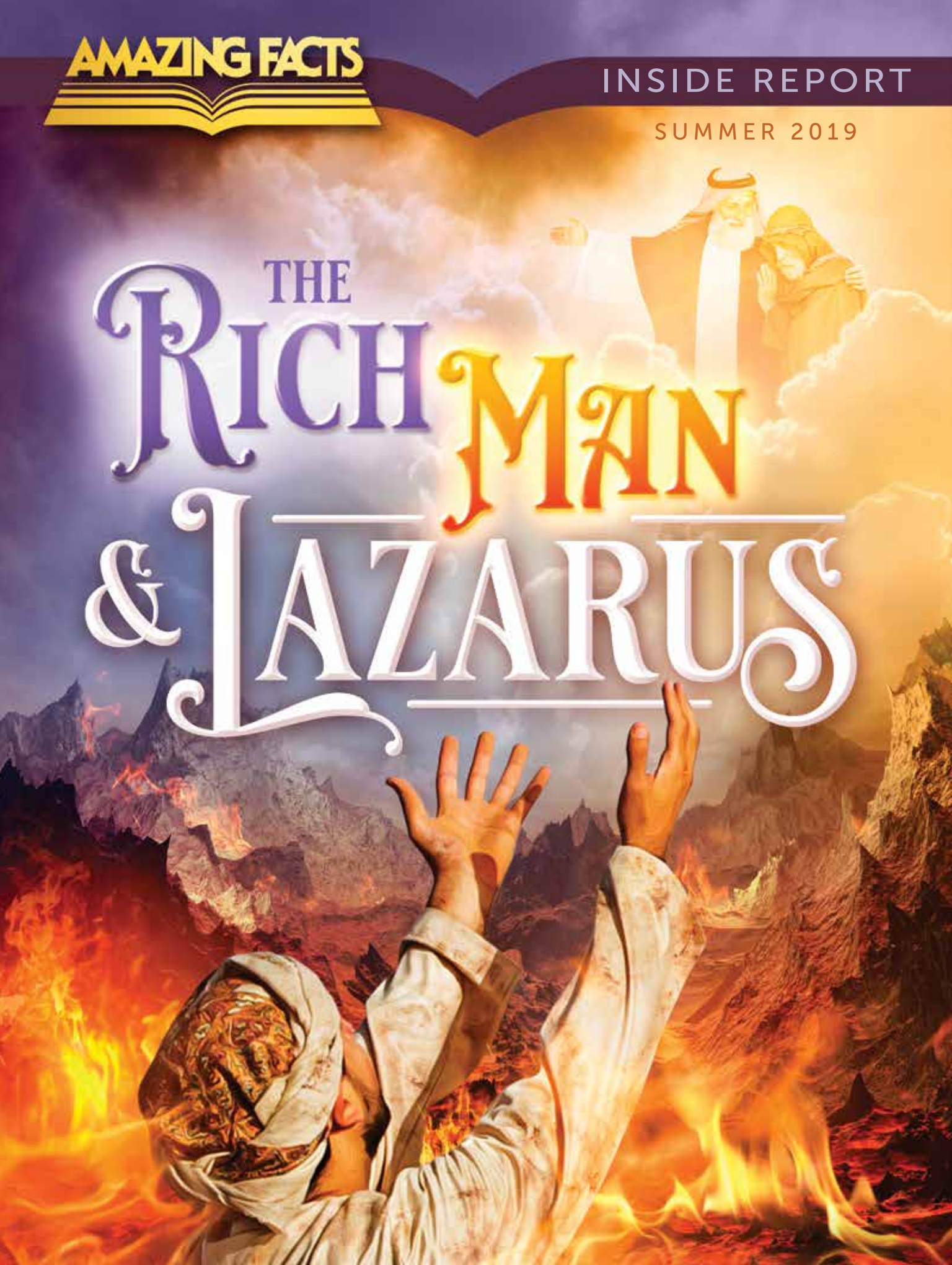


THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS



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Table of Contents



14 W.O.R.D. Center Opens

Please rejoice with your team at Amazing Facts as we praise God that Phase 1 of our new world headquarters has opened!

FEATURE

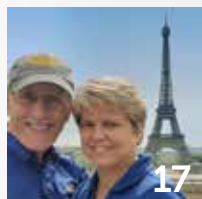
6 The Rich Man & Lazarus

It's one of the most disputed and controversial parables of Jesus—used by millions of Christians to “prove” that we immediately go to heaven or hell when we die. But it just doesn't make sense. Why? Pastor Doug Batchelor tackles a vital end-time subject in this eye-opening Bible study.



21 Bible Answers

Doesn't Matthew 3:12 prove that hellfire will never go out? Doesn't Colossians 2:14 show that the Ten Commandments no longer matter?

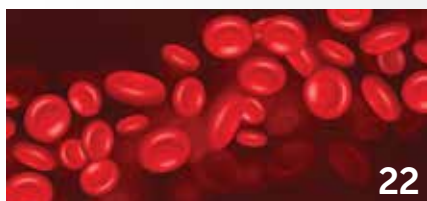


4 The President's Perspective

As shown in our feature article, many Scriptures are twisted to distort the Bible truth. Here's why it matters more than ever.

17 The Everlasting Gospel Reaches Seychelles and Paris!

Pastor Doug and the Amazing Facts team crossed the Atlantic to share the everlasting gospel. See what happened!



22 Go for the Flow!

God designed your body's circulatory system to do amazing things. Here's how to keep it in tip-top shape.

5 Mail Bag

10 Broadcast Schedule

11 News to Note

12 Christian Resources

16 Prophecy Seminars


23 Special Recognition



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!

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

PASTOR DOUG BATCHELOR



It's been called the "crookedest street in the world." And if you've ever driven or walked down Lombard Street in San Francisco's Russian Hill neighborhood, you immediately understand why. Eight hairpin turns in this one-block section can leave you feeling a little dizzy.

The hill's natural 27-percent grade was just too steep for most vehicles, so in 1922, a one-way, 600-foot zig-zagged street was developed and paved with red bricks. The recommended speed limit is just 5 MPH. It has since become one of the most famous tourist stops in the city. In fact, over two million visitors a year come to gawk at this crooked street.

While Lombard was twisted for safety purposes, there is a twisting of God's Word that is leading people into dangerous territory. Satan has confused millions through many distorted Bible teachings that misrepresent God. One example can be seen in the warped interpretation of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the topic of this issue's feature article.


Amazing Facts International is a worldwide ministry raised up by the Lord to *untwist* the deadly contortions that the devil has placed on lifesaving Scripture. Much like John the Baptist, we want to "prepare the way of the LORD" and "make His paths *straight*" (Luke 3:4, emphasis added) before Christ's second coming.

There's a reason we're living in a "perverse and crooked generation" (Deuteronomy 32:5). The apostle Paul warned Timothy, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables" (2 Timothy 4:3, 4).

We must take Paul's guidance seriously. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the word of truth*" (2 Timothy 2:15, emphasis added). One of Amazing Facts' missions is to put scriptural lessons, like the Rich Man and Lazarus, in their proper context so Bible truth can shine brighter in these last days.

