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The high calling of selling dresses

A writer I know tells this story of a friend of his who was in a Nordstrom store in a wealthy Los Angeles suburb. The friend was on the top floor, where the most elegant dresses cost thousands of dollars, when the elevator doors opened and a bag lady from off the streets emerged. The friend expected the employees to notify security and have the woman returned to the streets, from where she had obviously come.

Instead, a stately saleswoman greeted the bag lady and said, “Can I help you, madam?” The bag lady said she wanted to buy a dress. A party dress. “You’ve come to the right place,” the saleswoman said, brightly. “We have the finest dresses in the world.”

The two women looked at several racks and decided on two to try on.

The friend was flabbergasted. She knew that the bag lady couldn’t afford clothes from this store. But the saleswoman and the bag lady went into the fitting room. After a while, the bag lady said, “I’ve changed my mind. I’m not going to buy a dress today.”

“That’s quite all right, madam,” the saleswoman replied. “But I’d like you to take my card. Should you come back to Nordstrom, I would consider it both a privilege and a pleasure to wait on you again.”

The bag lady got back on the elevator and left.

With school back in session this month, conversations on campus often focus on jobs, careers and vocations. In our school’s publicity we like to talk about how many of our students become doctors, lawyers, teachers, pastors, missionaries, journalists, researchers, therapists, professional athletes, opera singers, and on and on.

Almost never do I hear us tell how many of our graduates sell dresses.

If you sell dresses the way this wom-



an does at Nordstrom, though, you have a high calling. I would even call it “holy orders.” Done this way, selling dresses is a form of worship, fulfilling a vocational call.

Eugene Peterson says that our worship and our work are inseparable.

“What we’re after is a seamless world of work and worship, worship and work... Work is the primary context for our spirituality.”

Get that? Not in church. At work.

He says that we are introduced to God in scripture as He is going to work. When Jesus stood up in the synagogue to preach, he was announcing that he was going to work.

We’ve all been given a job by God. The job is to participate with Him as he redeems, restores and reconciles all of creation back into right relationship.

“The key to living vocationally—that is, being ‘God-called,’ Spirit-anointed—isn’t getting the right job or career, but doing kingwork in whatever circumstances we find ourselves,” Peterson said.

It is true that finding the right job matters. How else are we going to pay off these crazy loans? And we want to make our schools and parents proud. And we need those career counseling centers to help students figure out where they could be headed.

But something else matters, too.

We’ve all been called to love extravagantly, whatever our job may be.

Could selling expensive dresses really be a vocational call? When it’s done this way, it is.

Discovering that we all have holy orders means that our everyday tasks have meanings and connections beyond the tasks—that they are ways we participate with what God is already doing in the world.

Frederick Buechner said that in our culture, people have so many voices calling to them that it is hard to discern which are worthy of our attention. One of the unfortunate ideas we retain from our Puritan forefathers, he said, is that work is supposed to be a kind of pen-

Done this way, selling dresses is a form of worship, fulfilling a vocational call.

ance to work off the guilt we accumulate when we’re not working. The world is full of people whose work brings no pleasure or purpose to themselves or anyone else. They listened to the wrong voice.

How do we find this voice? Buechner says that if we keep our lives open, it will find us.

What is your job today? Watch as the elevator doors open. Your vocational call is right in front of you.



Dean Nelson directs the journalism program at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. His book about seeing God in everyday life is “God Hides in Plain Sight: How to See the Sacred in a Chaotic World.”

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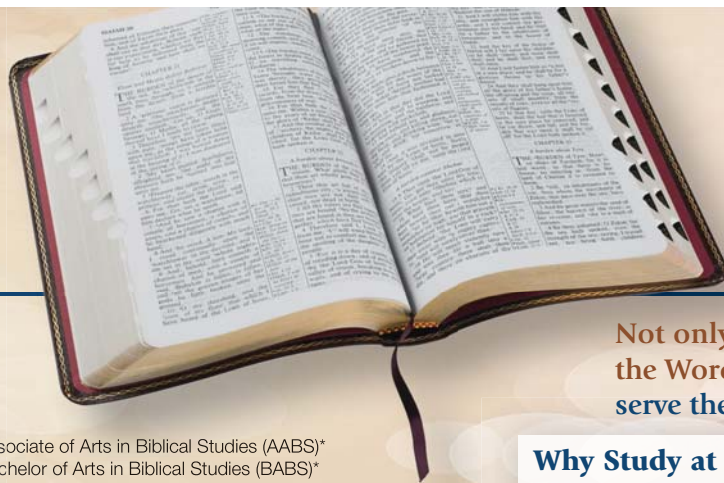
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Childhood ambition leads to impact in urban redevelopment

by LORI ARNOLD

As soon as Estean Lenyoun heard the *ding-ding* rattle through the service station where 25th Street intersected at Market, he hustled out to greet the driver of the two-door pinkish-gray 1955 Chevy Bel Air—just like his daddy taught him. Boasting crisp jeans, a broad smile and a uniform hat with a bright red star, Estean placed both hands where the window was being lowered by the hand crank.

“How may I help you ma’am?” came the small, helpful voice.

Rising above the driver and attendant was the towering Texaco sign, large enough to dwarf just about anyone, but even more dramatic when you are just 5 and pumping gas that costs 24.9 cents a gallon.

“They would look at you and smile because you were so cute and so little,” said Estean, more than a half-century removed from his first business venture at Eli’s Texaco, named for his papa. “They would light up. I remember getting little tips of a dime or a quarter.”

Even as a child, Estean loved the discipline and structure of working for his dad, heading with him to the station just before 6 a.m. and leaving for school several hours later. His payment came by way of the shop’s chocolate bars and soda pop.

“As I got a little older and a little taller, then I could do the windshield because I could reach it,” he said, adding that he eventually learned how to open the hoods to survey the radiator and batteries.

Even children, though, outgrow *The Three Musketeers*.

“One customer asked, ‘How much you



PHOTOS BY DAVID LOHLEIN PHOTOGRAPHY

getting paid?’ I looked up at (Dad) and said, ‘You mean I’m supposed to be getting paid?’ That’s when I figured it out. I don’t know why it took me so long, because at first it was so much fun.”

A student of entrepreneurship, his skills honed in large part by what he absorbed as he watched his father working 16-hour days, Estean quickly negotiated his own salary of 15 cents an hour, despite his dad’s sorry arguments that he was providing food, shelter and clothing to the grade-schooler.

THE ESTEAN LENYOUN FILE

OCCUPATION: Director of Urban Redevelopment for Sudberry Properties

MINISTRY: President and CEO of Impact Urban America

BOARDS: Rosey Grier’s Giant Steps Senior Housing, Ken Blanchard’s Center for Faith Walk Leadership, San Diego Rescue Mission, The Lincoln Club, Urban Property Solutions

PAST INVOLVEMENT: Urban pastor at Maranatha Chapel in Rancho Bernardo; general managing partner of No Compromise Communities; chairman of Promise Keepers, Pangea Foundation, and World Impact; board member of Maranatha Church and School and Wells Fargo Bank Community Board of Directors.

PERSONAL: Married with two grown sons.

“I’m one of your best salesmen out here,” he informed the outmatched station owner. “I run hard and work hard.” I talked him into it. He started paying me, and then the whole world changed for me, it was like, ‘Wow, this is good money. I can do well here.’”

Recognizing the injustice of the situation, Estean was not content with his new pay schedule so he demanded “retroactive compensation.” It wasn’t long before his pay escalated to 25 cents an hour.

“I was his best employee,” he said. “He taught us to have a phenomenal work ethic. He taught us how to hustle and work hard. Sometimes I actually resented it because I thought he was working me too hard. It was too hard for a little kid to get up at that age and work those kind of hours. That went on all the way to college.

“But I liked the financial independence of being a serial entrepreneur. After a little while I really started to respect the rewards of having those kinds of experiences and that kind of exposure and work ethic and work discipline that provided financial independence and financial security at a very young age.”

Before too long, he figured out that he could buy candy in large quantities and sell it to his classmates at a nice markup.

By the age of 12, Estean had saved up \$500, enough money to buy that same Bel Air that awed him years earlier. Still

Estean Lenyoun keeps his inspiration fresh by frequenting the beach at La Jolla for alone time with God.



too young to drive, he loaned his new ride to his older sister until he had his own license.

Pursuing profits

Estean, 64, is still making deals, though now mostly in real estate as director of urban redevelopment for Sudberry Properties and president and CEO of Impact Urban America, a nonprofit social benefit ministry he co-founded in the '90s with NFL great Roosevelt "Rosey" Grier.

Taking advantage of an athletic scholarship to California State University, Long Beach, Estean pursued business with the same meticulous attention to detail he used when washing windshields. IBM took notice and recruited him out of college. He worked in their Office Product Division for a year.

Driven to become a millionaire, Estean chased real estate, working for powerhouses such as Grubb & Ellis Commercial Brokerage Company. While much of the discipline that led to his success came by way of the family tree, a chance encounter at the age of 9 added rage to the equation.

While out and about in the neighborhood with his white Little League teammates the boys stopped to use the bathroom at a local business. Just as Estean was to follow his teammates inside, a man stepped in, blocking his path..

"He called me the big n-word and called me things you should never say to a child," he said. "This is the '50s. I can't go in? What are you talking about?"

The man didn't stop with the single insult. As he hovered over Estean, the stranger unleashed a torrent of slurs.

