

September 2000

# AMAZING

*Inside  
Report*

# FACTS

A person wearing a blue and white striped shirt is watering three large, dry, light-colored bones that are stuck upright in a reddish-brown, ornate ceramic planter. The person is holding a green watering can with a silver spout, and water is spraying out of the spout onto the bones. The background is slightly blurred, showing some greenery and a wooden fence.

**Reviving**

**DRY BONES**



# LETTERS

## Couch Potato Stayed and Listened!

I was having a migraine and happened upon your Web site. I just sat back in my recliner and listened and relaxed, enjoying another marvelous testimony to the glory of God. My husband came in about halfway, and our daughter was calling him to the TV, but instead this couch potato stayed and listened!

I sure did enjoy your testimony. . . . I thought that the neatest part was the Bible in that cave. God is so great! I will surely pass your page on to all I know. It really blessed me tonight.

CG

via e-mail



## Some of the Best Answers

I have orchestrated an online ministry called Thought For Today. The reason I am writing is to thank you for your assistance. I often listen to some of the responses on the *Bible Answers Live* archive of your Web site to hear some of the common questions and also some of the best answers. I have enjoyed Amazing Facts since childhood; now they have inspired me to teach in a similar manner.

AB

Maryland

## Only One Thing Wrong

In the May 2000 issue you asked for some feedback. Welcome back. I LOVE the *Inside Report*. My favorite is always the feature article. Amazing Facts writers have a way of "telling it like it is," and I like that. I always learn something new or am reminded of something "old." These articles are good for sharing with others. Personally, the only thing I find "wrong" with the *Inside Report* is that it's too short! Keep up the good work.

JC

via e-mail



## Converted and Baptized

After a good friend invited me to a prophecy seminar, Jesus had a dramatic effect on my life. I was converted and baptized into the church on June 3, 2000, and so was my friend, Kelly. While attending the seminar, our new friend [Amazing Facts Evangelist]

John Quade pulled me aside one evening to tell me about a prayer meeting on how to quit smoking. "Well," I said, "I don't smoke." But at that meeting I quit drinking coffee of any kind. Jesus helped me give it up after 20 years, and I haven't drunk any since. John Quade doesn't know how he and God have touched our lives.

NS

Oklahoma

## Offerings for bibleuniverse.com

I'm sending my offerings to help set up bibleuniverse.com. It isn't much; however, I believe God is able to bless you and that you will receive the support you need.

VM

New York

## Completely Impressed

I was recently introduced to your magazine and have been completely impressed with it. I'm not one for reading a lot of "religious" material due to the fact that I'm very skeptical. I was that way about your magazine until I read an article by a young man by the name of Michael Halfhill [July 2000 issue]. I've led a pretty similar life to his—except I'm no deejay and I haven't gone to college. I've recently let Jesus into my life (in August 1999), and I can see the changes He has done for me just in the past year. Reading about Michael strengthens my faith that there is a better life out there than what I've been living in the past. Thank you and God bless you, Michael, for strengthening and uplifting a person's failing faith and hope. I needed it really bad.

KS

Arizona



*Michael Halfhill's response:*

*WOW! I am simply blown away. Praise God for how He can use us to help other people. May God bless K.S. and continue to work in all of our lives to bring us closer to Him and be ready for His return.*

*Michael Halfhill*

*Nebraska*

## Opening Up My Eyes

I thank Pastor Doug Batchelor for opening up my eyes through the *Millennium of Prophecy* series. I am a Baptist, but God is leading me to become a Sabbathkeeping Christian.

ND

Georgia



AMAZING FACTS

INSIDE REPORT  
VOL. 18, NO. 9

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BY EDITOR  
DEBRA J. HICKS

# Would God Do That?

**T**his summer I took a master's-level class at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro. One evening part of our discussion centered on—of all things—whether or not television is an appropriate forum for corporate worship. At one point our instructor brought up the oft-asked hypothetical question, “Would Jesus appear on television if He were ministering on earth today?”

To my surprise, most of my fellow students thought He would not.

I found myself again considering the “What Would Jesus Do?” theme as I prepared this magazine—specifically the feature story on pages 12 and 13. When I told a friend that I was writing about a man who witnesses from his tanning salon, he burst into an explosion of laughter. “You’re kidding, right?” he asked.

I was not.

Lest I sound even a smidge pious, let me hasten to add that I too have often reacted with skepticism after hearing about various non-traditional ministries.

If you think the concept of God owning a tanning salon seems preposterous, wait until you hear about my friend who owned a jewelry store. When Casey gave her life to Jesus, she stripped off her ornaments and began making plans to sell her family business. While waiting for a buyer, she took advantage of multiple opportunities to share her testimony and give away free Amazing Facts literature.

Not everyone thought she had changed for the better. But when a regular customer came into the shop and made a big fuss about how “positively ill” Casey looked without her usual heavy makeup, she just laughed and took it in stride.

To my surprise, God never provided a buyer for her jewelry business. As ironic as it seemed, He kept the title in His name because that store was exactly where Casey needed to be at that point in time. It placed her where she would have the most contact with people who don’t already know the Lord.

While this certainly isn’t His usual method of operation, I believe that He does sometimes leave new converts in their old environments for the sake of the gospel. If God knows that they will truly continue to shine for Him, He might leave them in a dark corner so their light and love will be most brilliant.

Think of the healed demoniac who wanted to sail away with Jesus and His disciples after his angry countrymen demanded that the troublesome Galileans leave the region. Jesus did not permit the man to enter the fishing boat with Him, but instead

told him, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the LORD hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19). In His infinite knowledge, God knew that this man could now handle going back home and that his testimony would bring tremendous glory to Jesus.

I’m developing a theory. It says that God would probably assign us all to nontraditional ministries if we could handle it. I think He would like to have all of His followers work in night clubs or gambling casinos and other such questionable establishments *IF* they could do so without taking their eyes off the Savior and without becoming just like the people


**God would probably assign us all to nontraditional ministries if we could handle it.**

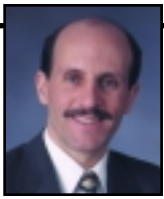
they needed to rescue. He’d probably like to send many more of His disciples to big cities or idolatrous countries in order to blanket the world with news of His life-changing power.

