

# refreshed

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**Planting  
hope**

Fighting extreme  
poverty by  
revitalizing the  
environment

**From rejection  
to redemption**

Country artist Mary  
James uses broken past  
to communicate through  
words and music

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SAN DIEGO**  
Harvest  
activities  
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The danger of  
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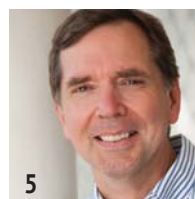
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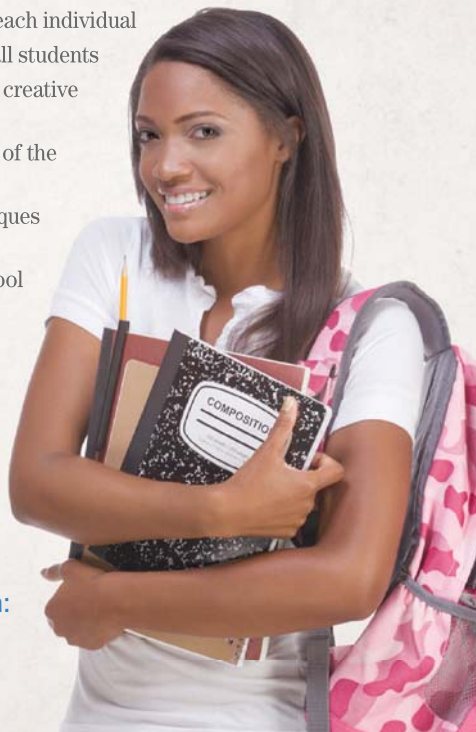
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## refreshed

VOLUME 1 | NUMBER 10

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Refreshed is an independent, faith-based magazine published monthly by Selah Media Group. It is distributed in bulk, free of charge, to hundreds of locations throughout San Diego County.

For a 1-year mail subscription, send \$24.95 to the address below or visit [refreshedmag.com](http://refreshedmag.com).

Refreshed welcomes story ideas. All unsolicited material is subject to approval of the publishers and is not returned.

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## Feasting on humble pie

Imagine if this had happened to you. It happened in a restaurant in Germany.

The restaurant had high tables where patrons would stand and eat a quick lunch. A woman went into the restaurant, bought a bowl of soup and a sandwich at the counter, and carried them to an empty table. She put her purse underneath, and went back to the counter to get a spoon for her soup.

When she returned, a dark-skinned stranger was standing at the table, happily eating her soup. At first she was shocked. Then furious. Within seconds, she decided that, if this man wished to be so bold, then so would she. She stood at the opposite side of the table and began eating from the same bowl. But instead of being embarrassed or intimidated, the man continued to eat. He did not speak German, so he couldn't understand what the woman was saying to him, but he kept a smile on his face as they ate together.

Seeming to provoke her further, the man offered her half of the sandwich.

When they were finished, he, still smiling, offered his hand across the table in a handshake. Still flabbergasted, the woman shook his hand. Then the man left the restaurant. When she looked under the table for her purse, it was gone. She knew it! He was a thief! All of her money, credit cards, personal information, taken by this brazen man!

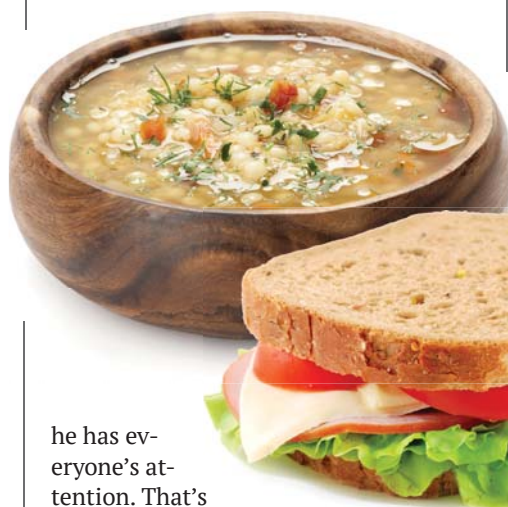
As she scanned the room to call out for help, she noticed a nearby table, with a bowl of now-cold soup, a sandwich, and her purse underneath. It had never occurred to her that she had gone to the wrong table.

What is our true vocation? To be the man who, although he could not understand what was being said about him, makes room at his table.

The theologian Peter van Breemen

said, "Vocation is a dynamic reality, constantly interacting with every aspect of the here and now."

The Sunday School class I teach has been looking at the story of Naaman in 2 Kings. It's a fascinating story about a guy who fits every definition of success—he's powerful, influential, rich, is known for winning, has servants, and



he has everyone's attention. That's what our culture tells us is important, right? But he also has leprosy, a gross, disgusting skin disease that could end up killing him.

In his house is a servant girl. Actually it's his wife's servant girl. She was a captive from one of the raids Naaman's army had conducted. Most estimates have her age at around 12 to 14.

There are a lot of aspects of Naaman's story that are fascinating, and they are also useful to think about in our present age. It's a great story that happened "back then," but is also a useful parable for today. What I find most interesting about the story is the seemingly minor role that the servant girl plays, and how it relates to our true vocation.

The girl is in the middle of circumstances that none of us would choose

for ourselves. Against her will, she's away from her home and family, serving the people who conquered her homeland. She's from a different race. If anyone has the right to be bitter, it's her. She hears that Naaman has leprosy. If we were in her shoes, wouldn't we be tempted to say, "Serves you right—that's what you get for invading my country, taking me as a slave and making me serve your household?"

Instead, she says, "If only Naaman would see the prophet in Israel, he'd be healed."

It makes sense to curse our circumstances. But our true vocation calls us to Something Bigger.

Our False Self would say to Naaman, "I hope you rot and die."

Our True Self says, "I know where you can get help."

Both the German man at the restaurant table and the servant girl in 2 Kings faced the "here and now" parts of their lives and saw how God could still use them. They set aside their egos and their rights, and humbled themselves to their true vocation.

Think about your own life. Does your attitude toward the circumstances of your life keep you from living out God's call on 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."



From  
**REJECTION** to  
**REDEMPTION**





## Country artist Mary James uses broken past to communicate through words and music

by LORI ARNOLD

**A**lone in her tiny apartment, Mary James replayed the conversation over and over in her head. She had listened quietly as a pregnant friend recited her reasoning for getting an abortion. As the friend talked, James flashed back to her own isolated childhood, living in a home where her adopted father, a respected pastor, spent inordinate amounts of time shepherding his flock while his wife secretly battled alcoholism.

“When I threatened to expose my mother’s alcoholism to my father, she returned that threat by telling me she would disown me as her child,” James recalled. “This—coupled with knowing that my birth mother had given me up—created a sense of being unloved and unwanted. Not that it was true, but it was my perception at the time. I do not feel that way any longer.”

Those feelings of rejection began to shift after James, then 21, was reunited with her birth mother. In the early, awkward days of becoming acquainted, James discovered that her mother was just a teen when she became pregnant in the mid-1960s. She opted for adoption, despite her own mother’s pleas for her travel to Europe where she could legally abort her baby.

The thought of those two journeys—a life lost and a life saved—intersected as James’ birth mother knocked on the apartment door for another visit.

“As I opened the door to let her in, I saw a different woman,” James said. “I saw a woman who had placed the value of my life ahead of her own. From that day forward, I never looked at being an adopted child through the same lens.”