"I remember looking at my friends and they were like, 'We don't know what to say or do,'" Estean said. "It was one of the most humiliating things and life-changing events that I had experienced, not only up until that point, of course, but in my life. I think it was a real paradigm shift for me to realize that in order to be 'equal' you had to be successful."

While racism was still the norm in some parts of San Diego—including

laws that prohibited African Americans from buying homes in certain neighborhoods—the bathroom episode instilled the reality inside of Estean's young heart.

"I never forgot it, it was so dramatic and such a horrible experience for a kid like that. I had never been talked to that way or treated that way or even heard that kind of mess. A grown man telling a kid that.

"I realized what mattered is not if you're black or white but green—green like money," he said.

Priority shift

From then on his singular goal was making enough money to distance himself from the limitations he associated with his neighborhood.

"I was struggling so hard to be equal. I couldn't relate to the people in the inner city because I didn't want to be like them," he said. "It sounds like such a shallow statement and it truly is. Not being like the environment from which I grew up was really a statement to say that I wanted more success. I wanted more notoriety, I wanted more opportunities and I wanted a different lifestyle that I didn't feel could be achieved growing up in the culture."

He continued his pattern of purchases, creating an investment portfolio of apartment complexes and property in three states, including 1,200 acres in Park City, Utah.

"Money," he said, "was my God."

But at age 41, Estean went to a meeting featuring a keynote address by former U.S. Senator Bill Armstrong of Colorado, who shared his faith. For the first time in his life, Estean prayed, not to the god of greenbacks, but to the one who cleansed his soul. He asked for forgiveness for his shallow pursuits.

"I figured I had nothing to lose, and as soon as I said that prayer, all hell broke loose," he said. "It was more than a statement. It was this reality that there was

this Creator of the Universe, this wonderful God and personal Lord and Savior. That if you asked him into your life, He would give you the opportunities and the desires of your heart, if you truly surrender."

Instead of running away from his past, Estean decided to run back, helping the very communities he shunned. After meeting Greer, who had dedicated his post-football career to community building, he vowed with Grier to work together through Impact Urban America.

"I would connect the dots and he would come up with the meat part of it," Grier said of his partner. "I always try to see what's in the heart of a man: Once you are with a man and you are around them a while their heart will reveal itself.

"Estean is a brilliant man, He wanted to work hard. He's always thinking. He's seeking ways in which he can be helpful to others. I love that about the man. He's honest. He's a visionary. He thinks things through. He can put things together, things that I can't put together."

Changing community

Over the years, their ministry has morphed as the pair has tested various methodologies, including housing programs, practical assistance through clothing and food, life skills develop-

ment, and church makeovers. At one point, a job skills program they created resulted in 1,000 people on their payroll.

Eventually, Estean said, they realized that bolstering the local economy through community development was the true key to helping maintain employment while keeping the money circulating within the community. So they began focusing on rehabilitation projects involving businesses, churches and city officials in collaborative, transformative projects.

Estean praises his boss, Tom Sudberry, for his commitment to many of their ministry projects.

“It’s a life-changing experience to be able to watch and to listen and to know and to love a man that loves God so much (and is) willing to share his time and talents, and to help equip and invest in so many people’s lives from so many different cultures as a calling,” he said.

Also playing a role is Ray Bentley, the senior pastor at Maranatha Chapel, where Estean previously served as an urban pastor.

“We came up with concept of ‘ministry heart and business mind,’” Estean said. “If you combine them both then you have something that is very unique. We found that the churches had the ministry equation and the solutions to society’s problems, but we found business had a special discipline and an awareness and a skill to be able to recognize the means, methods and ways to accomplish business successes and goals in ways that the ministries didn’t have.”

Their newest project is Limoncello, a 24-unit dilapidated rehabilitation center in Lemon Grove that has been renovated into studio and one-bedroom apartments for active adults.

“It’s really fascinating to see God at work and see what He can do when He’s in the deal, because we didn’t have the experience,” Estean said. “It wasn’t us making these numbers happen and providing these opportunities. It was God parting the Red Sea and giving these wonderful people an opportunity to enter into self-sufficiency.” ■

*The key to community development is economic development;
The key to economic development is human development;
And the key to human development is vision, value, and opportunities.*

At a glance...



Impact Urban America is a faith-based social entrepreneurial non-profit organization comprised of humanitarians, thought leaders, entrepreneurs, and business executives who are committed to life transformation and economic and community development in Urban America.

Founded: In 1992 by football legend Rosey Grier and businessman Estean Lenyoun with the objective to become part of the solution to the problems in inner cities and urban communities.

Vision: Impact Urban America’s vision is to assist in the transformation of urban communities, allowing its residents the opportunity to develop their human potential by setting goals, becoming contributors to society and achieving their dreams.

Recognition:

- City of San Diego – Special Commendation for “Christians in the Hood,” 1996
- President George W. Bush – Points of Light Award, 2002
- City of San Diego – Special Commendation for Extreme Church Makeovers, 2004 & 2005
- City of San Diego – Certificate of Appreciation for creating a national training and development model that emphasizes the importance of teaching “self-leadership,” 2006



Recent Projects:

- 2011 Urban Economic Bus Tour with developers that spurred the redevelopment of 4-6 projects
- 2013 & 2014 Limoncello refurbished 24 studio and one-bedroom residences
- 2015 Urban Economic Bus Tour (in development)

Information: Learn more at www.impacturbanamerica.org.

Contact: If your community is interested in partnering with IUA to help revitalize neighborhood areas, or if you are a fellow humanitarian/venture entrepreneur and would like to be involved in IUA special projects, please contact Estean Lenyoun at estean@impacturbanamerica.org.



A project of  Impact
Urban America

Dilapidated rehab center gets its own rehab

by LORI ARNOLD

When the 24-unit Lemon Grove residential care facility first opened, its goal was to provide healing help to seniors. Years later, after serious neglect and several ownership changes, the center needed its own healing help.

A code enforcement nightmare, the three-building complex had leaky roofs, rotted joists and trusses, structural issues and bug infestations. The damage was so bad it was visible on Google's satellite map.

"You don't see many properties at that level of disrepair," said Estean Lenyoun who, with a business partner, purchased the property as part of a repurposing project to convert the facility into studio and one-bedroom apartments.

The Limoncello project is part of Estean's work with Impact Urban America, a faith-based social entrepreneurial organization he runs with former NFL star Rosey Grier. It was a collaborative effort that had the blessings of city officials and community leaders at the highest level and had tapped volunteer workers from nearby Home Depot and its vendors.



The Dayton Drive property, Estean said, was reminiscent of the handiwork of big city slumlords, but located smack-dab in the middle of a quiet residential area.

"There were people who lived in really major, substandard conditions, conditions that are deplorable to the point where you really don't want to face the fact that people live that way," he said.

Estean said that the lifestyles of those who lived there emulated the deteriorated condition of the buildings.

As part of the rehab work, crews replaced all of the sewer mains and laterals, plus the plumbing and electrical systems. The wall studs had to be reinforced and all three roofs replaced.

Limoncello is a single-

story community. Nine of the 24 units are one-bedroom; the rest are studios. Some boast galley kitchens, and all have granite countertops, marble vanities, new cabinetry, new energy-efficient appliances, air conditioners and ceiling fans.

Landscaped areas include lemon trees, an organic garden, palm trees, and a grass picnic area for outdoor community socializing.

Estean described the new community as "an eco-friendly, work-force housing prototype that is reasonably priced to encourage ultimate home-ownership for professionals."

He said the redevelopment project "provided an opportunity to give beauty from ashes."

Limoncello celebrated its grand opening on August 2 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

For rental information, call (619) 260-3000 or (858) 334-8836.





Sudberry Properties is a proud sponsor of Impact Urban America. We salute their ongoing efforts to provide social benefit services to all aspects of America's urban communities and wish them continued success across America.



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Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.
— 2 Corinthians 12:9



The paradox of

Robin Williams

by DANIEL JENKINS

C*arpe Diem!* – Seize the Day! Whenever I hear that phrase my mind goes back to the movie, *Dead Poets Society*. As the emcee for Point Loma Nazarene University's Freshmen Convocation I had the opportunity to watch this movie with each new batch of eager freshmen. After watching Robin Williams play Mr. Keating about twenty times I felt like I had established something of a connection with his character. The charismatic Mr. Keating bestowed creative inspiration in his beloved students, as well as a love of literature, and a desire to live life unfettered and to the fullest.

Just like the character he played, Robin Williams lived as a man with boundless energy coupled with amazing wit, where the world was his stage and he could contribute a verse. This man brought joy and happiness to countless people. How is it that such an inspirational person, with such talent and positive impact can make a decision to end his life by his own hand?

We don't know all of the reasons why Williams made this decision, but we do know that he had a history of major depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and a recent diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. We know older males are at greatest risk for successfully taking their lives.

We also know that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in America, more common than death by automobile accidents. We know that suicide rates are rising; between 1999 and 2010 adult suicide rates *rose by more than 28 percent*. We know that Major Depressive Episodes are highly linked to suicide and that the symptom of *hopelessness* is most frequent reason why a person will end their life.

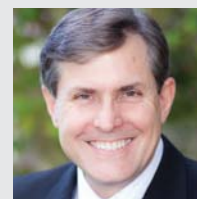
How might we provide hope to the hopeless? How do you know if a person is feeling hopeless if they are smiling and telling you that everything is just fine? It comes down to a willingness to connect with other people on an intimate and vulnerable level. Scripture tells us that we don't have to be afraid of our weaknesses and that God works through our flaws to impact others.