As we celebrate opening Phase I of the new W.O.R.D. Center (page 14), I want to remind you that we intentionally chose this name to emphasize that your ministry (World Outreach, Revival, and Discipleship) is not based on the twisted words of humans, but solely on the solid *Word* of God.

Your continued support of Amazing Facts ensures that "the crooked places shall be made straight" (Luke 3:5).

Thank you! 

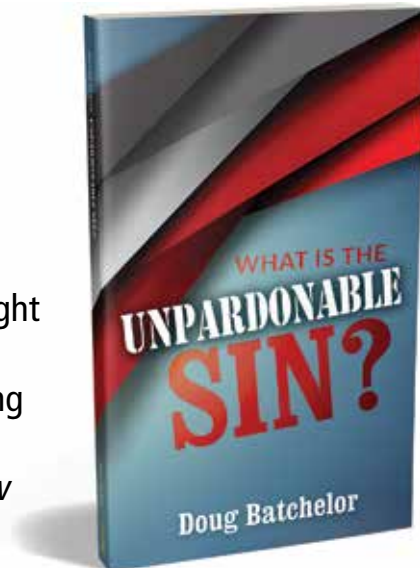
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From the Mail Bag

The Unpardonable Sin

"I really appreciate your insight into so many biblical-related topics, such as your teaching on blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. It was not only well thought out but also helped me grow in understanding of some confusing passages. Thank you for your continued good work!" *Matthew*



Establishing Faith Online

"I want to thank the Lord Jesus for guiding me to your program. I came to the USA six years ago from Italy, and I discovered the truth here. (Now I know why God brought me to this country!) Following your program on the Internet, I became a new person in Christ. I thought I knew everything about the Bible, but how wrong I was. God bless you for your amazing work in leading many lost souls to Jesus." *Monica, Florida*

Growing Churches

"The ministry of Amazing Facts is reaching the residents of Brooklyn in a positive way. On Sabbath, we welcomed a visitor to our worship service. We asked him what led him here, and he credited watching Amazing Facts on TV. He further stated that having learned and accepted the truth, he was now ready to be baptized. To God be the glory as He uses all avenues in reaching humanity. Thank you for your ministry!" *Owen, New York*

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Amazing Facts
INTERNATIONAL
P.O. Box 1058
Roseville, CA 95678-8058
916-434-3880
amazingfacts.org

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PRESIDENT
DOUG BATCHELOR

MANAGING EDITOR
ANTHONY LESTER
editor@amazingfacts.org

ASSISTANT EDITOR
MICHELLE KISS

WRITER
CURTIS RITTENOUR

COPYEDITOR
LAURIE LYON

ART DESIGN/LAYOUT
HALEY TRIMMER

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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, and more. For operation, we depend on the gifts and prayers of caring Christians who believe in our mission.



THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS

by Pastor
Doug Batchelor

An Amazing Fact:

Craig Coley, a California man who was wrongfully convicted for killing an ex-girlfriend and her son four decades ago, is found innocent, set free, and receives a \$21 million settlement from the city of Simi Valley. After being locked up for 39 years, the unjustly held prisoner becomes a happy millionaire. Then there's Bill Cosby, who once was known and loved by everyone as "America's favorite Dad." Now the disgraced millionaire comedian is languishing in prison, where he will likely spend the remainder of his life, after being convicted of sexual assault. What a contrast!



PEOPLE have always been fascinated by ironic stories of rags to riches—and, yes, riches to rags. Perhaps that's why Jesus told the astonishing story of two very different lives with two very distinct destinies—the tale of Lazarus and a rich man.

With an eager multitude gathered around Him, including some Pharisees lurking at the edges, Jesus told a parable about two men who were opposites in almost every respect. "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen," Jesus explained (Luke 16:19). The rich man's table was also regularly spread with feasts, and he enjoyed every variety of dainty delicacies.

Lazarus, on the other hand, was poor. He wore rags for clothes and was always hungry—so hungry that he laid in the street just outside the rich man's gates in the hopes that he would "be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table" (v. 21). Make no mistake: Lazarus wasn't hoping for a takeout box of leftovers. He wanted the dustpan scraps the maid swept up after supper. And to further illustrate how desperate his situation was, Jesus added, "Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores."

Though these two men dwelt in close proximity to one another, they lived opposite lives. Yet one thing was the same: They both died. What Jesus next said in His parable shocked the minds of everyone listening: The poor man "was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom," while the rich man was found in Hades, suffering torment (vv. 22, 23).

From his place in the flames, the rich man peered across the cosmic gulf to see Lazarus at Abraham's side. It

was too much to bear. "Father Abraham, have mercy on me!" the rich man cried out. "Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (v. 24).

"Son," Abraham answered, "remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us" (vv. 25, 26).

But the rich man wasn't done moaning. He then said, "I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment" (vv. 27, 28).

And once again, Abraham rebuked him, saying, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" (v. 29).

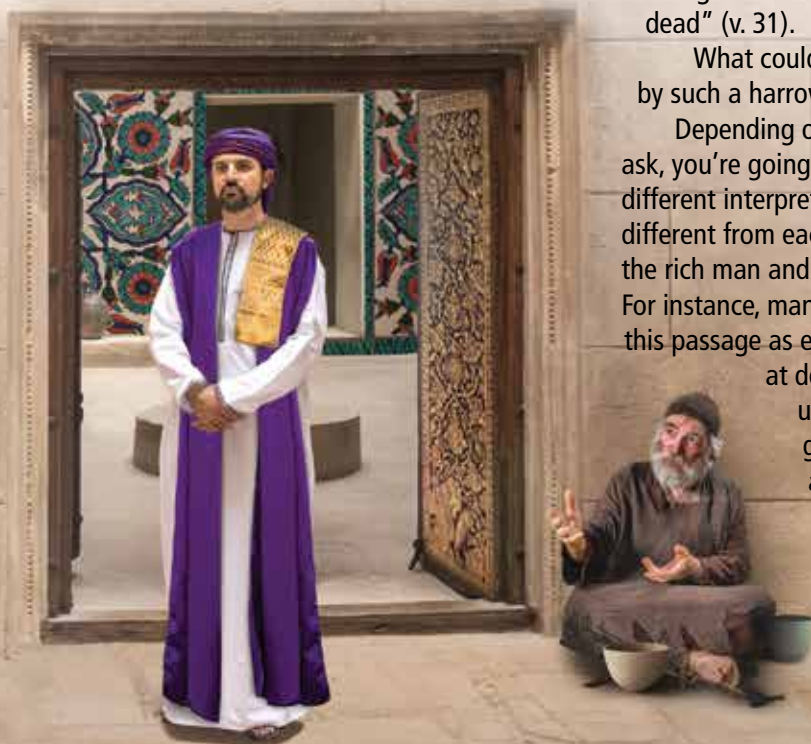
"No, father Abraham," the rich man insisted, "but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent" (v. 30).

