

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

ACTIVATED

Vol 1 • Issue 2

NAVIGATING LIFE

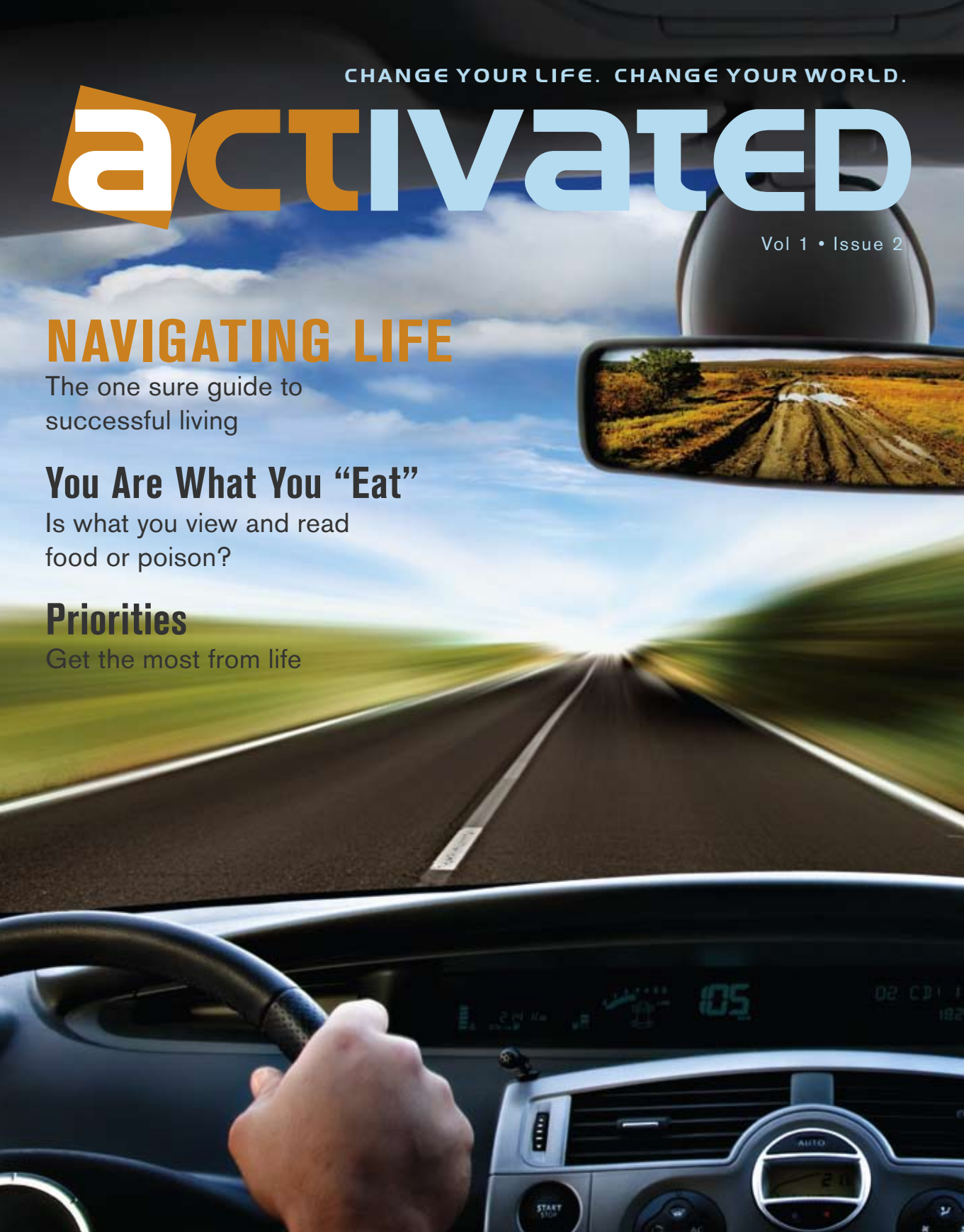
The one sure guide to
successful living

You Are What You “Eat”

Is what you view and read
food or poison?

Priorities

Get the most from life





PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Genuine, lasting friendship is built on communication. You know how it is with a close friend—you share your thoughts, they understand you, you understand them. That's how Jesus wants to be with us. He wants our close friendship, not merely a distant relationship. And for that friendship to grow, communication is essential. Directing our thoughts and needs to Jesus in prayer is one side of this communication; hearing from Him is the other. He reveals His thoughts to us through His Word—both the recorded Word in the Bible and the living Word that He speaks to our hearts when we listen to Him while praying.

