingfacts.org!

TELEVISION AND RADIO

Broadcast Schedule



Amazing Facts with Doug Batchelor (Times marked in black)

Sabbath School Study Hour (Times marked in blue)

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
AFTV	4:00 AM PT 10:30 AM PT 12:00 PM PT 10:30 PM PT	12:00 AM PT 6:00 AM PT 3:00 PM PT 6:00 PM PT	8:00 AM PT 11:00 AM PT 8:00 PM PT 11:00 PM PT	8:00 AM PT 8:00 PM PT	2:00 PM PT 4:30 PM PT	4:30 AM PT 9:00 AM PT 2:00 PM PT 5:00 PM PT 6:00 PM PT	5:00 AM PT 9:30 AM PT 10:00 AM PT 4:00 PM PT 9:30 PM PT
DAYSTAR TELEVISION NETWORK				6:00 PM ET			
Hope CHANNEL	10:00 AM PT 7:00 PM PT				6:00 AM PT 12:00 PM PT	6:00 AM PT 12:30 PM PT	6:00 AM PT
H HISTORY		6:00 AM ET/PT 5:00 AM CT 4:00 AM MT	6:00 AM ET/PT 5:00 AM CT 4:00 AM MT	6:00 AM ET/PT 5:00 AM CT 4:00 AM MT	6:00 AM ET/PT 5:00 AM CT 4:00 AM MT	6:00 AM ET/PT 5:00 AM CT 4:00 AM MT	
IMPACT NETWORK	5:00 PM ET						
lifetime	8:00 AM (All Time Zones)						
SafeTV®		9:30 AM CT		9:00 AM CT		9:00 PM CT	5:00 AM CT
TBN					10:00 PM PT		
THE WORD Network	1:00 PM ET						
3ABN Three Angels Broadcasting Network			10:00 PM CT	9:00 PM CT	1:30 PM CT 7:00 PM CT	5:00 AM CT	12:00 PM CT

WEB

Watch Bible programming you can trust at AFTV.org. Streaming online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, on your computer, iPhone, iPad, and more! You can even watch on ROKU!



RADIO

BIBLE ANSWERS LIVE

Airs weekly on Sunday at 7:00 PM PT. A live call-in radio program during which 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. You can also watch live on AFTV!

BIBLE ANSWERS

WITH DOUG BATCHELOR



Q What are some tips on how to handle temptation?

A “A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished” (Proverbs 22:3). The Bible offers much advice for dealing with temptation, but I believe one of the most important tips is this: Run! Few speed records are broken when people run from sin; they often crawl away hoping it catches up with them. Sometimes temptation comes through a door deliberately left open.

Suppose that you spilled kerosene all over yourself and somebody nearby lit a match. Where would you go? As far away as you could—as fast as possible! That should be the attitude of a Christian toward temptation. Paul said to *flee* from immorality and idolatry (1 Corinthians 6:18; 10:14). Run away from sin as fast as you can, and don’t leave a forwarding address.

It’s heartbreaking when Christians attempt to justify their sinful behaviors. They will always succeed in convincing themselves that what they’re doing is okay because the devil offers plenty of excuses from which to choose. Look what happened to Eve when she bantered with the devil. That’s why as soon as you know something is wrong, flee! The bravest person runs from temptation; the fool flirts with it.


And when you do run from temptation, you head toward God. “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8). We’re all tempted to do evil, but the Lord has promised that we can be overcomers through the “exceedingly great and precious promises” found in the Scriptures. Jesus can teach us how to overcome. The devil could not make Jesus sin, nor can he make us: “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57). Ask Him for the power to overcome, and then joyfully obey His leading.

Q How do I fully surrender my life to God?

A “From there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29). To be fully surrendered to God, we must first put all our energy into seeking His will in His Word and in prayer.

God won’t force His ways on us; instead, He invites us, “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:15). That’s why we must also choose to serve God when we discover His will, even when His will conflicts with the desires of our sinful hearts. If you’re not sure you’re willing but you want to be willing, you can pray, “Lord, make me willing to be willing.”

In Romans 7:15, Paul describes the struggle all believers face at one point or another: “What I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.” How do we overcome sin? “I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (v. 25). Yield your will to Christ in the same way He yielded to His Father. Tell God, “I’m willing for You to work in my life and do whatever You need to do.”