If you know someone who is depressed and you suspect that they may be thinking about ending their life, it is paramount for you to take some action. Use the power of the relationship to provide hope. Tell them that they are important to you and that you want to help. Say things like, "I am here for you. We can get through this together." When someone else can't seize the day, and they have shared their hopelessness with you, seize the day for them by being

available during those critical moments.

We don't know what was going through Robin William's mind before he took his life. His subjective reality may have been very different from what others saw on the outside. In facing the harsh reality of his death we can only say that we all wish we could have been by his side to bring him hope and encouragement in those final moments, just as he has done for countless others.

Did you know that September is National Suicide Prevention Month? Now, more than ever, may we let the power of the Lord work through our weaknesses to help us connect with hurting people at a deeper level. Intimacy is the pathway to greater connection, and paradoxically, it is by being vulnerable that others become willing to share their own hurts and fears. The right words at the right moment may prevent the unthinkable from happening.



Daniel Jenkins, Ph.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist at Lighthouse Psychological Services in Mission Valley. He is also a professor of psychology at Point

Loma Nazarene University. Learn more at www.lighthousepsy.com.

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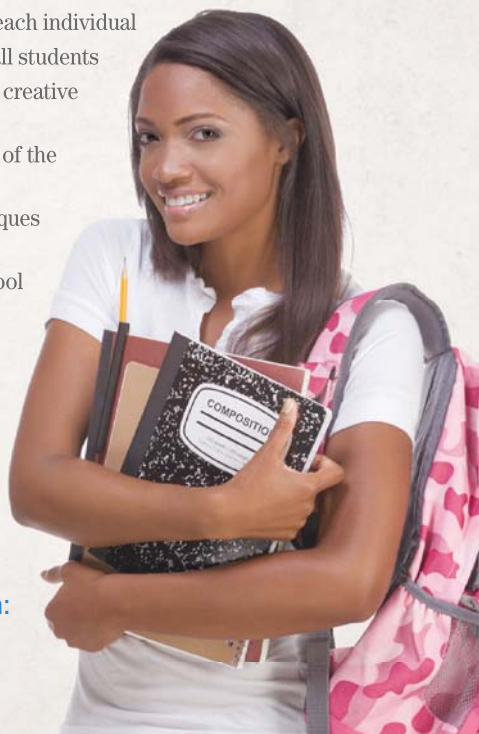
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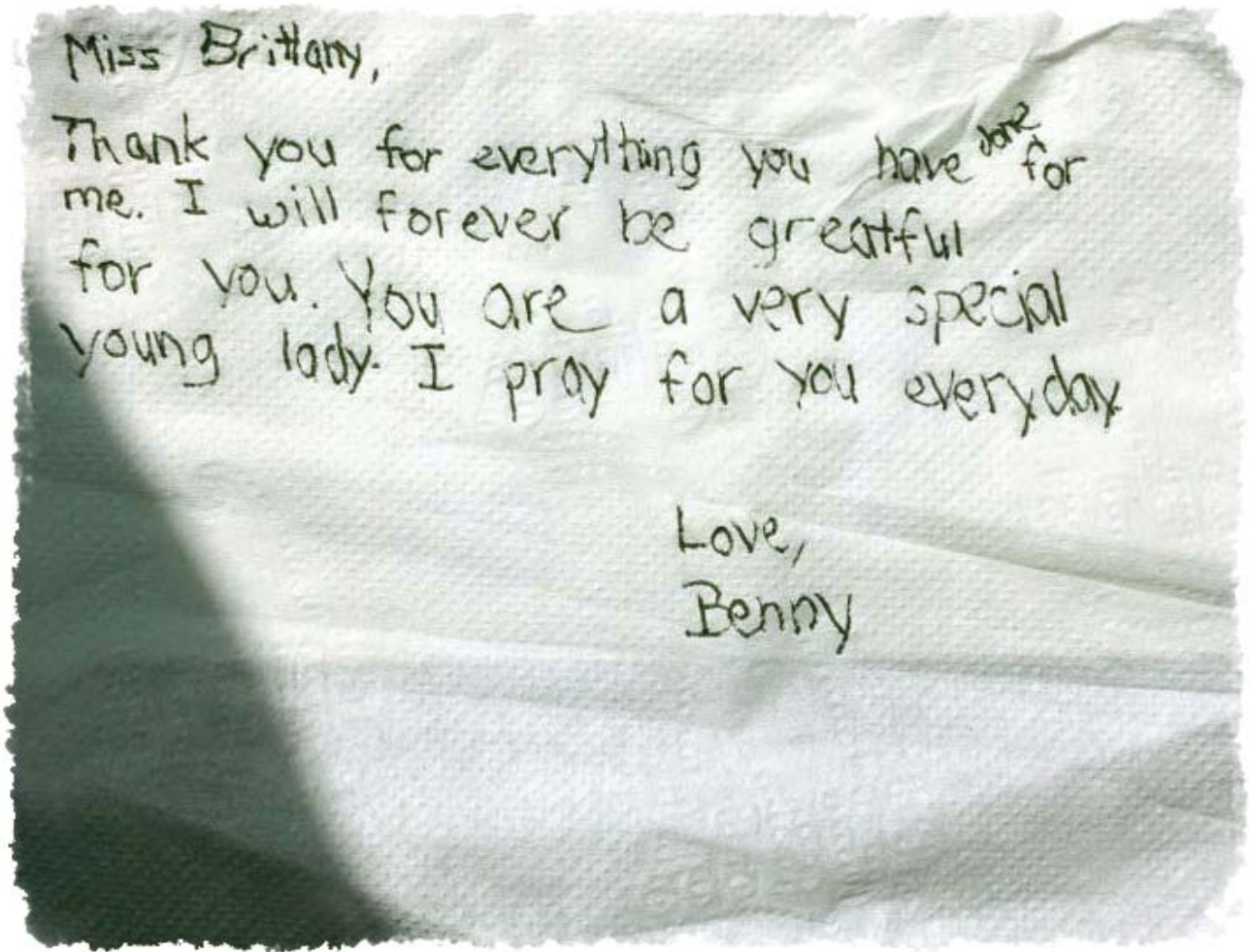


PHOTO COURTESY OF BRITTNEY HANVEY.

Just a and a biscuit blanket

by ANNA KELLER

Brittney Hanvey says she doesn't quite know what made her pull over to the side of the road back in January to offer a homeless man a biscuit. But that seemingly small act set off a chain of events that helped transform a life.

Hanvey, a pharmaceutical sales representative, spends many days driving to and from various doctors' offices. Every two weeks she visits the same doctor at Princeton Baptist Medical Center in Birmingham, Ala. During many of her trips to that office, Hanvey spotted the same homeless man on the street visit after visit.

"There was always this same man out there, wearing a raggedy T-shirt and pants," Hanvey recalled. "I was always told not to stop for people by the side of the road, because you couldn't tell if they just wanted drugs."

But, Hanvey said, one frigid January morning she felt compelled to stop and help the man.

"I was taking a doctor some breakfast, so I had some biscuits in my car, and I had a blanket for some reason too," she said. "So I stopped and offered him a biscuit and the blanket, and he took both and asked me if I minded sitting and

talking for a minute."

Hanvey sat down and said the man asked her why she'd stopped. She told him it was because he'd looked so cold, and then he began to cry and asked if he could pray for her before she left.

"Instead of praying for himself, he prayed for me: for my family, my





future husband,” Hanvey said.

“I was so touched. He introduced himself as Benny before I left.”

Hanvey said after that January day, she continued to drive past Benny from time to time but was always running late and didn’t have time to stop again. Then one day, she noticed he was missing from his usual spot.

In late February, she visited Princeton Medical Center on her regular rounds and saw an older man in the doctor’s office who looked familiar.

“The man caught me staring at him and said, ‘Oh, Miss Brittney, I’m so glad to see you.’” Hanvey said. “It was Benny. I didn’t recognize him because he was all cleaned up and everything.”

Brittney learned the doctor saw her stop and talk with Benny that cold January day. Her kind gesture moved him to reach out to Benny. He offered Benny a job as his office housekeeper. He’s since said Benny has been the best housekeeper the office has ever had.

“And the doctor told me, ‘Before you leave, just notice what he does when patients come in,’” Hanvey recalled.

She watched Benny and noticed that before the doctor came in to visit patients, Benny would walk up to the examining room, put his hand on the door and pray for the person in the room.

When Hanvey returned to the office in mid-March, the nurses were raving about Benny. They’d grown to love him and were helping him re-learn to write because they discovered he hadn’t made it past the sixth grade. Before Hanvey left during that visit, Benny gave her a note he’d written for her, which read:

“Thank you for everything you have done for me. I will forever be grateful for you. You are a very special young lady. I pray for you every day.”

When Hanvey came by the office for

her next visit, she found a yellow rose waiting for her from Benny. The office nurses explained that they’d been talking about what different colors of roses meant and said Benny had insisted on getting a yellow rose for Hanvey.

“I kept telling him, ‘Benny, I didn’t do anything. I just talked to you that one day,’” she said.

“He said, ‘No, no — you and God and the doctor have opened so many doors for me.’”

The day after Hanvey received the rose, Benny suffered a heart attack while

in the office. He survived, but the incident left him weak, and he had to reduce the number of hours working at the doctor’s office. He now lives in a guesthouse at the doctor’s home and works a couple of days a week.

Hanvey said she never imagined that her stopping to offer a man a biscuit on a winter day would lead to this, but one thing is for sure: Benny’s life is forever changed thanks to Hanvey, and it may be safe to say her life has forever changed thanks to him. ■

Anna Keller writes for The Alabama Baptist, where this article first appeared.