His words to us are a precious gift of His love and a special token of His friendship. They are not only for our information and instruction, but they are also an invaluable reservoir of courage, strength, faith, hope, and life. If ever you're feeling depressed or confused or just plain weary, nothing lifts your spirit like taking a few minutes to read a couple of Psalms or a chapter from the Gospels or a Christian publication based on the Scriptures.

We hope that this issue of *Activated* will encourage you to build a closer relationship with Jesus by spending more time with Him and reading more from His Word.

Don't miss "From Jesus with Love" on the back cover of this magazine. It's a beautiful personal message from Jesus to you. May God bless and keep you!

Keith Phillips
For *Activated*

PS We welcome your comments about *Activated*, and look forward to hearing from you!

Browse our website or contact one of the distributors below to enjoy the inspirational, motivational, and practical help offered in our books and audiovisual material.

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The big rocks

AN EXPERT ON the subject of time management was speaking to a group of business students. He stood in front of these high-powered overachievers, pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouthed Mason jar, and set it on a table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, “Is this jar full?”

Everyone in the class said, “Yes.”

Then he said, “Really?” He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar, causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. Then he asked the group once more, “Is the jar full?”

By this time the class was on to him. “Probably not,” one of them answered.

“Good!” he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in and it went into all the spaces

left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, “Is this jar full?”

“No!” the class shouted.

Once again he said, “Good!” Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim.

Then he looked up at the class and asked, “What is the point of this illustration?”

One eager beaver raised his hand and said, “The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things into it!”

“No,” the speaker replied, “that’s not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is this: If you don’t put the big rocks in first, you’ll never get them in at all.”

What are the “big rocks” in your life? Are you putting them in first? ☞

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, “Is this jar full?”



PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Jesus, sometimes I get all wound up and worried, but when I stop and give my problems to You to work out, You always do—starting with me. You remind me that everything’s under Your control, that You’re right here with me to help, and that nothing is too hard for You. You take everything so calmly and approach every

problem so positively that my worries and fears just melt away. You replace them with faith and trust in You, and that makes all the difference in the world!

I need Your help again, Jesus. I give my latest batch of worries to You, and receive Your perfect peace in exchange. Thank You, Jesus! ☞



Navigating Life

THE ONE SURE GUIDE
TO SUCCESSFUL LIVING

IF YOU WERE going on a long voyage, you would bring along a navigational chart, wouldn't you? Well, you *are* on a long voyage—life—and the One who knows the way has instructed some of His men to draw a detailed chart to help you make it safely to your final destination. To say you don't have time to read God's chart, the Bible, is like a sailor heading out to sea and saying, "Well, I'm in such a hurry to get where I'm going that I don't have time to look at the nautical chart!" But if you'll take the Bible and simply read it, believe it, and follow it, you will be on the right course and wind up at the right place.

THE MOST AMAZING BOOK

The Bible is the most marvelous book in the whole world. It not only tells us where we're going, but also how we got here, why we're here, how to survive and be happy while here, and how to have love, happiness, joy, and peace forever.

Yet so many people today ignore the Bible completely. Even many of those who have been through years of higher education and have read hundreds and hundreds of books of all kinds have never read the most fascinating book of all, the Bible.

In the Bible you can find almost anything: drama, romance, poetry, prophecy, history, mystery, and much more. But most important, the Bible contains the very Spirit and life of God Himself.¹ It's the means by which God activates us with His life, light, and power.

IT WORKS!

A skeptic and a Christian were discussing whether the Bible was truly a divinely inspired book. The skeptic was convinced that since no one had ever seen God and there was no scientific proof of His

¹John 4:24; 6:63

existence, how could anyone believe the Bible was truly inspired by Him?

“Is the compiler of the multiplication table known?” the Christian asked.

“No.”

“Then of course you do not believe in it.”

“Oh, yes, I believe in it because it works,” replied the skeptic.

“So does the Bible.”

The fact that the Bible has the power to effect positive change in each of our lives, no matter what our situation or need, is the greatest proof that the Bible is the supernatural Word of God Himself. As you read the Bible you will find that it is an absolutely inexhaustible source of wisdom and knowledge, out of which you will constantly find treasures new and old.²

And the most wonderful thing about the Bible is that through its words we can get to know its author, for the Bible is God’s great love letter to us. Its life-giving words make it the greatest book in the world, with the only author in the world who can guarantee life and love and happiness and Heaven forever through simply reading it and believing in its main character, the One who loved us so much that He gave His own life to save us—Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

If you sincerely pray, “Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things from Your Word,”³ you won’t be disappointed.