Finally, don’t get discouraged. Surrendering your life to God is not a one-time event; it must be a daily commitment. The apostles followed Jesus for more than three years before they were fully converted. Our progress happens over time as we trust in Him and stay committed, so renew your allegiance to Him every day. 

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 amazingfacts.org.

CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

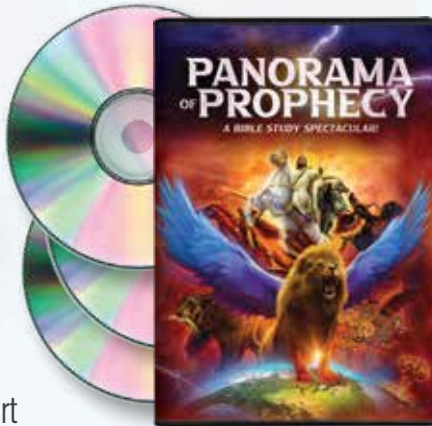


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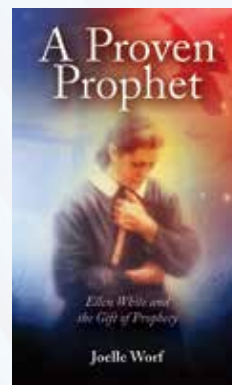
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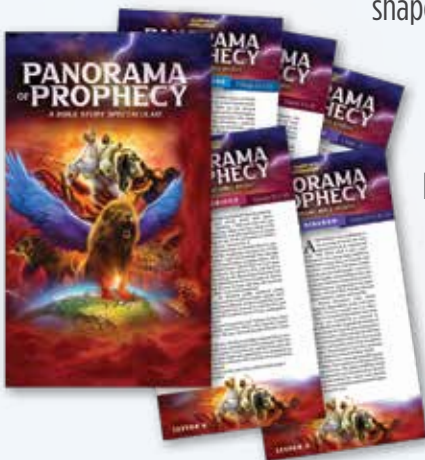
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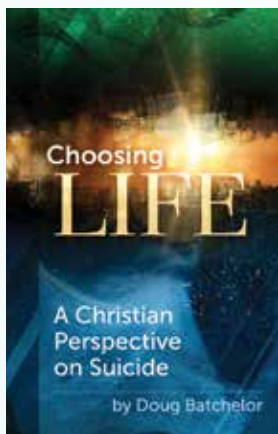
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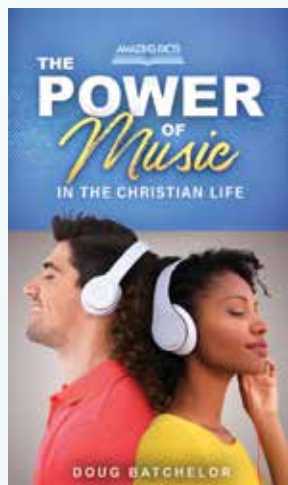
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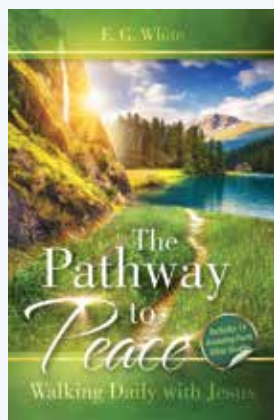
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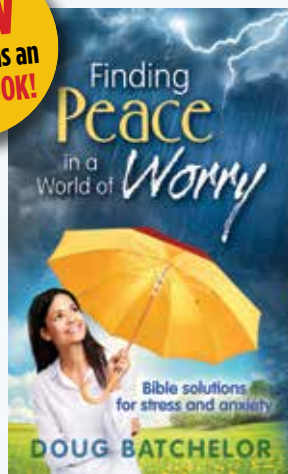
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(Continued from page 9.)

under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Let's take the example of "blind Bartimaeus" (Mark 10:46). The account in Matthew's Gospel describes him as being with one other blind man, likely with Bartimaeus as the more vocal of the two. As Jesus left the city of Jericho, He passed by these two individuals, followed by a huge crowd. When Bartimaeus and his friend discovered that they were in close proximity to Jesus, they instantly began to shout aloud, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" (Matthew 20:30). When shushed, "they cried out all the more" (v. 31). Their singular, foremost thought was of Jesus. They were fervent; they were persistent; they were desperately aware of their need.