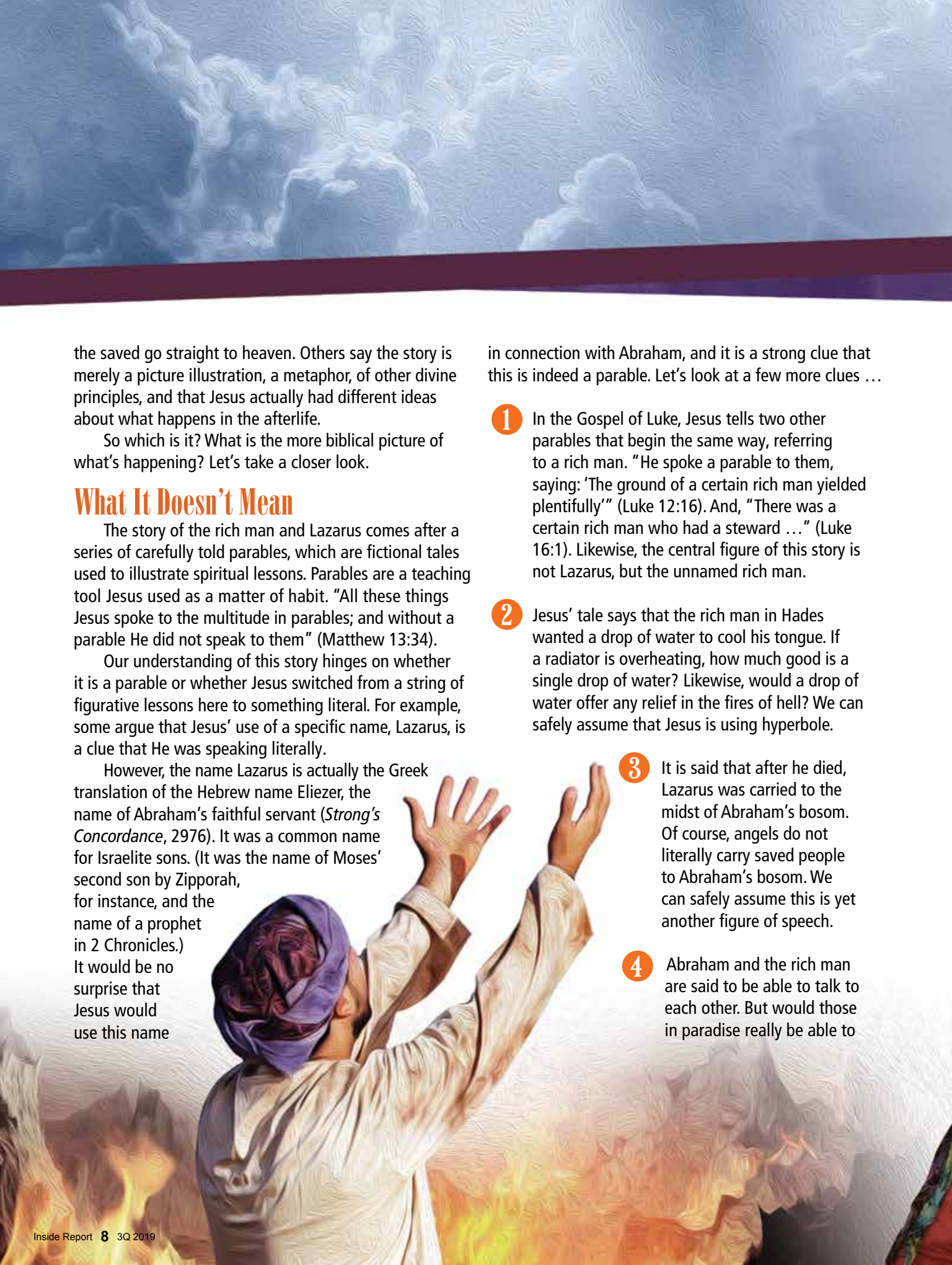
But Abraham was not swayed. "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead" (v. 31).

What could Jesus mean by such a harrowing story?

Depending on whom you ask, you're going to get widely different interpretations, as different from each other as the rich man and Lazarus! For instance, many have used this passage as evidence that

at death, the unrepentant go directly to an eternally burning hellfire, while





the saved go straight to heaven. Others say the story is merely a picture illustration, a metaphor, of other divine principles, and that Jesus actually had different ideas about what happens in the afterlife.

So which is it? What is the more biblical picture of what's happening? Let's take a closer look.

What It Doesn't Mean

The story of the rich man and Lazarus comes after a series of carefully told parables, which are fictional tales used to illustrate spiritual lessons. Parables are a teaching tool Jesus used as a matter of habit. "All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them" (Matthew 13:34).

Our understanding of this story hinges on whether it is a parable or whether Jesus switched from a string of figurative lessons here to something literal. For example, some argue that Jesus' use of a specific name, Lazarus, is a clue that He was speaking literally.

However, the name Lazarus is actually the Greek translation of the Hebrew name Eliezer, the name of Abraham's faithful servant (*Strong's Concordance*, 2976). It was a common name for Israelite sons. (It was the name of Moses' second son by Zipporah, for instance, and the name of a prophet in 2 Chronicles.) It would be no surprise that Jesus would use this name

in connection with Abraham, and it is a strong clue that this is indeed a parable. Let's look at a few more clues ...

- 1 In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus tells two other parables that begin the same way, referring to a rich man. "He spoke a parable to them, saying: 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully'" (Luke 12:16). And, "There was a certain rich man who had a steward ..." (Luke 16:1). Likewise, the central figure of this story is not Lazarus, but the unnamed rich man.
- 2 Jesus' tale says that the rich man in Hades wanted a drop of water to cool his tongue. If a radiator is overheating, how much good is a single drop of water? Likewise, would a drop of water offer any relief in the fires of hell? We can safely assume that Jesus is using hyperbole.
- 3 It is said that after he died, Lazarus was carried to the midst of Abraham's bosom. Of course, angels do not literally carry saved people to Abraham's bosom. We can safely assume this is yet another figure of speech.
- 4 Abraham and the rich man are said to be able to talk to each other. But would those in paradise really be able to



see, hear, and talk to the lost blistering in hellfire? Would it really be paradise to see your lost loved ones burning and not be able to help them? Again, we can safely assume that Jesus was painting an illustration, not recording facts.

The most rational understanding of this story is that it is also one of the many parables Jesus tells to illustrate divine truths. This is the position of many historical Bible scholars, including those who believed that people go to heaven or hell straight after they die.

In 1862, for instance, famous Presbyterian Albert Barnes wrote, "Many have supposed that our Lord here refers to a real history and gives an account of some man who had lived in this manner. But of this there is no evidence. The probability is, that this narrative is to be considered as a parable" (*Notes, Explanatory and Practical, on the Gospels*).

Also commenting on this passage, Baptist John Gill said, "In Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript of his, it is read by way of preface, 'he said also another parable': which shows, that this is not a history of matter of fact, or an historical account of two such persons" (*Exposition of the Whole Bible*). Many more theologians throughout history have understood that this story is a parable, spoken by Christ to get across spiritual truths.

Most important, we can know that Jesus' hearers that day would have understood that it was a parable. The word "Hades"

was well-known to be a word borrowed from Greek mythology. In those myths, Hades was both the name of the underworld as well as the name of the god in charge of the place.