SOUL FOOD

Jesus said, “The Words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”⁴ They give us spiritual life and nourishment and strength and health, which is why a good, wholesome, balanced diet of God’s Word is essential. Just like you have to eat in order to have physical strength, you have to feed on the Word to have spiritual strength.

The Bible tells us that like newborn babies desire to be fed, we should desire the pure milk of the Word, so we may grow thereby.⁵ Like a baby needs milk to be healthy and grow or even survive, you must be fed spiritually in order to stay healthy

and grow spiritually. And just like a baby has an instinctive and irrepressible desire to be fed, so we should hunger for the pure milk of God’s Word.

The prophet Jeremiah said, “Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.”⁶ Job said, “I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”⁷

There’s nothing more important to your spiritual life than the Word!

WORD TIME

In Luke, chapter 10, we read the story of Mary and Martha. When Jesus came to visit, Mary “sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word,” but Martha was too busy trying to be a good hostess. She tried so hard to get everything done just right for Jesus that she didn’t have time to listen to Him. So Jesus gently scolded her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”⁸ What is the “good part” that Mary chose?—The Word. She sat at Jesus’ feet and listened to His words.

“But,” you say, “I’ve got so much work and so many other things to do. How am I ever going to find time to read the Word every day?” Well, if you put the Word first, the Lord will always help you find the time to take care of those other things. When you see the difference it makes in your life, you’ll wonder how you ever got by without it! ❀

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GOD’S WORD AND HOW TO APPLY IT TO YOUR LIFE TODAY, ORDER THE BOOKLET *UNDERSTANDING GOD’S WORD* FROM ONE OF THE ADDRESSES ON PAGE 2 OF THIS MAGAZINE.)

²Matthew 13:52

³Psalms 119:18

⁴John 6:63

⁵1 Peter 2:2

⁶Jeremiah 15:16

⁷Job 23:12

⁸Luke 10:41–42

PRIORITIES

BY MARIA FONTAINE



If today was your last day and you knew it, how much time would you spend on things that mean nothing in the scope of eternity?

Your minutes would be extremely valuable, and you would choose to spend them on the things that were most important to you. The things of the world would seem pointless—almost offensive to your spirit. You would want to love those dearest to you, and to make sure they know how much they mean to you. You would be righting any wrongs and working out anything that had come between you. If you have ever come face to face with death or been with a loved one through a life-threatening illness and seen their priorities realign, you understand this. Everything becomes abundantly clear in those moments. The only thing that matters is love.

Our souls receive personality from God. They are designed to be filled by Him. The danger for us all comes when we crowd them full of our own petty ambitions and our shortsighted ideas of fulfillment and leave no room for the work that must be done in us.—William Kirk Kilpatrick

In good times and rough times, the happiness and joy that Jesus can give you is light years beyond anything that the world can offer. Fulfillment, peace, love, satisfaction, knowledge, truth—there is no way that the world can compete with Him in those areas. It takes discipline of mind and body to learn to treasure those things above the fleeting pleasures that the world has to offer. It's a matter of satisfying your heart and mind more than your five senses. When it comes down to it, that's really all the world can give you—temporary satisfaction of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches. But beyond those things, nothing the world has can satisfy the other cravings in your soul. Only Jesus can really satisfy. He is the answer. But as long as you're still looking for the things of this world to satisfy and make you happy, you won't find the truth.¹ ✨

¹1 John 2:15–17



Daily Word

YOUR NEW LIFE OF LOVE

ONE OF the very best habits you can ever form is that of spending a little time each day reading and studying the Bible and Bible-based Christian literature. Start by devoting 15 minutes a day, and then increase it to 30 minutes or more as time goes on. As you read God's Word and try to follow it, your life will become deeper, you'll be happier and have more peace of mind, and you'll have more love for and understanding of others. It doesn't all happen in one day, but it does happen.

Having an ongoing reading project—reading through all four Gospels or the New Testament or the Book of Psalms, for example—will help you get the most out of your daily Word time. One idea of a daily study plan that offers some variety is as follows:

Daily Dose for Optimum Growth

- One chapter from the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).
- One chapter from Psalms.
- Half a chapter from Proverbs.
- One page from the *Daily Might*, *From Jesus with Love*, or part of a section from *Discovering Truth*.

