

SPECIAL 30th YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Connection

the magazine

ISSUE 17 / OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2012

WORSHIP & THE WORD



THE POWER
OF THE WORD

LOOKING AT
THE PAST THIRTY
YEARS

LOVE THE PAST,
LIVE THE FUTURE
TIMELINE

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Dear Friends,

I can hardly believe it, but it has been 30 years since Calvary Albuquerque began! When I started a small Bible study back then, I could not have dreamed of what God would do. Through His sovereign power, He took that study and turned it into one of America's largest churches, and a worldwide ministry! It always reminds me that He uses "the foolish things of the world" (see 1 Corinthians 1:27) to accomplish His purposes.

So in this issue of Connection—the magazine, we are celebrating three decades of seeing God's hand on this community, and the life-giving power of worship and the Word.

In the following pages, you will find articles on the importance of Bible study and reaching out to the community, a retrospective on our journey to ministry here in Albuquerque, an examination of our cause as believers, and some special thoughts from Chuck Smith, the father of the Calvary Chapel movement.

Come celebrate with us on the first three decades of this ministry, and stay tuned for what God will accomplish in the next 30 years!



OUR MISSION:
WE PURSUE THE GOD WHO IS PASSIONATELY
PURSUING A LOST WORLD; WE DO THIS WITH EACH
OTHER, THROUGH WORSHIP, BY THE WORD, TO
THE WORLD.

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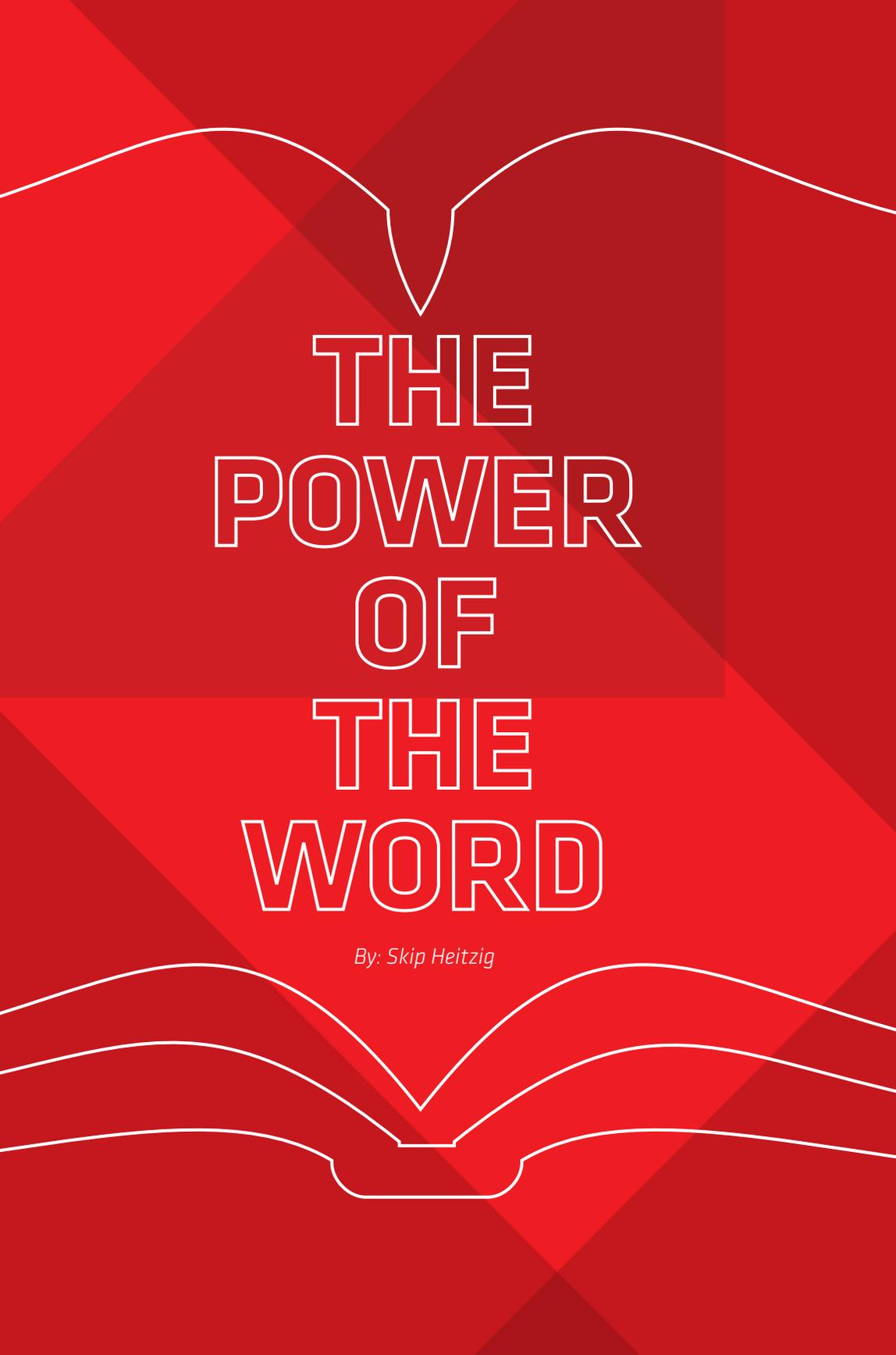
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THE POWER OF THE WORD

By: Skip Heitzig

YOU CAN STUDY THE BIBLE WHETHER YOU ARE A BUSINESS PERSON OR A BUS DRIVER; A PLUMBER OR A PHARMACIST; A STUDENT OR A SENIOR CITIZEN.

The first time I attended a Bible-teaching church, I was blown away. Pastor Chuck Smith at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa stood up, opened the Bible, and taught. It was simple, clear, and powerful. I remember thinking, *I wonder if God would ever use me to do that?...* *Naaah.* But I saw the impact of God's Word and I wanted to impact others, as well. I'm still amazed that, as my life verse says, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (1 Corinthians 1:27). I love studying and teaching the Bible.

The Bible provides principles, poetry, narrative, parables, and predictive prophecy to teach us the grand message that God has loved us from the foundation of the earth. The language in Scripture is simple and down-to-earth. The people who wrote it were regular people: Peter was a fisherman from Galilee, Luke was a Gentile doctor, Amos was a herdsman, Nehemiah was a cupbearer to a Persian king. David was a simple shepherd, who became a musician, who became

a warrior, who became the king of Israel. He wrote very simple analogies and words the commoner would understand. These were people from various walks of life. For the most part, they wrote about simple subjects: water sources, farming, sowing and reaping, love and war, family matters—all things common people are familiar with.

We know the New Testament was written in Greek. Most of us have the idea that Greek is the scholar's language. But New Testament Greek is *koinon* Greek, from which we get the word "common." This was the common, marketplace, street lingo of ancient Greece. Peddlers, housewives, and soldiers spoke this language.

Studying the Bible is for everyone. You don't have to be a pastor or scholar to study God's Word. You can study the Bible whether you are a businessperson or a bus driver; a plumber or a pharmacist; a teacher or a tender of the home; a student or a senior citizen. The key is to develop

a thirst for God's truth and to know God personally through knowing His Word.

SUPERHUMAN POWER

Paul wrote to the young Thessalonian church that "the Word of God... effectively works in you who believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). The Amplified Bible puts it this way: "The Word of God exercising its superhuman power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it." Did you catch that? Superhuman power.

One of the most significant claims of the Bible is that it's effective—it changes lives. God said, "My Word... that goes forth from My mouth... shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). One of the greatest joys of teaching God's Word is that I know my "product" (for lack of a better term) will work. It's not going to return void. It's guaranteed to have incredible results. God's Word changes lives when people listen and are open to His message.

You may have heard the story of the vacuum cleaner salesman who went into the country to a little old lady's house. The salesman was aggressive in his sales pitch, "Ma'am, I want you to know this beats all other vacuum cleaners." He went on and on with his spiel until he weaseled his way into the living room. He walked to her fireplace, removed some ashes, and threw them on her carpet. Then he went outside and took dirt from the garden, came back in, threw it on the carpet, and rubbed it in with his feet. She stood there aghast. He said, "Madam, if this vacuum cleaner won't suck up every bit of this dirt, I'll eat it all with a spoon." She put her hands on her hips and said, "Sonny, you better start eatin', 'cause we ain't got

no electricity." There's nothing more worthless than a product with no power. Thankfully, the Word of God is powerful. Let's look at some of the mighty ways God's Word can work in your life.

SALVATION

Scripture can bring you to faith for salvation. Paul said, "From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). One psychiatrist said that if he could convince his patients their sins were forgiven, 75% would need no more treatment. The Bible assures you of forgiveness of sin through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

SERVICE

The Word of God prepares you for service. Paul said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In other words, Scripture equips you for life. You can go to college, which trains you for a vocation. The Bible teaches you to live the way God wants you to live.

GROWTH

The Word will help you grow spiritually. Peter said, "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). Take a diet from the junk food of worldly wisdom, get off the perspective of humanism, beware of the doctrinal trends and whims that sweep through the church that are not founded upon Scripture. Stick with the Word and grow.



GOD'S WORD CHANGES LIVES WHEN PEOPLE LISTEN AND ARE OPEN TO HIS MESSAGE.

DIRECTION

The Bible will give direction for your life. The psalmist wrote, "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). I have found that when I have questions, God answers them in His Word. I find that the need for outside counsel diminishes as my appetite for God's Word increases.

JOY

The Bible brings joy to life. David said, "I rejoice at Your Word as one who finds great treasure" (Psalm 119:162). I can't recount how many times I've read a passage of Scripture that resonates in my heart, makes me smile, and comforts me from the depths of my being. It can do the same for you, regardless of what you're facing.

VICTORY

The Word of God will bring victory to your life. You might find the enemy coming against you: tempting you, telling you lies, accusing you, pressuring you to participate in things you don't want to do. When Satan tempted Jesus Christ, what did Jesus do? He said, "It is written" over and over again until Satan left. His weapon was to quote the Word of God. Paul called the Bible "the sword of

the Spirit" (see Ephesians 6:17). This weapon can be the source of your victory, too.