Now 49, James uses that pain to help others through her award-winning music and popular speaking ministry. A well-known local vocalist and songwriter, James has earned national accolades as well, earning two Inspirational Country Music Female Vocalist of the Year Awards. She’s also been nominated as a Top 5 Music Evangelist.

“I thought an award provided some type of validation and the night I (first) won, God had already brought me to a point where I knew it was His validation that truly mattered. He is my reward.”

James’ love of music provided strength for James even in her childhood, helping to counteract her deep insecurities.

“My adoptive family loved to sing, as did I,” she said. “I always had a song in my heart and I remember my mother would ask me to sing for guests.”

But, she said, “drawing and painting was my passion. Music didn’t really become a focus until high school.”

By that time, though, James had already spent two years using drugs and alcohol to mask her fears of loneliness and rejection.



## Country music with a divine message

Mary James, a two-time Inspirational Country Music Female Vocalist of the Year Award winner, is up for nomination again, this time for Entertainer of the Year, Female Vocalist of the Year, Music Evangelist, and Inspirational Country Song of the Year.

The 2014 Inspirational Country Music awards will be presented next month in Nashville. James is also scheduled to perform.

Her Song of the Year nomination is for “Strong,” the title song for her fourth album, sung with country star Jamie O’Neal. James’ style, described as a combination of folk, country, gospel and modern pop, is also apparent on her previous albums: “At His Feet,” “Beautiful Savior” and “Truth Cries Out,” and her fifth disc, last year’s “Comfort and Joy” Christmas CD.

James often appears on stage with her husband, Dan Barker, who plays the acoustic guitar with her band.

The mother of two grown children, James said she depends on Christ to keep her centered as the national demands for her singing and speaking ministry have escalated with each album and award. Her faith journey, she added, is only as strong as her fellowship.

“If I put God in the waiting room of my life, that is where my faith ends up,” she said. “Also, I also cannot grow in faith, if I am unwilling to take steps of faith. You have to get out of the boat to experience the possibilities. And oddly, you have to take your eyes off of Jesus, to understand what will happen if you do.”

Those steps of faith came early on when James began experiencing severe panic attacks that would come months in advance of an engagement.

“Most people would have quit because it was so intense,” she said. “I coped by praying—a lot—seeking counsel, which helped me understand that pride was behind my fear, and



Mary James receives her second ICM Female Vocalist of the Year Award at last year’s ceremony.

deciding that I was not going to be in chains to fear for the rest of my life. Nerves have showed up repeatedly in my performance, but God has always been more powerful.”

The rough spots have also helped her to maintain priorities in the fast-based music industry.

“While the world is busy measuring people by their looks and successes, God just wants me to grow in His grace, taking what He has given me and glorifying Him through my attitudes and actions,” James said, acknowledging that despite her spiritual growth, she remains cognizant that God is continually at work in her life and she is in it for the duration.

“The Refiner’s fire is hot; clay has to be shaped and molded,” she said. “Some folks just give up before the masterpiece is complete. Something is always going to come along to try and knock us off track. The enemy does not want us to experience the fullness of God’s restoration, so He uses our vulnerabilities to hinder the process.

“God is my anchor and He keeps me on a really short leash. He has done a great job keeping me grounded over the years.”

tion.

“I think the main thing is that my parents themselves were not raised to be communicators,” she said. Her adoptive mother died of cancer when James was just 13. “We did not openly discuss our challenges as people or a family. We lacked intimacy.

“Those things that live in the dark stayed in the dark,” she said. “If I did something wrong, instead of talking it through, my father would simply have me recite a Commandment.”

### Rules and rebellion

That lack of intimacy, the musician said, also impacted her view of the church and Jesus.

Family life, for her, seemed to be “about rules and not relationship. What I did, not who I was or how I felt. I believed that God was the same,” James said.

“Because God represented ‘rules’ and not a ‘relationship’ to me, living without Him was a natural response to my pain. I did not understand the comfort that could be found in Christ or that a relationship with Him would have helped me walk away from sinful, harmful choices. My response to life would have been loving, instead of rebellious.”

The rebellion prompted her to run away at age 16.

“I filled a big purse with all that it could hold, wore as many layers of clothes that I could stand, and off I went,” she said. “If I was afraid, I buried my fear with drugs and alcohol. Underneath the sedation, I am sure I was terrified.”

As she entered adulthood, James gave up drugs, but still used the socially accepted alcohol.

“The drugs were so destructive that I quit doing them in my early 20s,” she said. “I was a young mom, so I had absolutely no desire to put anything in my body—even caffeine—that could poten-



tially harm my children. Praise the Lord I had that much sense!”

### A new anchor

Even alcohol went by the wayside in 1999 after a family outing to a friend’s church, resulted in James, her new husband, Dan Barker, and her two children, converting to Christianity.

“It was then that I realized how much power alcohol had in my life and how it acted as my stress reliever on tough days—which was every day, it seemed,” she said. “The Lord wanted to be my strength. By going without it after so many years, I learned how alcohol numbs the emotions, gains control and creates reliance upon it instead of God.”

Finally developing a relationship with each of her birth parents also helped to provide more stability as James was able to reconcile the past—including her feelings of isolation—by putting it into perspective. That fresh perspective also restored her relationship with her adopted father, who is now deceased.

“Meeting them answered many questions, which most importantly helped me understand that it was love that kept me alive, when I could have been aborted,” she said. “My mother wanted to give me the best life possible and everyone made the best choices that they could.”

### Restoration and forgiveness

Even with her new spiritual grounding, James says trials have remained. The difference, though, is she no longer walks—or battles—alone.

“To be honest, I’ve experienced more seasons of questioning as a Christ-follower than I did as a non-believer,” she said. “When I became a Christian, I thought all my problems would go away, that trials were reserved for those who reject Him, that every prayer would be answered as I wish. Not the case.



After a childhood of struggles with insecurity and isolation, Mary James’s faith has generated a new view of beauty in everything around her.

“The way that I work through it now is by way of the cross, with humility and focusing on all that the Lord has done instead of focusing on the pain that comes with living in a fallen world.”

That power of forgiveness and the restoration that it has brought to her family has provided James with a stable of powerful speaking points, such as “Beauty from Brokenness,” “Strong for the Journey,” “Invite Him In,” “Wonderful Life, Glorious Light” and “Trusting God With Your Unfolding Story.”

“The forgiveness I received through Christ included my mistakes as a parent,” she said. “This is a huge, because when you blow it as a parent, it is hard to accept forgiveness. You want to fix it, reverse the hands of time, and you can’t. The sin and baggage you bring into your parenting becomes a part of your children’s lives—whether you want to admit it or not.

“But God’s grace and healing is not exclusive to the wounds I experienced, but also to those I have inflicted upon others.”

Her heart-hope is that others will experience the life-altering freedom that comes from forgiveness, a reality she’s benefited from on both the giving and the receiving ends.

“I will never forget the look in my grandmother’s eyes and the words she spoke as she held my face in her hands.... ‘To think that I wanted to have you elim-

inated. I am so thankful that your mother refused my suggestion.’ It was then that I truly understood how my birth mother had protected my life.” ■

*Learn more at [www.mary-james.com](http://www.mary-james.com).*

### IN CONCERT

Singer-songwriter Mary James has a full calendar this fall. In addition to half a dozen local events, James will attend the Inspirational Country Music Week events from Nov. 9 to 13, where she will lead a breakout session, host a morning worship service, deliver a keynote message and perform for the annual awards show, where she is also up for four awards.