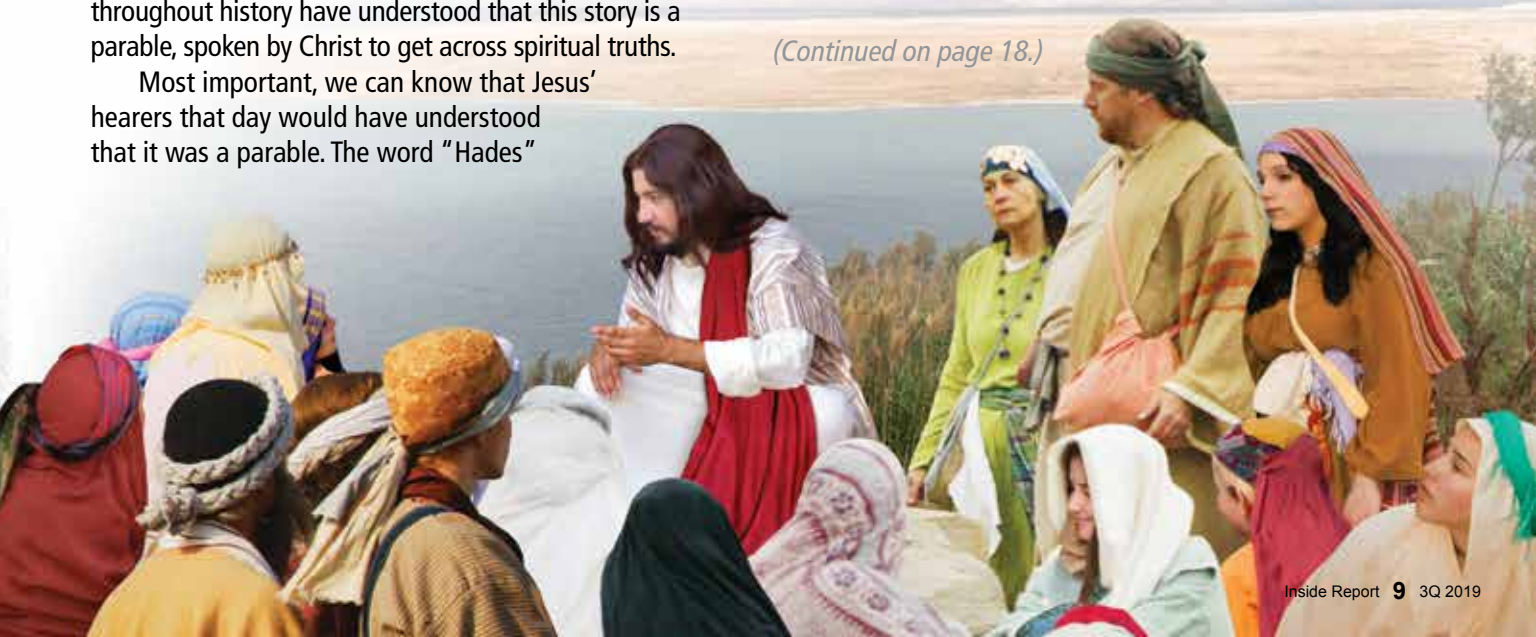
In one of the 14 schools I attended as a young man, I participated in a play about Greek mythology. I was given the role of Pluto—the Roman name for Hades. Indeed, many of our modern conceptions about hell are influenced by Greek and Roman mythology; the medieval church adopted such views, tangling up the truth about hell. But to Jesus' Jewish listeners, the word Hades would have indicated that He was speaking in metaphor.

I could even do the same thing right now. If I began a story by saying, "One day Alice walked into Wonderland," you would immediately understand that I was not telling a literal story. In our culture, most people are aware of Lewis Carroll's fairytale, *Alice in Wonderland*. In the same way, the Jewish people would have recognized Hades as a Greek myth and that Jesus was using it for illustration.

What Does the Rest of the Bible Say?

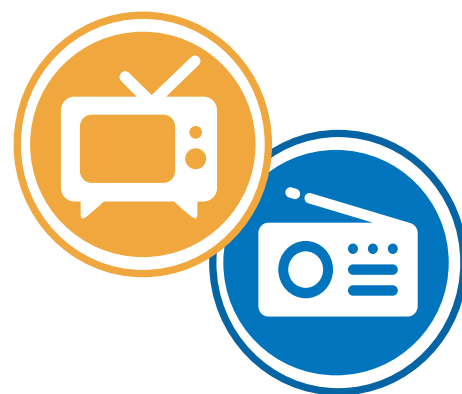
We can also know that this is a parable by comparing it to other parts of Scripture, including Jesus' own plainly stated beliefs. It's always dangerous to base an entire

(Continued on page 18.)



TELEVISION AND RADIO

Broadcast Schedule



AMAZING FACTS WITH DOUG BATCHELOR

Daystar Network	Wednesday, 6:00 PM ET
Hope Channel	Sunday, 10:00 AM, 7:00 PM; Thursday, 6:00 AM; Friday, 12:30 PM PT
Impact Network	Sunday, 5:00 PM ET
Inspiration Network	Sunday, 9:00 AM ET
Lifetime Network	Sunday, 8:00 AM (All Time Zones)
Safe TV	Monday, 9:30 AM; Wednesday, 9:00 AM CT
TCT Network	Sunday, 8:00 AM ET
TBN	Thursday, 10:00 PM PT
The Word Network	Sunday, 1:00 PM ET
3ABN	Tuesday, 10:00 PM; Wednesday, 9:00 PM; Thursday, 1:30 PM CT

SABBATH SCHOOL STUDY HOUR

AFTV	Monday, 6:00 AM; Tuesday, 9:00 AM; Thursday, 10:00 AM; Friday, 3:00 PM; Saturday, 7:00 AM PT
Hope Channel	Thursday, 1:00 PM; Friday, 6:00 AM PT
Safe TV	Friday, 9:00 PM; Saturday, 7:00 AM CT
3ABN	Thursday, 7:00 PM; Friday, 5:00 AM; Saturday, 12:00 PM CT



RADIO

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NEWS TO NOTE

Digital Evangelism Launches in the Philippines

Our AFCOE Philippines team has recently debuted their online Bible School—enrolling dozens of students in its first two weeks! Along with English, Bible studies are available in the area's major dialects, such as Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Waray, and Hiligaynon.

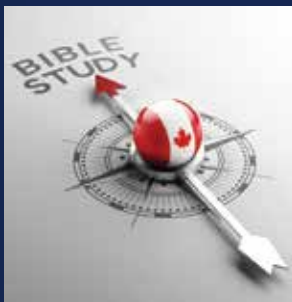
Graduates of the Philippines AFCOE program are jumping in to assist, signing up as volunteer digital evangelists, tasked with following-up, encouraging, and tracking the progress of online students. The online school's first graduate said, "This Bible study helped me learn a lot about history and prophecy. My favorite part has been the lessons about Revelation." Thank you for making our international outreach possible with your gifts!