When Sir Walter Scott, the Scottish poet and novelist, was on his deathbed, he said to his son-in-law Lockhart, "Bring me the Book." Lockhart asked, "Which book?" Scott answered, "There is but one Book for a dying man, the Bible." This man of letters died listening to the comforting words of the Holy Bible read by his son-in-law.

In the end, it's not how many times you go through the Bible, it's how many times the Bible goes through you. As you live out God's principles and receive His promises, God's Word becomes more and more the joy and the rejoicing of your heart.

My desire for all of us is that we would, in increasing measure, know and experience the power of the Word of God! ←

// SKIP HEITZIG

Skip Heitzig is the author of numerous books and is the senior pastor of Calvary Albuquerque. You can follow him on Twitter @skipheitzig



**MISSION:
IS THERE
NOT A
CAUSE ?**

By Robert Furrow

TODAY, CHRISTIAN, WHAT IS OUR CAUSE? WE CANNOT SEEM TO GET OUR FEET UNDER US WHEN IT COMES TO WHERE GOD IS DIRECTING US.

David, as a young shepherd boy, heard the taunts and threats of the giant enemy. He did not shrink in fear. He did not worry about his next step. With purpose and determination, he chose to fight. His brother Eliab discouraged him for coming to the battlefield, and yet David threw up his hands and asked, *Is there not a cause?* (1 Samuel 17:29). David knew the cause, glorifying God, and fought *from* victory for that cause.

Today, Christian, what is our cause? As we encounter opportunities for missions and sharing Christ with others, we may feel confused or discouraged. Many Christians are unsure of their exact cause, or their mission. We cannot seem to get our feet under us when it comes to where God is directing us.

Many churches and church plants on the mission field may flounder in

trying to find a place for themselves in the vast sea of churches. Churches struggle to find the appropriate style or theme or business model to make the church “successful.”

Young David heard the threats of the giant Goliath, threw up his hands, and asked his older brother, *Is there not a cause?* The answer was a clear, resounding affirmation of the Israelites’ cause to glorify God as His people in the face of a giant enemy. Just as David received his cause and walked in victory, we too have been given a cause from which we may fight daily.

Our cause is not to try to figure out what we want to do, or what our flavor of church or Christian might be. We have been given a clear and direct cause, a command from Jesus Christ called the Great Commission. “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go

therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Jesus declares the cause to His disciples, to now go into the world and make disciples by teaching them all things received from Jesus. He gave them (and us) the confidence that He would be with them. The power and presence of His Holy Spirit would guide them in victory as they carried out the cause.

Our cause is clear, our mission is direct: Preach the gospel to everyone. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

Jesus' Great Commission includes three essential keys to preaching the Gospel to all creatures.

FIRST: To accomplish our mission, we must be empowered by the Spirit. In Acts 1:4-8, He commands them to remain in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit who would empower them to

be His witnesses. The Holy Spirit is given to all who follow Jesus. We cannot make disciples and preach the gospel in our own power. It must be the work of the Spirit. This is comforting and challenging. Before we can accomplish our mission, we must be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Simply ask God to fill you and empower you; then you will receive the gifts and equipping of the Spirit to make disciples. Romans 12:3-8 and 1 Corinthians 12 both explain the gifts of the Spirit for completing the cause in Christ.

SECOND: To make disciples, we must follow Jesus' example. He established his disciples through the Word of God and the gospel. Paul knew the power of Scripture and the Word of God in establishing the church. He implores the church in Thessalonians by saying, "Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you...the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thessalonians 3:1, 3). To follow the cause, know the Word of God, be established in it and then preach this Scripture with boldness.

JESUS DECLARES THE CAUSE TO HIS DISCIPLES, TO NOW GO INTO THE WORLD AND MAKE DISCIPLES BY TEACHING THEM ALL THINGS RECEIVED FROM JESUS.

THE CAUSE IS CLEAR. RECEIVE THE SPIRIT, BE ESTABLISHED IN THE WORD, AND TELL OTHERS OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

THIRD: Finally, after we have been empowered by the Spirit and established in the Word of God, we must share the gospel of a life-changing relationship with Jesus. No man can be a disciple of Christ unless he is brought into a relationship with Jesus Christ. John 1:12 records these hopeful words, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.” The final and most essential part of our cause is to bring men and women to a relationship with Jesus and a place in the Kingdom as children of God.

Christian, do you not have a cause? Have you not been given a commission?

The cause is clear. Receive the Spirit, be established in the Word, and tell others of a relationship with Jesus. Whether you are sent to minister to your own community, to another city, or to the uttermost parts of the world, you must simply make yourself available to God. Be willing to go anywhere He would call you. May you walk with expectation and anticipation.

Preach the gospel faithfully and the power of Jesus will resound in victory:

“And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son’” (Revelation 21:6-7). ←

// ROBERT FURROW

Robert Furrow has been senior pastor of Calvary Tucson for 27 years. He is committed to faithfully preaching the Word of God throughout the world. Calvary Tucson has two campuses, and is also involved in a number of missions projects around the world.

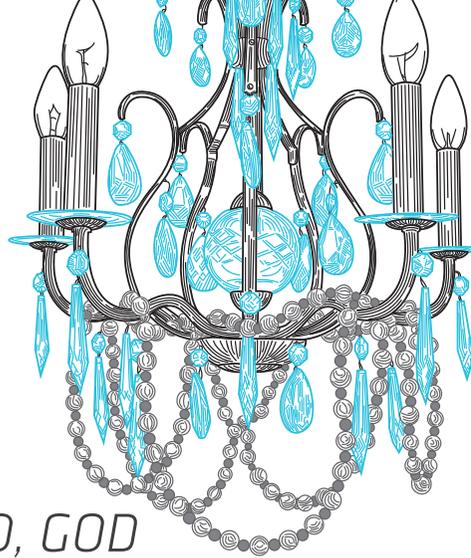
Follow his blog at calvarychapelblog.com and follow him on Twitter @robertfurrow.



**LOOKING
AT THE
PAST
THIRTY
YEARS**

By: Lenya Heitzig





THIRTY-PLUS YEARS AGO, GOD TRANSFORMED ME FROM A YOUNG, REBELLIOUS, AGNOSTIC WOMAN INTO A BELIEVER WHO DEEPLY CRAVED THE LORD.

Looking on the dawn of Calvary Albuquerque, I'm amazed at God's handiwork. You may remember how our first small Bible study sparked from six people to a couple of hundred in the first year, and then exploded into our vibrant fellowship of thousands. What you may not know is the providential way God worked in my life prior to coming to Albuquerque.

Thirty-plus years ago, God transformed me from a young, rebellious, agnostic woman into a believer who deeply craved the Lord. At the same time, He intervened in Skip's life through the gifts of the Holy Spirit and by sharpening his ministry focus.

But even before that... Well, this might be a good time to step into the

"Wayback Machine" and let me share my journey.

My parents divorced during my elementary school years, creating an empty instability in my heart. By the time I reached high school, I abandoned my own grief to parties and alcohol, unconsciously deciding to maintain control at the cost of feeling anything, good or bad. For years, that philosophy seemed to work. Yet the loss of my dad's presence resulted in a two-fold coping mechanism: I looked for male approval in the wrong places and I experimented with drugs.

In my sophomore year of college, my tenuous equilibrium teetered when my dad, a self-professed "power-of-positive-thinking" man,

announced that he was born-again. I reeled as the philosophical rug was pulled out from under me. My assumptions about life, my emotional paralysis, and my hedonistic life-style were now challenged by Dad's newfound faith. I privately wondered, *What if Dad is right and I'm wrong? What if there is a God and heaven and hell do exist?*

I decided to investigate religion with a class that overviewed Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Islam. I also surveyed my friends, asking, "Do you believe in God?" Most responded with a denomination rather than a relationship, saying, "I'm a Catholic," or "I go to the Lutheran church," or "My parents are Episcopalian." My friend Tamara Johnson was the exception.

Tamara was witty and adventurous. In high school, we cheered on the freshman squad, traveled to Spain with our Spanish club, and double-dated. Then, shockingly, she became a "Jesus freak." She changed from party girl to prayer warrior, and I went out of my way to avoid her. But God reunited us at Western Michigan University.

After a semester break, Tamara and I made the three-hour drive back to WMU. I told her Dad had become a born-again Christian, and I no longer understood him. Then I asked "What, exactly, do you guys believe?" I respected her opinion because she practiced what she preached. I can't remember her exact words that day, but I recall thinking, *This makes sense*. The bells of freedom rang in my ears.

When we parted that day, Tamara gave me a pamphlet called *Four Spiritual Laws* and told me to call her if I had questions. Eventually, I read

about the emptiness felt by man's separation from God and how Jesus bridged that gap, reconciling us with God. As I read, my frozen emotions thawed, and I wept. At the conclusion of the pamphlet was an invitation to pray to receive Jesus as Lord of my life. I knew it was the right thing to do. There were no stained glass windows or bolts of lightning, just Lenya, at long last, surrendering control of her life to God.

WELCOME TO CHURCH

The parking lot of Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa bustled with activity. The place was magnetic! The people were casual, young, and filled with vitality. Some were longhaired, barefoot hippies toting big black Bibles. These people were hungry for Bible study and radiated joy. I was home.

When Chuck Smith stepped up to speak, his smile beamed the love of God. The methodical verse-by-verse teaching was balanced and thorough and met my need for an intelligent approach.

But I had questions. After the service, I met with Pastor Malcolm Wild in the prayer room. He surprised me with a question: "Have you repented of your sins?" Unfamiliar with biblical terms, I answered, "I have no idea what that is." He explained that repentance meant to have a change of heart, to turn away from sin and toward God. He quoted Isaiah: "'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow'" (Isaiah 1:18). Shame about my past kept me from asking for God's mercy, but this passage assured me He was ready and willing to cleanse me of anything! My heart turned a fresh page.