Can it be made any plainer? Bartimaeus and his friend did not try to regain their sight before coming to Jesus. They knew they needed Jesus in order to see. When their cries reached the Savior, the crowd told Bartimaeus, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you" (Mark 10:49). Immediately, the blind man obeyed: "Throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus" (v. 50). What a moving symbol! The Bible tells us, "All our righteousnesses are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). What rags could be filthier than those of a blind beggar, who, even if he had the means, could not so much as see the spots on his clothes to scrub them clean?

In their filth, Bartimaeus and his friend approached Jesus—and we must do the same, in our "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked" sinfulness (Revelation 3:17). Then, Jesus asked them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" (Matthew 20:32), not because He did not know but because Christ does unto us nothing against our free will. Their request was clear: "Lord, that our eyes may be opened" (v. 33). They came to Him unashamed because their faith in Him was great. As Jesus put it, "Go your way; your faith has made you well" (Mark 10:52).

Just as immediately as they came to Him, so did Jesus immediately heal their sight (Matthew 20:34). In so doing, He "clothed [them] with the garments of salvation, He ... covered [them] with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah

61:10). After that miracle, Scripture tells us, "They followed Him" (Matthew 20:34). There was no hesitancy or worry about how to act or obey. Once these men followed Jesus, He would give them the power to keep His commandments; Jesus would recreate their characters into one like His.

Looking Up

Are we starting to see a theme develop here? Those who walk with Jesus are to, despite the pull to do the opposite, have a singular focus on the One they are following.

Look at this third example the Bible gives of a man who was struggling to follow God: "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell

who are at my house," he said to Jesus (Luke 9:61).

We've heard this kind of excuse before.

Christ responded, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (v. 62).

This was a direct reference to the prophet Elisha, "who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen" when he was called to follow in the footsteps of God's servant Elijah (1 Kings 19:19). In responding to the call, Elisha said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you" (v. 20).

At first glance, the responses of these two men may seem similar, but they couldn't be any more different. The focus of the first was on the life he'd have to leave, not on the service he was privileged to undertake; Christ's response to him made that clear. In contrast, Elisha's next move was to immediately sacrifice his oxen "and [give] it to the people" to eat (v. 21). In so doing, he renounced his former life, his former responsibilities—in fact, his inheritance. Not everyone had the claim to 12 yoke of oxen. Elisha came from a rich family, and he would have become a wealthy landowner had he not accepted the call from God. But, like Zacchaeus, his sacrifice of the very means of his livelihood illustrated his zeal for the Lord's work. After that, "he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant." He went forward, never "looking back," as Christ said.



Elisha walked with Elijah until the end of the latter's earthly life. In his last days, God sent Elijah to give some words of encouragement to the sons of the prophets, those who were carrying on the Lord's work. Elijah said to his trusted apprentice, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Bethel" (2 Kings 2:2).