When reading through the Bible, pray for the Holy Spirit to help you understand what you read, but don't worry if you don't understand everything the first time you read it; no one does. Keep at it. The more you read the Word, the more you will understand, and often when going back to reread a certain passage, you'll find new meanings and "treasures" that you hadn't noticed before.

In order to help you understand the amazing truths in God's Word and get the most out of it, we've put together some

books and booklets that cover the various aspects of Christian life. The object of these publications is to help you know how to apply God's Word in practical ways, as well as to help you develop a more personal relationship with Him so you will be better equipped to face the ups and downs of life. Books available include *Daily Might*, *Discovering Truth: A Topical Bible Guide*, *From Jesus With Love*, and the *Get Activated* series, among others. (You can order these from one of the addresses on page 2 of this magazine.) ✂

With all that's been said in this issue of *Activated* about the importance of reading God's Word, you've probably come to the conclusion that you'd better get a Bible of your own if you don't already have one. But that raises an important question: What version of the Bible is best? Here's our recommendation:

The King James Version (also called the Authorized Version) is considered by a great many to be the most accurate, the most inspired, the most fundamental, the most poetic, and the most authoritative English translation. It is also the most well-known and widely recognized, having been around for 400 years. One drawback is that it's written in seventeenth-century Elizabethan English, which some people find rather difficult to understand.

The next best English translation is probably the New King James Version. It's based on the original King James Version, but the antiquated words and punctuation have been changed to modern English. (For that reason, this is the version usually quoted in *Activated*.)

Other translations are generally not as inspired nor as true to the original Hebrew and Greek texts, and some modern versions have serious flaws. It's best to stick with the version which has been the standard for hundreds of years! ✂



YOU ARE WHAT YOU “EAT”

BASED ON THE WRITINGS OF DAVID BRANDT BERG

SOMEBODY ONCE SAID, “You are what you read.” It’s like the saying about health, “You are what you eat,” physically. Well, you are what you read, mentally and spiritually. And the same is true of movies, TV, music, and other forms of input, like the Internet and computer games. Tell me what kind of input someone enjoys most, and I can usually tell what that person’s spiritual condition is like.

God created people with a spiritual hunger for truth—insights and ideas that will feed their souls, bring them closer to Him by helping them better understand Him and His loving ways, and inspire them to live better lives. But sad to say, a lot of people today have developed perverted spiritual appetites through reading and viewing the wrong kinds of things, similar to what happens when people develop an appetite for junk food and sweets, and lose their appetite for good wholesome food.

It reminds me of the following verses from the Bible: “Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what

does not satisfy? Eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance,”¹ and, “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life.”²

The portrayal of attitudes and actions that are contrary to the way God wants us to think and

TELL ME WHAT KIND OF INPUT
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act really does have an effect on people, whether they like to admit that or not. Filling their

¹Isaiah 55:2

²John 6:27

minds and hearts with lies and half-truths will eat away at their spirits, even if they are only reading or viewing for relaxation or entertainment. Multiply that effect a few million times, and it has the same bad effect on society. The world today is proof of that!

DISCERN AND DISCRIMINATE

Everything that you take into your mind affects your spirit. Movies, music, books, newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, and the Internet are all mediums for conveying a message, and that message is either inspired by God and in

EVERYTHING THAT YOU TAKE INTO YOUR MIND AFFECTS YOUR SPIRIT

line with His Word, or it's not.

Much of what's out there today is what the Bible calls "cunningly devised fables"³—cunningly inspired not by God, but by the dark side to deceive people, lead them astray, and numb them spiritually to where they no longer know what is true or right.

Reading the wrong kind of books or watching the wrong kind of movies does not make people wise. It leaves them dumber and more confused and further from the truth than ever. The wisdom of this world is absolute foolishness to God.⁴

People eat junk food because it *looks* like food and is tasty, but

enough of it will eventually kill them. That's why it's so dangerous—because it's so deceptive. And the same is true of junk reading and viewing.

The Devil is a liar and the father of lies.⁵ And let me tell you, his lies are very clever! Part of what he says is always true, because he couldn't get people to believe his lies unless he told some truth along with them. He mixes in little truths, like he did with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. When he tempted them to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he told them, "You will be like God."⁶ What a tempting truth that was—and they swallowed it!⁷

HOW ABOUT YOU?