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THE DESIRE OF MY HEART

As I worshiped Jesus, learned His ways, and obeyed His commands, He began to cultivate desires in my heart that were not only mine, but His. My greatest desire was to become a pastor's wife. There was only one problem: I didn't know any available pastors. But God did.

I met Skip Heitzig at a backyard barbecue in Costa Mesa, California. When Skip strode in, his long hair was still wet from surfing. I was attracted to his wit, and his tall, handsome physique. And the attraction was mutual. Skip later said he noticed my blond hair, tanned skin, and my relaxed way with people. Eventually, I walked over to him, shook his hand, and said, "Hi, I'm Lenya."

Having been raised with three rowdy brothers, he was uncomfortable making friends with women, but he was intrigued with my theological questions and enthusiasm. We went out a couple of times, but I was immature in my faith and rough around the edges. We liked each other but we went our separate ways. I joined Youth With A Mission in Hawaii and attended an intensive discipleship school.

About a year later, when I was home for Christmas, Skip and I had dinner together. I couldn't contain my zeal for God and my heart for ministry. When he took me home, I prayed out loud with passion and confidence. I returned to Hawaii to fulfill my commitment as secretary for the Discipleship Training School. Although I was invited to join several mission teams, the Lord would not let me go. I still had a burning desire to be a pastor's wife. I longed to see God's Spirit ignite a community with His love and power like He had in South-

ern California during the 70s. Skip was on my mind.

When I talked to my mentors, they challenged me to send Skip an upfront letter exposing my feelings and to leave the results in God's hands. With fear and anticipation I wrote a letter that revealed my heart for the poor and my hope to ignite a church for the mission field.

Simultaneously, God was at work in Skip's heart. When he received my letter, he said it was like reading something he had written to himself. His response arrived with a huge bouquet of exotic roses and a simple note.

Six months later, after a whirlwind courtship and wedding, Mr. and Mrs. Skip Heitzig climbed into a blue Datsun pick-up pulling a U-Haul trailer, headed for our life together in New Mexico. Every 500 miles or so, we had to add oil to our overworked engine. As we drove, we prayed and chatted about our hearts for God, His Word, and His church. We couldn't wait to begin a Bible study in Albuquerque.

So there you have it. Life has not always been easy, but the Lord gave me the desire of my heart, just as He promised, and I still love serving in ministry alongside my husband. As Paul Harvey used to say, "And now you know the rest of the story." ←

// LENYA HEITZIG

Lenya Heitzig is an award-winning author and sought-after speaker at conferences and retreats worldwide. Visit Lenya's blog at sheabq.org and follow her on Twitter @lenyaheitzig

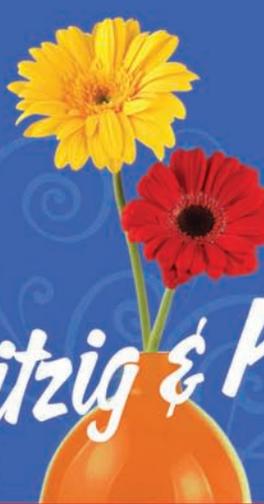
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A Study in the Book of James

Lenya Heitzig & Penny Rose



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Odd, the way the less the Bible is read, the more it is translated. -C.S. Lewis

A readiness to believe every promise implicitly, to obey every command unhesitatingly, to stand perfect and complete in all the will of God, is the only true spirit of Bible study.

-Andrew Murray

I venture to say that the bulk of Christians spend more time in reading the newspaper than they do reading the Word of God.

-Charles Spurgeon

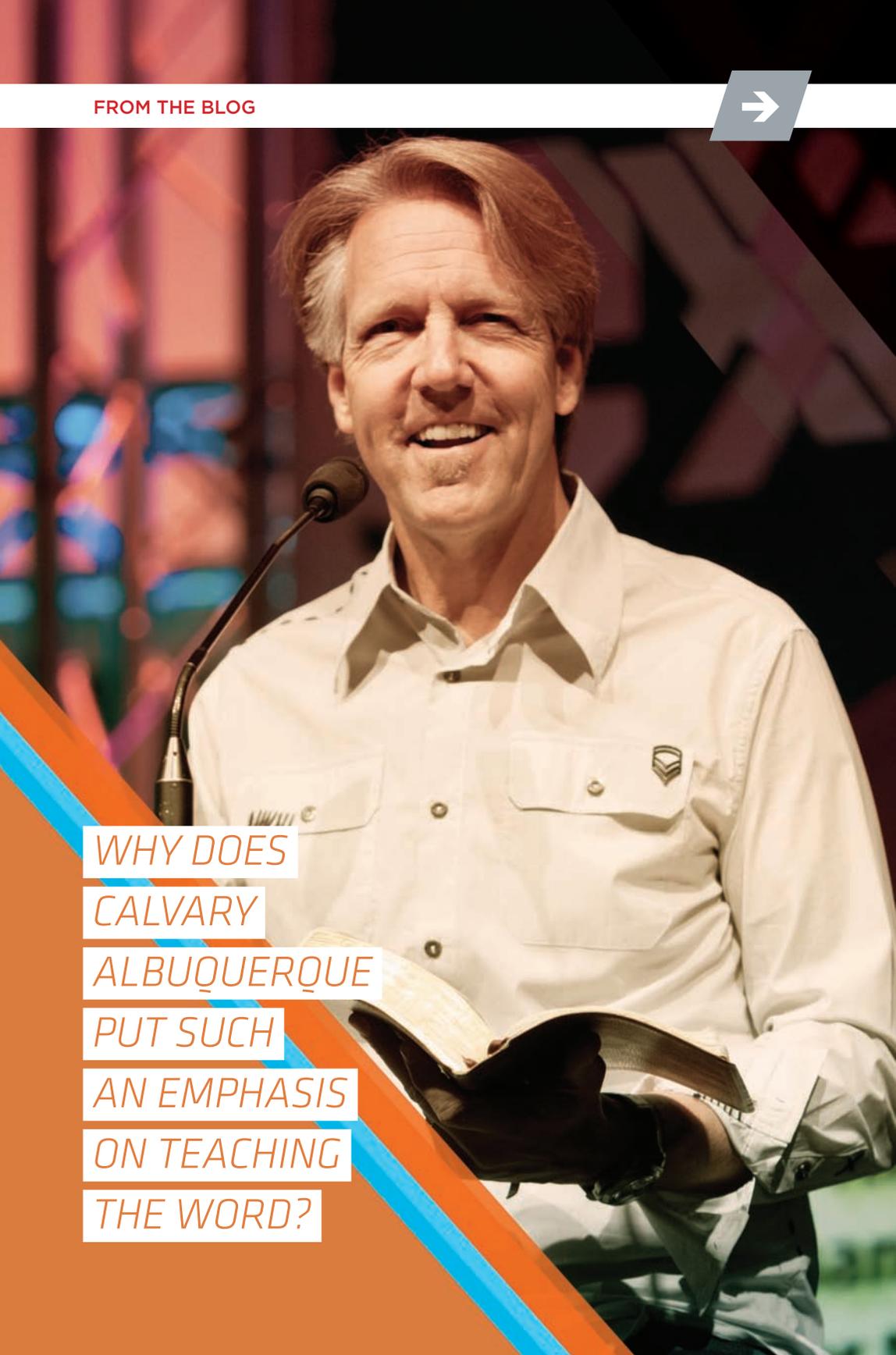
The reason you don't like the Bible, you old sinner, is because it knows all about you. -Billy Sunday

The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. -George Mueller

Gather the riches of God's promises. Nobody can take away from you those texts from the Bible which you have learned by heart. -Corrie ten Boom

The Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives. -D.L. Moody

He that reads his Bible to find fault with it will soon discover that the Bible finds fault with him. -Charles Spurgeon

A man with light brown hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is speaking at a podium. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. He is holding an open Bible in his hands. A microphone is positioned in front of him. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a church interior with stained glass windows. The image is overlaid with a large, stylized graphic consisting of diagonal stripes in orange, blue, and white.

WHY DOES
CALVARY
ALBUQUERQUE
PUT SUCH
AN EMPHASIS
ON TEACHING
THE WORD?

In 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul exhorts Timothy, “Preach the word!” He didn’t say, “Timothy, preach your own opinion. Preach what the committees of the church have agreed on.” He said, “Preach the word!”

Frequently people will come to me with this question, “What does Calvary teach?” But that’s an irrelevant question. The issue is what the Bible declares about God, and about Christ, and about the church, and heaven and hell.

2 Timothy 4:3 says, “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” There’s a lot of people who hate that word, but it’s a good word; it means instruction or teaching. It’s actually the same word as “Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering, and doctrine” (v. 2, KJV).

2 Timothy 3:16 says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” And though that is true, though this is a great word and a great concept, there are still people in the church of Christ who have such “works” sentiments that they say, “Who cares about doctrine? That’s technical stuff. That’s so irrelevant. That’s really not the issue.” But Paul says it *is* the issue.

When you buy some kind of gadget, you get a manual with it. If you’re like me, you hate manuals and you don’t read them. One Christmas, my wife got me a cool coffeemaker. I thought I could figure it out, but I couldn’t. It came with a manual and a video, so of course I watched the video. But I still couldn’t figure it out. I had to go back to the manual.

Well, as Christians, the Bible is our manual for life. My concern is that the Bible, the manual of truth, is more and more being disregarded by the church of Jesus Christ on this earth. Did you know, there are some people who believe—and actually teach and preach—that what you feel is more important than what you know? “As long as you feel good about it, who cares about the knowledge stuff, the doctrine stuff?” And so you have a generation of people who are long on zeal and short on facts. They’re very enthusiastic, but they’re hazy when it comes to scriptural truth.

However, the prophet Hosea said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). In Acts chapter 2:42, the church was commended because “they continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine.” In 1 Timothy 4:13, Paul said, “Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.” In Titus 2:1, Paul said, “Teach what is in accord with sound doctrine” (NIV).

So obviously, based on that, doctrine is far more than important. It is essential.