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A photograph of Dallas Willard, an older man with glasses, wearing a black academic robe with a blue and red collar. He is speaking at a wooden podium with a microphone. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

The smartest man I ever met

by TONY BARON

The smartest man I ever met died last year.

I still can't believe he is gone. Daily I think of him, talk to God about him, and live a life of gratefulness because of him. Seventy-seven years he lived on this earth, but it wasn't long enough for me.

Dallas Willard was my doctoral professor at Fuller Theological Seminary on the subject of "Spirituality and Ministry"—a lackluster title to be sure, but a fairly typical one for graduate school. Our required reading focused on the classics of Christian spirituality. Whether the authors were Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, or Protestant; ancient or new; male or female—we were exposed to nearly all of the thought leaders and practitioners on spirituality.

Naturally, some may think I call Dallas the smartest man I ever met because of his academic qualifications—they are certainly impressive. He held a Ph.D. specializing in epistemology (how it is that we know what we know). For nearly fifty years Dallas taught at USC where he

was voted Outstanding Faculty Member by the student senate. But that is not why I call Dallas Willard the smartest man I ever met.

I call Dallas Willard the smartest man I ever met because I know no other human being whose IQ and I Do were so integrated with the ways of Jesus Christ, the icon of servant leadership (Mark 10:45).

As the Book of Common Prayer so eloquently puts it, the "thoughts, words, and deeds" are what we need to confess as fallen creatures. But in the case of Dallas Willard, he had less profane "thoughts, words, and deeds" of any person I have ever met.

The role of a servant leader

I have always believed that the role of a servant leader is *to inspire, equip, and encourage those we influence for God's vision in a world that God loves.*

Like Robert Greenleaf (who coined the phrase servant leadership), I believe that a leader must be a servant first, then a leader. Further, servant leaders must

leave the ones they are serving better off emotionally, physically, spiritually, or psychologically for having had encountered them.

There are three dimensions of servant leadership which Dallas Willard lived out that profoundly changed my life as a professor, pastor, parent, personal coach—and as a person. In fact, these three dimensions are necessary for all who seek to serve for the sake of others and not themselves.

1 All great servant leaders inspire greatness.

Most leaders inspire greatness in others through their stirring words. After all these years I am still moved when I read the words or see the video of Martin Luther King's speech, "I Have a Dream." A profound sermon or a thought-provoking speech often compels us to be more or do more. Through the spoken or written word, we are motivated to think bigger and live with greater purpose—to be a better person, a more effective servant leader, or a

DALLAS WILLARD PHOTO BY BRAD ELLIOTT/COURTESY OF WESTMONT COLLEGE

more obedient follower of Jesus.

There are other leaders though who inspire greatness beyond their words. More than their melodious voice, their timely gestures, or their artistic way of storytelling—they simply model themselves after the powerful words that so deeply resonate within us. Their daily lives are a living, breathing demonstration of the richness and weight of their words. They live and speak what is true.

We find ourselves marked by the authenticity of their statements and completely won over by the conviction by which they live. Those of this caliber inspire greatness in others because their words and actions align. Their thoughts are deep, and they convey wisdom—not with superiority—but with kind justice toward others and great responsibility toward God. They have an instinctive clarity for what is truly important in life. They are mindful and intuitive about what really needs to change to make this world a better place. Nelson Mandela comes to my mind. So does Mahatma Gandhi. More than their words alone, their *lives* stir greatness in others. In the same way, Dallas Willard inspired others to make an impact with their lives. The famous mega-pastors like John Ortberg to best-selling authors on spirituality like Richard Foster to influential theologians like J.P. Moreland or Gary Black, Jr. were impacted by Dallas' generous lifestyle as a servant leader.

2 All great servant leaders are humble teachers.

I don't believe anyone can truly be a servant leader without humility. Arrogant teachers may provide knowledge to their students, but rarely wisdom. Humility is a lack of egotism without respect to one's attainments. Humility is the honest appraisal of one's gifting, without competitive comparisons to others, but with full recognition that God is the Provider. In essence, humility (like the word "meekness") is personal power under control.

What made Dallas such a gifted and humble teacher was that he was a seeker of truth and knowledge; a servant to His Lord for the benefit of others; and a sage for all those willing to hear and learn how to "live on earth as it is in heaven." Dallas incarnated what he imparted.

Todd Hunter, now a Bishop in the An-

glican Church of North America, was at one time President of the fast growing Vineyard denomination in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Todd wanted to help their pastors deal with the confusion that post-modernity can provoke on such important questions as: "What is truth?" and "How can we know that we know?"

Todd contacted Dallas Willard, widely recognized as one of the leading epistemological scholars in the United States, and asked him if he would be willing to address the question, "How do we know what we know?" for his pastors.

They discussed the great questions of life. They talked about how all systems of thought will have to answer key critical questions if we are to take life seriously.

Though Todd is a national teacher to many, he was a student when Dallas taught. It was from that moment that Todd Hunter began to move from a Gospel that advocates sin management to a Gospel that reflects the Kingdom of God. Todd will tell you that it was the *humility* of Dallas, even more than his brilliant mind, which encouraged him to model his life after Dallas—because Dallas modeled his life after Jesus.

3 All great servant leaders are compassionate encouragers.

Dallas had a way of making you feel like you were at that very moment, the most important person in the world. His impressive intellect could make any pastor nervous and the give-and-take of good conversation difficult, but this was Dallas. His gentle demeanor was consistent with his remarkable listening skills and warm eye-contact. He genuinely cared about you as a person.

Dallas knew I was serving as Senior Pastor of a southern California church. Although the church was healthier than ever in its hundred-year history, I was physically tired and, at times, experiencing spiritual burnout. The numbers were growing, the people seemed responsive, but I was wondering if the church was really making disciples of Jesus for the world or just better church members in the parish. After five and a half years there, I was wondering if I was the problem or could I still be an instrument for a solution that God could use.

As we talked, it didn't take long for Dallas to get to my heart. My tears flowed freely. Dallas touched my hand and

looked me in the eyes. His words were encouraging and refreshing water to a dry soul. I was truly nourished by them. I knew I was called to stay at that ministry and continue on. It was as if Jesus Himself told me that He was pleased with my ministry. No exaggeration—the burnout totally evaporated in that moment.

I have had several conversations with Dallas at more casual settings, over meals and in front of other friends. He encouraged me always, with a touch, a look, or a voice that expressed, "I believe in you."

I knew I was not alone. I knew many who would call Dallas a dear friend simply because he was available to listen, love, and pray.

The Passing of a Great Servant Leader, Dallas Willard

Dallas often described death simply as a "transition from one room in the house to another." He had even surmised that it may be a while before he realized that he himself had died. On May 8, 2013, the Servant Leader who inspired, equipped, and encouraged hundreds of thousands in his seventy-seven years was about to move permanently to another room.

Hardly able to speak in his final moments, Dallas managed to utter his last two words: "Thank you." I am told by those who were there that they were unsure what he was grateful for. Of course, there was much to be thankful for. Was it his wife Jane? His family? His life? No one knows for sure. However, it would not surprise me that this humble servant leader who taught me more about how to live than any other person on earth was simply responding to Jesus in Heaven when our Lord said, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter in the joy of your Master." (Matthew 25:23) It would be just like Dallas as he entered the Heavenly gates to humbly say to the words of Jesus, "Thank you."



Dr. Tony Baron is the director of Azusa Pacific Seminary in San Diego and an Associate Professor of Christian Leadership and Formation. He is the

Executive Director of the Ken Blanchard Center for Transformative Leadership.

New Blanchard Center launched

SAN DIEGO — A unique partnership between the Azusa Pacific Seminary in San Diego and Ken Blanchard's Lead Like Jesus training organization has resulted in the newly launched Ken Blanchard Center for Transformative Leadership.

Lead Like Jesus was founded by Blanchard and Phil Hodges as an international training organization to provide in-depth courses on the teachings of Jesus Christ, expounding on the subject of leadership.

Dr. Tony Baron, director of Azusa Pacific Seminary in San Diego and former president of the Servant Leadership Institute in Vista, approached Blanchard to form the partnership.

Baron will continue as the seminary director in San Diego and also be executive director of the Ken Blanchard Center for Transformative Leadership.

Azusa Pacific has been a national

leader in servant leadership under the writings and speaking of Baron, who is the author of *The Art of Servant Leadership* and *The Cross and the Towel*, both of which have become standard textbooks for corporations, churches, universities, and seminaries.

Baron said the fundamental assumption of the Ken Blanchard Center for Transformative Leadership certificate program in servant leadership is that the ministry of Jesus Christ was redemptive, both in its application to personal salvation and as a "practical and effective leadership model for all organizations, for all people, for all situations," as stated by Blanchard and Hodges in their book, *Lead like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Model of All Time*.

The Certificate in Servant Leadership is designed as a cohort model—for individuals, corporations, one church or multiple churches with 15 or more people—with once-a-month training set-

tings, informal gatherings of mentoring, and guided readings designed for practical application in church settings. The three components within the curriculum will include Lead Like Jesus leadership training, mentoring by Baron with the guided readings, and theology focusing upon the kingdom of God, spiritual formation, the heart of the gospel, the importance of vision and mission, and the nature of the local church.

The Ken Blanchard Center for Transformative Leadership will begin its first cohort on September 26 at The Rock Church.

Learn more at www.blanchardapu.com or call (626) 815-2148.