It is not wrong to sometimes read or watch for relaxation, but if you aren't choosy about what input you receive, if you don't guard yourself against ungodly input, it will be more draining to your spirit than beneficial. "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."⁸

Even books and movies and other things that are mostly good can influence you adversely if you don't make a conscious effort to focus on

the positive and reject the negative, either during or after your reading or viewing. The Bible says to "eschew [abstain from] evil, and do good"⁹—a verse that applies not only to what we do, but also what we take in, since that will ultimately affect our actions.

You also need to make sure you're getting filled up with the truth of God's Word to counteract any bad influences that whatever else you've been reading or watching may have on you. "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."¹⁰

There is a saying about prayer: "You believe in prayer as much as you pray." I would say the same about God's Word and worldly input: You believe the Word as much as you read it, or you believe in that other stuff as much as you take it in. I hope that you are getting *good* spiritual food, because your spiritual health and happiness depend on it. You *are* what you take in! ✨

³2 Peter 1:16

⁴1 Corinthians 3:19

⁵John 8:44

⁶Genesis 3:5

⁷Genesis 3:6

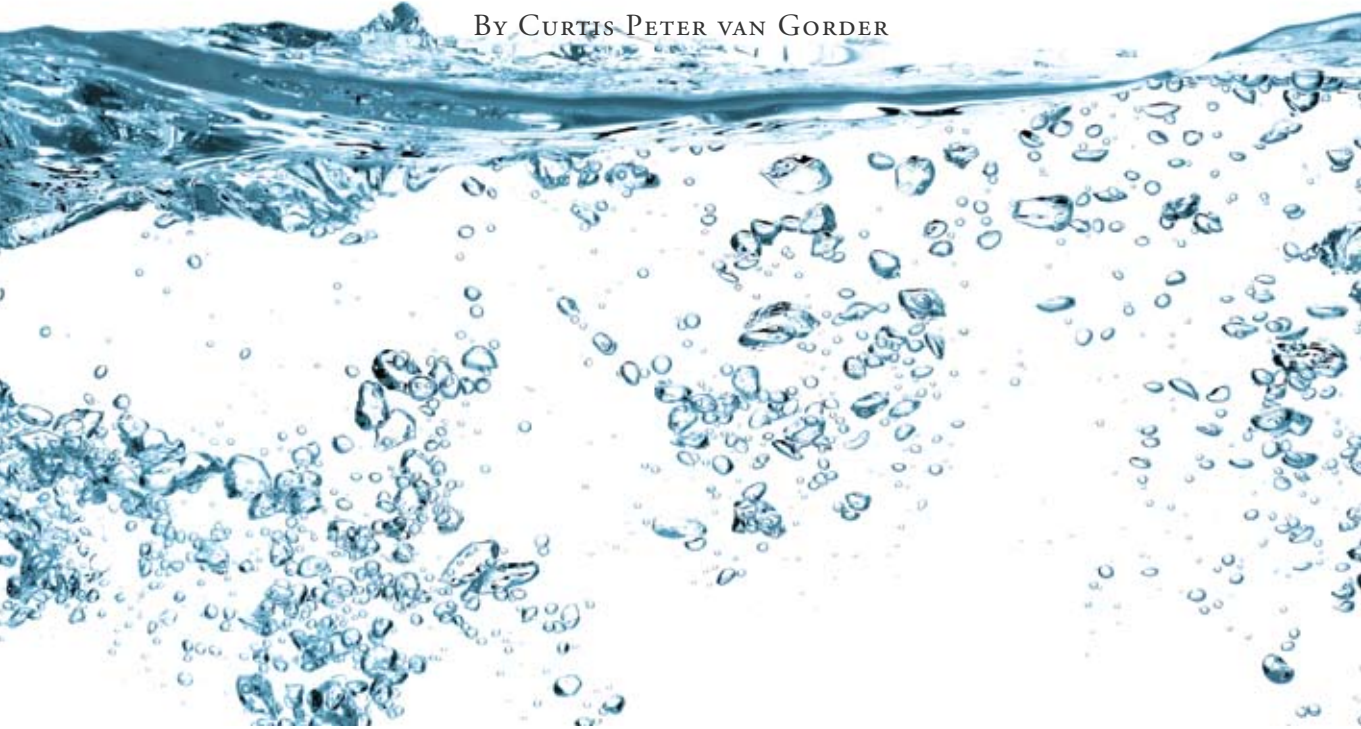
⁸Philippians 4:8

⁹1 Peter 3:11, KJV

¹⁰Proverbs 4:23

Let It Flow

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER



I was in India, a few days
before the monsoon
season arrived ...