Amazing Facts Canada Experiences Surge

Our sister ministry in Canada, called Amazing Facts Ministries, has recently seen a surprising 70-percent rise in Bible School enrollments. "We don't know what's happening," said Rudy Harnisch, vice president of administration and finance, "but it suddenly surged. Not just one month either, but month after month." That translates to 700 new students since January just from those who found us on television. Rudy adds, "Many Mennonites are asking for the course, even a Mennonite pastor."

Although Christian influence has waned among Canadians, Rudy noted that immigrants are embracing the message proclaimed by Amazing Facts. "The immigrant community is taking hold of this message. For instance, a gentleman from Venezuela joined us after watching programs online." We thank God and you that Amazing Facts Ministries continues to share the everlasting gospel across Canada!



Bible School Sees Gains in God's Kingdom

During the first seven months of 2019, nearly 2,500 students graduated from the Amazing Facts online and mail-based Bible School. As a result, 231 souls have been baptized, and 1,249 have indicated a desire for baptism into God's end-time church. Your support also made it possible to mail almost 150,000 Study Guides so far this year—and volunteers and staff have personally graded 77,241 lessons.

One student from Airway Heights, Washington, expressed deep gratitude: "What a pleasant journey this has been, traveling through God's Word with these 27 marvelously presented lessons! Every single one has been a treat and great joy to complete. I have learned so much, and they have given me a much clearer and deeper understanding of God's Word." Praise the Lord!

AFCOE to Go Delivers Soul-winning Training

During a recent Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism event in Los Angeles at White Memorial Church, Pastor Doug Batchelor, Pastor Jean Ross, and AFCOE director Carlos Muñoz presented the keys to exponential evangelism and church growth to nearly 2,000 attendees. AFCOE to Go brings the renowned training of AFCOE to church groups around the world through a dynamic weekend-long training event, making it possible for even busy professionals to join in the end-time work in their local communities.



One attendee, Ram, was so enthusiastic about AFCOE to Go, he committed to a 156-mile round trip to attend. He explains, "I live 78 miles away, but I found out about the seminar through the Amazing Facts app on my phone." What he experienced strengthened his faith. "Carlos' presentation on the divine commission and using Christ's method alone really captured my attention. ... I learned a lot, not only for my own spiritual growth, but for sharing the message of hope in this sinful world."

Thank you for helping to make AFCOE to Go available to churches around the globe. If you would like to bring AFCOE to Go to your congregation, visit afcoe.org today to learn more.

CHRISTIAN



Book of Amazing Facts, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2

Pastor Doug has been using historical, scientific, and other amazing facts to share the gospel, making the Bible more approachable and easier to understand for millions. These wonderfully fun volumes feature some of the most eye-opening facts he's used in radio and television programs, sermons, and books—perfect for family worship and more!

Vol. 1 | BK-BOAF ... \$9.95

Vol. 2 | BK-BOAF2 ... \$9.95

Kingdoms in Time DVD

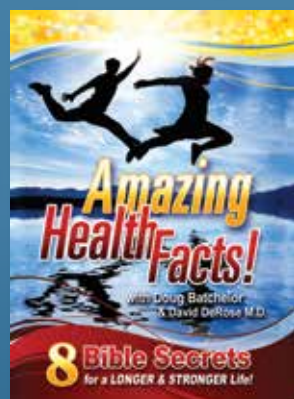
You will cherish this life-changing documentary hosted by Pastor Doug, who explores the most striking Bible predictions that have come true—from nations rising and falling to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Journey through ancient Israel and hear from expert theologians, historians, and archaeologists on how we can know these prophecies were written in advance—and what it means for the ones that have yet to come true. A powerful evangelistic tool!

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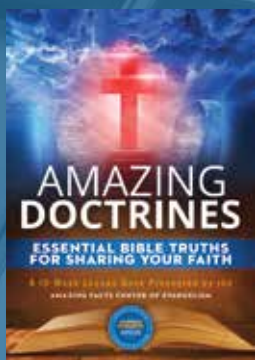


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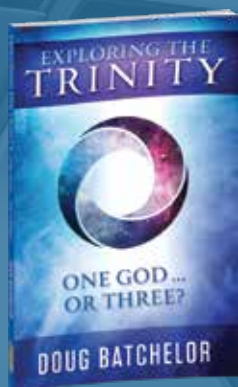
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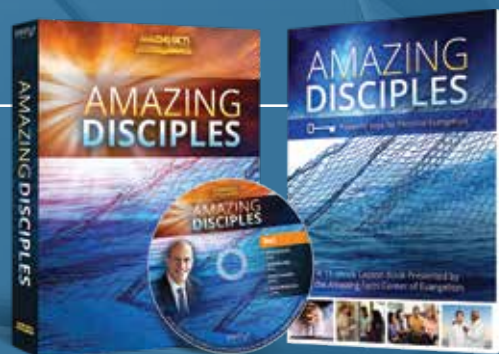


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Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit in our salvation. A powerful resource for sharing with friends and church members who have doubts about the Godhead.

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After more than a decade of prayer, planning, and construction, Phase 1 of the Amazing Facts W.O.R.D. Center—World Outreach, Revival, and Discipleship—in Granite Bay, California, is now open for ministry!

Pastor Doug Batchelor, president of Amazing Facts International and senior pastor of Granite Bay Church, says, “We are grateful to God and to our many friends for this opportunity to expand our outreach to a world in such spiritual upheaval. I believe that because of our commitment to His Word and mission in these last days, the Lord has blessed us with growth and influence.”

The new facilities sit on 75 acres on a hill with stunning views of nature. The land was purchased in 2008 at an extremely favorable—even providential—price. During the following years, Amazing Facts experienced phenomenal growth, creating a pressing need for larger, updated facilities. Shares Pastor Doug, “After years of

maxing out our old office, with virtually every inch jammed, we now have the space to accomplish our work and grow for future evangelism.”

Having a new, larger, and technology-updated office building for the ministry means workers won’t be on top of each other, as they have been, leading to more efficient and effective workflows. It also means that media production won’t be squeezed into cramped spaces decorated to look larger; rather, there will be dedicated areas for both on-camera sets and behind-the-scenes production work. Work areas in the new facilities are specially designed to meet these production needs.

According to Wayne Leman, creative productions director for the ministry, “We always had limitations in our productions because of the shortcomings of our previous facility. However, with this new building, the only limitations will be our imaginations. We know that with God, all things are possible, so the sky is the limit!”



Staff Worship



THE W.O.R.D. CENTER

NOW OPEN!

Amazing Facts staff moved into the ministry's new world headquarters on August 28, kickstarting a new phase in worldwide evangelism!

Wayne also explains, "We will no longer need to spend countless hours re-recording various commercials, documentaries, and TV series due to local noise pollution from trains, motorcycles, and airplanes that cruised by our old facility. We will no longer need to set up and break down lights between productions because we will now have a dedicated soundstage to accommodate a lighting grid."

In short, Wayne says, "The W.O.R.D. Center will be a place where we can create an environment that allows evangelism and media to live harmoniously! It will be a place where less goes further, and where our efforts go further than we've ever been able to take evangelism before."

Moreover, The W.O.R.D. Center is more than just an office building. Pastor Doug explains, "Here, we have expanded facilities for TV and radio production, along with space for AFCOE's outreach training. And when completed in the next several months, the Granite Bay Church building

will not only support the congregation, but it will also provide facilities to produce and record a wide range of church-based programs that will minister to millions worldwide."