**Oct. 10 to 12:** La Jolla United Methodist Church Annual Women’s Retreat in Ramona. Worship and keynote messages.

**Nov. 8:** First United Methodist Church Women’s Day Retreat in Mission Valley. Worship and keynote message.

**Nov. 29 to 30:** The Church at Rancho Bernardo. All weekend worship services.

**Dec. 4:** Vista Grande Community Church Annual Women’s Christmas Dinner in San Diego. Special music and keynote message.

**Dec. 5:** Windsor Hills Community Church Annual Women’s Christmas Event in La Mesa. “A Lamp For Every Corner.” Special music and keynote message.

**Dec. 12 to 13:** 25th Anniversary of Carols by Candlelight in Escondido

*Learn more at [www.mary-james.com](http://www.mary-james.com).*



J.K. Shea, middle, a board member for Plant with Purpose, visits one of the reforestation sites in Burundi adopted by the San Diego-based ministry.

# Planting hope

## Fighting extreme poverty by revitalizing the environment

by LORI ARNOLD

J.K. Shea stood just outside a crimson mud-brick hut with no roof. The structure, in a rural area of the East African nation of Burundi, was the gathering point for a two-year-old microsavings group that was helping local women to improve their financial standing.

“From seemingly vacant hillsides, women, some with babies tightly bundled in traditional African shawls hanging on their (mothers’) backs, came from all directions to meet in the closest thing to pass for a building that I could see,” said an astonished Shea, who arrived at the spot from a dirt trail.

The region, disfigured physically and emotionally by genocide, is one of many adopted by Plant With Purpose, a San Diego faith-based reforestation effort designed to empower residents of developing countries through entrepreneurship, training and discipleship.

Shea, a member of the ministry’s board of directors, made the trip to assess the ministry’s outreach.

As he watched the women arrive, Shea noted the bursting kaleidoscope as the sun streamed across the flowing dresses

of the women, who formed a semicircle as they sat down together on the floor, within the four electric-red walls. He was taken by how the program is designed to enhance the culture of these women, not thrust Western traditions upon them in the name of doing good.

“I had a feeling it was going to be a special experience,” Shea said.

He absorbed every word as the women shared how Plant With Purpose diligently trained them in the microsavings model that has become their trademark—and how they learned a valuable lesson after acknowledging that they weren’t fully invested in the process the first year.

“A severe drought started halfway through the growing season, leaving them with almost no food at the end,” Shea said. “This year, they had realized that to prevent the same thing from happening, they needed to work hard together to make sure everyone had enough.

“Everyone put in extra time to plant enough diverse crops so that even if some of them failed, they would still be fine.”

Word of their success quickly spread, resulting in the formation of 31 additional farmer groups.

“People came from all around to find out how they had done it,” Shea said. “Often in charitable work, we measure the success of a charity by the amount that goes to the field versus what gets spent on administration.

“When I found out that 31 other groups had started, based on the success of one Plant With Purpose-facilitated group, not only did I know that we had something special that really works, but I realized that the impact of our work was likely far beyond what we would ever be able to know or measure—which is how it should be.”

Shea, whose family has been involved in assisted health care for several decades, said he became involved in Plant With Purpose about seven years ago at the urging of a business coach.

“He thought my personal interest in the power of plants to transform the lives of the needy made Plant With Purpose a perfect match,” the El Cajon businessman said.



## Plant With Purpose reverses deforestation and poverty around the world by transforming the lives of the rural poor.

### Restored lives

The concept of an agricultural microbusiness took root for Plant With Purpose 30 years ago when its founder, Tom Woodward, and his wife, Teresa, were making annual ministry trips to the Dominican Republic. Despite consistent efforts to provide food, Woodward was discouraged about a lack of long-term solutions to hunger and poverty.

Recognizing that the land provided key solutions to elevating rural residents out of poverty, Woodward launched his ministry, then called Floresta USA, as a way to integrate environmental, economic and spiritual solutions. The three-pronged approach is designed to reverse deforestation, which squelches the ability of smallholder farms to produce sustainable crops.

"I see plants as one of God's everyday miracles because a plant in the right en-

vironment, given the right care, can provide usefulness—food or medicine—for a lifetime to a person or family, at almost no cost other than the effort it takes to plant," Shea said.

Although a cornerstone of their work involves tree planting, the ministry also combats hunger by providing agricultural training that enables farmers to feed their families, as well as sell any surplus to bolster their income. Additional programs include microfinance co-ops and church development and discipleship.

### 12 million trees and counting

Since 1984, Plant With Purpose has expanded its outreach beyond the Dominican Republic to include Burundi, Haiti, Mexico, Tanzania and Thailand. Since its inception, the ministry has planted more than 12 million trees and partnered with more than 18,500 fami-



lies in 370 communities.

"In Tanzania and Haiti, Plant With Purpose has seen a 50 percent reduction in waterborne illness in the communities they work with," Shea said. "This was never a goal, but it is a byproduct of the right approach to rural transformation."

Although the transformations can be dramatic within the community, Plant With Purpose is discovering it is not limited to neighborhoods.

"I was blown away to learn that satellite imagery is beginning to show a statistically significant increase in green forest cover around the villages that Plant With Purpose works with versus a decrease in the surrounding villages where we don't yet have a presence," Shea said. "When you can start to see the effects of our work from space, I feel I'm a part of something I can really be proud of."

On Oct. 11, Plant With Purpose will celebrate 30 years of ministry with a "Planting Hope Gala" at Paradise Point Resort in San Diego. ■



A women's microsavings group in Burundi dispurses funds to their neighbors. The program is one of several offered by Plant With Purpose in an effort to bring financial stability to impoverished communities.

### IF YOU GO

**WHO:** Plant With Purpose  
**WHAT:** Planting Hope Gala  
Dinner and Auction  
**WHEN:** October 11, 2014, 5:30pm  
**WHERE:** Paradise Point Resort, San Diego  
**WHAT:** Dinner with silent and live auctions  
with proceeds to benefit farming  
families around the world  
**INFO:** [plantwithpurpose.org/gala](http://plantwithpurpose.org/gala)  
1-800-633-5319





# Sleepless night

## Charity event to raise awareness for the homeless

by LORI ARNOLD

The San Diego Rescue Mission will hold its Eighth Annual Sleepless America San Diego event Oct. 11 and 12 at Liberty Station. The event begins at 4:30 p.m. Saturday and ends at 8 a.m. Sunday morning.

About 1,000 people are expected to stay overnight, taking part in a variety of activities, including live music from local artists and musical groups, video testimonies and fireside chats. Numerous organizations that serve homeless people will also be on hand.

“Our goal is to generate increased awareness of and solutions for a truly tragic situation that affects far too many people in our community,” said Herb Johnson, president and CEO of the San Diego Rescue Mission.

Those who wish to sleep over will be able to choose to sleep on a cot, cardboard or plastic sheeting to gain a deeper awareness of the homeless condition. At the same time, “We clearly recognize that Sleepless San Diego does not in any way recreate the dire and often haunting circumstances of true homelessness,” Johnson said.