James Montgomery Boice wrote, “We do not have a strong church today, nor do we have many strong Christians. We can trace the cause to an acute lack of sound spiritual knowledge... Ask an average Christian to talk about God. After getting past the expected answers, you will find that his god is a little god of vacillating sentiments.”

Ignorance is not bliss; it’s dangerous. It is essential to know the truth. On four occasions, Jesus rebuked religious leaders for not knowing what the book says. He asked them, “Have you not read what Moses said?” “Did you not read this and that?”

THAT'S WHAT OUR EXPOSITIONAL BIBLE STUDIES ARE ALL ABOUT VERSE BY VERSE, LINE UPON LINE, THE OLD TESTAMENT AS WELL AS THE NEW.

So I wonder if the Lord might ask us that same question in situations where we're plagued with, "What do we do about that?" *Haven't you read?* "What do I do about this relationship?" *Haven't you read? It's in the book.* More than once, Paul wrote to the church and said, "Now brethren, I don't want you to be ignorant..." Or, "Brethren, I write these things so that you won't be ignorant..."

I want to echo the words of Paul: "I don't want us to be ignorant concerning spiritual truth." My heart's desire is that Christians be well-fed. And that's why we plow through the Bible like we do. That's why we give attention to language and background and context and the sense of a word all through the Bible. That's what our expositional Bible studies are all about—verse by verse, line upon line, the Old Testament as well as the New.

I would encourage you to look up the references that are spoken in any message from the pulpit, actually read them on your own. And then apply them to your life. Take the questions that are on the bottom of the outline and actually apply them through the week. That's how you'll grow. And that's the reason some

grow fast and some grow slowly, because some have a real hunger and an appetite, and others do not. Study to show yourself approved to God, as we get back to the foundations.

Of all of the ages, and of all of the countries that have ever existed on earth, it is this age and this country that have been most blessed with scriptural resources. Churches, Bible bookstores, teaching tapes, and sermons are all so readily available. Which means, "to whom much has been given, much shall be required" (see Luke 12:48). It would make sense that we would be the strongest spiritually of any believers. Sometimes that's true and sometimes it's not. We should give ourselves to truth, to find out "What does the book say? What is the heart of God?" We should welcome sound doctrine, and we should develop a strong appetite for the Word, because the only way to know God is through His Word. The only valid experiences are those that can be substantiated by the Word. We should know it, so that we can look at all of life, every situation, every circumstance, and filter it through the truth of the Word, and get direction from God. ◀

LOVE THE PAST

A LOOK AT 30 YEARS IN MINISTRY



1981: Calvary begins as a home Bible study at the Lakes Apartments on San Mateo Blvd.

1982: Incorporated as Calvary Chapel of Albuquerque

1983: Calvary moves to 1660 Eubank Blvd.

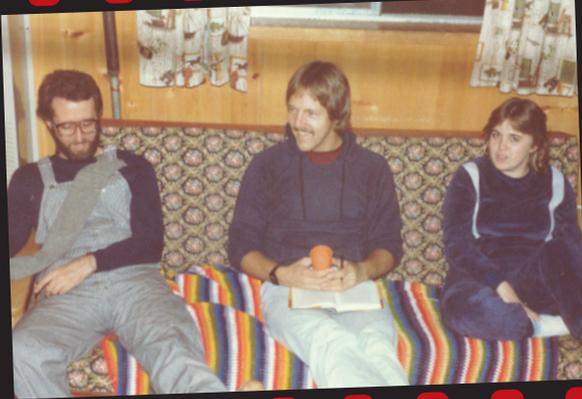
1984: Calvary moves to 9610 Snowheights Blvd.

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FILM RVP

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1990: The Connection with Skip Heitzig makes its first daily broadcast

1992: Servant Connection School of Ministry opens.

1993: Calvary expands to three weekend services

1986: Calvary moves into its permanent home at 4001 Osuna Rd.

1989: Calvary is listed as the fastest growing church in America by Church Growth Today

1989: First Easter sunrise service at Dukes Stadium

04

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1994: Easter Sunrise services move to University Stadium

1995: First Connection Magazine published

1995: KNKT begins broadcasting

1996: Calvary expands to four weekend services



1996: Calvary launches our first web site

2000: KLYT begins broadcasting from Calvary as M88

2000: Remodel/expansion of church complete, with new Connection building, Parchments bookstore, and Solomon's Porch

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2010: Calvary purchases the White Cap building to expand our office space

2010: Calvary opens our first multi-site campus in downtown Albuquerque

2011: Calvary opens doors to a second multi-site campus in Santa Fe

2004: Skip Heitzig moves to California and Pete Nelson comes on as senior pastor

2006: Skip returns to Calvary

2010: M88 changes to Static Radio and launches the youth-oriented Static Paper

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2012: Calvary Albuquerque ministers to over 14,000 adults and their children every weekend. More than 35 churches have sprung up from Calvary Albuquerque, including churches in Arizona, Colorado, Texas, and other parts of New Mexico. Internationally, Uganda, Mexico, and England were just a few of the countries that saw Calvary establish significant works. Calvary sells 40,000 teaching CDs each year. We have 28 websites, with 582,000 visitors overall each month. 300 radio stations carry The Connection radio broadcast each day. 20,000 people hear the live services by radio each weekend.



TO GOD BE THE GLORY

LIVE THE FUTURE

**ON BIBLE KNOWLEDGE:**

21% of adults call themselves above average

53% rate themselves as average

25% below average

**ON WORSHIP:**

36% rate themselves as completely or highly developed in this area

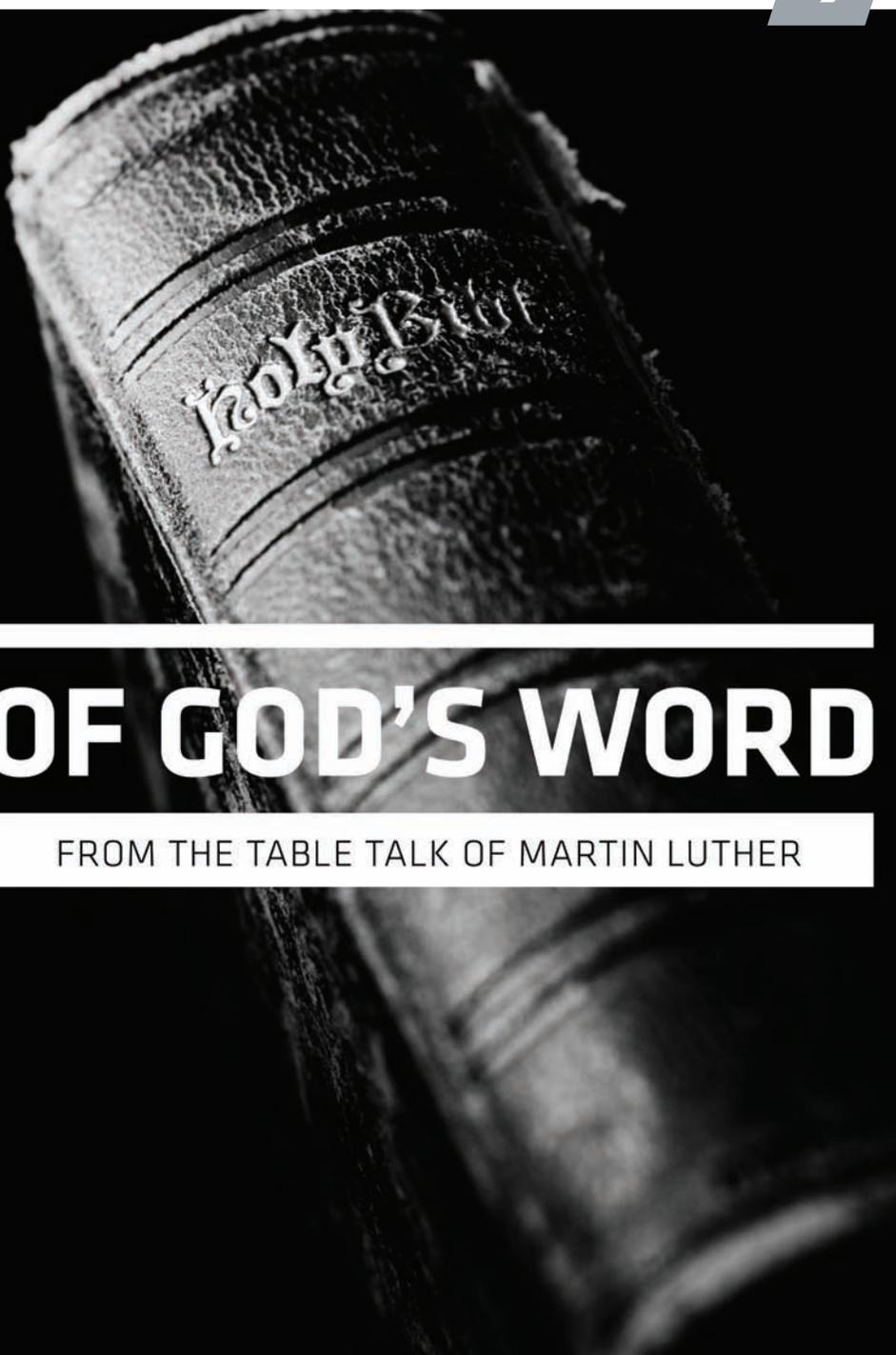
51% call themselves average

14% say they are below average

“Bible reading has become the religious equivalent of sound-bite journalism. When people read from the Bible they typically open it, read a brief passage without much regard for the context, and consider the primary thought or feeling that the passage provided. If they are comfortable with it, they accept it; otherwise, they deem it interesting but irrelevant to their life, and move on. There is shockingly little growth evident in people’s understanding of the fundamental themes of the Scriptures and amazingly little interest in deepening their knowledge and application of biblical principles.”

Source: The Barna Group

DEAD PASTORS' SOCIETY

A close-up, black and white photograph of a book spine, likely a Bible, with the words "Holy Bible" embossed in a decorative, gothic-style font. The spine is made of a textured material, possibly leather, and shows signs of wear. The background is dark and out of focus.