Unfortunately, most of us can’t do it. Maybe the problem is that we try to rely on our own strength instead of on God’s.

Or maybe we don’t want to get that close to the ungodly. After all, God’s grace has a refining effect on people, and those who barely know Him can be “rough around the edges,” to put it politely. They sometimes have nasty habits, tough questions, and lots of immediate needs. Sometimes we judge them as “not like us,” conveniently forgetting that our own problems make us just as needy in heaven’s eyes.

Like Simon at the feast in Bethany, we churchgoers are sometimes unsure what to make of God’s grace. On one hand we’re glad that Jesus doesn’t show favoritism or make Himself completely unapproachable, because if He did we would have died long ago from leprosy (or whatever sin threatens to overtake us). But on the other hand, we tend to look down our noses at people who don’t immediately fit in with the church crowd after God rescues them.

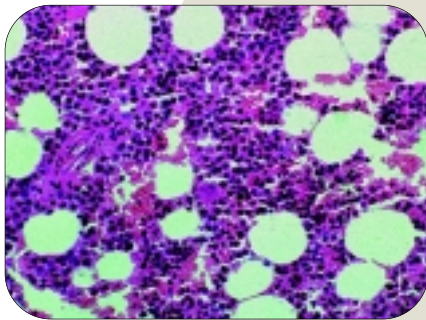
It’s easy to forget that we, like the two debtors in the parable Jesus told Simon (Luke 7:40-43), have “nothing with which to repay” our merciful God. The best way we can show our love and gratitude is to tell other wretches about our Benefactor’s inconceivable generosity. 



BY DIRECTOR-SPEAKER  
DOUG BATCHELOR

# Reviving

## DRY BONES



Corel Corp.

### **An Amazing Fact:**

*The Bible tells us that “the life of the flesh is in the blood” (Leviticus 17:11). However, it is equally true to say that human life is in the bones, because the marrow in our bones is what produces our blood. As a matter of fact, the bone marrow in a healthy person can produce enough blood to completely replenish the body’s blood supply in four weeks. All of the marrow in a baby’s bones produces blood, but as a person matures, the arms and fingers and legs cease to produce it. However, the skull, ribs and hip bones continue to produce blood all throughout a person’s life.*



Most people associate the book of Ezekiel with one of two things: God’s chariot with the “wheel in the middle of a wheel,” or the dry bones that come back to life. Both of these visions have inspired several lively songs, but rarely are they the subject of practical or serious Bible study.

In this article I want to focus on the vision of the valley of dry bones, found in Ezekiel 37:1-14, because we can learn many profound things from this fascinating passage of Scripture.

The book of Ezekiel was written by the prophet bearing the same name, which means “God will strengthen.” A Hebrew from the tribe of Levi, he was among the elite of Judah who were captured by Nebuchadnezzar and carried away to Babylon. Ezekiel prophesied between the years 600 and 570 B.C. and was a contemporary of the prophet Daniel. Some scholars believe that his reference in the very first verse of the book to “the thirtieth year” was probably an indication of his age. If so, that means Ezekiel would have been only 25 years old at the time he was forced to leave his homeland. Thirty was also the age when a priest could begin to minister (Numbers 4:3). It was at age 30 that Jesus began His ministry, Joseph began to rule over Egypt, and David began his reign.

This fascinating prophecy of dry bones in Ezekiel has something for everybody. (Pardon the pun.) First

of all, he was speaking primarily to his fellow captives among the children of Israel. By this time in history, the 10 tribes of Israel had been so widely scattered among the surrounding nations that they seemed all but lost as a people. The tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi had just been conquered and carried away captive to Babylon. It looked as if their national identity was forever gone and they would never again return to their Promised Land. Hence, one purpose of this vision was to inspire them with hope that God would someday revive them as a nation.

In addition, this prophecy speaks about what God will do for spiritual Israel, which is the church today. An obvious theme of the vision is that God can resurrect dry bones—that He can give literal life to that which is dead and inanimate. It is a message that He can revive His people and turn them into a mighty army.

Last of all, it speaks to us individually. No matter how dried up and worthless we may feel, or how dead in trespasses and sins, God can restore us to life through His Word and Spirit.

### **Ankle-Deep in Bones**

Ezekiel begins his account with these words: “The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones” (Ezekiel 37:1).



Picture the scene for a moment. Ezekiel was carried off in the Spirit and taken to an obscure valley. The Promised Land is home to the lowest spot on earth. Located down below the Jordan Valley, near the Dead Sea, this valley is more than 1,300 feet below sea level. Perhaps Ezekiel was taken in vision down to this very low and very hot area, where Sodom and Gomorrah used to be.

Everywhere, on every side, were dead men's bleached bones. Talk about Death Valley! In this macabre vision Ezekiel was surrounded with a countless number of bleaching bones from this slain multitude.

Now keep in mind that when an army was defeated in battle in Bible times, the victorious soldiers would often strip the valuables from the slain and then leave their enemies' bodies unburied. In remote places where there had been serious battles, skeletons sometimes remained for years afterward, until the beasts of carrion completely scattered the bones or they surrendered to the elements. This image of a valley covered with bones was not merely an abstract concept. Ezekiel lived at a time when one could find literal valleys of bones—places where the slain enemy had been overwhelmed and there was no one to bury them. In the Bible, a corpse not properly buried was considered to be accursed by God.

This image also has a lot of relevance for us. The Bible tells us that just after the Lord comes, the surface of the earth will remain convoluted and destroyed for 1,000 years. The earth will look like a wilderness strewn with the corpses of the lost. Cities will be broken down, and nobody will be there to lament, to mourn, or to bury them. "And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth," says Jeremiah 25:33. This entire world is going to be a dark valley of dry bones that will someday come to life for judgment.