The new sanctuary will be the perfect location to present, record, and broadcast prophecy seminars, Bible studies, weekly church sermons, as well as health programs—all before an enthusiastic congregation. *Sabbath School Study Hour* and other church-based worship programs will also go out to viewers around the world via AFTV, Facebook, and YouTube streams, along with our family of cable and satellite networks.

Says Pastor Doug, "The financial support of so many people has made this dream a reality. I want everyone who gave to and prayed for this project to know that we will use this place to forward God's mission

on earth." The entire ministry team is so grateful for your support and participation in the completion of the W.O.R.D. Center. We look forward to seeing you here on a visit! 📖



PROPHECY SEMINARS

You are invited to meet the members of our dynamic evangelism team at our many seminars and revivals—and please invite a friend!

SPEAKERS



Doug Batchelor



Wyatt Allen



Dakota Day



Carlos Muñoz



Dave Steward

Doug Batchelor

September 20, 21

Loma Linda Indonesian Church
10827 California Street
Redlands, California

September 27, 28

3ABN Camp Meeting
Thompsonville Church
Worship Center
3577 Angel Lane
Thompsonville, Illinois

November 8, 9

Texas Men's Conference
Houston Central Church
9425 West Sam Houston Parkway
Houston, Texas

Wyatt Allen

September 13–October 11

Whitneyville Cultural Commons
1253 Whitney Avenue
Hamden, Connecticut
Call 573-260-5505 for details.

October 25–November 23

Gulf Coast Church
13301 Shriners Boulevard
Biloxi, Mississippi
Call 573-260-5505 for details.

Dakota Day

September 6–28

Livingston Church
4120 Bradford Hicks Drive
Livingston, Tennessee

November 1–23

Twin Peaks Church
9696 Paschal Drive
Louisville, Colorado

Carlos Muñoz

September 27–October 12

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico
(Spanish-language Seminar)

October 18–November 2

Norwalk Church
12191 Firestone Boulevard
Norwalk, California

Dave Steward

September 6–28

Houston Central Church
9425 West Sam Houston Pkwy N
Houston, Texas
Call 315-430-6010 for details.

January 10–21, 2020

Fort Myers Church
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The Everlasting Gospel Reaches Seychelles and Paris!

By Mark A. Kellner

In bringing the three angels' messages to one of the world's most remote corners and then to one of its most famous capitals, Pastor Doug Batchelor and the Amazing Facts team covered tens of thousands of miles in just fifteen days, visiting the Seychelles Islands and then Paris, France.

The island Republic of Seychelles sits in the Indian Ocean 932 miles from the coast of East Africa and has a population of just 94,228 people, the smallest of any sovereign African nation. English and French are widely spoken there, and Amazing Facts programs are found on both cable and satellite.

"There were few places you could go where people didn't see our program," Pastor Doug happily shares.

The group was invited to Seychelles for the church's first national camp meeting, with attendance peaking at a thousand visitors. The guests were thrilled to hear such bold preaching from the Bible.

"Everywhere we went, we heard wonderful stories of conversion," Pastor Doug adds.

"This visit was a growing trend of sowing the seed of God's Word in the region."

The team also filmed several evangelistic *Amazing Facts of Faith* episodes, including one about the giant tortoises found on the island. Other videos focused on parrotfish and the world's largest nut, the coco de mer, which can grow up to forty pounds. Find these on YouTube in the coming weeks!

Paris and Notre Dame


Pastor Doug notes, "Strangely, as we were packing for this trip, I received a call that the famous landmark Notre Dame was on fire. This historic loss struck me as exceptionally sad. It was just so tragic to see that this church, built before Columbus sailed for America, was going up in flames."

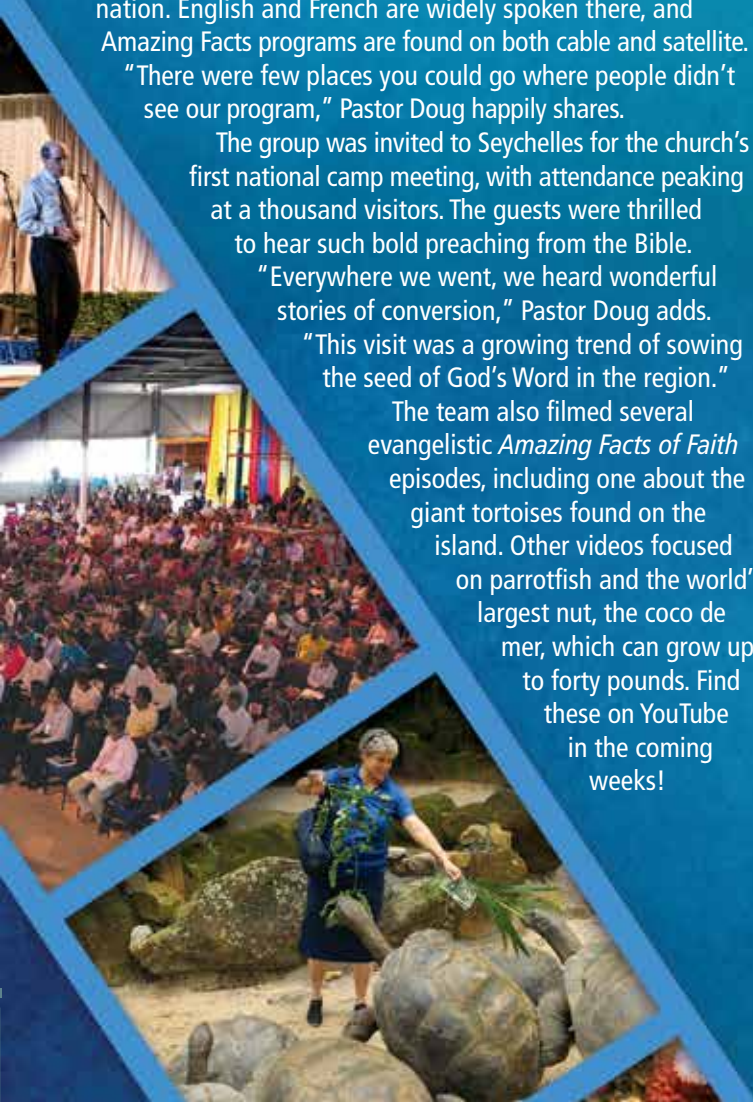
Shortly after this national tragedy, the team arrived in France for a seven-part evangelistic series. According to Pastor Doug, "Two thousand people attended the final presentation, which was highlighted by a beautiful baptism service."

With the church in Europe growing—largely through immigrant arrivals—the need to reach those who live throughout Western Europe, where Protestantism began, remains strong. While thousands of people line up to visit Paris' famous museums and tourist attractions, it's not common to see thousands turn out for a gospel presentation.

The Notre Dame fire did not deter the ministry's plans to record videos at this historic site, Pastor Doug added. "We still recorded at Notre Dame, but the script had to be rewritten because of the fire, which made the story even more poignant. There were still firemen and workers at the scene dealing with the fallout of the blaze as we filmed."