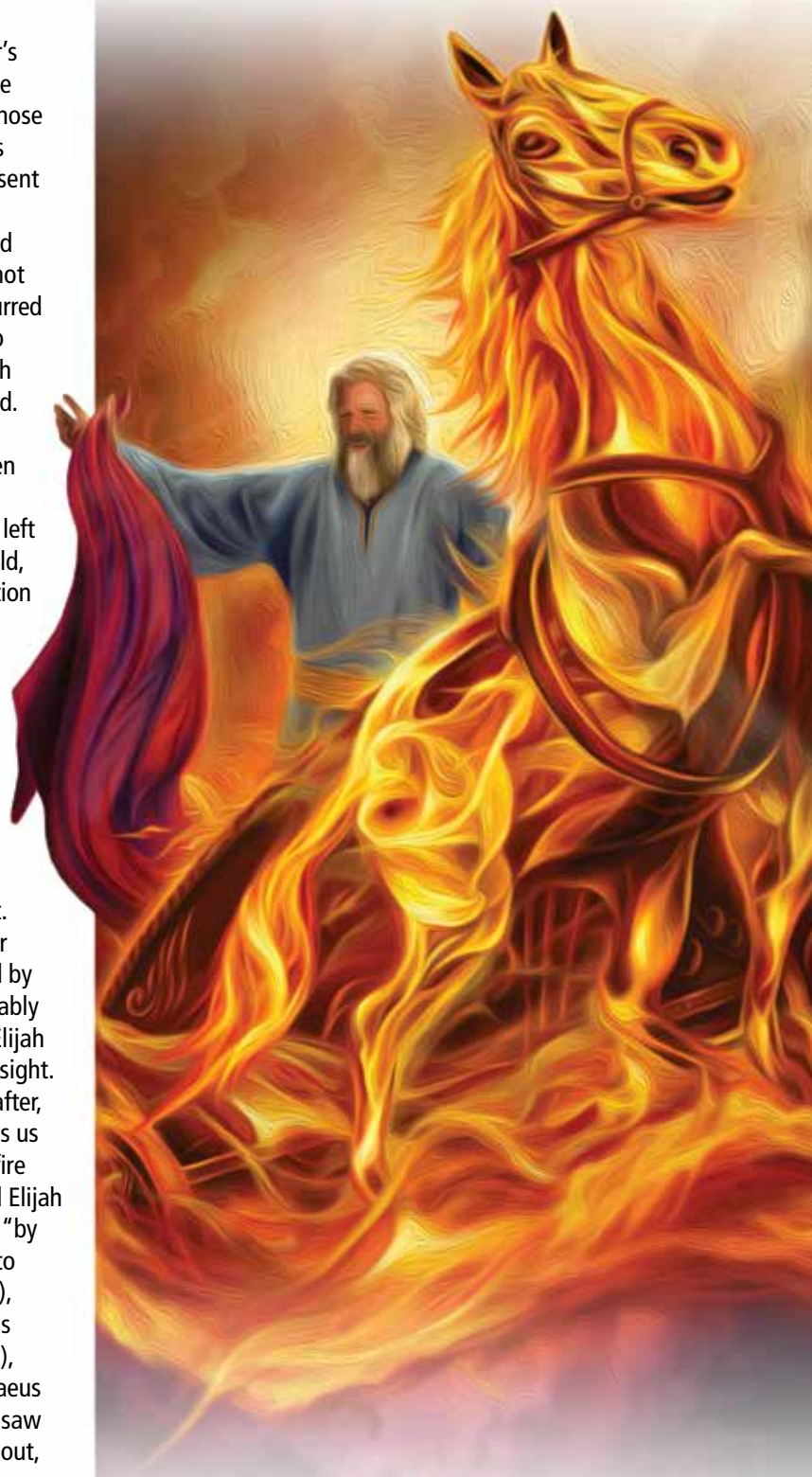
But Elisha would not be separated from his beloved master. "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" Elisha determined. Two more times this occurred as God sent Elijah next to Jericho, then to the Jordan to visit various groups of prophets. Each time, Elisha, though instructed otherwise, nevertheless followed Elijah onward.


During the last of these travels together, Elijah inquired, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" (v. 9).

These two men were like father and son. Elisha had left his family to be adopted into Elijah's. And like a son would, Elisha asked for an inheritance. "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me," he requested. It was law that every firstborn son was to receive this "double portion" from his father (Deuteronomy 21:17). We have already seen that Elisha had no care for his earthly inheritance; he burned it. The only inheritance he desired was the heavenly—the Holy Spirit.

To this Elijah responded, "If you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so" (2 Kings 2:10). You can imagine how Elisha must have walked after that. Do you think he trailed far behind his master or became easily distracted by his surroundings? He probably didn't let Elijah out of his sight.

Soon after, the Bible tells us "a chariot of fire appeared," and Elijah was translated "by a whirlwind into heaven" (v. 11), abandoning his garment (v. 13), as blind Bartimaeus had. "And Elisha saw it ... and ... cried out, 'My father, my father,





the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” (v. 12). He had received not only his inheritance, but also a glimpse of the ultimate inheritance given to all those who walk with God.

Walking the Walk

Elisha was certainly a prime example of a follower—but more than that, Elijah was a type of Christ, and his last moments on earth an important lesson for all who desire to walk with God.