Armstrong to retire from KPRZ

SAN DIEGO — Salem Communications Corporation has announced that KPRZ general manager Dave Armstrong is retiring from Salem Communications at the end of September. Armstrong, who has led San Diego's Christian talk station for the past seven years, has managed the Los Angeles, New York and San Diego clusters during his 20 years with Salem.



Armstrong started in radio as a teenager as a part-time DJ at a small station in Conneaut, Ohio. He has held positions as program director, sales manager, and vice president/general manager during his 50 years in radio.

Salem Radio Division President Dave Santrella said, "Dave has been a tremendous leader in our company and his creative contributions have created legacy attributes that Salem enjoys to this day and will enjoy well into the future. For that we are forever grateful."

Although he's leaving Salem, Armstrong was quick to say, "This is the end of another chapter in my workbook, but it's not the final chapter and I'm excited to see what's next."

Thrive conference scheduled

EL CAJON — Registration is now underway for "Thrive," a two-day global empowerment conference designed to help wipe the tears of women from all



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walks of life. The conference will be held Sept. 26 and 27 at Narratives Church. The conference is the West Coast debut of "Thrive," which has held events on the East Coast for the past few years.

The speakers will include several native missionaries who work with women in some of the most difficult regions in the world.

Conference workshops will include:

- "Becoming Emotionally Healthy," an encouragement for those facing depression or other wounds
- "Out of the Darkness," one woman's story about converting from Islam
- "Thriving Because I Am Confident," a look at overcoming cultural messages that emphasize sexiness, success and perfection.
- "Beauty from Brokenness: Surrender, Forgiveness, Acceptance, Restoration," an inspirational testimony by local recording artist Mary James, an ICM Female Vocalist of the Year who will also lead worship.

The event is sponsored by International Women's Ministries, a division of Advancing Native Missions.

The cost is \$30, which includes desert Friday night, breakfast snack, lunch on Saturday, plus materials. All proceeds will benefit the work of Advancing Native Missions.

The church is located at 450 Fletcher Parkway, Suite 224.

Learn more by visiting www.advancingnativemissions.com/thrive or call (619) 249-9853.

Inaugural Bridge Builders event announced

SAN DIEGO — Pastor David Jeremiah and business leader Paul Saber will be the featured speakers for the first annual Bridge Builders leadership breakfast scheduled for Friday, Sept. 19.

Jeremiah is the senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon. He is heard on more than 2,000 radio stations daily worldwide on the Turning Point broadcast.

Saber is president and CEO of Manna Development Group, managing 56 Panera Bread restaurants with more than 2,400 employees.



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These services held at: 3219 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. (In Clairemont)
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The breakfast, hosted by the Professional Women's Fellowship and sponsored by several local businesses and ministries, has as its theme: Christian Leaders Communicating God's Love in Business and in Life. It is open to both men and women.

The event will be held at the Handlery Hotel in Mission Valley from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. Registration is \$35 (\$25 for PWF members).

To register, visit www.pwfsd.org.

Plant With Purpose gala to celebrate 30 years

SAN DIEGO — For 30 years Plant With Purpose has been transforming lives in poverty-stricken rural areas around the world. The organization provides lasting solutions to rural poverty through a community development approach that integrates reforestation, sustainable agriculture programs, economic opportunity through microfinance, and local leadership development. Current work is being carried on in six countries: Burundi, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, Tanzania, and Thailand.

To date, Plant With Purpose has planted more than 12 million trees and partnered with more than 18,500 families in 370 communities.

On Saturday, Oct. 11, the San Diego-based nonprofit will host

their annual gala at the Paradise Point Resort on Mission Bay. The event, which will reflect on 30 years of transformation of the rural poor, will feature an extensive silent auction, dinner, live auction, opportunity drawing, and Fund-A-Need auction.

Purchase tickets or learn more at www.plantwithpurpose.org/gala.

Men's conference at Pine Valley

PINE VALLEY — Pastor and author Jared C. Wilson is the featured speaker for the 2014 Men's Conference sponsored by Pine Valley Bible Conference Center on Oct. 10 to 12.

Wilson is the pastor of Middletown Springs Community Church in Middletown Springs, Vermont. He is the author of *The Story Telling God*, *Your Jesus Is Too Safe*, *Gospel Wakefulness*, and several other books. He blogs for The Gospel Coalition, Resurgence, and Lifeway.

Karl Verkade will be the worship leader.

Titled "Awaken," the conference is designed to allow men to step out of their current context, encounter Biblical teaching, and interact with other men on the same journey.

Pine Valley Bible Conference Center is a full-service, year-round camp and conference center located 30 miles east of El Cajon. Besides hosting its own camp and conference programming, the facility is also available for group rentals for retreats.

Learn more at www.pinevalleybible.com/events/men.

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C.S. Lewis' 'The Great Divorce' on stage

SAN DIEGO — In C.S. Lewis' "The Great Divorce" veteran Broadway actors bring some of Lewis' quirkiest, hopelessly flawed but still worth redeeming characters to life on stage in 90 humorous, witty and enchanting minutes.

Showcased in an imaginative stage design that transforms the world of the play from bleak and dark to lush and beautiful, "The Great Divorce" takes audiences on a bus ride from a suburb in Hell to a celestial new world on the outskirts of Heaven.

The show comes from the producers of the hit "The Screwtape Letters."

"Our challenge was to turn a complex theological fantasy into an accessible stage adaptation that entertains and provokes lively discussion," said Fellowship for Performing Arts founder and artistic director Max McLean.

The show makes a one-night-only stop in San Diego on Saturday, Oct. 25 with two live performances at Balboa Theatre at 4:00 and 8:00 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased at www.cslewisstage.com or by calling (619) 570-1100.

Church donates supplies to teachers

SAN DIEGO — When Whole Life Church decided on a new location to hold their weekly church services they found themselves near Rolando Elementary School. Wanting to reach out to the school and thank the staff for the investment they make into teaching young children, volunteers from the church went shopping for school supplies that the teachers customarily have to purchase using their own money.



A van is loaded with some of the 22 boxes of school supplies Whole Life Church volunteers were donating to the teachers at Rolando Elementary School.

“A cool thing was that, as we were checking out, we had people amazed by our story who were contributing and even paying for some of the supplies,” said pastor Donna Rothenberger.

A few days before school started, the church members delivered a gift box of classroom supplies to each of the 22 teachers.

Pregnancy clinic hosts golf fundraiser

SAN DIEGO — CAPS Pregnancy Services will host their 8th annual golf tournament on Monday, Sept. 29, at the Riverwalk Golf Course. The day will be filled with various contests, raffles, food, and 18 holes of golf.

Tee time is 12:30 p.m. with the registration and the range opening at 10:00 a.m.

CAPS is a licensed medical clinic with locations in the College Area and Pacific Beach communities. They provide early medical help and peer counseling to those facing unexpected pregnancies.

To register for the golf tournament, visit www.capsgolf.com.

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SPEAKER David Jeremiah is the founder of Turning Point Radio and Television Ministries and the senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church. He's the NYT Bestselling author of more than 30 books, including Signs of Life, What in the World is Going On? and God Loves You: He Always Has, He Always Will.



SPEAKER Paul Saber has been in the restaurant business since 1980 and has owned and operated 14 McDonald's and 56 Panera Bread restaurants. He is President and CEO of Manna Development Group, managing over 2400 employees. He's built a corporate culture based on one simple premise: Treat others as you would like to be treated.



Selah is one of many groups to release an album this past month.

Artists release lots of new albums in August

American Idol finalist (Season 11) **Colton Dixon's** sophomore album, *Anchor*, was released Aug. 19. Dixon kicked off his national press tour with a performance of his hit radio single, "More of You," live on Fox & Friends.

The 5-time Dove Award-winning vocal trio, **Selah**, has released *You Amaze Us*. Half of the songs are newly written material while the other half are older hymns and modern worship songs done in Selah's signature style. Selah is well



known for transforming old Christian hymns into a more modern style and with their powerful voices and

beautiful harmonies. The group continues a fan-favorite tradition of featuring an African-themed song on each recording, this time a bilingual rendition of the Andraé Crouch classic, "Soon And Very Soon." The song is performed in both English and Kituba, the language of Smith's childhood in The Congo, where his family served as missionaries.

Amy Grant puts a new spin on old hits with her August release of *In Motion: The Remixes*. The 11-song recording features a collection of Amy's biggest hits remixed by well-known remix engineers and DJs. Songs include "That's What Love Is For," "Every Heartbeat," "Find A Way," and "Stay For A While."



Family Force 5 released *Time Stands Still*, their first studio album in three years. The debut radio single, "Let It Be Love," emphasizes the incredible, life-giving power of grace.

Lincoln Brewster's latest album, "Oxygen," was released Aug. 19. The project features eleven new songs, 10 of them co-written by Brewster. The album's first single, "Made New," is currently garnering airplay at Christian radio stations across the country.

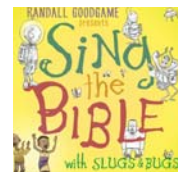
Sing the Bible with Slugs & Bugs

Sing The Bible, the fourth installment in the popular *Slugs & Bugs* series for families, was released August 12. Written and performed by acclaimed singer/songwriter Randall Goodgame and produced by Ben Shive, *Sing The Bible* is the first *Slugs & Bugs* release to feature exclusively word-for-word Scripture songs.

Slugs & Bugs has applied its unique blend of sincerity and silliness to 18 brand-new songs filled with lyrics straight from Scripture. Highlights of the project include "Freedom," showcasing The African Children's Choir and "Alien," featuring spoken dialogue from Sally Lloyd-Jones, best-selling author of *The Jesus Storybook Bible*.