The event is also open to those who are not participating in the sleepover. All proceeds from the event are used to help the mission’s outreach to San Diego’s homeless population, estimated at 10,000 men, women, and children. In addition to being a major fundraiser for the mission, the event serves as an educational tool on how the community can help those on the streets.

“Eight years ago, the San Diego Rescue Mission, in collaboration with other faith-based, social service and community partners, launched Sleepless America San Diego to bring attention to the challenges of chronic homelessness and the ever-increasing number of people living on the streets of this wonderful city,” Johnson said.

“We needed to do something to elevate the process of finding solutions. This year, we expect about 25 to 30 Rescue Missions across America will participate in Sleepless America.”

The mission provides long-term rehabilitation and restorative programs, emergency shelter for women and chil-

### IF YOU GO

- WHAT:** Sleepless San Diego  
**WHEN:** October 11-12, 2014  
 4:30pm Sat. to 7am Sun.  
**WHERE:** Liberty Station, Point Loma  
**WHAT:** All-night fundraiser to support San Diego’s homeless men, women and children. Featuring live music, art gallery, care package assembly, videos, discussions  
**INFO:** [sleeplessandiego.org](http://sleeplessandiego.org)  
 619-819-1892

dren and a recuperative care center for the homeless leaving the hospital.

Participants will receive light snacks and beverages, and will be able to purchase food on site. First aid supplies, medical staff, and private security guards will be present throughout the event.

“Ours is a message of hope and as Sleepless campaigns expand across America, we pray that our voices join together to help bring powerful coalition and solutions to the plight of homelessness,” Johnson said. ■



# Cal Thomas



- #1 Nationally Syndicated Columnist
- Fox News Analyst
- Pro-Life Advocate

To schedule Cal Thomas for your next special event, contact Mark Larson.

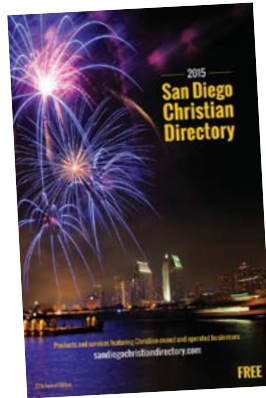
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# Fall Fun SAN DIEGO

## Harvest activities for all ages

by LORI ARNOLD



There's no doubt that the main staple of fall festivals is the door-to-door tradition of trick-or-treating, but as the popularity of the fall holiday has mushroomed, area organizations and kid parks have dressed up their own offerings from church trunk-or-treats to full-blown festivals with myriad entertainment and goodies. True to form, San Diego is not lacking when it comes to family friendly options for fall.

One of the most diverse options is at Balboa Park, where each venue offers its own take on fall fun. In addition to trick-or-treating, options include crafts, a doggie costume contest, mini-carnival games, projects, gallery tours, pumpkin drop, music, storytelling, puppet making, costume parades and contests, and science experiments.

SeaWorld, Legoland and the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum are also offering their own themed events.

One caveat: Parents who desire to protect their children from the dark side of Halloween—including costumes with evil themes—should do their due diligence. Check event websites or call the venues to determine policies governing Halloween observances.

### Church events

**Calvary Chapel La Costa Hills** holds its annual Harvest Celebration Oct. 31. Festivities will include a bounce house, food, games, raffle prizes, music, cake-walk and candy.

**Mission Church of the Nazarene** hosts its free Fall Festival from 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 31. The parking lot event includes a "Trunk-r-Treat," petting zoo, inflatables, food, pony rides, balloon artist, pumpkin decorating and giveaways.

**The Church at Rancho Bernardo** will hold its Trunk or Treat & Harvest Festival from 4 to 8 p.m. Oct. 25. The schedule will include games, food, bounce houses, a DJ, photo booth, costume contests and dunking booth.

**Newbreak Church's Pacific Beach** campus will hold a joint Trunk-or-Treat event with the Crown Point Junior Music Academy from 5 to 7 p.m. Oct. 31 at the church. The fifth annual event includes food trucks, carnival games and a photo booth.

**First United Methodist Church of San Diego** will sponsor its free Kids First Fall Festival beginning at 3 p.m. Oct. 26. Activities include a cakewalk, fun jump house with slide, games, crafts, prizes, face painting, candy and a flying pumpkin activity sponsored by the student ministries department. A low-cost snack shack will be available.

### Festivals

**The Salvation Army Kroc Center Boo Bash**, a family friendly gathering that in-

cludes trick-or-treating, will be held beginning at 1 p.m. Oct. 25. Open to all ages, the festivities will include pumpkin decorating, carnival games, snacks, bounce houses and rock climbing.

Admission is \$1 cash per person.

The **Fallbrook Harvest Faire**, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. October 19 in the community's downtown. The annual autumn-themed event includes handmade crafts, local foods and treats, a petting zoo, pony rides and hayrides, pumpkin contest and scarecrow displays.

### Pumpkin Patches

**Summers Past Farms** in Flinn Springs will host its annual October Pumpkin Patch weekends from Oct. 4 to Oct. 26. The Saturday and Sunday events will include a bounce house, plus popcorn, corndogs, a coffee bar and smoothies. The East County farm features herbal gardens, a soap shop, a variety of animals, floral and water-wise nursery, and classes. The farm is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays to Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays.

**Oma's Pumpkin Patch** operates from Sept. 23 to Nov. 1 at the Van Ommering Dairy Farm. Every child who participates in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual event will receive a water bottle and a Jack Patch Pumpkin, and will have access to other activities.

In addition to the pumpkin patch, the farm offers playground equipment, its Cottonseed Mountain for climbing and sliding, a sand pile with toy trucks and tractors for the kids, covered hayrides and a petting corral. Patrons may also



purchase Indian corn, cornstalks, gourds, and hay bales.

Oma's "A Piece of the Farm" gift shop offers souvenirs, crafts, honey and other seasonal items, while the "Cow Country Cafe" provides quick munchies.

The patch is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is \$8 for children 1 year and older. One adult (over 16), is admitted free with each paid child admission. Admission for additional adults is \$4 each. Field trips are also accommodated. Reservations are required for groups of 20 or more people.

**Bates Nut Farm** brings back its decades-long multi-varietal pumpkin patch from Sept. 24 to Oct. 31. In addition to the patch, guests will be treated to tractor hayrides, a straw maze, petting corral and pony rides. Those attending on the weekends will be treated to live entertainment from noon to 3 p.m., a rock climb, bounce house, slide and other family friendly events. Barbecue, kettle corn and food trucks will be onsite. Admission and parking are free. Fall decor will also be available for sale.

Flashlights and cameras are recommended.

The farm is open from 9 to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

The **Pumpkin Station** operates half a dozen family patches throughout San Diego County from Sept. 27 to Oct. 31. The stations are located in Chula Vista, Bonita, National City, El Cajon, Mission Valley and Del Mar.

Rides and activities vary by site but



may include giant slides, train jump, mini-slide, game zone, swing ride, Ferris wheel, El Paso Train Ride, Sky Fighter Ride, boat ride, petting zoo, helicopter ride, Dino Jump, Lil Toot Ride.

Operation dates and hours also vary by location.