Just before God took him, we know that Elijah crossed through the Jordan. He “struck the water” with his mantle, whereupon it divided just like the Red Sea so that he and Elisha could “[cross] over on dry ground” (v. 8). You may recall that the same thing happened to the children of Israel, who likewise were able to “[cross] over on dry ground” when their “priests ... bore the ark of the covenant ... in the midst of the Jordan” (Joshua 3:17). On the other side of the Jordan lay Canaan, the Promised Land. Jordan was also the river in which John the Baptist chose to baptize people (Matthew 3:4–6); Jesus Himself was baptized in it (v. 13).

The symbolism is powerful. The Bible teaches us that baptism is a symbol for death (Romans 6:3, 4); crossing

through the Jordan represents death, burial, and resurrection. Canaan represents heaven, our ultimate destination. That route—through Jordan to Canaan—not only was walked literally by Elijah and by Israel, but it was the very pathway that Christ symbolically traversed, first dying upon the cross before being resurrected and then ascending to the true Promised Land, heaven.

As Elijah spent his final days with different companies of believers before being taken to heaven, so did Jesus before ascending to heaven (Acts 1:1–3; 1 Corinthians 15:4–7). As the Holy Spirit came to Elisha after Elijah’s translation (2 Kings 2:15), so did Christ send the Holy Spirit to His disciples after He ascended, on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4).

If we are to follow Jesus, we must walk this same path. We must, like Elisha, forsake that old life willingly, readily, and completely. We must fix our eyes upon Jesus and follow wherever He leads, even if it is to the lowest part of the Jordan. Sure, most of us will in this lifetime go down into the grave to await the coming of our Lord, but in a deeper sense we must also die to self, becoming “a living sacrifice ... to God” (Romans 12:1), “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with” (6:6). And if we do truly follow, like Elisha did, then



God has promised to send us the Holy Spirit too. The disciples were given the former rain at Pentecost; the Bible prophesies that God's last-day people are to receive "the latter rain" (Joel 2:23), wherein "[God] will pour out [His] Spirit on all flesh" (v. 28). Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our works will extend throughout the whole earth, just as He commissioned (Mark 16:15).

The Promised Land

Have you noticed that the people who had trouble following Jesus often lamented over what they would leave behind or what they wouldn't have? I want to be clear. A follower of God isn't some sort of ascetic monk whose goal in life is to deny all pleasure and pursuit. When you are following God, where your life lacks in earthly goods, it overflows with heavenly gifts and promises.

When Jesus, your Shepherd, is by your side, He will feed you. "[You] shall not want" (Psalm 23:1), for "He makes [you] to lie down in green pastures; He leads [you] beside the still waters. He restores [your] soul" (vv. 2, 3). This doesn't mean you put forth no effort whatsoever toward your livelihood; it simply means that your life is made up not only of "what you will eat or what you will drink" (Matthew 6:25). If you "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, . . . all these things shall be added to you" (v. 33)—and then some. "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psalm 1:1). You will eat of Christ, the Bread of Life (John 6:35); you will drink of Him who is the Water of Life (4:14). You will lead a fulfilling, abundant life (10:10).

When Jesus is leading the way, not only yourself but others will be blessed. The apostles became "fishers of men" when they began following Christ (Matthew 4:19). "Enoch walked with God" (Genesis 5:24), and the book of Jude records that he "prophesied" (v. 14). "Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9), and he was called "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). Those who walk with God share their experience with others; they invite others to join

the same path: "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern" (Philippians 3:17).


When you walk hand in hand with Jesus, He will heal you: "Great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all" (Matthew 12:15)—"the blind [saw], the lame [walked], the lepers [were] cleansed, the deaf [heard], the dead [were] raised" (Luke 7:22). You may be shaking your head. You

may be thinking about Paul's "thorn in the flesh" or perhaps even of yourself (2 Corinthians

12:7). No, following Jesus may not mean physical healing now—but it means something infinitely more. It means healing of the deep, dark sins that choke out your chance at eternal life. It means peace of mind now; it means comfort now. And it means most of all that at Christ's second coming, all of you—mind and body, your entire soul—will be absolutely healed. Even the physical healing you might get in this lifetime is nothing compared to the glorified, immortal body you will receive "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet" (1 Corinthians 15:52). Everyone who has ever faithfully followed

Jesus will receive this best-of-all healing.