OF GOD'S WORD

FROM THE TABLE TALK OF MARTIN LUTHER

*WHEN I FIND MYSELF ASSAILED BY
TEMPTATION, I FORTHWITH LAY HOLD
OF SOME TEXT OF THE BIBLE, WHICH
JESUS EXTENDS TO ME; AS THIS: THAT
HE DIED FOR ME, WHENCE I DERIVE
INFINITE COMFORT.*

Infinite potentates have raged against this book, and sought to destroy and uproot it—king Alexander the Great, the princes of Egypt and of Babylon, the monarchs of Persia, of Greece, and of Rome, the emperors Julius and Augustus—but they nothing prevailed; they are all gone and vanished, while the book remains, and will remain for ever and ever, perfect and entire, as it was declared at first. Who has thus helped it—who has thus protected it against such mighty forces? No one, surely, but God himself, who is the master of all things. And 'tis no small miracle how God has so long preserved and protected this book; for the devil and the world are sore foes to it. I believe that the devil has destroyed many good books of the church, as, aforetime, he killed and crushed many holy persons, the memory of whom has now passed away; but the Bible he was fain to leave subsisting.... Homer, Virgil, and other noble, fine, and profitable writers, have left us books of great antiquity, but they are naught to the Bible.

We ought not to criticize, explain, or judge the Scriptures by our mere

reason, but diligently, with prayer, meditate thereon, and seek their meaning.... The Holy Ghost must here be our only master and tutor... When I find myself assailed by temptation, I forthwith lay hold of some text of the Bible, which Jesus extends to me; as this: that he died for me, whence I derive infinite comfort.

He who has made himself master of the principles and text of the word runs little risk of committing errors. A theologian should be thoroughly in possession of the basis and source of faith—that is to say, the Holy Scriptures. Armed with this knowledge it was that I confounded and silenced all my adversaries; for they seek not to fathom and understand the Scriptures... My counsel is, that we draw water from the true source and fountain, that is, that we diligently search the Scriptures. He who wholly possesses the text of the Bible, is a consummate divine. One single verse, one sentence of the text, is of far more instruction than a whole host of glosses and commentaries, which are neither strongly penetrating nor armor of proof.

OH! HOW GREAT AND GLORIOUS A THING IT IS TO HAVE BEFORE ONE THE WORD OF GOD!

Let us not lose the Bible, but with diligence, in fear and invocation of God, read and preach it.

The Holy Scriptures surpass in efficaciousness all the arts and all the sciences of the philosophers and jurists... The Bible should be regarded with wholly different eyes from those with which we view other productions. He who wholly renounces himself, and relies not on mere human reason, will make good progress in the Scriptures; but the world comprehends them not, from ignorance of that mortification which is the gift of God's Word. Can he who understands not God's Word, understand God's works? ... But by that Word, we, God be praised, are able to discern and know all such; therefore let us hold the Bible in precious esteem, and diligently read it.

Oh! how great and glorious a thing it is to have before one the Word of God! With that we may at all times feel joyous and secure; we need never be in want of consolation, for we see before us, in all its brightness, the pure and right way. He who loses sight of the Word of God, falls into despair; the voice of heaven no longer sustains him; he follows only the disorderly tendency of his heart, and of world vanity, which lead him on to his destruction.

A fiery shield is God's Word; of more substance and purer than gold, which, tried in the fire, loses naught of its substance, but resists and overcomes all the fury of the fiery heat; even so, he that believes God's Word overcomes all, and remains secure everlastingly, against all misfortunes; for this shield fears nothing, neither hell nor the devil.

The Word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea, greater than death and hell, for it forms part of the power of God, and endures everlastingly; we should, therefore, diligently study God's Word, and know and assuredly believe that God himself speaks unto us.

We must know how to teach God's Word aright, discerningly, for there are divers sorts of hearers; some are struck with fear in the conscience, are perplexed, and awed by their sins, and, in apprehension of God's anger, are penitent; these must be comforted with the consolations of the gospel. Others are hardened, obstinate, stiff-necked, rebel-hearted; these must be affrighted by the law, by examples of God's wrath...

The Bible is the book that makes fools of the wise of this world; it is only understood by the plain and simple hearted. Esteem this book as the precious fountain that can never be exhausted. ←

// MARTIN LUTHER

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a leader of the Protestant Reformation against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. He translated the Bible into German to make it more accessible to common people and to reduce the influence of priests.



WORSHIP:

¹ THE ACT OF PAYING HONOR TO A DEITY; RELIGIOUS REVERENCE AND HOMAGE.

² PROSKUNEO (TRANSLATED WORSHIP): (MEAN. TO KISS, LIKE A DOG LICKING HIS MASTER'S HAND); TO FAWN OR CROUCH TO, I.E. (LIT OR FIG) PROSTRATE ONESELF IN HOMAGE, (DO REVERENCE TO, ADORE)



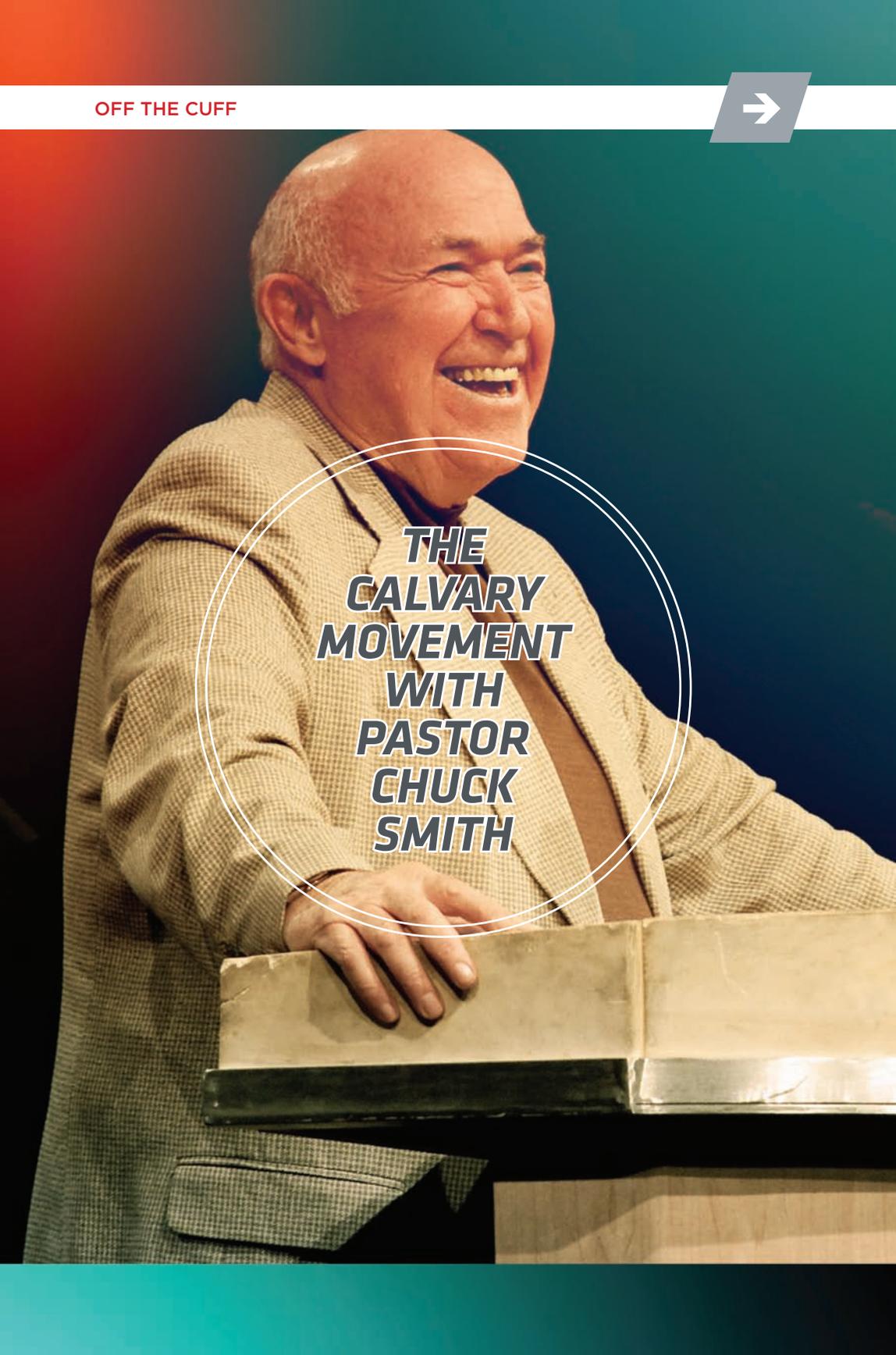
WORD:

¹ LOGOS... (GREEK, HO LOGOS, "THE WORD"). A TERM USED BY THE APOSTLE JOHN CONVEYING MOST EXPRESSIVELY THE MISSION OF JESUS AS THE REVEALER OF THE GODHEAD (JOHN 1:1, 14). THE TITLE DECLARES CHRIST'S ETERNITY AND ABSOLUTE DEITY AS WELL AS HIS ASSUMPTION OF HUMANITY FOR MAN'S SALVATION.

² LOGOS: SOMETHING SAID (INCLUDING THE THOUGHT); BY IMPLICATION A TOPIC (SUBJECT OF DISCOURSE), ALSO REASONING (THE MENTAL FACULTY) OR MOTIVE... SPECIFICALLY (WITH THE ARTICLE IN JOHN) THE DIVINE EXPRESSION (I.E., CHRIST)

.....
¹ THE NEW UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY

² STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE OF THE BIBLE

A photograph of Pastor Chuck Smith, an older man with a balding head, smiling broadly. He is wearing a light-colored, textured blazer over a dark shirt and a tie. He is standing behind a wooden podium, with his right hand resting on the top edge. The background is a dark, solid color. A white circular graphic is overlaid on the image, containing the text.