The **Mountain Valley Ranch Pumpkin Patch** offers guests indoor and outdoor options when searching for the perfect Halloween jack-o'-lantern. The barn will provide guests with other holiday treats including Indian maize, popping corn, and gourds in many shapes and color patterns.

Other activities include the Corn Maze, Corn Cannon, animal exhibit, petting zoo and pony rides. The grounds also boasts a collection of old farm implements on display, as well as a 1930 Model A.

The venue is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 29 to Oct. 31.

## Attractions

**SeaWorld's Halloween Spooktacular** provides Halloween-themed activities on weekends Sept. 27 to Oct. 26 with paid admission. The water animal park will offer special shows and activities. Children are encouraged to attend in costume as they grab goodies and pose for photos with "wacky characters."

**Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Pumpkin Express Train Ride & Pumpkin Patch** hosts its annual train ride at the historic Campo Depot. After participating in the hour-long ride, children will be able to pick out a pumpkin and decorate it inside the museum's Display

Building. Parents should know there is also a Haunted Train on site.

The Pumpkin Express runs three times a day Oct. 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Advance registration is required. Fares range from \$5 for toddlers to \$15 for adults.

**Legoland's Brick-or-Treat Party Nights 2014** will be held every Saturday in October, as well as on two Friday nights (Oct. 17 and 24). The program runs from 5 to 9 p.m. and includes 10 LEGO-themed treat stations with candy, healthy snacks and a few surprises along the way. A costume contest for children ages 12 and under will be held, with the winners receiving four Resort Membership Passes and a gift basket.

Other entertainment options include Hubble Bubble's Dance Party; Kevin Johnson, the master ventriloquist; the BOO Crew jugglers, unicyclists and stilt walkers, and an evening-ending fireworks show. Ticket prices vary.

The **Balboa Park Halloween Family Day 2014** offers a wide variety of activities at more than two dozen museums and cultural attractions from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 24.

Among the long list of participants are Museum of Photographic Arts, Air & Space Museum, Museum of Man, International Houses, Spanish Village artisan co-op, Automotive Museum, Museum of Art, Natural History Museum and the Zoo. ■

Visit [www.refreshedmag.com](http://www.refreshedmag.com) for location and contact information for all these events.



# Colliding with GOD

by TIM WALKER

I'm not the most coordinated person in the world. I can trip over my own two feet just as easily as I can trip over an object in my path. There's a good reason for it. I have "athletically challenged syndrome." It's a real disease. (Okay, maybe not yet. But if we can get enough people to petition without injuring themselves with pencils, paper cuts, etc., we'll get organized.)

So, needless to say, I know a thing or two about collision.

I'm the guy who stood in right field, praying the ball wouldn't collide with my head. I'm the guy who jumped off the bus at a band competition, thinking I could reenact the 1980s "Oh What a Feeling" Toyota commercial jump only to come crashing on the pavement, bloodying my knee and tearing my pants. I'm the guy who had a head-on collision with my brother on a motorcycle trail. We both swerved. I just swerved the wrong direction.

It's a gift, I know.

And while I'm not so great at moving around (my wife has a strict "please don't do that" regarding my dancing), I am very grateful for some of the collisions I've had in my life.

Like the person who hit the bumper of my car when I was a newly licensed driver. Someone at a traffic light thought the light had changed and hit the gas, giving my car a bump. That moment taught me to allow space at the stoplight and to make sure I knew what was going on around me.

But I've also had some collisions in my life that have had a great impact on me personally as well.

Like my Sunday school teacher in middle school, Kathy Crowell. In a routine lesson, with an activity that involved making a poster and writing a skit, she saw a gift in me. A gift for words. A gift to create. And she told me. She told my mom. She spoke life into that gift by being someone outside my own family to recognize it. And because of that, I began to dream of using that gift.

Or my Sunday School teacher in high school, Phil Harley. He impacted my life in a huge way. He made a misfit, uncoordinated kid feel like he was a wanted part of the world. It's why I looked forward to church and

loved being around Phil and his family.

Or the time when I began to see the themes in my Lit class play out in the Bible, and when I began to see that all of life was a mere reflection of the story that unfolds in the Bible.

Or the time when I was driving on the Interstate, pouring my broken heart out to God and He brought both comfort and joy.

Or the time I met someone from another denomination who really loved God, and I realized that my particular church didn't have a monopoly on Him.

There are many other collision stories, moments when God's truth collided with me, God's people crashed into me, God Himself showed up in my life in ways that I never saw coming—much like a baseball soaring in the air or the tree that suddenly jumped into my path.

What about you?

What are the moments when God crashed into you?

What about the moments when His truth showed up somewhere you didn't expect and He showed you something about who He is? Was it in the face of one of your children, your spouse, a total stranger? Was it in a sunset or in a book or a movie?

Take some time today to think about the ways God has collided with you, and you with Him. And how not only you collided, but how you were changed.

Then do one more thing for me . . . Tell someone. Let other people hear from your own lips about the collision. Let them into your story.

And when they hear your stories about a God who collides with us, changes us, maybe they'll be intentional about colliding with God as well.



Tim Walker is a husband/father/writer who is navigating faith, marriage, parenthood and mid-life. Follow his blog at [www.timswords.com](http://www.timswords.com).



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**Where:** Liberty Station, Point Loma

**Who:** Community members, students, families, youth groups...and you!

**What:** An all night fundraiser to support San Diego's 10,000 homeless men, women, and children

**Why:** To raise awareness of homelessness and funds to change lives at San Diego Rescue Mission

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## Review: “Left Behind” rebooted

by MICHAEL FOUST

Of all the jobs in the world, movie-making surely has to be one of the most challenging ones—especially when it comes to filming subjects no one has ever seen or experienced.

For instance, what should a scene look like in which millions of Christians around the world are raptured, from earth to heaven, all at once? I’m not sure, either, but “Left Behind”—which hit theaters Oct. 3—paints a remarkably believable picture.

It alone is worth the price of admission.

“Left Behind” is actually not a sequel to the first three films but a reboot of the very first one, which was released in 2000 and starred Kirk Cameron. The films are based on the best-selling books by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins.

The biggest name in the newest “Left Behind” is Nicolas Cage, who does a fine job playing pilot Rayford Steele. Other solid performances are given by Cassi Thom-

son (Chloe Steele) and Chad Michael Murray (Cameron “Buck” Williams).

The newest “Left Behind” has a bigger budget than the original one (\$15 million compared to \$4 million), and that’s evident on the screen. The special effects, for instance, are solid.

The movie starts strong and provides solid character development for the lead characters, and it also ends on a strong note, presumably setting up a sequel.

Fans of the series certainly will enjoy it.

The movie’s strongest moments come when the characters are one-on-one, as when Cage’s character is talking to Buck Williams, and when Williams is talking to Chloe Steele.

But the film struggles a bit when it tries to show scenes of chaos. The same forced crowd shots that often plague sports movies are also at play here, making some of the scenes unbelievable. It’s simply diffi-



Nicolas Cage is pilot Rayford Steele in “Left Behind,” an end-times movie from the New York Times Bestseller ‘Left Behind’ series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Johnson.

cult to get a large group of people to look excited or scared, all at once.

Overall, though, it’s a solid film, and it’s far better than the first installment.