That's right. When you follow Jesus, He will lead you straight into the gates of eternal life. That's what literally happened to Enoch. He ended up following Christ right up into heaven (Hebrews 11:5). The Bible tells us that God's people at the very end of time "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Revelation 14:4). Despite temptations, through trials, and even while headed to the Jordan itself, they have their eyes fixed on their Savior, the One who will never lead them astray. And they too, like Enoch, follow Him right up to heaven.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish" (John 10:27, 28), Jesus promised. The walk to heaven begins here on earth. Do you desire to follow Christ throughout eternity? Then you are to walk with Him here and now, day by day, until you reach the Promised Land. So put on your walking shoes, and let's start logging those miles with God! 





Sharing God's Blessings with Others

Reflecting on his life's journey, Jim Myers shares, "In every season of my life, the Lord has found a way to bless me." Born in San Francisco and raised in a faithful Christian home, Jim gave his heart to the Lord after attending a camp meeting as a child.

He was blessed by Amazing Facts' first speaker, Joe Crews. Years later, after Pastor Doug Batchelor became president and the ministry relocated to Sacramento, Jim's wife began volunteering at Amazing Facts. After Jim retired, he also joined as a volunteer in both shipping and the Bible School. Today, Jim credits Amazing Facts for keeping him involved in the church and strengthening his walk with God.


A Legacy of Giving

Inspired by his fruitful relationship with Amazing Facts, Jim has funded 15 charitable gift annuities—and has remembered the ministry in his trust. A gift annuity is typically funded with cash or an appreciated asset and, in exchange, the annuity pays fixed, lifetime payments to the donor or other designated recipient. Jim shares,

"Giving back to the Lord in this way is not only a good temporal investment, but I also have peace of mind knowing that Amazing Facts is doing the best in terms of evangelism. I see the results. I know that my money will make a difference here."

The staff at Amazing Facts always count on seeing Jim, and they have now become like family to him as he continues volunteering at the ministry's new headquarters in Granite Bay, California. "He faithfully helps our shipping department stay organized and is a vital member of our team," says Brad Vail, warehouse supervisor.

When asked what he would like his legacy to be, Jim says, "That I tried to follow Jesus." One of the greatest blessings in life is giving so that others may come to know the Lord.

Amazing Facts makes it easy to be a part of the journey in winning souls for the kingdom. Request our free **Estate Planning Guide** at mylegacy.amazingfacts.org or call our planned giving team at 800-436-2695 for more information. 

Volunteer Spotlight

*V*olunteering at Amazing Facts each Thursday is the highlight of Milton Dee's week. "I look forward to coming here all week," he says. "My enjoyment is being a part of a team dedicated to helping others. While I'm doing correspondence, I can hear people talking about God and His work. That's been a personal high for me."

For the past eleven years and four months, Milton has consistently dedicated one day a week to help Amazing Facts share the gospel message. This year alone, he has donated over 160 hours—sending out free offers and much more. His dedication and performance through his many years of service have been exemplary.

Our correspondence staff count on Milton as a hard-working volunteer who is focused and diligent. No matter what he does, he takes pride in doing it well. "I always prepare beforehand for everything," explains Milton. "I think about what I am going to do and try to figure out what is the best way to do it. I feel that I have to give my best because the team is like a wheel. I am one of the spokes. I don't want to be the broken spoke that slows down the wheel."

He's also experienced an unexpected blessing from volunteering at Amazing Facts. "I've started to pray more," smiles Milton. "Here at Amazing Facts, we pray about little things that I had never thought I should pray about before. Now when I have a difficult problem, I pray about it. I can often feel the prayers being answered."

We are thankful for Milton and his dedication to God's work! He is a blessing! —



PROPHECY REPORT

“Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.”

—John 13:19

If anything, this past year has proven that the signs of the times really are everywhere—and gathering speed. The devil’s plan is rapidly unfolding with “great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time” (Revelation 12:12). Even those who have not been studying the Bible’s end-time prophecies are noticing a global shift. So many are trying to figure out what it all means and longing to know what lies ahead.

And through the Bible, we can. God has a plan too, His plan of salvation, revealed to us through His “prophetic word . . . , which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place” (2 Peter 1:19).