**THE
CALVARY
MOVEMENT
WITH
PASTOR
CHUCK
SMITH**

In an interview with Chuck Smith, pastor of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, Skip Heitzig asked about the Calvary movement.

You've raised up a bunch of young men who have emulated your style of teaching through the Bible, Genesis to Revelation. And I've personally sat under you a few of those times when you've taken us through the Scriptures. It seems that many young ministers are being drawn into new trends, in just trying to attract a crowd. So talk to those who get tempted to be drawn away from the simplicity that has marked your ministry to these new trends.

It's interesting. Jesus said that He called us that we might bring forth fruit, "that your fruit might remain." They made fun of Isaiah because they said he ought to be teaching in kindergarten: "His teaching is so simple; it's just line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little," and yet there are those who are looking for immediate growth, for immediate success, a large congregation. And they're giving into these trends today that are appealing to people from a psychological standpoint—how to have a better home, how to have a better family, and these kinds of things. It's a social gospel, dealing with social issues and it neglects the Word. And yet it's the Word that brings strong growth. It is the Word that develops faith. And so by just going through and just teaching the Word, you have solid growth. But also, the fruit remains. It isn't something that has come up overnight. Because when it comes up overnight and there's no real foundation, it can begin to go down just the same way, because there's no depth. It's the seed falling along the way-side, and it has no depth, and when trials and tribulations come, it dies and it passes away. But that which

falls on the good soil, it brings forth fruit, thirty, sixty, a hundredfold. But it takes longer because you just don't have immediate growth like you do on the stony ground, where it comes up fast but no depth of earth, and thus it dies when the problems arise. But when it's planted in good soil it doesn't come up as fast, but what does come up remains and brings forth fruit. That's been the pattern of our ministry, to plant good seed in good soil.

It's sort of like building a house, isn't it? The two-by-fours go up quick, but if you don't have a foundation—which takes longer—but that's where the solid structure comes from.

As Jesus talked about the two houses, one man dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the storms came—and they will come—that house that was founded upon the rock withstood the storms, and thus that's really the key to the ministry.

Pastor Chuck, you've been very careful not to control this movement because you've felt that the Lord has birthed it. Unlike a denomination that has very strict rules and regulations, controls, tithing mechanisms, you have had sort of a hands-off approach. Can you explain a little bit about that philosophy?

Well, Skip, I came out of a denomination, and I was not satisfied within it because of the leadership. The leaders were really not the most spiritual men within the denomination. And I was seeking the Lord and really very sincere in my desire to just serve the Lord. I was troubled with the leadership within the denomination, and so I was really for a long time looking at the various denominations, feeling that maybe I would just leave the denomination I was in and get into another denomination. And so I would go to their conventions and meet the

men and so forth. But I found that in every denomination there was that same problem: The leadership was not the truly spiritual men within the denomination. I began to study it to find out why it is. Every denomination was started with a great move of God and a real, intense belief in the Word, but gradually they began to get more liberal in their theology and the spiritual aspects were set as secondary, not the primary thing. Why is it that denominations come under the leadership of those who are not so spiritual? I realized that if a man is truly spiritual, seeking the Lord and seeking to just serve the Lord, he doesn't care where he is. He can be in Albuquerque, he can be anywhere. He doesn't have ambitions for greatness or ambitions for power, he just wants to serve the Lord: "I'm content right where I am because I'm serving the Lord here; this is where God called me." But those men who were ambitious, they were the ones who were hungry for power, and thus become political; in other words, they begin to strive to gain the leadership. And because of that they are the ones that ultimately gain the power. And once they gain the power and the leadership, then they have a two-fold purpose. Number one is to extend their power. They begin to extend their power in the churches, trying to bring them more and more under their control. I've found that as I was in a denominational church, the leaders didn't know what was going on in my church, they didn't know what the needs were of my church. And then they want to perpetuate themselves in power, and so they surround them with weaker men that are no threat to them. And thus the denominations ultimately fall into that kind of leadership, and the spiritual is set on the back burner. "We're trying to increase the denomination, increase the numbers," and that be-

comes the goal. And I finally realized, "I'm not going to find it in a denomination; just going to have to start over again." And that's what we did.

One of the reasons I believe you've been so blessed in what God has given you as a steward is because you never held onto it, you never wanted it to begin with, you never had the ambition to hold onto it. Like you always say, "What you strive to attain, you have to strive to maintain." So as you look back at the ministry of Calvary Chapel and now all of this fruit, what are your concerns for this movement?

Well, basically my concern is that the generation will grow up that really didn't know the Lord in that way. You have the primary generation, the generation that knew the work of God, knew the move of God, and they understand that it is God's work. And the second generation, they hear about what God did. It isn't something that's actually happening in their lives but they hear about what God had done and so it's a memorial almost; you're living in the past of what God did. You get to the next generation, and they don't even hear about it. It just seems that's the way it goes. So my concern is that each generation becomes a first generation...so that you don't deteriorate with each generation and get further away from what God did in the beginning. ←

// CHUCK SMITH

Chuck Smith is the founder of the Calvary Chapel movement, senior pastor at Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, and author of dozens of books. Visit twft.com to listen to Chuck's radio program *The Word For Today*.

BLESSED BIBLE *By: Fanny Crosby*

*Blessèd Bible, Book of Gold,
Precious truths thy pages hold,
Truths to lead me day by day
All along my pilgrim way.*

*Blessèd Bible, pure and true,
Guide me all my journey through;
Heav'nly light within me shine,
Help me make thy precepts mine!*

*Lamp of faith, my feet to lead,
Bread of Heav'n, my soul to feed;
Living waters pure and free,
Book of books thou art to me.*

*Word of God, thy love impart,
Fire my zeal, and cleanse my heart;
Keep me earnest, keep me true,
Ev'ry day my strength renew.*

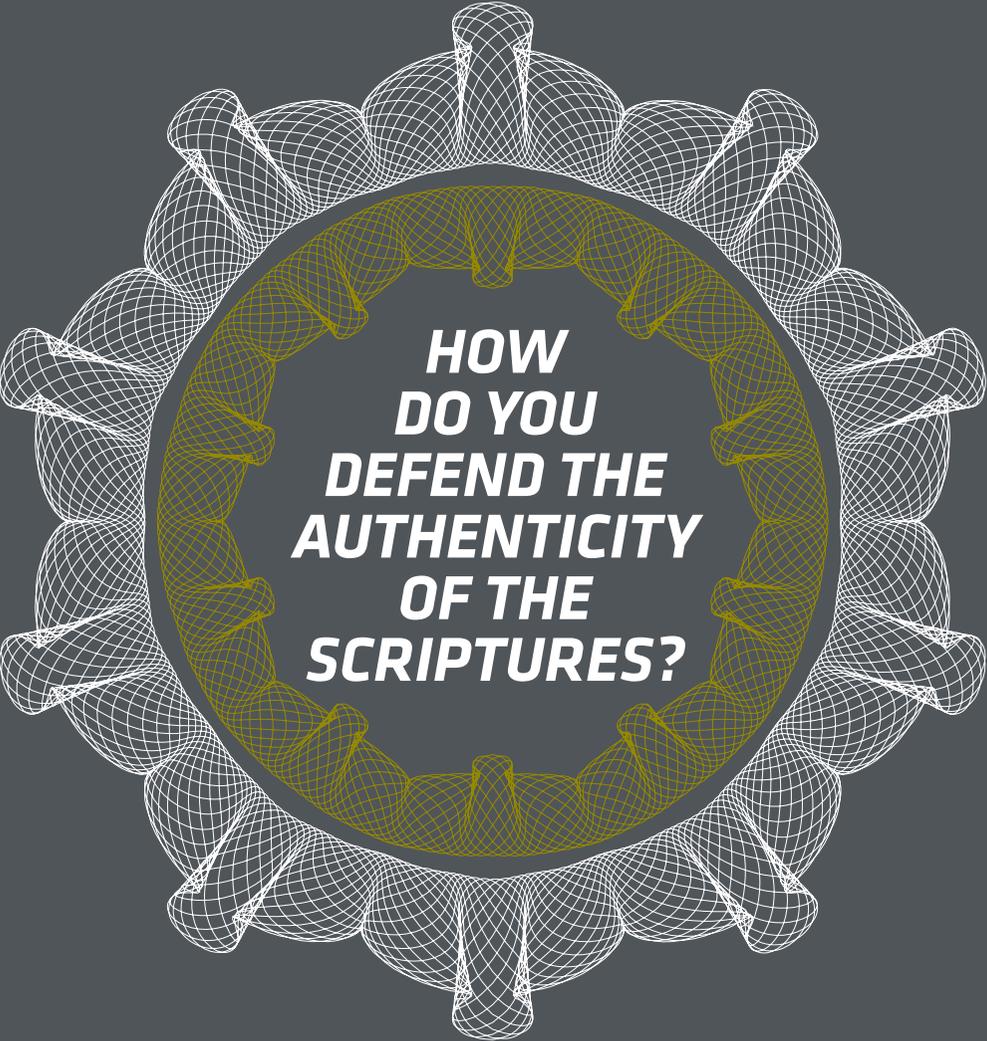
OH, WORSHIP THE KING *By: Robert Grant*

*Oh, worship the King, all glorious above.
Oh, gratefully sing His power and His love;
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.*

*Oh, tell of His might; oh, sing of His grace,
Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.*

*Your bountiful care what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light,
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.*

*Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
In You do we trust, nor find You to fail;
Your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!*

A large, intricate wireframe graphic of a globe, rendered in white and yellow lines, centered on the page. The globe is composed of a grid of lines that form a spherical shape with a textured, almost crystalline appearance. The central text is overlaid on a dark grey circular area within the globe's structure.

**HOW
DO YOU
DEFEND THE
AUTHENTICITY
OF THE
SCRIPTURES?**

By:
Skip Heitzig

One scholar said that if you took all of the original copies of extra-biblical works penned in the AD 50s and 60s, you could fit them all between two bookends spaced one foot apart. All of other literature, that's all you have.