Everyone in India looks forward to the monsoon. You can read predictions of its arrival and follow its daily progress around the country in the newspapers. The heavy rains clean the dirt that has accumulated over the months. The rains also help to cool things down. Without them, not much will grow. The monsoon is India's lifeblood.

In anticipation of the rains, many trees are trimmed back and drains are cleaned. Until it is collected, all along the roadside next to the drains lies all manner of trash, much of it decomposed into a sort of black goo.

I asked my daughter, who lives there, why they did this, and she explained, "They trim the trees to

prevent any weak branches from breaking off and falling on power lines or causing other damage, and they clear the drains so the rainwater will flow freely. It's not enough to clear the drains and just pile the trash on the side of the road, though. If the monsoon were to hit before trucks arrived to cart the trash away, it would either be washed back down the drains and clog them again, or be washed elsewhere. Either way, it would contribute to the monsoon flooding and carry all kinds of germs with it, creating a lot of problems."

In our spiritual lives, we have to do much the same thing. We have to get rid of any obstructions that drag us down or hinder our spiritual growth—the things that keep God's cleansing, renewing Spirit from flowing freely through us.

This "trash" in our lives could be anything that has come between the Lord and us. For example, it could be a grievance we have against someone—a "root of bitterness," like the Bible warns against,

which will eat away at us if we don't recognize it and make amends with the person we feel has wronged us.¹ Or it could be materialistic "thorns and weeds" that choke out our love for the Lord and others—the "cares of this life," which Jesus warned against.² Or it could be our own pride—an exaggerated feeling of self-importance or self-reliance that hinders our link with the Lord through prayer and causes us to miss out on some of the blessings He has for us.

If not thoroughly removed, these obstacles will weaken us. They will also spill out and infect others. It is really worth our while to first of all identify what it is that is blocking the flow of God's Spirit to ours, and then to get rid of those hindrances before they can do any more damage.

There is victory to be had! Let's ask God today to show us what could be hindering us spiritually, and then go to work to clear away the trash in our hearts so the fresh, clean waters of His Spirit and Word can flow freely. As we do our part, God will do His and we will experience Him working more fully in our lives, we will receive more of His blessings, and we will go on to become all He wants us to be and knows we can be. ✨

If you haven't yet met the Man who has power to forgive the past, transform the present, brighten the future, and grant heavenly happiness forever, you can right now. Jesus promises all that if you will sincerely pray the following prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank You for dying for me so I can have eternal life. Please forgive me for every wrong and unloving thing I have ever done. Please come into my heart, give me Your gift of eternal life, and help me to know Your love and peace. Thank You for hearing and answering this prayer and for being with me always, from this moment on. Amen.

¹Hebrews 12:15

²Matthew 13:22

³John 15:4

⁴John 15:5-6

⁵John 15:5

⁶John 15:8



“ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU.”³

IN THE BEAUTIFUL 15th chapter of John, Jesus says, “I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.”⁴ If ever you, as a branch, don't abide in the Vine, Christ—if you don't abide in His love and His Word—then you will become unfruitful and withered, and you will be pruned from the tree as a dead branch. You won't lose your salvation, but you will be cast aside as being no longer useful to God and His kingdom.

Without the flow of God's Spirit there is no life. You must be firmly attached to the Vine where you're receiving the spiritual sap and life and nourishment that you need directly from the Lord Himself. A lot of how you grow is up to you and how much nourishment you receive, so don't cut yourself off from the Vine.

Jesus said, “Without Me you can do nothing.”⁵ But if you are dwelling in the Vine, as one of the branches, then you can produce beautiful leaves and beautiful fruit so that He and the Father may be glorified and have much fruit.⁶ ✨

Answers from God

For all the negative things we say to ourselves, God has given us His positive responses in the Bible.

You say, "It's impossible."

God says, "All things are possible with Me" (Matthew 19:26).

You say, "I'm so tired."

God says, "I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28–30).

You say, "Nobody really loves me."

God says, "I love you" (John 3:16 and 13:34).

You say, "I can't go on."

God says, "My grace is sufficient and I will always be there to help you" (2 Corinthians 12:9 and Psalm 91:15).

You say, "I can't figure things out."

God says, "I will direct your steps" (Proverbs 3:5–6).