Ezekiel was not only a prophet of God, but he was also a priest. The poor guy was placed in the midst of this valley of bones, and he said that the Lord "caused me to pass by them" (verse 2). Can you imagine walking around ankle-deep in the bones of dead men? It might have been a dog's dream come true; but it likely made the prophet extremely uncomfortable. To touch a dead body would render anybody, but especially a priest, unclean. How objectionable it must have been for Ezekiel to be placed, even in vision, in this gruesome field of death!

## New Life to the Lifeless

The Bible says these bones were "very dry" (verse 2). There wasn't any hope of life.



Baron Williams

These "very dry" bones in Ezekiel's vision symbolized a completely hopeless situation. Even if you fertilized and watered a dry bone for a hundred years, it would never live again.

I understand that while doing some excavating in an ancient peat bog in England, a team of archaeologists found some very small lily seeds, which they planted. Although scientists estimate that those seeds had been there for thousands of years, they sprouted and produced a lily. There's nothing else like it in the world today because that particular plant had at some point become extinct. Yet because life was somehow preserved in that seed, the flower could live again.

However, you can't stick a dry bone in water and expect it to come back to life. Even if you fertilized it and watered it for a hundred years, it would never live again. So these "very dry" bones symbolized a situation that looked completely hopeless.

Remember that this vision was given as a lesson not only for a nation or for the church, but also for us as individuals. These dry bones represent people. The Bible says, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). If a person does not have Jesus, his bones are bleached, white, and dry. Spiritually speaking, he has no life.

Katie Lechler

### An Amazing Fact:

*There are 28 bones in the human skull alone. An adult human body has a total of 206 bones, which account for 14 percent of the body's total weight. The longest and strongest bone is the thighbone, which at maturity measures about 20 inches long and 1 inch wide.*

*The smallest bone, called the stirrup, is one of three tiny bones buried within the middle ear; it is only seven one-hundredths of an inch long.*



Just as water brings the parched earth to life, God's Word and living water of His Spirit will bring dry souls new life. Isaiah 44:3 says, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."

Ephesians 2:1 says, "And you hath he quickened [revived], who were dead in trespasses and sins." If sin still reigns in our lives, if we're still controlled by a life of sin, then we're spiritually dead. We are as good as dry bones. Thankfully, the hope in this story is that God can revive dry bones.

"For this my son was dead," the father said of the prodigal son, "and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke 15:24). When was the rebellious son dead? When he was out living a riotous life. Spiritually he was as dead as a dry mummy, but then God brought him to his knees and restored him to his senses.

## Mission Possible!

In the vision, God asked Ezekiel a question. He said, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

The prophet replied, "O Lord GOD, thou knowest" (verse 3).

God knows everything. He doesn't ask us questions because He's been stumped; He asks in order to get us to think. Just as the ancient philosopher Socrates used to teach by asking questions, so too God asks people questions in order to arouse their thought processes and to get them to analyze the situation. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 1:18).

If Ezekiel had responded to God's question based on the evidence of his senses, he would have answered "no." Dead, dry bones cannot come back to life.

If you were the first to the scene of an accident and you saw somebody lying motionless on the ground, you might think, "Perhaps there's hope." You would probably even do a little CPR and try to revive the person. But if you saw a skeleton lying in the road, you wouldn't even consider giving it mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. You'd think, "It's just dead bones. There's no hope."

What God wants us to learn from this story is that nothing is too hard for Him. What may appear hopeless and dead to you and me is a field full of possibilities for the Lord.

Have you known people whom you thought were too far lost to be found? Someone for whom it seemed useless to pray? The Bible says, Never give up!

When Mary asked, "How can this be?" the angel Gabriel told her, "Nothing is impossible with God." And when the disciples asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible." The Bible is saying that without Christ we can't do anything, but through Christ all things are possible. God never wants us to lose faith that He can give life—even if it appears that a situation is hopeless. We have all heard the proverb where there is life there is hope (Ecclesiastes 9:4). Yet with God there is even hope when there appears to be no life!

## When God Speaks, Things Happen

Next God said to Ezekiel, "Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD" (verse 4).

If you were to walk down the street one day and see a preacher standing on a box preaching to a skeleton, what would you think? You'd telephone the nearest mental hospital, wouldn't you? You'd assume that man was a menace to society.

Preaching to dry bones would seem like a waste of time. A skeleton just isn't listening! But we sometimes forget the incredible vital power of God's Word. If God can speak matter into existence with just a word and if He can make a man out of clay or a woman out of a rib, then it stands to reason that He can also cause the spiritually dead to hear. So don't lose hope, especially those of you who are pastors and evangelists! You can preach to dry bones and see results. God's Word is so potent and so powerful that it infuses new life into that which appears dead.

Whenever the Lord speaks, things happen. The Bible tells us that when Christ said to the leper, Be cleansed, he was immediately clean (Mark 1:40-42). When Jesus said Get up and walk to a man who had not walked in 38 years, the man walked (John 5:5-9). There is always inherent power in the Word of God to enable us to do whatever He commands.

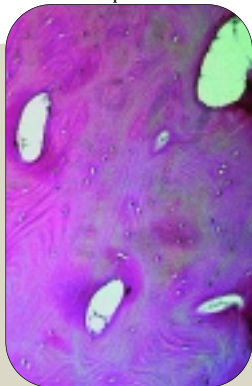
## Life in the Bones

In Ezekiel 37:5, God says, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live."

Bones are almost always associated with death, yet Scripture tells one story in which bones were a source of life. In 2 Kings 13:20-21 we find that Elisha the prophet, who was filled with a double portion of Elijah's spirit, was so Spirit-filled that his bones radiated life even after he was dead!

The Bible says that after Elisha died and was buried, some men in Israel were performing a funeral ceremony for one of their friends. As they were carrying his remains out to bury him, they caught a glimpse of Moabite raiders on horseback. These land pirates had been ransacking the countryside, and the

Corel Corp.