"These songs were written to help families learn Scripture together," Goodgame says. "My grand hope is that these *Slugs & Bugs* songs will help fasten God's Word to the heart of all who listen. The musicians on *Sing The Bible* are some of the world's best, and they did a masterful job of keeping the focus first and foremost on lifting up Scripture."

A singer/songwriter, Goodgame has penned selections for Caedmon's Call, *VeggieTales*, Jason Gray and Ginny Owens, among others. Along with award-winning singer/songwriter Andrew Peterson, Goodgame created *Slugs & Bugs* & Lullabies in 2007.



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OCTOBER 10-12
Speaker:
JARED C WILSON
 Pastor at Middletown Springs Community Church
 Author of "Your Jesus is Too Safe" and
 "Gospel Wakefulness"
 Writer for The Gospel Coalition,
 Resurgence, and Lifeway
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Just sitting... enjoying the view

“Well now class, what did we learn over summer vacation?” asked nearly every teacher in America. How many times have we heard a variation of that question? It’s a rite of passage from seasonal leisure to those back-to-school, nose-to-the-grindstone cycles of life.

There’s been lots of talk about vacations in recent weeks, especially when it comes to the schedule for the President of the United States. *Can you believe it? The Leader of the Free World, taking vacation? With all the chaos heating up around the globe?!*

Yes. And I don’t blame the nation’s top taxpayer-funded employee for taking some R&R. Every President has done so, some more than others, but all deserve the time off. Besides, there’s no getting away from the 24/7 since the White House apparatus goes along with the Boss. They are never away from the job, and they age before our eyes.

I prefer a well-rested politician (regardless of party) to one who prides him or herself on working sleep-deprived. These are the people who control the nukes, after all. So rest up, one and all!

Taking the occasional holiday is a good thing, if used strategically and systematically. Still, many Americans pride themselves in the vacation hours they *don’t* use... as if non-vacation is a badge of honor. But research shows even a short “mental vacation” (or nap) is better than no time off at all.

Sometimes it can seem like too much getaway time works in a counter-productive way. The first day back to work may create a feeling of being drained of all of the benefits... bringing on thoughts of, “Really! Was vacation a good idea?” Again, yes.

Case in point: This year during our annual family gathering at Big Bear Lake (a long weekend during August) I

was reminded of all this in a charming, simple moment.

It was early morning and I had just walked out onto a balcony area outside the cabin. It was a nice, tranquil situation...until a little voice surprised me.

There was one of our 4-year-old grandsons, ready to share something obviously very important. (I’ll pause while you note, “Mark, you’re too young to have grandkids!” Thank you.)

He looked at me with a sweet smile and said, “Bompa, how about if we just sit here and enjoy the view?”

Enjoy the view. Timeless wisdom,

The lake suddenly looked a little more blue, the clouds a little more puffy and interesting.

out of the mouth of a babe.

The funny thing is, I thought I was doing just that, originally planning to plunk down with some encouraging reading and a hot cup of great coffee. But that little man snapped me into an immediate reassessment of my surroundings. Definitely one of those stop-and-smell-the-roses moments.

The lake suddenly looked a little more blue, the clouds a little more puffy and interesting. There were birds that appeared more varied, the scene more serene. Even the air seemed fresher.

As the wise Mini One climbed up into the “mountain home chic” two-seats-wide rocking chair, we started talking about what we could see out there. A water skier taking an early run across the placid lake surface. A biplane overhead, along with a few unusual bugs floating around the trees. There

was a squirrel running on a wire and a woodpecker banging his head against a pine somewhere in the woods.

Suddenly we were joined by the Wise Child’s cousin, insisting on climbing into the now-crowded rocker with us, saying that he too wanted to “enjoy the view.”

So much for what I thought the morning would be like. I reflected on that line again: *Why don’t we just sit here and enjoy the view.*

As I laughed to myself, thinking “OK, God, I get what you’re teaching me here,” the whole situation moved into

Charlie Brown mode. The kids began rattling off what certain clouds looked like.

Some looked as if they were racing the others. All we needed was Snoopy ... though I believe I may have seen him in a cumulus tower above.

What a marvelous lesson.

It immediately sharpened my sense of the beautiful creation around me and made it feel like vacation time lasted so much longer. Stress melted away, gratefulness grew.

I also found myself watching the children more closely, enjoying the view of their innocent, eager faces. In my imagination I could see them all grown up, with little ones of their own. It was a stark reminder of how fast time goes by in life.

Enjoy the view, indeed.



Mark Larson is a veteran Southern California radio/television personality and media consultant. His voice is heard on KPRZ 1210AM, and his weekday talk

show airs mornings 6-9 on KCBQ 1170AM. Learn more at www.marklarson.com.

KIMBERLY RUBY

Randy and Raydina Swan show off some kale and chard from their Lakeside organic farm.



Dining with Kale Royalty and other organic adventures

“I am a food revolutionary,” declared Randy Swan of Pure Foods Organic Farm in Lakeside. Hidden on an ancient two-acre mineral seabed in the beauty of the El Monte Valley, with El Capitan Mountain in view and a cluster of hang gliders circling above, you will find Randy and his beautiful wife Raydina, also known as “The Queen of Kale,” coddling their precious bounty 10-12 hours a day.

A richer life

With the fervor of any organic food evangelist, the Swans left a very comfortable mortgage and real estate brokerage business almost two years ago to “bring the Garden of Eden back to everyone who will listen,” living in a humble trailer surrounded by deliciously mild kale, mineral-rich Swiss chard, heirloom Russian Tomatoes and exotic hot peppers from around the world. So hot, in fact, that one of his pepper species, the Trinidad Scorpion Pepper, is rated almost six times hotter than the habanero!

One of the most unusual new “super-plant species” taking up residence on the Swans’ farm is the Moringa tree, native to the Himalayas, but common throughout the tropical and subtropical regions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The tender leaves of the Moringa tree contain, gram per gram, 7 times the vitamin C of an orange, 4 times the calcium of milk, 4 times the vitamin A of a carrot, 3 times the potassium of a banana and 2 times the protein of yogurt.

In fact, a documentary film was recently released revealing the tree’s healing and nutritional power, focusing on a tribe in Africa that went from famished to thriving by farming and harvesting the Moringa for the entire village. “Do you realize what we could do with this tree?” Randy asks me.

Growing greens on a raft

While touring the farm and walking between the rows of organic peppers and heirloom tomatoes basking in the hot sun and rich soil, Randy and Raydina brought me to a special greenhouse on the edge of the property. They had saved the best for last, and I was amazed. “Welcome to the world of hydroponics,” Raydina said.

Hundreds of 2-by-3 foam rafts on raised waterbeds supported the most beautiful, healthy kale and chard I had ever seen—huge, crisp leaves with a milder, less bitter taste. The secret to these mammoth tasty greens, Randy said, was mineralization.

“Our goal when we created Pure Foods was to bring to the public the highest mineralized, nutritious produce available without chemical residue, high in micronutrients, while educating people on the difference between plants that are mass-produced in depleted soil and plants that had so much more to offer because of the medium they were raised in,” Randy said. They use a special topical wash of sea water, fulvic acid and humic acid to attract minerals and nutrients to each plant. Fulvic and humic acids come from prehistoric plant matter deep in the earth and are created by soil-based microorganisms. They enhance and transport nutrients straight to the plant, enriching its nutrient-base content many-fold.

Time for dinner

In the manner of all missional organic farmers, Randy and Raydina invited me to sample the harvest. We sat down outdoors, under the stars, on an old welcoming picnic table, delighting ourselves in the joys of eating deep-red and goldenrod-colored meaty tomatoes that really tasted like tomatoes. Quinoa pasta topped with dried pulverized tomatoes drenched in butter sauce was a

new experience.

The best menu item was Raydina’s Righteous Kale Salad. (Did I have thirds?) She is graciously sharing the recipe with the readers of *Refreshed*. This might be the best kale salad you have ever tried.

Raydina’s Righteous Kale Salad

- 1 bunch Raydina’s Mild Kale
- ½ cup each strawberries, blueberries and apples
- ½ cup crumbled Feta and Gorgonzola cheeses
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- Ken’s Raspberry Pecan Dressing to taste

The proof is in the pot

While steaming kale from the Swans’ farm, I noticed a mineral residue around the entire inside surface of my pot. First time ever! The Garden of Eden has visited the Ruby Ranch indeed!

If you have any questions on organic farming or hydroponics, please contact Pure Foods Farm at (619) 561-1165 or email them at purefoodscorp@gmail.com. You can sample their produce every Saturday morning from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Little Italy Farmer’s Market.

May you all thrive as you live longer to serve the Kingdom of God stronger!

If you have any ideas for future articles, please contact me at kim@ucprx.com.



Kimberly Ruby, certified nutritionist at University Compounding Pharmacy, has been in the wellness industry for more than 20 years. She has been facilitating one of the

longest running weight management support groups in the nation, meeting weekly in the North County for 10 years. Her health segments have appeared on local news channels.

CAROL LEBEAU

In a pickle about Pickleball

At a recent family reunion, I learned my husband's sweet, petite cousin, Carolyn, is also quite the athlete. I had no idea, but Cousin Carolyn and her husband, Dale, are the reigning New York State doubles champions... in pickleball!

"Wow! That's awesome," I said... fake smile masking the fact I had absolutely no idea what Tom's cousins were into. Pickleball? I'd never even heard of the game with the funny name. Turns out, Dale and Carolyn are on the cutting edge of a sports trend that's exploding in popularity... especially among older adults.