You say, "I can't do this."

God says, "You don't have to do it.—I will" (2 Chronicles 20:17).

You say, "It's not worth it."

God says, "It will be worth it" (Romans 8:18).

You say, "I can't forgive myself."

God says, "I forgive you" (1 John 1:9 and Romans 8:1).

You say, "I can't manage."

God says, "I will supply all your needs" (Philippians 4:19).

You say, "I'm not able."

God says, "You can do it with My help" (Philippians 4:13 and 2 Corinthians 3:5).

You say, "I'm afraid."

God says, "Be not afraid, for I am with you" (Jeremiah 42:11).

You say, "I'm always worried and frustrated."

God says, "Give your cares to Me" (1 Peter 5:7).

You say, "I don't have enough faith."

God says, "I've given everyone a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3b).

You say, "I'm not smart enough."

God says, "I give you wisdom" (James 1:5 and 1 Corinthians 1:30).

You say, "I feel all alone."

God says, "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

Jesus said, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”¹ Living, the real thing, doesn’t consist of things at all, because things cannot truly satisfy. They may temporarily satisfy the body, but they can never satisfy the soul or the spirit that cries out to God its Father for the joy and happiness and the eternal fulfillment that only God can give.
—DAVID BRANDT BERG

VALUES

TRUE VALUES

Nothing truly valuable arises from ambition or from a mere sense of duty; it stems rather from love and devotion towards men.
—ALBERT EINSTEIN

Mahatma Gandhi identified the seven sins in the world as wealth without work, pleasure before conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, and politics without principle.
—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Measure wealth not by the things you have, but by the things you have that you wouldn’t sell for money.
—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt within the heart.
—HELEN KELLER

An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.
—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.
—WINSTON CHURCHILL

¹Luke 12:15

FEEDING READING

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

When Jesus spoke to the multitudes, He often explained deep truths by means of parables—stories about common events, circumstances, and things that His listeners could easily relate to. Times have changed, but the timeless truths contained in the parables of Jesus are just as relevant today and just as feeding to our souls as they were to those who first heard them 2,000 years ago! *Bon appétit!*

The Parable of the Sower
The seed of God’s Word
Matthew 13:3–8,18–23

The Good Samaritan
“Who is my neighbor?”
Luke 10:25–37

The Prodigal Son
God’s everlasting love
Luke 15:11–32

The Parable of the Talents
The wise investor
Matthew 25:14–30

The Two Houses
What is your foundation?
Matthew 7:24–27

The Lost Sheep
Seeking the lost
Luke 15:3–7

The Wise and Foolish Virgins
Will you be ready when He comes?
Matthew 25:1–13

The Unmerciful Servant
A lesson in forgiveness
Matthew 18:23–35

The Pharisee and the Publican
God’s idea of righteousness
Luke 18:9–14

The Rich Fool
Share—don’t hoard
Luke 12:16–21



THE FUTURE FORETOLD

BY MICHAEL ROY AND SCOTT MACGREGOR

AS EVENTS UNFOLD in the third millennium, many of us can't help but wonder what the future holds for us and our planet. Are we on the threshold of a brave New World Order, with "peace and plenty for all"? Or are we tottering on the brink of unprecedented chaos and disaster?

Biblical prophets foretold many specifics about today's world. Their predictions, now two to three thousand years old, accurately depict conditions and events that have either already taken place or will soon—quite possibly during our lifetime.

Among those prophecies are descriptions of modern rapid transportation systems, today's unprecedented increase in world travel, the present explosion in knowledge of all kinds, technological advances such as

electronic banking, a soon-to-be-implemented global financial and identification system, the effects of global warming, and outbreaks of lethal epidemics.

Awareness of these predictions will give you a new perspective on the radical transformation the world is currently undergoing, as well as prepare you for the cataclysmic changes to come.

THE BIG QUESTION

Throughout the ages a number of seers have received special insight into the future. A discourse that is regarded by many as the most profound and comprehensive of its kind was given 2,000 years ago on a hillside outside the ancient city of Jerusalem. There a small band of truth-seekers gathered around their teacher—a carpenter-turned-

preacher, known as Jesus of Nazareth. The question they asked Him prompted a response that reaches across the centuries to the days in which we are now living.

As He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"¹

What His followers were asking Him about is often referred to as "the Second Coming," the dramatic return of Christ prior to His taking over the world and establishing the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus answered their question by revealing not one sign of "the end," but many. Outstanding predictions by a number of other biblical writers both before and after Jesus help fill in the picture.