### **An Amazing Fact:**

*Blood and bones play very interactive roles within the body. Calcium is needed for most of our bodily functions, and when the calcium levels in the blood drop too low, special cells called osteoclasts dig out the calcium for our body to use. When we get more calcium from eating foods such as spinach or tofu, special cells called osteoblasts replace the calcium, building up our bones again. This process happens on a daily basis.*

### **An Amazing Fact:**

Not all cemeteries keep the dearly departed underground. A church in Rome called *Santa Maria della Immacolata Concezione*, built in 1626, houses one of the most interesting crypts in the world. Created in the 17th and 18th centuries during the Baroque period, it is called “*Cimitero dei Cappuccini*” [*Cemetery of the Capuchins*]. However, the remains of its 4,000 Capuchin monks are not buried. Instead, they are displayed—as lampstands made of fibulae, as intricate frescoes of scapulae and vertebrae, and as hanging chandeliers made of the more delicate bones. In Faro, Portugal, a tiny chapel behind an 18-century Carmelite church has actually been built from the ground up with nothing but bones and a little cement (see photo at right).



Corel Corp.

Israelite men knew that they needed to get out of there fast or they'd be the next victims. They didn't want to be disrespectful toward the friend they were burying, but they had to run for their lives. So the Bible says that “they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet” (verse 21).

There are also many modern-day examples of how bones can give life. In its June 1997 issue, *Reader's Digest* told about a family in which the daughter contracted a form of leukemia that would ultimately kill her unless she received a bone marrow transplant. Because she had an unusual blood type, it was very difficult to find a donor. So her parents did something that was almost unbelievable. They began praying to have another child with the same rare blood type. They hoped this second child, after a short time, would be able to provide the bone marrow needed for their daughter with leukemia.

Things were somewhat complicated by the fact that this was an older couple and the man had already

had a vasectomy. Not only would doctors need to reverse that, which is a very iffy procedure in itself, but their new baby would need to have the same rare blood type as the older sister.

It worked. The man's surgery was a success, the couple was able to conceive again, and they gave birth to a second daughter who had the appropriate blood type. After 14 months, the little girl provided enough bone marrow, from her hip, to give a transplant that saved her older sister's life. There is life in the bones.

### **A Mighty, Vast Army**

Ezekiel 37:7 says, “So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.”

When God's people preach the truth, it's going to cause a rattling. Things are going to happen. Sometimes it brings revival. At other times it arouses opposition or persecution. Sometimes both! But I guarantee that when the truth is faithfully proclaimed, there's going to be a lot of shaking!

Imagine the prophet standing in this valley, ankle-deep in thousands of sun-bleached skeletons. After months of being ravaged by vultures and animals of carrion, this virtual sea of helter-skelter bones had been scattered all over the place. Then, as Ezekiel began to preach, there was a rattling. Suddenly as if drawn by some powerful unseen magnet, bones began to whiz and fly through the air, being pulled back to their original partners as God began the amazing process of reassembly.

After the bones came together in their appropriate positions and Ezekiel continued preaching, the Bible says that sinew and tendons began to take their places. Next the skin was put in position. Notice that God was doing things in order. He did not say, “Let's put all the flesh together. OK, now let's see if we can squeeze the bones inside the skin. Now let's put the



### **An Amazing Fact:**

Ezekiel lived at a time when one could find literal valleys of bones—places where the slain enemy had been overwhelmed and there was no one to bury them.



muscle on the outside.” That would have been backwards (and the result hideous). God always works through process and does things in their proper order—whether it is rebuilding His church or reviving us individually. “Let all things be done decently and in order,” the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 14:40.

Peter tells us that growing in Christ is also a process with order. “Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” (2 Peter 1:5-7).

At this point all the body parts were in their proper place. The bones, muscle, and skin were in position, but still there was no life. The brain was in the head, but it wasn’t thinking. The lungs were there, but the body wasn’t breathing. The heart was in place, but it was not beating. Like Adam before the Lord inflated him with the breath of life, each soldier was a perfect lifeless corpse.

So now Ezekiel is surrounded not with thousands of disconnected bones, but with an army of cold bodies. They were probably very good-looking corpses, but they were dead nonetheless. This condition accurately describes some churches. They might have everything in place, but there is no spiritual life. Jesus says of them: “I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead” (Revelation 3:1). Outwardly the members look really good. They think they’re rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing (Revelation 3:17), yet they do not have the breath of life.

Ezekiel 37:10 says, “So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.”

God gives them life to fight. They become an army.

In the same way, God gives us spiritual life so we can become soldiers in His army. We come to the Lord, He breathes into us the breath of life, then we go for the Lord. Zechariah 4:6 describes the battle plan: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”

## Hope for the Hopeless


After World War II, tens of thousands of Japanese soldiers and civilians were killed in Saipan. And today, 55 years later, teams of volunteers are still combing the region, searching for the bones of individuals who disappeared. It’s very important for the survivors to be able to identify their missing relatives. Thus far they have found less than half of the people. That would be a very depressing job, don’t you think? How much better to be involved in bringing life to bones that really can live—to people who can experience new life by virtue of the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

In verse 11 God says to Ezekiel, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.”

Have you ever felt cut off, dried up, or even hopeless?

Ezekiel 37:1-14 is a vision of hope. It’s a wonderful message that God’s Word and His Spirit can bring life to any situation and to any soul—no matter how utterly dead and hopeless it might be. Perhaps you remember the story where the dry, dead rod of Aaron came to life. After being placed in the ark of God overnight, it budded, flowered, and produced almonds (Numbers 17:8)! If God can make an old stick fruitful in His presence, He can do the same for us.

As a church, God can revive us and make us an army that will be part of His end-time remnant. Ezekiel 37:12-14 tells us that God’s people will be raised up and brought into the Promised Land. There will be a resurrection of the righteous someday soon, and we will ultimately live in that new earth in the New Jerusalem. But even before that, the Lord wants to raise up an army of Spirit-filled people who will expand His kingdom.