Future *Amazing Facts of Faith* videos were shot in Paris' historic catacombs, an underground cemetery where six million people are buried in 190 miles of tunnels. The team also recorded presentations about Napoleon, Louis XIV, the Eiffel Tower, the Palace of Versailles, the D-Day invasion at Normandy, Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa, and more.

In fifteen days, Pastor Doug preached as many times, and the team recorded a total of 14 outreach presentations for YouTube and social media. Your support for the ministry helped make this journey possible, and we look forward to future trips to French-speaking areas where the message still needs to be proclaimed! 



(Continued from page 9.)

doctrine on a single text, and the more we look into this subject, we'll find that the rest of Scripture is clear that the punishment of the wicked comes at the end of the world.

Jesus said, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken *will judge him in the last day*" (John 12:48, my emphasis). When are those who reject Jesus judged? In the last day.

Furthermore, Jesus plainly stated that the saved do not receive their reward until the resurrection.

"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and *I will raise him up at the last day*" (John 6:54, my emphasis).

Jesus also told a parable about the timing of the final judgment—and even provided His own explanation, making it hard to misunderstand His intent. You find it in Matthew 13:38–42. In that parable, a farmer sowed good seed, but an enemy came and sowed weeds. Jesus explained the lesson, saying, "The tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, *so it will be at the end of this age*. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend ... and will cast them into the furnace of fire" (my emphasis). According to Jesus, the wicked will be cast into hell at the end of this age. This is a strong indication that Jesus was speaking figuratively in the story of Lazarus.

While some people may get mixed up trying to turn the parable of the rich man and Lazarus into a literal description of what happens at death, we can know that Jesus

has an entirely different purpose. The question is: What is the purpose of the rich man and Lazarus parable?

Two Themes

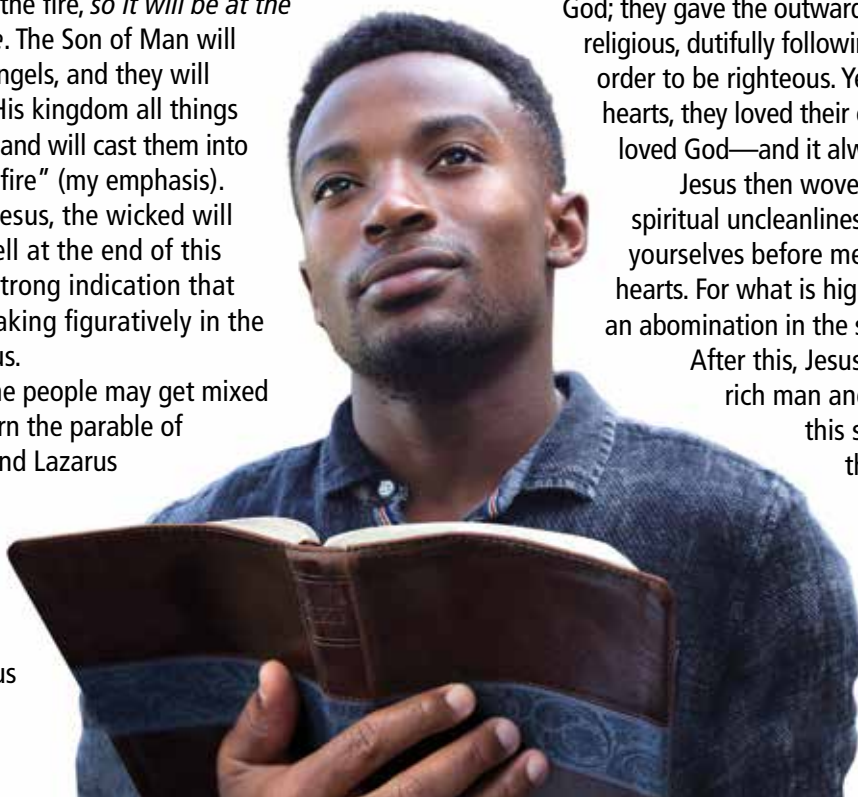
A wonderful thing about parables is that they can have several spiritual lessons and multiple applications. The story of the rich man and Lazarus is but one example of many; it has at least two spiritual lessons for us to ponder.

One theme is that our everyday actions have eternal consequences. The ability to choose salvation is not available to us after death. Another theme is that God sees people differently than sinful humanity sees them.

As always, understanding the context is paramount to understanding a Bible passage. What happened before Jesus told this parable? He told the parable about an unjust steward. He ended that story with this summary: "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other. ... You cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). The Pharisees were listening. The Bible says that when they heard Jesus' words, "They derided Him." Why? Because they "were lovers of money" (v. 14). The Pharisees claimed to be followers of God; they gave the outward impression of being ultra-religious, dutifully following all the supposed rules in order to be righteous. Yet Jesus knew that in their hearts, they loved their earthly riches more than they loved God—and it always showed in their actions.

Jesus then wove a warning to speak to their spiritual uncleanness: "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God" (v. 15).

After this, Jesus gives the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. And likewise in this story, He included themes that the Pharisees needed to hear. But they aren't just for the Pharisees living in the first century. You and I need to heed this parable too. 📖



Get More Answers from **Pastor Doug!**

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Doug Batchelor. When Jesus told the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, was He sharing hidden truths about the state of the dead—or did He have another lesson in mind? This brief book quickly and biblically explains the often-misunderstood parable found in Luke 16.