“Left Behind” will, of course, spark another discussion among Christians about the End Times. After all, the movie’s viewpoint—called “pre-millennial, pre-tribulation”—is not shared by all believers. Some Christians say the Bible doesn’t teach that believers will be spared from the tribulation, and still others say there won’t be a tribulation at all and that the next major moment in redemptive history is simply the return of Christ.

As Christians, we all certainly believe that Jesus is returning, and hopefully strive to be ready for that day. “Left Behind” does a good job reminding us of that message, one on which we all can agree.

## Eastwood son catches ‘Perfect Wave’

Encinitas resident Scott Eastwood, the son of famous actor-director Clint Eastwood, made his own splash this summer with the release of “The Perfect Wave,” an international film about surfer-pastor Ian McCormack.

The younger Eastwood’s previous credits include “Gran Torino” and “Flags of Our Fathers.”

The filmmakers created a partnership with the grassroots website Tugg, which allows local communities to host their own screenings. San Diegans got the chance to see the film in late September after it was featured at the San Diego Film Festival.

Macdonald describes “The Perfect Wave,” which also stars Rachel Hendrix (“October Baby”) and Cheryl Ladd (“Charlie’s Angels”), as a “love story with four pillars:” a mother’s love, a young man’s love for surfing, first love, and most importantly, God’s love.

“This film shares the amazing story of God’s plan for Ian’s life and reminds viewers that no matter how far you run, you can never outrun God’s love,” he said.

In addition to “The Perfect Wave’s” invitation at the San Diego Film Festival, it was tapped for three awards at the 6th Annual Pan Pacific Film Festival, bringing home the nod for Best Cinematography.

## ‘Selma’

Nigerian-born actor David Oyelowo is filming what is expected to be the biggest role of his career to date, portraying Martin Luther King Jr. in the Lee Daniels biopic, “Selma.”

According to Allied Faith & Family the movie also stars Cuba Gooding Jr., Oprah Winfrey and Carmen Ejogo. Oyelowo is in familiar territory, having also starred in Daniels’ “The Butler,” the 2013 hit which also featured Winfrey. Other credits include “The Last King of Scotland,” “Red Tails,” “Rise of the Planet of the Apes” and “Lincoln.”



Open about his deep-seated Christian faith, Oyelowo, 38, took a leap of faith when moving his family from Britain to Los Angeles because of the limited amount of roles for black actors there.

In an interview last year with the UK’s *The Independent* Oyelowo acknowledged his committed relationship with God.

“I literally heard God speak to me about how much He loved me,” the actor said. “That voice never abated. Like any relationship, it becomes deeper. It’s a hard thing to explain—it’s like explaining love to someone who has never fallen in love.”

“Selma” will open in limited markets Christmas Day, with wide release planned for early January.



## Switchfoot's eventful year includes 4 Dove nominations

San Diego rockers Switchfoot, who appear Nov. 1 at SDSU's Open Air Theatre, have been nominated for four GMA Dove Awards, including Artist of the Year. The 45th annual awards will be presented Oct. 7 in Nashville. The show will be broadcast for the first time on Trinity Broadcasting Network, opening up access to the show to 100 million homes, according to USA Today.

In addition to Best Artist accolades, the band is also nominated for Rock/Contemporary Album of the Year with *Fading West*; Rock/Contemporary Song of the Year for "Love Alone is Worth the Fight"; and Long Form Video of the Year for the *Fading West* album.

The video nomination is not entirely surprising since Switchfoot released a companion feature-length documentary called "Fading West." The documentary, filmed at some of the world's most notable beaches, includes stunning cinematography highlighting the band's passion for surfing and music while exploring their struggles trying to balance their growing families, faith and life on the road.

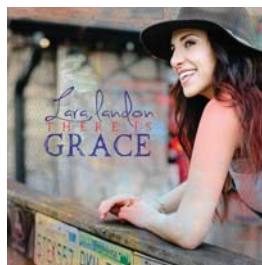
## Crowder brings 'Neon Steeple' tour to La Mesa

David Crowder, whose signature sound of electronica and folk music led to a national following for the David Crowder Band, brings his concert tour to San Diego in promotion of his first solo album, "Neon Steeple Tour."

The concert will be held 7:30 p.m. Nov. 1 at Skyline Church in La Mesa. His show, presented by Transparent Productions, includes performances by All Sons & Daughters and Capital Kings. Tickets are \$25 to \$40.

## A season of sorrow and grace

Entrenched in her own season of sorrow, singer-songwriter Lara Landon released her third album, "There is Grace" on Sept. 9. The album dropped just weeks after the unexpected death of her father. The Southern California artist canceled pre-release promotion to tend to her



family, but decided to go forward with the planned album release.

"He was and is my biggest fan and supporter and he would want me to," Landon said in a statement.

Among the songs featured on the album is "I Want to Know You," which she penned for and shared with her father before his passing. A video tribute at his memorial service included that song.

"I've been working on this album for two years with my own hopes, reasons and expectations for it, but I had no idea the very songs I wrote would be what I needed to hear myself right now," she said.

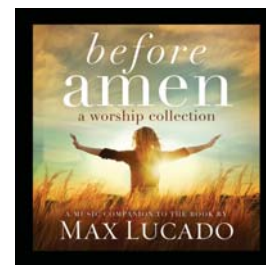
## Powerful amen

Integrity Music releases *Before Amen: A Worship Collection*, the musical

companion to the book from bestselling author and pastor Max Lucado, "Before Amen: The Power of a Simple Prayer," on Oct. 7.

The album offers songs that were chosen to complement the just-released book and provides a musical backdrop for prayer and personal devotion. Lucado is also showcased giving inspirational messages.

Featured artists on the 13-track recording include All Sons & Daughters, Michael W. Smith, Kari Jobe, John Mark McMillan, Brian Doerksen, Kathryn Scott and Soul Survivor, as well as brand-new songs from worship leaders Paul and Rita Baloché, Planetshakers and Darlene Zschech.



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## Memorial services for aborted, abandoned babies

SAN DIEGO — St. Stephen's Cathedral Church of God in Christ—as a part of their Call to Repentance, Forgiveness and Healing Ministry—will launch monthly memorial services for aborted babies and children abandoned at birth.

“We join our prayers and our voices with other people of faith who affirm that life is sacred and the children, in and out of the womb, are precious in God's sight,” said Bishop George McKinney, the congregation's senior pastor. “We mourn, agonize and grieve because of the ongoing slaughter of the innocent who are supposedly safe in the protective environment of the womb.”

The services will be held from 5 to 6 p.m. the last Saturday of every month and are also designed as a time of repentance, forgiveness and healing for those who have received, assisted or performed abortions and those who abandoned their child at birth.

Each service will begin with praise, prayer and Scripture reading, continuing with the Memorial Litany that includes the congregation reciting a confession in unity, a time of repentance and prayer for absolution and healing. In addition, those who attend will receive information regarding certain aspects of abortion and national statistics, human sexuality as a gift from God and the spiritual ramifications of sexual behaviors.

For more information, call (619) 262-2671.



## Students donate 350 stocked backpacks

SOLANA BEACH — Santa Fe Christian Schools teamed up with Bridge of Hope and Anchor and Venture churches to distribute about 350 backpacks to City Heights students.