Some of us do a pretty good job of covering up our dry bones. Maybe our marriages are dry and barren. Or maybe there has been a loss of vitality in our family or work relationships. Some of us have bank accounts that are like dry bones. Others have health problems. Whatever the cause, the message in this study is that God can send new life to your dry bone situation. God can breathe vitality through His Spirit and through His Word into our lives. Pray for that revival today. 

## Amazing Facts Offers Books and Tapes on This Subject

### Reviving Dry Bones

Doug Batchelor’s sermon on video or audio tape.

**\$14.95 each video; \$3.00 each audio**

### When Days Are Dark

Book by G.R. Nash

**95 cents each**

### Riches of Grace

Book by Joe Crews

**75 cents each**

Add \$3.00 per order for shipping and handling.

California residents must add 7.25 percent sales tax.





# From the Inside

## Evangelism Team Accepts Pastorate After Two Years With Amazing Facts

Amazing Facts bids farewell to Evangelist Ray House and his family as they take on pastoral responsibilities at the Huntsville Central Church in northern Alabama.



Ray and Becky with their son, Joshua, joined Amazing Facts in the fall of 1998. Prior to that time, Ray had served as a pastor in Texas for 13 years. "One of

Ray's goals in working for Amazing Facts was to get evangelism experience that would help him as a pastor and church planter," says Gary Gibbs, the ministry's evangelism coordinator.

Having achieved these goals, Ray says he is returning to pastoral ministry with renewed vigor and an enriched perspective thanks to his experiences in full-time evangelism. He assumes his new responsibilities in Alabama on September 1.

## Attend Our Faith Summit Weekend January 12-14 in Orlando, Florida

Let Amazing Facts know by December 10 if you can attend a Faith Summit Weekend in Orlando, scheduled for the second weekend in January 2001. Doug and Karen Batchelor invite you to join them for this special event, which will feature uplifting sermons, inspiring testimonies, and soul-stirring music. Call 916-434-3880 to register or to request additional information.

## Amazing Facts College of Evangelism Draws 46 Students for First Semester

Of the nearly 600 people who requested information about the Amazing Facts College of Evangelism, 46 were able to enroll in the first session, which began August 6. They have come to northern California from 21 different states or provinces in North America.

The students meet each day at the Amazing Facts office headquarters in Rocklin. In addition to traditional lecture and discussion classes, the students spend 16 hours a week in the community for field work. For the next three months, the greater Sacramento area will serve as a laboratory of sorts in which students gain hands-on experience in soul-

winning. One major focus of the training to date has involved preparation for a series of evangelistic meetings. Pastor Doug Batchelor will begin the series October 6 at his home church in downtown Sacramento.

"We have a tremendous curriculum and an excellent teaching staff," said Gary Gibbs, director for the College of Evangelism. Full-time instructors include Doug Batchelor, Gary Gibbs, Annie Kjaer, Robb Long, and Jason Morgan. In addition, several guest instructors will come on-site to conduct training intensives in their areas of expertise. Dr. Herbert Douglas, a former college president, will teach on the gift of prophecy. Also, Mark Finley, speaker-director of the *It Is Written* telecast, will share from his many years of experience as a pastor and evangelist.

Following this first session, which ends on December 3, Amazing Facts will offer a two-week intensive mini-course that has been designed for individuals who are not able to enroll as full-time students in the College of Evangelism. This two-week course will be held January 14-27, 2001.

The registration deadline for the second semester session, which runs February 4-May 27, 2001, is October 13, 2000. Call 916-434-3880 extension 3011.

## Bible School Wishes to Thank Anonymous Donor of Gift Bibles

"Thank you, thank you, thank you," wrote Jimmie in gratitude for the gift Bible he received from Amazing Facts. "I've looked at it over and over again and am really learning as I go along!"

He was one of dozens of prisoners who benefited after an anonymous donor sent a box of Bibles earmarked for Bible School students who needed one. The supply of more than 30 Bibles was given in January and lasted until the first of June.

## Amazing Facts on Nationwide TV

### 3ABN, Dish Network, Sky Angel Service

#### 3ABN Digital Service, GE-4 @ 101 degrees west

- Sundays at 7 a.m. Pacific time/10 a.m. Eastern time
- Tuesdays at 1 a.m. Pacific time/4 a.m. Eastern time
- Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Pacific time/11 p.m. Eastern time
- Fridays at 1 a.m. Pacific time/4 a.m. Eastern time
- Fridays at 2 p.m. Pacific time/5 p.m. Eastern time
- Saturdays at 7 a.m. Pacific time/10 a.m. Eastern time

### Black Entertainment Television

- Wednesdays at 5 a.m. Pacific time/8 a.m. Eastern time

### CourtTV

- Sundays at 4 a.m. Pacific time/7 a.m. Eastern time

### Day Star (available on Spacenet 4, Channel 10)

- Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Pacific time/12:30 p.m. Eastern time

### Fox Family Channel

- Mondays at 6:30 a.m. Pacific time/7:30 a.m. Mountain time/5:30 a.m. Central time/6:30 a.m. Eastern time

### Inspirational Network

- Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Pacific time/1:30 p.m. Eastern time
- Wednesdays at 5:30 a.m. Pacific time/8:30 a.m. Eastern time

### KSBN (Safe TV)

- Sundays at 6:30 a.m. Pacific time/9:30 a.m. Eastern time
- Saturdays at 1 a.m. Pacific time/4 a.m. Eastern time
- Saturdays at 7 a.m. Pacific time/10 a.m. Eastern time
- Saturdays at 11 a.m. Pacific time/2 p.m. Eastern time
- Saturdays at 2 p.m. Pacific time/5 p.m. Eastern time

*Programming schedules are subject to change without notice.*



BY JUDY  
KJAER

# “It’s Like Coming Home”

## Woman Discovers Why God Led Her to Roanoke, Va.

**W**e met Anna Abdulah at our seminar in Roanoke, Va. Two years prior to that meeting, Anna had been diagnosed with breast cancer and fibroid tumors. She was told that one of the tumors had burst. Upon learning she would need two different surgeries, Anna placed her life in God’s hands, saying, “Lord, if it’s over, I’m ready to come home. Whatever You do, it’s okay with me.”