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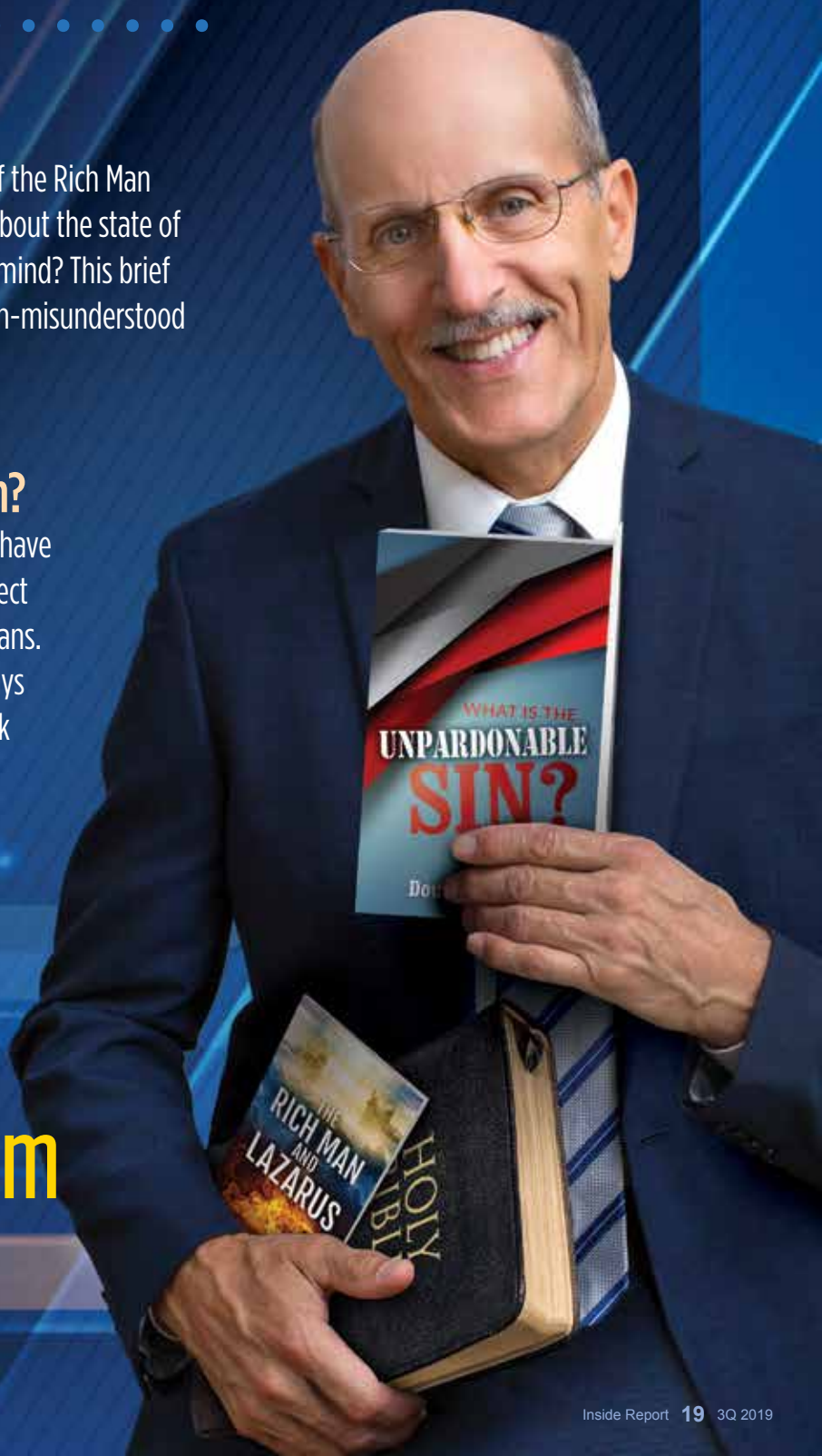
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BIBLE ANSWERS

WITH DOUG BATCHELOR



Q Doesn't Matthew 3:12 prove that hellfire will never go out?

A "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:12).

The fire mentioned here concerns the punishment of the wicked. At the end of time, when all have made their final choice to either accept or reject the Lord, His glorious coming to this earth will certainly destroy unrepentant sinners.

However, an unquenchable fire is one that cannot be *put* out. Once it begins its work, nothing can stop it. Likewise, when the fires of hell begin, no amount of water can extinguish the flames. The question to be asked is, "Will it ever go out?" Yes—when its work is done. When sin and sinners are consumed, the fires *will* cease. Isaiah 47:14 describes this work as ending in "stubble."


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.

Q Doesn't Colossians 2:14 show that the Ten Commandments no longer matter?

A "... Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14).

This verse is about the ceremonial laws that pointed forward to the life and death of Jesus; with His death on the cross, Christ fulfilled all these types and shadows; thus, these laws have no further purpose. The apostle Paul even said that such laws are contrary to the Christian. The torn veil in the temple at the death of Christ (Matthew 27:51) indicated the end of the ordinance of animal sacrifices, and Ephesians 2:15 says that Jesus "abolished ... the law of commandments contained in ordinances."

This is why Paul wrote in Colossians 2:16, 17, that we are no longer judged by "food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths" because they were "a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ." Also note that these ceremonial laws were handwritten by Moses on parchment and placed *beside* the ark, whereas the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God on stone and placed *inside* the ark. Think about it: Wouldn't it be impossible to nail rock to the cross?

These yearly sabbaths were not the weekly Sabbath of the creation story and the Ten Commandments. They are shadowy sabbaths described in Leviticus 23:24–37. They fell on certain days of the month—a different day of the week each year, yet they were called sabbaths. But note in verses 37 and 38 how they were distinguished from the weekly Sabbath: "These are the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—*besides* the Sabbaths of the LORD" (emphasis added). The law of the yearly sabbaths was nailed to the cross, but the great Sabbath commandment was not likewise affected. 

Go for the Flow!

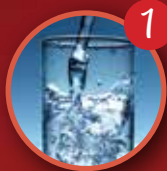
BY LAURIE LYON

Did you know that, if placed end to end, the blood vessels found in the average adult circulatory system would span about 60,000 miles? Through this incredible network of passageways, our cells and organs receive life-giving oxygen and nutrients, while toxic waste products are whisked away.

In general, the better the flow, the more optimally every cell will function, so it pays to keep those streams flowing smoothly.

A number of conditions go hand in hand with poor circulation—either as a cause or effect—such as peripheral artery disease, diabetes, Raynaud’s disease, blood clots, varicose veins, and even obesity.¹ While some of these conditions are serious, potentially deadly, and require expert medical treatment, many of us can take positive steps to enhance our circulation today.

So what can you do to rev up the pipeline? Since water, temperature, movement, and even food can all have a dramatic impact on your blood flow, here are a few ways you can harness these factors to improve circulation and boost your health:



1 Drink adequate amounts of water throughout the day to thin the blood so it can be pumped more easily by the heart. Additionally, use warm and/or cool water externally—through a shower, bath, or other hydrotherapy—to stimulate blood flow.



2 Foods such as cayenne pepper, turmeric, ginger, nuts, onions, garlic, berries, beets, and leafy greens can improve circulation. Many of these are vasodilators that relax and/or widen the blood vessels to some extent, allowing blood to flow more freely.²



3 Avoid temperature extremes. Becoming overheated stresses the heart, the circulatory system’s essential pump, while overexposure to cold can slow circulation to the extremities as the body struggles to maintain its core temperature. Take care to keep adequately

warm clothing on your arms and legs during the cooler months.



4 While regular exercise is excellent for circulation, research shows that once a day may not be enough, especially for those who sit for long periods of time. In fact, a study published in *Annals of Internal Medicine* suggests that taking regular breaks from sedentary time may save your life.³ Dozens of other studies have come to similar conclusions, with many researchers and physicians now recommending taking a ten-minute exercise break per hour—while some advocate shorter but more frequent intermissions. For sedentary workers, moving more often is likely to boost productivity as well, as better blood flow enhances brain function.



Good circulation benefits every part of your body. It increases the efficiency of your skin and other organs and makes you more resistant to disease. It lowers blood pressure and heart rate, improves muscle function and energy, and gives a healthy glow. You’ll think better, look better, and feel better!

Just as vibrant circulation through our body is critical to our physical health, we need an energetic flow in our Christian life as well. We need to eat the proper spiritual food—the Bread of Life, keep our heart warm with the love of Christ, frequently exercise our spiritual muscles by serving Him, and stay well hydrated with the Water of Life. Jesus invites you today, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37, 38).

¹ <https://www.healthline.com/health/poor-circulation-symptoms-causes#causes>

² <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods-that-increase-blood-flow>

³ <https://annals.org/aim/article-abstract/2653704/patterns-sedentary-behavior-mortality-u-s-middle-aged-older-adults>

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