But if you look at the New Testament, you find something interesting: an abundance of ancient manuscripts exist—5,750! If you take all the other fragments of the New Testament, you have about 24,000-plus fragments and documents (scrolls) from that time! What's interesting is that the earliest copy we have from the New Testament is a copy of the gospel of John penned in AD 120, only 30 years after John originally penned it. I bring that up because everybody wants to knock the Bible: "The Bible is invalid. How can you trust that old book penned by people?" But nobody disses the other ancient documents, the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Homer—which have much less credible evidence. Did you know that the earliest copy we have of the complete work of *The Odyssey* by Homer was written 2,200 years after its original? So: 30 years versus 2,200 years. Copies of works by Plato and Aristotle number only about five to ten, written about 1,000 or 1,500 years after the originals. But nobody disses those documents—but they do the Bible.

The question would then be: "How do we know the Bible is an accurate representation of the original? After all, you did mention copies, so somebody copied these documents. So all we have today aren't the originals, but copies of the originals. How do we know they didn't get distracted or something, and they wrote the wrong words down?"

HOW DO WE KNOW THE BIBLE IS AN ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF THE ORIGINAL?

But that only betrays an ignorance of the level of integrity of the ancient scribes. In the Jewish religion 2,000 years ago, becoming a scribe was a demanding and lofty profession. It took an entire lifetime of commitment. Training began at age 14 and did not end till age 40. And once you completed your training and were going to copy the master scroll, the material had to be carefully prepared, the ink had to be specially mixed and selected. Thirty-seven letters per line were required; every line was inspected and then reconfirmed, every letter, the space between the letters, the number of letters, the number of lines per page—all checked and rechecked. And the middle letter of the page was checked against the middle letter of the master scroll. If they didn't match up in any of these criteria, the copy of the entire scroll was burned—and the scribe would start from scratch, hand-copying it. All you have to do is take the oldest manuscript we have before the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls and compare them with the Dead Sea Scroll documents, which represents a time gap of hundreds of years. When you look at the copies, you find that there is no difference; an incredible level of consistency and accuracy. ←

COMMUNITY

A low-angle, close-up photograph of the lower legs and feet of three people walking on a city street. The person on the left is wearing dark jeans with the cuffs rolled up and dark loafers. The person in the middle is wearing dark pants and light-colored loafers. The person on the right is wearing dark pants and black sneakers with white soles. The ground is paved and has some faint, blurry text painted on it. The overall lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

ALL THE LONELY PEOPLE

By: Holly Slade

One of the Beatles' greatest songs, "Eleanor Rigby," asks two haunting questions in the chorus of its ode to loneliness:

*All the lonely people
Where do they all come from?*

*All the lonely people
Where do they all belong?*

We live in an age of social networking. In an instant we can update 1,500 of our "closest" friends with photos of the new puppy, a recipe of the latest garden-fresh gourmet salad, and our opinion on the latest political poll. When someone responds to our post, we are instantly updated. We simultaneously manage multiple conversations via an assortment of venues. How can it be that such a connected culture is experiencing unprecedented loneliness?

A recent article in *Atlantic Monthly* states, "Roughly 20 percent of Americans—about 60 million people—are unhappy with their lives because of loneliness. Across the Western world, physicians and nurses have begun to speak openly of an epidemic of loneliness. Americans have never been more detached from one another, or lonelier. In a world consumed by ever more novel modes of socializing, we have less and less actual society."

According to this same in-depth article, in 1985, only ten percent of Americans polled said they had no one with whom to discuss important matters; by 2004, that number had increased to twenty-five percent. That's an increase of 150 percent in only nineteen years.

There is simply no substitute for the physical presence of a friend, whether in times of need or joy. Real connections and genuine bonds of

friendship happen face-to-face rather than Facebook-to-Facebook. Yet society is rapidly heading toward a broader, yet shallower, network of "friends," as compared to the narrower and deeper relationships of previous generations.

It sounds farfetched to think that cyber relationships could replace human relationships, but we are careening toward this possibility at an alarming pace. Think of the young couple on a date, sitting across the table from each other in silence, while texting someone about the person sitting across from them. Consider the siblings at home in the family room; rather than talking to each other, they are texting their friends across town. Picture a parent enthusiastically chatting into an earpiece, while their toddler tries to entertain himself in the stroller.

Facebook and Twitter have no arms to hold us when we cry, no kind voice to express love, comfort, or empathy. Yet the time invested in these cyber-relationships often outweighs the time spent in meaningful relationships with one another.

In the end, the individual holding the smart phone decides whether

***THERE IS SIMPLY
NO SUBSTITUTE
FOR THE PHYSICAL
PRESENCE OF A
FRIEND, WHETHER
IN TIMES OF NEED
OR JOY.***

JESUS WAS HANDS-ON WITH PEOPLE. HE TOUCHED. HE HEALED. HE WEPT.

he or she will choose an electronic interruption over the flesh-and-blood person right in front of them. Valuing quantity of interactions over quality is a slippery slope resulting in a society overwhelmed with loneliness.

In the New Testament, we find the word *koinonia*. This word has a rich and complex meaning that defies a single-word translation in English. *Koinonia* is derived from the word *koinos*, a “fascinating Greek approach to building community and teamwork.” It implies an inner good that results in outward, virtuous social relationships.

Jesus practiced *koinonia* through authentic social networking. He came to this world to save us for an eternity of the ultimate social networking: relating with the triune God and with each other. Jesus was hands-on with people. He touched. He healed. He wept. And when He was nearing death on our behalf and in our place, He said, “I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn’t confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me” (John 15:15, NLT). In this brief lifetime, being a true friend is a high honor because, in reality, we entrust our hopes, our dreams, our sorrows, and our burdens with only a precious few.

God not only designed us to be social creatures, He gave us the mission to tell the world about His Son while caring for one another along the way. If God had chosen to broadcast the message of His Son from the heavens, the message would have gone viral in a split second. But our Creator told us to form real social networks that result in bonds of deep intimacy and to share the good news within that context. We serve, we feed, we visit, we sacrifice, we laugh, and we cry. In this way, we share His love with a lost and hurting world.

Jesus said, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22: 37-39, NIV). Jesus exemplified *koinonia*. He modeled it for his disciples and for us. Then he passed the baton.

*All the lonely people
Where do they all come from?
All the lonely people
Where do they all belong?*

Where do they belong? They belong to the body of Christ; they belong to you and to me, in the ultimate form of social networking: *koinonia*. ←

// HOLLY SLADE

Holly Slade serves as the Executive Administrator at Calvary Albuquerque. She volunteered in the women’s ministry for 12 years as a teacher, moderator, emcee, and “Jill of all trades,” while selling real estate with her husband Dave.

→ OCTOBER

OCTOBER 1

READ: John 1:1-14,
Matthew 1

REFLECT: *And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins* (Matthew 1:21).

RETURN: Luke 2:1-38

OCTOBER 2

READ: Matthew 2

REFLECT: *And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him* (Matthew 2:11).

RETURN: Luke 2:39-52

OCTOBER 3

READ: Mark 1, Luke 3

REFLECT: *Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Mark 1:11).

RETURN: Matthew 3

OCTOBER 4

READ: John 1:15-51,
Matthew 4

REFLECT: *For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ* (John 1:17).

RETURN: Luke 4-5

OCTOBER 5

READ: John 2-3

REFLECT: *For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved* (John 3:17).

RETURN: John 4

OCTOBER 6

READ: Mark 2:1-17

REFLECT: *When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you"* (Mark 2:5).

RETURN: Mark 2:18-28

OCTOBER 7

READ: John 5:1-23

REFLECT: *He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him* (John 5:23).

RETURN: John 5:24-47

OCTOBER 8

READ: Mark 3, Luke 6

REFLECT: *And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all* (Luke 6:19).

RETURN: Matthew 12:1-21

OCTOBER 9

READ: Matthew 5-6

REFLECT: *For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?* (Matthew 5:46).

RETURN: Matthew 7

OCTOBER 10

READ: Luke 7

REFLECT: *Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people"* (Luke 7:16).

RETURN: Matthew 8:1-13

OCTOBER 11

READ: Matthew 11:1-19

REFLECT: *The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them* (Matthew 11:5).

RETURN: Matthew 11:20-30

OCTOBER 12

READ: Luke 11

REFLECT: *So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you* (Luke 11:9).

RETURN: Matthew 12:22-50

OCTOBER 13

READ: Luke 8

REFLECT: *Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given* (Luke 8:18).

RETURN: Matthew 13

OCTOBER 14

READ: Mark 4-5

REFLECT: *And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"* (Mark 4:41).

RETURN: Matthew 8:14-34

OCTOBER 15

READ: Matthew 9

REFLECT: *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd* (Matthew 9:36).

RETURN: Matthew 10

OCTOBER 16

READ: Mark 6, Luke 9:1-17

REFLECT: *So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them* (Luke 9:17).

RETURN: Matthew 14

OCTOBER 17

READ: John 6:1-40

REFLECT: *And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me*

shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

RETURN: John 6:41-71

OCTOBER 18

READ: Mark 7

REFLECT: *He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me'"* (Mark 7:6).

RETURN: Matthew 15

OCTOBER 19

READ: Mark 8, Luke 9:18-27

REFLECT: *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God"* (Luke 9:20).

RETURN: Matthew 16

OCTOBER 20

READ: Mark 9, Luke 9:28-62

REFLECT: *Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes"* (Mark 9:23).

RETURN: Matthew 17

OCTOBER 21

READ: Matthew 18:1-20

REFLECT: *For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost* (Matthew 18:11).

RETURN: Matthew 18:21-35

OCTOBER 22

READ: John 7

REFLECT: *And many of the people believed in Him, and said, "When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?"* (John 7:31).

RETURN: John 8

OCTOBER 23

READ: John 9

REFLECT: *He answered*

and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25).

RETURN: John 10:1-21

OCTOBER 24

READ: John 10:22-42

REFLECT: *I and My Father are one* (John 10:30).

RETURN: Luke 10-11

OCTOBER 25

READ: Luke 12

REFLECT: *Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom* (Luke 12:32).