Both surgeries were successful, and Anna gratefully committed her life fully to God.

Anna’s prayer life changed after she had made that total commitment to God. She began to ask Him to lead her, guide her, teach her, send her—and promised that she would go. Then she received one of our seminar brochures in the mail. Her close friend, Rebecca, also received a brochure and promptly phoned Anna.

“Do you know anything about this seminar?” Rebecca asked.

“No, not really,” Anna replied, “but I’m not going.”

“Me neither,” said Rebecca. “What did you do with your brochure?”

“I threw it in the trash,” Anna told her, “because that’s what I think it is.”

“Well, I’m going to throw mine in the trash too,” her friend agreed.

A few days later, one of the deacons from Anna’s church came to her home to set up a computer she had just purchased. Anna was shocked when he began to talk about the Amazing Facts prophecy seminar.

“Did you hear about the seminar?” the deacon asked Anna.

“Yeah,” she replied.

“The pastor and I went last night,” he told her.

“You did?” she asked in surprise.

“Oh, it’s dynamite!” he exclaimed.

Anna immediately called Rebecca and told her, “The pastor and the deacon went to the seminar. We gotta go!”

“What?” Rebecca asked in astonishment. “They went?”

“Yeah, girl,” Anna affirmed, “and I’m going tonight!”

That night at the seminar, Amazing Facts Evangelist Kim Kjaer presented the Bible Sabbath, and Anna knew the Lord was speaking to her. Anna’s mother, now 90 years old, has been a Sabbathkeeping Holiness minister for more than 50 years.

“I grew up keeping God’s Sabbath and His commandments,” Anna explained, “but when I became a teenager, I figured I knew more than she knew, as most teenagers do. Everybody else was going to church on Sunday, and I thought, ‘This lady has lost her mind. She’s going on Saturday, while everybody else is going on Sunday.’”

“So I left, and I joined a Sunday church. But you know how you can feel that something is missing? Even though I enjoyed being with the Lord, it just seemed as though something was not right. Then, when Brother Kjaer taught the seventh-day Sabbath, I got so excited! I called my mother and said, ‘I found out something today. You were right all those years, and I was wrong.’ Mom was ecstatic.”

On her third night at the seminar, Anna decided what she was going to do. She would return to keeping God’s Sabbath holy. Not only did she keep going to the meetings, but she also read our literature, looking up each reference in the Bible. She thanked God for leading and guiding her, and for sending Brother Kjaer to teach this beautiful Bible truth.

One night during the seminar, decision cards were distributed so people could make a tangible commit-

Photos by Judy Kjaer



After Anna Abdulah moved to Roanoke, Va., her family begged her to move back to Philadelphia, but she felt certain that she needed to stay. After she was baptized during Evangelist Kim Kjaer’s seminar, she told him: “Had I gone back home, I would have missed meeting you. I would have missed your message, and I would have missed what God wants me to do with my life!”




nessing His intervention in her life. Anna was among those who were baptized at the end of our Roanoke meeting.

"I've had a lot of turmoil in my life," she confided. "It's been a hard road. All of my family is in Philadelphia, but I was convinced God had me here [in Roanoke] for a purpose, and I would not go back. My children stopped talking to me for about a year because I wouldn't go back to Philadelphia.

"I knew God had me here for a purpose, and now I know why. Had I gone back home, I would have missed meeting you. I would have missed your message, and I would have missed what God wants me to do with my life!"

Thrilled with all that she is learning, Anna said that going to Sabbath School in the morning "is like coming home." She loves being able to get up early on Sabbath mornings and then go to class and learn new truths. She added, "I went home yesterday and was doing my homework, and I said, 'Oh God, thank You. Thank You for bringing me home.'"

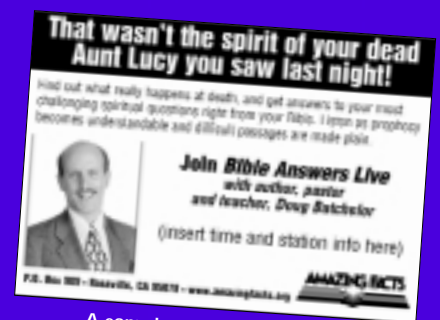
Like a shepherd seeking His lost sheep, God is seeking those who will hear His voice and follow it, and He is calling them from every nation and people. One day very soon Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, will return and take us all back with Him to heaven. There we'll feel right at home, and we'll thank Him and praise Him for all eternity. What a glorious homecoming that will be! 

ment to obey God in whatever He was asking them to do. Anna said that as soon as those cards were handed out, she knew that the Lord had brought her to the right place. The next night she took off all of her jewelry, which was uncharacteristic because Anna had always loved the world of beauty and fashion. She'd even become a cosmetologist. But on that night, she simply packed it all in a box and shoved it into a drawer. Weeks later she told us, "I kept thinking, 'This is not me, this has got to be the Lord,' because I am a jewelry person and always have been. ... [But] I don't feel like I've lost anything. I'm grateful."

We are grateful, too, that God was working in Anna's heart and that He gave us the privilege of wit-

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A sample of one of 8 available ads.

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Pastors Dick Devitt and Doug Batchelor present *Bible Answers Live* every Sunday night beginning at 7 p.m. Pacific time.







BY EDITOR  
DEBRA J. HICKS

# Faith at Work

## Store Owner Shares Jesus' Love With His Customers

It doesn't take long for Donald Smith's customers to figure out that he is a Christian. A Bible text appears on the store window beside a bold yellow newspaper-type stand containing religious material. Inside the store, a bookcase displays magazines and some pocket-sized books from *Amazing Facts*. A framed picture of Jesus hangs in the hallway.

It's the kind of stuff a person would expect to see in a Christian bookstore, which is precisely why some of Donald's customers appear to be caught off guard the first time they step into his store. After all, it's not exactly the kind of place you'd expect to see religion on display.