Unfortunately, I was still in a pickle about pickleball, so I talked to Carolyn and got the scoop. First off, the game often described as a mixture of tennis and ping-pong has nothing to do with pickles.

Here's the deal. If you take a game of tennis and slow it down... use a smaller court, slower racket and harder-to-hit ball...you get pickleball.

The sport is played with a wooden paddle and a plastic ball on a short, square court. The net is hung at 34 inches in the middle (it's 36 inches for tennis.) There is a non-volley zone on both sides of the net to prevent high-speed spikes...as dictated by the U.S.A. Pickleball Association rulebook. Players score when the other side can't return a shot. The first side to reach 11 points with a two-point lead wins.

Pickleball's popularity has made it the first sport to be added for competition in the National Senior Games (NSGA) in 20 years. The pickleball movement is averaging a thousand new players a year. There are now more than 100,000 players in the U.S. and the number of pickleball courts has doubled to more than 5,600...just since 2010.

"It's good exercise," says Carolyn. "In my first six months of playing pickleball, my cholesterol dropped 40 points!" But she also loves the social aspect of the

game. "It's fun. It's something Dale and I can do together and we meet so many wonderful people."

Interestingly, the popularity among seniors is creating a trickle-down effect, with pickleball becoming more popular with school PE programs and at recreational camps nationwide.

And that includes the San Diego area. If you'd like to try your hand at pickleball, you can find teams and leagues from Oceanside to Alpine, La Jolla to Lakeside. Check out San Diego Parks and Recreation for more info and become part of the fastest growing sport in America!

In fact, San Diego boasts a gold medal-winning pickleballer. Pat Carroll took the gold in the 70-74 age division at the National Senior Games last month in Cleveland (where, if I may brag just a bit, Dale and Carolyn placed fourth in the doubles division. Way to go, cousins!)

As more folks become sweet on pickleball, maybe it's time to give it a try. "This is a game that has a lot of participation from people who have never been an athlete in their life," says Tom Burkhart, pickleball competition director for the NSGA. "They can still acclimate and become a decent player."

Need a little incentive to try your hand at pickleball? According to a report on San Diego's KPBS, "Pickleball is really a great game with a silly name. It's addictive and might just lead you on the path of health, happiness and a heck of a lot of fun!"



Carol LeBeau is a former 10News anchor, Staying Healthy reporter and current Health Champion for Palomar Health, avid runner, bicyclist and ranked, rough water swimmer. Learn more at www.carollebeau.com.

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JANICE THOMPSON

Power-up principle: Conquer the clutter

I've lost count of how many people we've helped sort through mounds of documents gathered from the nooks and crannies of their home. Fearful of tossing anything "important," people stack their paperwork on kitchen tables, stuff it into drawers (especially when company is coming over), or stash it in boxes under the bed. But good record-keeping is vital to lowering stress and maintaining a healthy financial household. If you won't do it for yourself, *consider your heirs!* The search for documents that are hard to find can cause untold frustration and, even worse, delays in a timely settlement of an estate. So where do you begin?

First, prep your storage area and sort documents by type. If you want to really streamline filing, purchase a quality scanner or sign up for online access to your financial accounts and store records on your computer. I set up my electronic files to mirror my old filing system. If you go paperless, it is very important to have a good backup protocol with encrypted cloud storage or systematic backup to another device.

File cabinets still work, too, so choose the system you will actually use.

Before sharing some general guidelines I use to determine what should be filed and for how long, please know that these are general guidelines. Check with your professionals for exceptions.

Home and Personal Records

Family records: Birth, marriage, divorce, military discharge, and death certificates – keep permanently.

Medical records/ health insurance: Keep at least five years after the surgery or the end of treatment. If you've claimed medical expenses on your tax return, keep for seven years.

Estate plan documents: Check with your estate planning attorney and fol-

low those guidelines.

Mortgages: You may wish to keep mortgage (including HELOC) documents for the ownership period of the property plus ten years. As a rule, keep statements for the ownership period of the property plus seven years.

Insurance - life, disability, health, auto, home: Retain the actual policies in your file. Keep policy information on hand for the life of the policy plus three years. Do not shred documents related to permanent insurance with cash value.

Utility bills: Most companies now have this info available online. Check last month's statement against this month's and shred last month's bill.

Vehicle records: Maintain purchase info and maintenance records for as long as you own the vehicle. Store title records in a safe or safe deposit box.

Warranties: Keep until they expire.

Financial Records

Banking: Once the statements are reconciled, shred deposit slips. Access to three years' worth of statements is a good best practice. In some circumstances (lawsuit, divorce, past debts) it may be wise to keep them longer.

Credit cards: If receipts and statements are for *tax-related* purchases, consider keeping seven years.

Employee benefits: Keep year-end statements. Documents related to a defined pension plan from current and former employers should be retained indefinitely.

Investments forms: Organize by registration type: IRA, 401(k), Non-qualified, etc. Retain original paperwork and statements that help determine capital gains, losses, interest or dividends. Purge monthly or quarterly statements and keep *annual* statements that summarize this information. With IRAs or 401(k)s, it is a good idea to re-



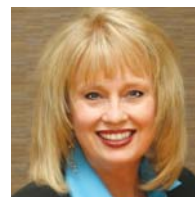
tain Form 8606 (reports non-deductible contributions to traditional IRAs), Form 5498 ("Fair Market Value Information" your IRA custodian sends each May), and Form 1099-R (report IRA income distributions).

Social Security benefits: To access your personal account, go to www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Review your earnings record from the day you started working. If you see an error, you will want to have your W-2 or tax return for the particular year to help the Social Security Administration correct it.

Tax returns: Since the standard IRS audit looks at your past three years of federal tax records, you need to keep three years of federal (and state) tax records on hand, and up to seven years to be really safe. Tax records related to real property or "real assets" should be kept for as long as you own the asset and for at least seven years after you sell, exchange or liquidate it.

Payroll statements: Shred paystubs after you reconcile them with your W-2. If you own a business or are self-employed, retain your payroll statements for seven years or longer.

If paper threatens to take over your sanity, you're not alone. With these guidelines, set aside time this fall to get your financial household in order. You'll be glad you did!



Janice Thompson is a certified financial planner and co-founder/CEO of One Degree Advisors, Inc. A frequent speaker on financial topics and mentor for financial

professionals, she also serves on the board of directors for Kingdom Advisors. Learn more at www.onedegreeadvisors.com.

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4 ways to make every kid in a large family feel special

There's a humorous but wise adage that many parents who are having their third child eventually hear: "Man-to-man defense no longer applies. You'll have to switch to a zone."

The meaning in a nutshell? The kids now outnumber the parents.

I had heard friends talk about the blessings and challenges of a larger family but didn't fully understand it until my wife and I added twins to our "bunch," which automatically bumped our small family of three to a "large" family of five – thereby putting us at that out-of-the-way corner booth in all the restaurants. No longer would we fit at 95 percent of the restaurant tables or 99 percent of the hotel rooms.

That also meant it was not possible for each child to be held, for each kid to receive individual attention, for each child to sit in a lap. I've always been one who wants to see needs met, so it was a major adjustment. After all, I physically couldn't read a story to my twins *and* ride bike with my oldest son at the same time – even though I wanted to do both. (It did, though, put me in awe of God more, because He *can* comfort the little boy in China *and* the little girl in America simultaneously.)

So can a mother and father of multiple kids still make each one feel special? Yes. Here are four suggestions:

1. Spotlight the "unique." Two of my kids are skilled readers for their age, but one is not. But that third child is smarter in other areas, obeys more readily, and is even more loving. Perhaps the former two will grow up to be scientists or researchers and the latter one a therapist. Who knows? God made each of my kids unique, with different strengths, and they should hear early and often that Mom and Dad recognize and appreciate those distinctive God-given quali-

ties. The Bible says God "knitted" each child (Psalm 139). Our children should never hear us compare them to one another, much less hear us say, "Why can't you be more like your" brother or sister? Each of them is "knitted,;" each of them is beautiful—but different.

2. Go one-on-one. The fact that you're a large family doesn't mean every event has to be a group activity. Be intentional about planning, for instance, a "daddy-daughter night," and make sure each child knows that his or her night is coming up, too. Go to the park or eat ice cream or even enjoy a meal together. Can't do that as much as you'd like? Then do it at home, or take advantage of spontaneous situations. If three out of four kids are playing well together in the other room, read a book or play with that fourth kid—until you're discovered, of course.

3. Be a team. Those one-on-one activities are essential, but don't go overboard. It's critical that my children—and yours—understand that each member of the family is important, working toward a common goal. Today's goal may be as simple as setting the table or being pleasant in the car or cleaning the house. Just like a body, no member is more important, and just like a body, each member has a vital role. Thus, even in group activities, each child can feel unique and special. Group activities also can help a family grow closer. Once, when I saw that two of my children weren't getting along, I began planning activities where just the two of them would interact. It worked. Soon, they seemingly were best friends.

4. Don't play favorites. It can destroy a family and spark sibling rivalries, and children can see it even if we don't intend it. Perhaps a new baby comes along, and we accidentally ignore the oldest child. Or maybe we focus too much on that oldest child—the "first borne"—as the youngest baby ages. I have had to guard against unintentional favoritism in buying souvenirs, thinking it was a waste of money to buy gifts for a 4-month-old but then not recognizing the moment when that child reached awareness and actually wanted a gift.