Through the fourth annual collaborative effort, elementary and high school students from City Heights received backpacks filled with school supplies that included binders, paper, pens, pencils, folders, glue sticks, crayons or markers and spiral notebooks.

This year's donations resulted in 75 more backpacks than last year, a 27 percent increase.

“Just 30 minutes away, in our own country, is a life that is extremely different and difficult,” said Santa Fe Christian volunteer Melissa Drake. “The backpacks are just one small way SFC students can help.”

The middle school students organized the collection of supplies and helped distribute the backpacks with volunteers from Anchor and Venture. Students with the greatest need for the backpacks were identified with the help of Bridge of Hope, a nonprofit that helps families and refugees facing crisis around the world.

Learn more at [www.sfcs.net](http://www.sfcs.net).

## Youth choir to make debut

EL CAJON — A new community choir bringing together high school students from all over the San Diego area will make its debut this month.

The Youth Choir of San Diego, led by artistic director Jason Prater, will hold its premiere concert on Thursday, Oct. 16, at Cuyamaca College. The 7:00 p.m. concert will feature special musical guest Jasmine Commerce.

With a mission of “empowering San Diego's youth, one note at a time,” the student-centered choral organization has a goal to develop leaders and inspire community through musical excellence.

Prater, a graduate of UCLA and an Army veteran, is the Community Outreach Director at El Cajon Wesleyan Church and has previously served with Shadow Mountain Community Church.

Musical director Jonni Glaser, principal keyboardist for Skyline Church, has a rich musical background having been credited on Grammy-winning albums with such superstars as Christina Aguilera, Chante Moore, and Brandy.

Tickets for the concert, which will be held in the Performing Arts Theater, located at 900 Rancho San Diego Parkway in El Cajon, range from \$3 to \$10.

Learn more at [www.youthchoird.org](http://www.youthchoird.org) or call (619) 442-5941.

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## Craft and bake sale set for Santee

SANTEE — Santee Christian Church will host a craft and bake sale from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 4.

The event will feature handmade and home-baked items from vendors from around the county.

The church is located at 8410 Fanita Drive. For more information, call (619) 448-5591.

## 1,450 church volunteers beautify 38 campuses

SAN DIEGO — Urban Youth Collaborative partnered with local congregations, school administrators and the U.S. Navy to mobilize 1,450 faith-based volunteers to beautify 38 campuses throughout San Diego County as part of its fifth annual school beautification project.

The effort culminated in late August

when volunteers poured into schools in San Ysidro, inner-city San Diego, North Park, Santee, Escondido, Fallbrook, San Marcos and Vista.

Ministry founder the Rev. Nate Landis said that in an era of budget cuts, School Beautification Day has become a welcome tradition for students and administrators.

“A clean and freshly painted school communicates that students matter and builds favor with administrators of all backgrounds,” the ministry website said.

Learn more at [www.uyc.org](http://www.uyc.org).

## Lowrider Gospel Fest returns to City Heights

SAN DIEGO — The San Diego Lowrider & Hotrod Gospel Fest will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 18 at City Heights Urban Village.

The free event is led by Pastor Richard “Cisco” Mendez in partnership with San Diego Police Department’s Mid-City Divi-

sion, City Heights Town Council, San Diego School District; San Diego Parks and Recreation, local lowrider and hotrod car clubs and other government, Christian and secular agencies.

As many as 8,000 people are expected to attend the event.

The annual show is hosted as way to keep children and teens busy, while educating them about community resources. In addition to free food, live entertainment, a car show, boxes of groceries for each family to take home, the event disseminates information addressing child abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse and spousal abuse.


Donations are being accepted to underwrite the event.

For more information, call (619) 384-6579.

### EVENTS ONLINE

For a Calendar of Events for San Diego County, please visit [www.refreshedmag.com](http://www.refreshedmag.com).

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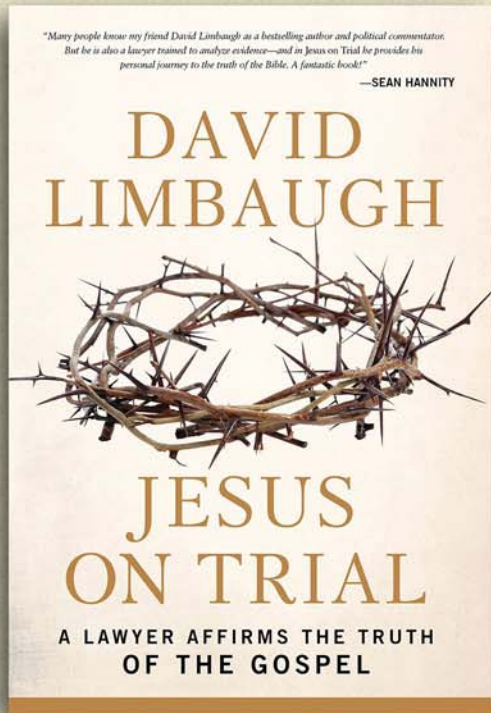
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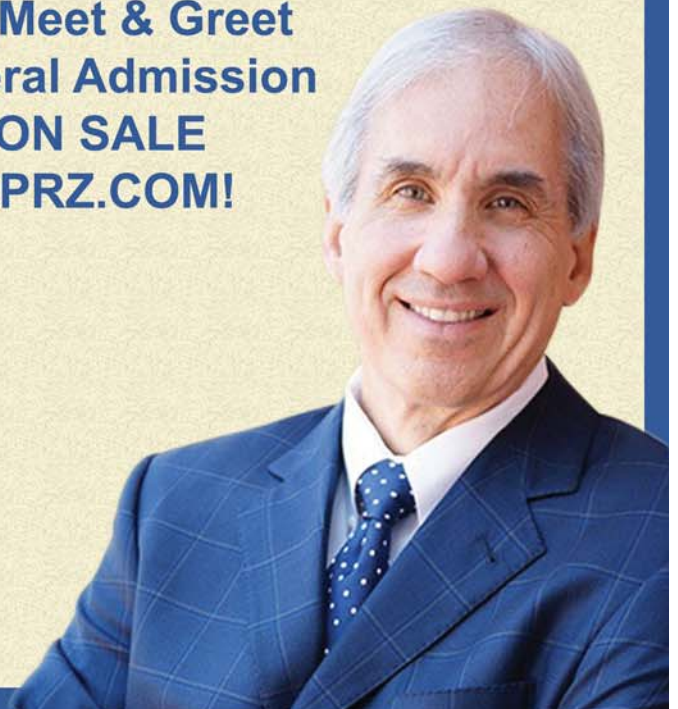


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# The parable of the cinnamon roll

There's a reason why communication is enhanced through *stories*: They work. A compelling story will connect, engage, and enlighten.

Jesus told stories, "parables," and lives were changed—at least for those who really listened. In our day a good story still effectively strips away pretense and cuts to the heart of a matter.

In 1982 President Ronald Reagan took the State of the Union messages to a new level when he pointed out a man in the upstairs gallery. It was a hero at the scene of a winter plane crash in D.C. who selflessly rescued a passenger from the icy Potomac River. Most everyone who watched that speech remembers that man's name: Lenny Skutnik.

In telling the story, the president said this:

"Just two weeks ago, in the midst of a terrible tragedy on the Potomac, we saw again the spirit of American heroism at its finest ...the heroism of dedicated rescue workers saving crash victims from icy waters.