The business he owns is a tanning salon called TanFastics.

Donald set up shop in Ashland, Ore., 15 years ago and later experienced a revival in his Christian experience. Although "fired up" and eager to share the gospel with others, he wasn't sure exactly what God wanted him to do.

One restless night he tuned to a religious television network and heard a woman who owned a hamburger joint telling how God works through her business. She explained that each day she posts a Bible question on the wall and then offers a free hot fudge sundae to customers who answer it correctly.

"Oh," Donald said aloud to God. "I see what You want me to do." Almost immediately he fell back asleep.

That same week Donald began offering a free tan to anyone who could answer the Bible trivia question on display in his salon. If customers ask for help, he



Tamme Marschall's enthusiasm for Bible truth has been a great source of joy for Donald Smith. She was especially excited to learn about the Sabbath after reading free books she picked up at the tanning salon. An avid reader, Tamme has devoured Jim Pinkoski's books (pictured above) and *The Great Controversy*. She also listens to *Amazing Facts* tapes while tanning and is currently studying for baptism. The Bible was really new to her at first, but now she exults over knowing where to find some of the smaller books of the Bible, like Jude. "It drove me crazy wondering where it was!" she exclaimed.

hands them a Bible and says, "The answer is between chapters 1 and 4." That way they end up reading through several chapters rather than looking up a single verse. He doesn't try to disguise the fact that his primary objective is to get people in the habit of reading God's Word.

While at camp meeting one summer, the Lord impressed Donald to buy a set of audio tapes recorded by an inspiring minister and to share them with people back at home. The first thing he did was to wire each room in the tanning salon so his customers could listen to the tapes through headsets while they tanned.

His tape collection was small at first, but it grew over time. When he was introduced to *Amazing Facts* and heard some sermons by Pastor Doug Batchelor, Donald immediately said, "I have to get his tapes."

At first he bought them for himself. "I really identified with Doug because I'd been down some of the same roads," Donald explained. He spent many years away from the church, dabbling in drugs and other worldly pursuits before returning to God.

Soon, however, he was buying the tapes in large quantities because so many of his customers were listening to them. "Basically everybody wants to listen to Doug," says Donald. "I order everything of his I can get." Today he has multiple stacks of sermon

Photos courtesy of Donald Smith



Christian businessman Donald Smith often offers his customers free Bibles and *Amazing Facts* lessons.

tapes on a rack behind his desk at TanFastics. The titles range from "The Red Rope of Rahab," preached in January 1995, to Pastor Batchelor's most recent "gift of the month" tape, which goes to anyone who sends a donation to Amazing Facts.

In addition to cassette tapes, Donald also offers people Bibles, video tapes, and some of the small sharing booklets produced by Amazing Facts. He says he has replaced his copy of *The Richest Caveman*, Doug Batchelor's autobiography, nearly 10 times because it keeps disappearing. "I don't mind buying them again," he says. "I just hope they keep getting passed around and don't simply sit on a shelf somewhere."

Many of the salon's customers are college students who attend Southern Oregon University. A young man named Justin really likes to tan but doesn't have much money, so he regularly takes advantage of Donald's free-tan plans. Most recently he started going through the Amazing Facts Storacles of Prophecy series, which includes 24 lessons on a wide array of Bible topics. For every summary sheet Justin completes, Donald gives him one free tanning session.

The time Justin has spent reading the Bible has not been without effect. One day Justin came into TanFastics looking exceptionally great. Donald quickly realized what was different. Normally Justin wears a pin in his tongue and three earrings in each ear, but on this day they were missing. "The Lord is working on him," Donald silently observed.

Justin also accepted Donald's invitation to attend a Revelation seminar series in nearby Medford. His growing interest in spiritual things has captured the attention of both his friends and his parents, but unfortunately they have not been supportive. "Every time Justin wants to come to church on Sabbath," says Donald, "his relatives get mad."

Perhaps one of the most valuable lessons Donald has learned is to wait on God's timing. He said there have been times when a customer asked about the stacks of tapes behind his desk but he sensed the Lord saying, "Don't talk yet; they're not ready for them."

At other times, however, the door of opportunity opens wide and God will provide ample time for Donald to talk with someone without experiencing any interruptions.

Not too long ago a young man with bleached hair entered TanFastics while Donald was cleaning some of the tanning beds. He was acting very strange and noticeably edgy, which in turn made Donald wonder if the young man might try to rob him.

Finally, when no one else was in the waiting room, the nervous youth whispered, "I think I'm in the wrong place. Do you know where there is a head shop?"

Donald replied, "Well, maybe years ago, but since I found the Lord I don't need that anymore."

At that, the young man began to open up. He told how he had been wandering throughout the state of Oregon for several weeks and had suddenly felt impressed to stop at TanFastics.

Donald shot a quick prayer heavenward, pleading for wisdom to know what to say next. He could relate to the young man's story about drug abuse, so they talked for over an hour. Not a single person entered the shop, and the phone didn't ring once.

When the youth confided that he had a problem with homosexuality, the Lord said to Donald, "Pray with him."

"I don't want to pray with him," Donald silently protested. But before long he obeyed, grabbed the young man by the hands, and started to pray. He also told him that if he got down to Sacramento, he should stop in at Doug Batchelor's church.


Before they parted, Donald gave him a Bible and told him, "If you need to come back, come back. And if you need to go someplace else, may the Lord lead you."

Although he hasn't seen him since, Donald continues to pray for him each day.

As with any form of witnessing, Donald's ministry at the tanning salon is filled with ups and downs. "On some days you feel really good," he says, "and on other days you feel really sad because someone has stopped [studying] or turned away. Some people have gotten very angry with me. That is when I've got to be reminded that Jesus spoke to a lot of people, but very few accepted His teachings."

The thing that keeps Donald going and makes him most excited is to see a person get all fired up for the Lord as a result of what they hear or study. His greatest reward is to see a sparkle in the eyes of somebody who has just entered a "first love" experience with Jesus.