Last, be honest and frank. After we added the twins to our family, I asked my oldest what I thought was a tough question for his age: "Who do you think I should love more: you, the twins, or should I love you all equally?" Thankfully, he got the answer right.



Michael Foust is the father of three small children, a writer and editor, and blogs about parenting at www.michaelfoust.com.

Forgiveness: The power of a single word

Over the past 40 years, I've talked with countless numbers of people asking for help with personal struggles, life problems, and difficulties. Looking back, I can see patterns emerging: patterns within age groups, gender groups, social classes, and economic groups. But an overwhelming pattern of recurrence across all of these groups is the distress caused by old memories. Hurts that were inflicted years earlier are still causing dysfunction in friendships and relationships—and especially in sleep patterns.

Many years ago a friend asked if I could help him understand some things in his life. He was wealthy, successful, handsome, and well-liked by others. As we talked, we came to an area of his past that seemed walled off; not up for discussion. Period. After a period of time, the subject came into the open. It was his childhood relationship with his father, who had passed away more than a decade earlier when my friend was just 13 years old.

It seems that his father would become verbally abusive when he would get drunk. The drunken bouts happened on a daily basis. His father would berate him and call him horrible names. He said he wished his son had never been born. He told the boy he would never amount to anything in life. In reality, the father was describing himself, not my friend.

I asked my friend, in our time together, "What is the worst thing your father could have done to you?" He thought deeply about that and then said he was always fearful that his dad would beat him up or even kill him. I asked him if anything like that had ever happened to him or even come close to happening. He responded with, "No."

My question followed very quickly.

"If the worst never happened, why can't you forgive your father and move on?"

One single word has the power to erase a lot of hurt, pain and sadness in everyone's hearts and minds and memories. That word is "forgiveness."

Forgiveness lifts a person from sadness to happiness; from burdened to free; from anger to understanding. Yet, the idea of forgiveness seems so foreign to so many. How often our thoughts and memories hold us hostage to the past; captive to our fears, a prisoner to unrest.

Gandhi, India's great leader of peace, once said, "The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

Forgiveness is the single most powerful word that can release each of us from the tyranny of the past.

Jesus of Nazareth said, "Forgive and you shall be forgiven." He has given us lots of hope on many levels. Of course the obvious is that people will know that we are caring people and since we forgive others, they are inclined to forgive us. On a different level forgiveness takes on a significant meaning for each of us. Jesus was saying when we forgive others not only will we find forgiveness from others but we will find eternal forgive-

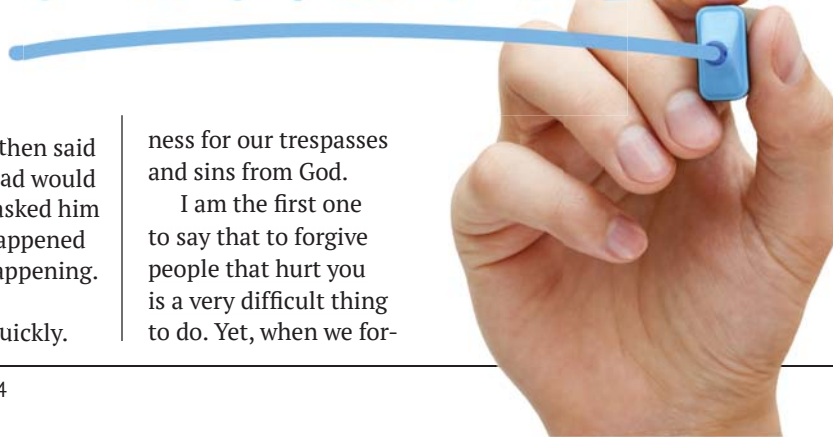
give others there is a peace or serenity that comes to us knowing that this is no longer an issue. Forgiveness allows us to move forward in our lives. On the other hand holding on to bad memories and carrying them through life with us is tedious at the least. It can eat away at the core of our hopes and dreams; derail our future. Its clutching force keeps us from becoming all we were meant to be. It suffocates passion and joy.

Life is tough enough for all of us and why should we not be happy: because of memories? I lived in the past all of my life until I was 26 years old. That is when I found out that God had forgiven me. It became very obvious that if I could be forgiven why shouldn't I forgive those in my past? Everything changed for me immediately. I know that it will do the same for you, if you will let forgiveness work in your life, despite the circumstances. Often I find that I need to forgive myself and that I am harder on myself than anyone else ever is.

The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the first century Christians living in a city much like San Diego. Ephesus was known for its medical progress. It had the same balmy Mediterranean weather patterns we enjoy here. Education was big, and they had a beautiful and large library downtown.

Paul's words remind us that people are the same in every city, every era, every ethnic group, and we can learn from one another. St. Paul penned these words: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even

FORGIVE



ness for our trespasses and sins from God.

I am the first one to say that to forgive people that hurt you is a very difficult thing to do. Yet, when we for-

as God in Christ forgave you.”

The first Easter service I ever officiated was in 1974 on a mountaintop overlooking Escondido. Hundreds of people came up on the mountain, and we all waited as the sun began to rise from the east and blanketed San Diego County with a brand-new day. This year was my 40th Easter service, and during the past 40 years I have been able to have hope for many seemingly hopeless people. Because I forgave my alcoholic father, I can and will forgive friends that had knifed me in the back. On and on I learned through God’s great love that forgiveness is for all of us.

You, my friend, are forgiven, so go back and forgive others.

Let this fall be your best ever. Let it be filled with kindness, tenderheartedness, and mercy. Forgive one another as often as God has forgiven you in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said, “God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world would be saved by Him.”

When Jesus spoke with a woman who was arrested for adultery, He said to her, “Woman, where are your accusers?” Jesus had just said to the crowd of men, “He who has not sinned, you cast the first stone.” They had all walked away. The woman answered Jesus and said, “Lord, I have none.” Jesus, with a tenderhearted and kind smile, said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”

Forgive, and you shall be forgiven.




Mike MacIntosh is the pastor of Horizon Christian Fellowship in San Diego and a chaplain for the San Diego Police Department.

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JOANNE BROKAW

Insomnia: Questions that keep me awake at night

It's after midnight and I can't sleep.

I have a column due in the morning and I have no idea what I'm going to write about, so I keep turning thoughts over in my head. The problem is that the column ideas are being pushed aside by weightier items demanding my attention.

Take the fortune cookie I ate today.

When I cracked it open, I was stunned to see that my fortune said, "Ganaras mucho dinero." The translation on the other side: "You will earn a lot of money."

Earn a lot of money? Do you know what humor columnists are paid? And why was my Chinese fortune in Spanish? (And where were my lucky numbers?)

Were these cookies destined for a Chinese restaurant in Mexico and intercepted on the black market before they landed on my grocery store shelf? Are they irregular cookies (which would explain why they were on sale)? And if so, I hope they were safe to eat, since I ate the whole box. (And yes, all of the fortunes were in Spanish.)

These are the things that keep me up at night.

Here's another one: Before I go to bed, I jot down in my journal some notes about the day — what I did, where I went, who irritated me, what my dog Bandit ate and then barfed up. I noticed tonight that my handwriting today looks nothing like my handwriting in yesterday's entry or the entry from the day before, which got me thinking.

What if my Spanish fortune cookie comes true and I make a lot of money as a famous writer and a hundred years from now my great-great-grandchildren take my journals to the "Antiques Roadshow" and the experts deem them fake because they think the entries were written by more than one person?

Even I can't read my own writing sometimes, so how can I expect a complete stranger to decipher my chicken scratch? My poor great-great-grandchildren. Robbed of their inheritance, all because I have bad handwriting.

Does anyone use a key to open their car door anymore? Don't we all have those little beepy things? So why do they still make lock de-icer?



And while I'm on that subject, what happens if Bandit manages to eat my car keys, something he attempts several times a day? When I want to unlock my car, will I have to squeeze the dog until he beeps?

Who determines the sizes on women's clothing? How come I can fit into a size 8 from one store but have to wear a size 12 from another store? Making the clothing bigger and labeling it with a smaller size does not satisfy my ego; it just means that when I try on clothes I have to try on three sizes of the same item, which takes three times as long and leaves me three times as frustrated.

How does the mailman get his own mail? Is it delivered to "Jimmy at the Post Office" or does it get delivered to

his house? Does he deliver his own mail, and if not, does he know his mailman's name? Does his mail ever get delivered to the wrong house or get rolled into a ball and shoved into the mail slot, the way it gets delivered to my house whenever Jimmy the Mailman is on vacation?

If I have to get a real job, I wonder if they'd let me train sea lions. I think I would like that job. I'd teach them to clap their flippers every time I walked into the room. I bet that would do a lot for my self-esteem, even if deep down I knew they were only doing it for the fish.

Why does Facebook think it knows so much about me? I took a personality quiz the other day called "Which character on Gilligan's Island are you?" Turns out I am not sultry Ginger or the brilliant Professor, like I had hoped. I'm Gilligan.

And when Facebook posted the results — that I'm a loveable, adorable goofball — everyone agreed that pretty much described me.

Adorable goofball? Is that how I'll be remembered when I die?

Maybe I need to go find someone to yawn in front of me so I can go to sleep. It worked in "Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book." Maybe it will work for me.

After all, I have a column due in the morning and I really need to come up with something to write about.



Award-winning freelance writer Joanne Brokaw spends her days dreaming of things she'd like to do but probably never will — like swimming with dolphins, cleaning

the attic and someday overcoming the trauma of elementary school picture day. She lives with two dogs, a cat, six chickens and one very patient husband. Learn more at www.joannebrokaw.com.

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