RETURN: Luke 13

OCTOBER 26

READ: Luke 14

REFLECT: *For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted* (Luke 14:11).

RETURN: Luke 15

OCTOBER 27

READ: Luke 16

REFLECT: *But he said to him, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead"* (Luke 16:31).

RETURN: Luke 17:1-10

OCTOBER 28

READ: John 11:1-44

REFLECT: *And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?* (John 11:26).

RETURN: John 11:45-57

OCTOBER 29

READ: Luke 17:11-37

REFLECT: *So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But*

where are the nine?"
(Luke 17:17).

RETURN: Luke 18:1-14

OCTOBER 30

READ: Mark 10

REFLECT: *But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible"* (Mark 10:27).

RETURN: Matthew 19

OCTOBER 31

READ: Matthew 20

REFLECT: *Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant* (Matthew 20:26).

RETURN: Matthew 21

→ NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 1

READ: Luke 18:15-43

REFLECT: *Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"* (Luke 18:18).

RETURN: Luke 19

NOVEMBER 2

READ: Mark 11

REFLECT: *Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'"* (Mark 11:9).

RETURN: John 12

NOVEMBER 3

READ: Mark 12

REFLECT: *Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the*

Scriptures nor the power of God?" (Mark 12:24).

RETURN: Matthew 22

NOVEMBER 4

READ: Luke 20-21

REFLECT: *Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone?'"* (Luke 20:17).

RETURN: Matthew 23

NOVEMBER 5

READ: Mark 13:1-23

REFLECT: *"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it"* (Mark 13:21).

RETURN: Mark 13:24-37

NOVEMBER 6

READ: Matthew 24:1-31

REFLECT: *And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other* (Matthew 24:31).

RETURN: Matthew 24:32-51

NOVEMBER 7

READ: Matthew 25:1-30

REFLECT: *Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming* (Matthew 25:13).

RETURN: Matthew 25:31-46

NOVEMBER 8

READ: Mark 14

REFLECT: *And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will"* (Mark 14:36).

RETURN: Matthew 26

NOVEMBER 9

READ: John 13

REFLECT: *Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him* (John 13:16).

RETURN: Luke 22

NOVEMBER 10

READ: John 14-15

REFLECT: *Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid* (John 14:27).

RETURN: John 16-17

NOVEMBER 11

READ: Mark 15

REFLECT: *Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?"* (Mark 15:12).

RETURN: Matthew 27

NOVEMBER 12

READ: John 18-19

REFLECT: *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit* (John 19:30).

RETURN: Luke 23

NOVEMBER 13

READ: Mark 16

REFLECT: *But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him"* (Mark 16:6).

RETURN: Matthew 28

NOVEMBER 14

READ: John 20-21

REFLECT: *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name* (John 20:31).

RETURN: Luke 24

NOVEMBER 15

READ: Acts 1-2

REFLECT: *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them* (Acts 2:41).

RETURN: Acts 3

NOVEMBER 16

READ: Acts 4-5

REFLECT: *Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word* (Acts 4:29).

RETURN: Acts 6

NOVEMBER 17

READ: Acts 7

REFLECT: *But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God* (Acts 7:55).

RETURN: Acts 8

NOVEMBER 18

READ: Acts 9

REFLECT: *Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"* (Acts 9:4).

RETURN: Acts 10

NOVEMBER 19

READ: Acts 11

REFLECT: *And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord* (Acts 11:21).

RETURN: Acts 12

NOVEMBER 20

READ: Acts 13

REFLECT: *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them"* (Acts 13:2).

RETURN: Acts 14

NOVEMBER 21

READ: James 1-3

REFLECT: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning* (James 1:17).

RETURN: James 4-5

NOVEMBER 22

READ: Acts 15

REFLECT: *And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches* (Acts 15:41).

RETURN: Acts 16

NOVEMBER 23

READ: Galatians 1-2

REFLECT: *I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel* (Galatians 1:6).

RETURN: Acts 3

NOVEMBER 24

READ: Galatians 4-5

REFLECT: *Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ* (Galatians 4:7).

RETURN: Galatians 6

NOVEMBER 25

READ: Acts 17

REFLECT: *These were more*

fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so (Acts 17:11).

RETURN: Acts 18:1-18

NOVEMBER 26

READ: 1 Thessalonians 1-5

REFLECT: *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus* (1 Thessalonians 4:14).

RETURN: 2 Thessalonians 1-3

NOVEMBER 27

READ: Acts 18:19-28

REFLECT: *For he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ* (Acts 18:28).

RETURN: Acts 19

NOVEMBER 28

READ: 1 Corinthians 1-2

REFLECT: *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God* (1 Corinthians 1:18).

RETURN: 1 Corinthians 3-4

NOVEMBER 29

READ: 1 Corinthians 5-6

REFLECT: *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?* (1 Corinthians 6:9).

RETURN: 1 Corinthians 7-8

NOVEMBER 30

READ: 1 Corinthians 9-10

REFLECT: *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it*

→ DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1

READ: 1 Corinthians 12-13
REFLECT: *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.* (1 Corinthians 12:26).
RETURN: 1 Corinthians 14

DECEMBER 2

READ: 1 Corinthians 15
REFLECT: *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep* (1 Corinthians 15:20).
RETURN: 1 Corinthians 16

DECEMBER 3

READ: 2 Corinthians 1-2
REFLECT: *For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing* (2 Corinthians 2:15).
RETURN: 2 Corinthians 3-4

DECEMBER 4

READ: 2 Corinthians 5-7
REFLECT: *And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again* (2 Corinthians 5:15).
RETURN: 2 Corinthians 8-9

DECEMBER 5

READ: 2 Corinthians 10-11
REFLECT: *Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every*

thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

RETURN: 2 Corinthians 12-13

DECEMBER 6

READ: Romans 1-3
REFLECT: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek* (Romans 1:16).
RETURN: Acts 20:1-3

DECEMBER 7

READ: Romans 4-5
REFLECT: *For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness"* (Romans 4:3).
RETURN: Romans 6-7

DECEMBER 8

READ: Romans 8-9
REFLECT: *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live* (Romans 8:13).
RETURN: Romans 10

DECEMBER 9

READ: Romans 11-12
REFLECT: *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!* (Romans 11:33).
RETURN: Romans 13

DECEMBER 10

READ: Romans 14-15
REFLECT: *For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live*

or die, we are the Lord's (Romans 14:8).

RETURN: Romans 16

DECEMBER 11

READ: Acts 20:4-21:40
REFLECT: *But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God* (Acts 20:24).
RETURN: Acts 22-23

DECEMBER 12

READ: Acts 24-25
REFLECT: *But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound* (Acts 24:27).
RETURN: Acts 26

DECEMBER 13

READ: Acts 27
REFLECT: *Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up* (Acts 27:20).
RETURN: Acts 28

DECEMBER 14

READ: Philemon 1, Colossians 1-2
REFLECT: *That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God* (Colossians 1:10).
RETURN: Colossians 3-4

DECEMBER 15

READ: Ephesians 1-4
REFLECT: *For by grace you have been saved through*

faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast

(Ephesians 2:8-9).

RETURN: Ephesians 5-6

DECEMBER 16

READ: Philippians 1-2

REFLECT: *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself* (Philippians 2:3).

RETURN: Philippians 3-4

DECEMBER 17

READ: 1 Timothy 1-4

REFLECT: *For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus* (1 Timothy 2:5).

RETURN: 1 Timothy 5-6

DECEMBER 18

READ: Titus 1-2

REFLECT: *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men* (Titus 2:11).

RETURN: Titus 3

DECEMBER 19

READ: 1 Peter 1-3

REFLECT: *As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby* (1 Peter 2:2).

RETURN: 1 Peter 4-5

DECEMBER 20

READ: Hebrews 1-3

REFLECT: *For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end* (Hebrews 3:14).

RETURN: Hebrews 4-6

DECEMBER 21

READ: Hebrews 7-8

REFLECT: *Therefore He*

is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).

RETURN: Hebrews 9-10

DECEMBER 22

READ: Hebrews 11-12

REFLECT: *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him* (Hebrews 11:6).

RETURN: Hebrews 13

DECEMBER 23

READ: 2 Timothy 1-2

REFLECT: *Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus* (2 Timothy 1:13).

RETURN: 2 Timothy 3-4

DECEMBER 24

READ: Jude 1

REFLECT: *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life* (Jude 1:21).

RETURN: 2 Peter 1-3

DECEMBER 25

READ: 1 John 1-3

REFLECT: *And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming* (1 John 2:28).

RETURN: 1 John 4-5

DECEMBER 26

READ: 2 John 1

REFLECT: *This is love, that we walk according to His commandments* (2 John 1:6).

RETURN: 3 John 1

DECEMBER 27

READ: Revelation 1-3

REFLECT: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me* (Revelation 3:20).

RETURN: Revelation 4-5

DECEMBER 28

READ: Revelation 6-8

REFLECT: *Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place* (Revelation 6:14).

RETURN: Revelation 9-11

DECEMBER 29

READ: Revelation 12-13

REFLECT: *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come"* (Revelation 12:10).

RETURN: Revelation 14-15

DECEMBER 30

READ: Revelation 16-17

REFLECT: *Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth"* (Revelation 16:1).

RETURN: Revelation 18

DECEMBER 31

READ: Revelation 19-20

REFLECT: *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude...saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"* (Revelation 19:6).

RETURN: Revelation 21-22



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Dear Pastor Skip,

You sent us *Homeland Security*. It is amazing. It was a love letter sent right from God. I was being tortured by the enemy. I found the Lord in 1992 when I was 42. I had been Buddhist. The Lord had sent dreams to me. One time, I spoke with an angel and he told me I was on the wrong path. (I thought he meant I was negative.) Anyway, for weeks, I have walked down memory lane and remembered how I made myself vile in my 20s. It shook me up. I questioned my salvation. Your book is touching my heart in a truly remarkable way. I love to hear you on the radio. Lenya is very encouraging too. I just wanted to thank you and our Lord for this wonderful book.

—Richard

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