¹Matthew 24:3

THE EVEN BIGGER ANSWERS

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. . . . Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.”²

The Greek word that is translated as “sorrows” here is sometimes also translated “birth pangs,” the painful muscle contractions that women experience during childbirth.

Wars, famines, plagues, and earthquakes were nothing new in Jesus’ time, of course. The apostle Paul wrote, “We know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.”³

Labor pains become more frequent and intensify right up to the moment of birth, but eventually the ordeal comes to an end. The birth of the baby, which in this case symbolizes Jesus’ return at the end of this age, is not going to wait forever. You may be surprised to learn just how far this “childbirth” has progressed in recent years.

A WORLD AT WAR

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. . . . Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.”

War has been a scourge of mankind since time immemorial, but no period in history has witnessed a greater number of wars or greater destruction brought about by them than has the last hundred years.

Prior to 1914, war had never been universal, but in both World War I and World War II global war was waged. In the latter, all but 12 small nations of the world were militarily or technically involved, and 93 million people served in the armed forces of both sides. Of these, 25 million died. Civilian casualties were unprecedented: In the Soviet Union alone, over 20 million civilians died as a result of the war.

The Washington Post noted: “20th-century wars have been ‘total wars’ against combatants and civilians alike. . . . The barbarian wars of centuries past were alley fights in comparison.”⁴

ETHNIC CLEANSING AND TRIBAL TERROR

The Greek word for “nation” originally used in this prophecy—“nation shall rise against nation”—is *ethnos*, which is more accurately translated “a race” or “a tribe.” In other words, Jesus was saying that ethnic groups would rise against each other. This has been tragically fulfilled in recent

times. Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Arthur Schlesinger (1917–2007) warned: The 20th century [was] a century of the warfare of ideologies: democracy vs. fascism, democracy vs. communism. But the end of the Cold War has released long-buried national, racial, ethnic, and linguistic antagonisms around the world. . . . The 21st century promises to be a century of the warfare of ethnicities.⁵

Citing Stalin’s purges, Mao’s Cultural Revolution, Pol Pot’s killing fields, the so-called ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, the horrors of Rwanda, etc., the *Associated Press* (AP) reports that during the 20th century the murders perpetrated by nations against their own people exceeded the deaths caused by wars with rivals outside their borders—170 million lives, by one estimate. That was the century that coined the term “genocide.”⁶

Although the outlook may appear bleak, the day is soon coming when God Himself will intervene in this violent world, and war shall be forever abolished.⁷ ❀

(CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF *ACTIVATED*. EXCERPTED FROM THE BOOKLET *THE FUTURE FORETOLD*. 3RD ED. AURORA PRODUCTION AG, 2008.)

²Matthew 24:6–8

³Romans 8:22

⁴Richard Harwood, “Death in the 20th Century,” *Washington Post*, 27 Apr 1995.

⁵Unity, Multiculturalism and the American Creed,” *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, Issue 18.2, 31 Oct 1994.

⁶Arlene Levinson, “20th Century Awash in Blood,” *AP*, 16 Sep 1995.

⁷Isaiah 2:4

How to get the most from life

From Jesus with Love



It's sad how so many people are content to just let life pass them by. Sure, they may be busy keeping up or trying to get ahead, and they may fill every spare moment with activities that they hope will be relaxing and enjoyable, but where is all that busy activity taking them? When do they really live?

The secret to getting the most out of life is in living close to Me and living in My Word. By that I don't mean that you should hide away and give yourself solely to quiet reflection and study; I mean that you should try to include Me in your daily activities and apply My Word to whatever you're doing. If you can learn to do that, your life will take on new meaning and depth. You will not only be much happier and feel more fulfilled, but you will brighten the lives of those around you as you reflect My love and the light of My Word in all you do.

It starts by making a habit of taking a few quiet minutes at the start of every day for prayer and reading My Word. Then take what I have taught you in the "classroom" and apply it throughout the day. If you don't know how, just shoot up a quick prayer and I will show you. On the job, running errands, or relaxing with family and friends, I can make you a greater blessing to others and bless you in the process.

Life will become richer and more meaningful as I help you make more time for the most interesting and rewarding thing I have going—people. You'll even get much more out of such everyday things as reading the newspaper or watching a movie or TV if you ask Me for My mind on each matter. I think you'll be surprised to find how much I know and how much I have to offer!