As we launch our quarterly prophecy report, our prayer is for it to be seen in the light of “the light of life” (John 8:12), Jesus Christ, to whom all prophecy points. May these landmarks help us to more fully understand the big picture of this great cosmic conflict, to strengthen our faith, and to prepare us all for the final events heralding Christ’s second coming.

“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (Revelation 13:12).

On October 29, ahead of the UN’s much-hyped Climate Change Conference COP26, U.S. President Joe Biden met with Pope Francis, a first in his presidency. The press noted the hour-and-a-half-long visit—the longest ever granted to an American president—as being both political and personal. It was obvious that “the two most prominent Roman Catholic leaders in the world”¹ had built



a history over the years, from a shared passion about the environment to the comfort Francis provided Biden over the loss of his son Beau. Biden even keeps a photograph of the pontiff in the Oval Office. What influence will their relationship have on their two nations?

“And all the world marveled and followed the beast” (Revelation 13:3).

On November 2, *The Associated Press* posted an article noting the recent “trend around the world of faith leaders and environmental activists increasingly joining the fight against climate change.”²

It mentioned the efforts of Hindus, Muslims, and Presbyterians, to name a few, and dubbed climate change “the movement [that] knows no denominational boundaries,” uniting even the most disparate with its “moral imperative.” It is no secret that Pope Francis has made environmental protection the magnum opus of his papal career. It seems that “all the world” is starting to follow his lead, taking up the mantle he has long been advocating as our “shared responsibility.”³ Not

to mention, COP26 saw a coalition of not only the world’s major political leaders but also its financial giants targeting climate change as public enemy number one. What will be the next trend set?



1 <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/president-biden-pope-francis-meeting-vatican/>

2 <https://apnews.com/article/climate-united-nations-general-assembly-science-business-united-nations-18e6ae73cbb5f392dc3a09ebbe68eb27>

3 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertthart/2021/10/29/pope-francis-presses-urgent-action-on-climate-change-ahead-of-key-summit-biden-meeting/?sh=6ea37aa1f30c>

Have a Happier, **HEALTHIER** Holiday Season

By Laurie Lyon


*A*s much as most of us look forward to the late-year holidays, they can be hazardous and stressful for many. Depression, anxiety, and loneliness skyrocket. Temptations abound, and healthful habits get sidelined. We can become lazy—or overextend ourselves. There are often opportunities to eat with wild abandon, ignoring quantity or quality. No wonder the holidays amplify the risk of some types of accidents and illnesses.

You're likely aware that traffic accidents increase during holidays, but did you know that home and workplace accidents also escalate? For example, each year more than 5,000 people are injured from a fall while putting up decorations. And in addition to typical seasonal illnesses, cardiac events surge about five percent during those festive times of the year.

But we needn't fall into the statistics category. Careful planning and thoughtful choices will go a long way toward keeping us safe and healthy throughout the holidays. Here are some ideas to consider:



4. **Stick to your exercise program.** Among a boatload of benefits, exercise relieves stress, boosts energy levels, helps you sleep better, and decreases the risk of disease.¹
5. **Stay cheerful:** "A merry heart does good, like medicine" (Proverbs 17:22). Don't let little setbacks get you down, and don't expect perfection. Cut some slack for yourself and others. Set aside any differences. Remember to count your blessings too, as it tends to improve physical and emotional health.²
6. **Drink plenty of water.** Just about every function in our bodies is dependent on an adequate supply. Keeping well hydrated supports a higher energy level and better brain function.³
7. **Get outside whenever possible.** Fresh air and sunlight can brighten your outlook. Be cautious, though, about exercising in the cold. Know your limits and always warm up adequately first.
8. **Spread the joy** and be thoughtful of those not on your gift list. Reach out to a lonely neighbor, for instance. Take them a loaf of bread or some cookies, invite them for a meal, or otherwise encourage them.
9. **Maintain your devotional life.** During the season when distractions multiply exponentially, cling to that vital connection with God. Feast on His Word, keep the conversation line open with the One whose incredible blessings have inspired these yearly celebrations, and always watch for opportunities to share His love with a world in need of hope.

Finally, remember to have fun as you endeavor to make the season both joyful and healthy for yourself and those you love. Happy Holidays! 

1 <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/exercise/art-20048389>

2 <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/improve-health-practice-gratitude/art-20270841>

3 <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/290814#benefits>



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