Donald says he has no idea how many free tans he has given away for the sake of the gospel. "Hundreds and hundreds" is his best estimate. But he hastens to add that business has never suffered. "I get so busy here," he remarked. "The Lord is keeping the doors open, and hopefully He will continue to keep them open."

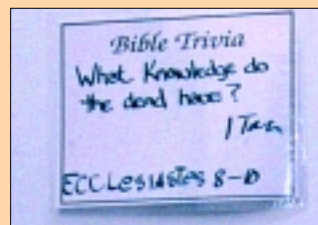
"It's up to Him," he added. "This is His shop, not mine." 



TanFastics in Ashland, Ore., serves not only as a five-bed tanning salon, but also as a thriving ministry headquarters.



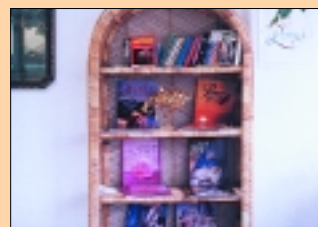
Justin Smith is a regular customer who completed an entire Bible study series in order to receive free tans.



Finding the correct answer to a Bible trivia question posted in the store entitles salon customers to one free tan.



Rebecca Brinegar holds the free Bible and a set of Amazing Facts lessons she has been studying as a result of getting to know Donald Smith at TanFastics.



A bookcase inside the store lobby displays a wealth of free religious reading material, including Amazing Facts magazines and pocket-size books for sharing.

# Meet Amazing Facts



Doug  
Batchelor



Rich  
Cavaness



Steve  
DeLong



Lowell  
Hargreaves



Kim  
Kjaer



Jack  
Pefley



John  
Quade



John  
Bradshaw



Byron  
Corbett



Gary  
Gibbs



Jaime  
Jorge



Brian  
McMahon



Dennis  
Priebe



John  
Silvestri



Verne  
Snow

## Doug Batchelor

**October 6-November 11**  
Millennium of Prophecy Sacramento series  
Sacramento Central Church  
6045 Camellia Avenue  
Sacramento, California

## John Bradshaw

**September 9-October 14**  
Bordeaux Church  
5121 Buena Vista Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee

**October 21-November 25**  
Columbia Missouri Church  
1100 College Park Drive  
Columbia, Missouri

## Rich Cavaness

**September 9-October 7**  
Harrisburg Church  
424 N. Progress Avenue  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

**October 20-November 19**  
Owatonna Church  
2373 7th Avenue NE  
Owatonna, Minnesota

## Byron Corbett

**September 9-October 11**  
Baton Rouge Church  
4455 Jones Creek Road  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

**October 14-November 19**  
Bellingham Church  
910 N. Forest Street  
Bellingham, Washington

## Steve DeLong

**September 9-October 14**  
Charleston Church  
622 Kanawha Boulevard W.  
Charleston, West Virginia

**October 21-November 25**  
Perry Traditional Academy  
3875 Perrysville Road  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

## Jaime Jorge

**September 2 at 7 p.m.**  
Willowdale Church  
535 Finch Avenue W  
Willowdale, Ontario

**September 6 at 7:30 p.m.**  
Apple Creek Church  
700 Apple Creek Boulevard  
Markham, Ontario

**September 14**  
Charleston Church  
622 Kanawha Boulevard W.  
Charleston, West Virginia

**September 23 at 3:30 p.m.**  
La Voz De La Esperanza  
Festival of Faith and Global Mission  
Berean Church  
291 Holmes Drive NW  
Atlanta, Georgia

**September 24**  
Hutchinson Church  
1302 N. Severance  
Hutchinson, Kansas

**September 30**  
Adventist Review Magazine Rally & Concert  
Riverdale Baptist Church  
1177 Largo Road  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland



*You are invited to meet the members of our Amazing Facts team at any one of the following locations. This schedule is subject to change without notice, so please call Amazing Facts to confirm appointments or to request more information.*

## Lowell Hargreaves

### September 9- October 7

Harrison Church  
Highway 392 W.  
Harrison, Arkansas

### October 21-November 19

Savannah Church  
306 Harbert Drive  
Savannah, Tennessee

## Dennis Priebe

### September 22-23

Deer Park Church  
809 S. Colville  
Deer Park, Washington

### September 30

Inchelium Church  
5184 Kettle Fall Road  
Inchelium, Washington

## Kim Kjaer

### September 9-October 14

Pewee Valley Church  
103 Lagrange Road  
Pewee Valley, Kentucky

### October 21-November 25

Raleigh Church  
4815 Dillard Drive  
Raleigh, North Carolina

## John Quade

### September 9-October 7

Lakewood Link Recreational Center  
1295 Reed Street  
Lakewood, Colorado

### October 20-November 19

Ramada Convention Center  
1100 VanDiver Drive  
Columbia, Missouri

## Brian McMahon

### August 4-September 7

Milwaukee Citywide Meetings  
Waukesha County Exposition Center  
1000 Northview Road  
Waukesha, Wisconsin

### September 29-November 4

Vancouver Church  
1207 E. Reserve Street  
Vancouver, Washington

## John Silvestri

### August 25-26

Myrtle Creek Church  
Community Services Center  
325 Spruce Street  
Myrtle Creek, Oregon

## Verne Snow

### September 9-October 14

Grasonville Church  
Grasonville Medical Center Drive  
Grasonville, Maryland

## Jack Pefley

### September 8-October 7

St. George Company  
188 E. 300 Street S.  
St. George, Utah

### October 20-November 17

The Oasis Group  
Pahrump, Nevada

### October 27-Dec 22

Brainerd Church  
2822 East Oak Street  
Brainerd, Minnesota



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Gary Gibbs, AFCOE Director

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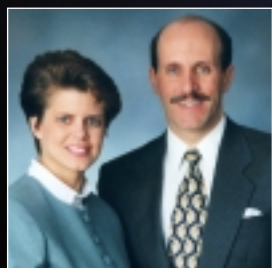
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John Lomacang  
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