"And we saw the heroism of one of our young government employees, Lenny Skutnik, who, when he saw a woman lose her grip on the helicopter line, dived into the water and dragged her to safety."

Pretty good for a guy who each day didn't exactly risk bodily harm, while working at the U.S. Budget Office printing department.

By the way, during his career he also worked other jobs including painter, supermarket employee, restaurant cook, meat packing plant processor and furniture factory worker

In other words, he wasn't trained in "how to be a hero one day." When the time was right, he didn't mull it over.

Lenny just did what he needed to do, while hundreds of others watched from the riverbanks, wondering if the woman would slip under the water, never to be seen again.

Great stories, especially those that are true or based on non-fiction circumstances, are the ones we remember. From that Reagan speech until today, there's always someone (or many someones) who sit in the gallery above the U.S. House of Representatives floor, waiting for the moment when a current president highlights what they've done to inspire other Americans. It's a very nice tradition, even though sometimes leaders choose to politicize who sits up there and why.



I'm always amazed how my wife can tune into a television drama two-thirds of the way through a show with no idea of what's been going on,

and become totally engrossed in the story. I will then be warned to change channels at my own risk. Wonder of wonders, she will pick up on the story in no time.

Well-told stories make people pay attention. When they're shared honestly, with passion and conviction, they also touch hearts, and are capable of causing those who hear to make adjustments in their own lives.

A few years ago, one of my favorite stories actually happened to me. My friend, Apollo XII astronaut Alan Bean (one of only 12 humans who have walked on the face of the moon) taught me a significant lesson while we were waiting for our flights home after an event at the Kennedy Space Center.

After a weekend of seeing hundreds of Americans line up to get autographs and have photos taken with dozens of space explorers, everyone was heading out of town, catching flights at Orlando International.

As I waited in line for a breakfast sandwich and coffee, I noticed Alan sitting across the food court, quietly munching his cinnamon roll. Just hangin' out, like an everyday guy...the legendary astronaut, who also made history on America's first space station, Skylab.

Alan noticed me watching him. He smiled, nodded hello, invited me to join him. As I pulled up a chair I told him I was amused by how most people don't recognize the heroes around us.

Alan said, "Nope, I'm just enjoying *THIS* moment." For emphasis, he looked me straight in the eye, smiled and declared, "This cinnamon roll is the most important part of my day... *RIGHT NOW*."

Well said.

I got the lesson: *Seize the moment, live in it, enjoy it, savor it...always*. From that day, when I see Alan I remind him how important that event was to me, and how I now refer to it as "The Parable of the Cinnabun."

Getting the most from every moment in life helps us understand events, learn new things about ourselves, and have many new stories to share with others.

So... *what's your favorite story?*



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](http://www.marklarson.com).

KIMBERLY RUBY



## Taming the food trigger giant

It's right about now when I warn my patients to be on guard for the sugar parade: a steady stream of sweet delicacies from Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas to Girl Scout cookie time. Each event could derail any well-meaning consumer.

Let's not kid ourselves: That premium bag of candy you purchased at Costco way before Oct. 31 will be gone a week before your doorbell rings and substituted a few days later with the cheap stuff.

Studies tell us we gain between two to four pounds around this time every year. That's not a bad thing; we just fail to work it off after the holidays. The cumulative effects after age 20 or so can really add up.

So how do we best prepare ourselves to succeed when it comes to any kind of caloric temptation, from birthday celebrations and holiday festivities to the more common emotional hunger triggers that drive our face into a tub of Ben and Jerry's?

According to Weight Watchers, a trigger food or craving is a specific food that sets off a course of eating where control is lost. That sounds so cold and sterile for something that brings so much comfort and relief.

The most common food triggers, Weight Watchers tell us, are "calorie-dense, highly palatable foods that are often a combination of sugar, fat and salt."

How true, I tell my weight management support group. No one ever tells me, "Oh, I just can't keep away from Brussels sprouts and lima beans!"

I've divided food cravings into three categories. The first: gooey/savory, like cheese and sauces along with breads, pizza and pastas. (Can you say comfort foods?) The second category: swirl-in-your-mouth chocolatey, caramel or nutty. And the third: salty/crunchy. Nothing

a whole bag of Flamin' Hot Cheetos can't fix, right?

So, not scientific by any means, but these are the "911 go-to's" I've observed and come up with when life starts pressing in from every direction.

### Lurking triggers

Dr. Judith Beck, author of "The Beck Diet Solution, Train Your Brain to Think Like a Thin Person," identifies five different kinds of triggers that can lead to sabotaging thoughts: environmental triggers such as seeing or smelling food; biological triggers such as hunger, thirst or cravings; mental triggers such as reading a description of food or thinking about food; emotional triggers such as pleasant or unpleasant feelings; and social triggers such as others around you who urge you to eat.

Beck believes that if you can identify the triggers that lead you to eat in unhelpful ways, you can change how you respond to them and reduce your exposure to them.

### Hunger and eating styles

In their book, "Intuitive Eating," registered dietitians Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch teach that you must first honor and recognize your biological hunger.

You must ask yourself, "Am I hungry?" while learning what true biological hunger feels like. They believe this is the first step to reclaiming normal eating and understanding what fullness feels like. The authors also have identified eight different eating styles (or personalities), the characteristics of each style and their triggers. For example, The Chaotic Unconscious Eater is a person whose eating style is haphazard, gulp-n'-go when food is available. They seem to thrive on tension. Their trigger would be an overscheduled life. Sound familiar?

### Expert advice

Here are some additional tips to curb your cravings as outlined in "The Daniel Plan—40 Days to a Healthier Life."

**Balance your blood sugar.** Low blood sugar leads to poor nutritional choices. Eat protein with each meal to keep your levels stable.

**Eliminate sugar, artificial sweeteners and refined carbs.** These can trigger cravings. Many doctors believe sugar is the primary cause of obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. The average American consumes over 130 pounds of sugar per year.

**Get moving.** Research shows physical activity can curb cravings. Plan your exercise for the week and schedule it on your calendar.

**Manage your stress.** Stress triggers hormones that activate your cravings. Chronic stress has been associated with obesity, addiction, anxiety, depression, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease and cancer. Adopt a daily stress management program that includes prayer, rest, music and enjoyable activities.

One of my favorite quotes comes from Mark Hyman, M.D.:

"What you put on your fork dictates whether you are sick or well, slim or fat, depleted or energized."

May you thrive and enjoy the upcoming holidays with family and friends and honor God in all you do.



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.



# The danger of masking the truth

*“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” — John 8:32*

Years ago, while working at a psychiatric hospital, I was asked to conduct an intake interview with a young lady who was experiencing “false pregnancy,” which is known as pseudocyesis. She was 19 years old, of very slight build with the exception of a large round belly that could not be hidden by the maternity clothes.

“Everyone thinks I’m crazy because I believe I’m pregnant,” she blurted out without hesitation. “Just look at me! Obviously I’m going to have a baby.”

I said, “It certainly looks that way to me, too,” hoping to put her at ease a little. And, with some prompting she went on to tell me more about her situation.

Both she and her boyfriend were Christians who had dated for many years. She knew that he was the one she was going to marry, have children, and together they would live out their lives.

**...we are all guilty of changing reality to some degree in an attempt to protect ourselves from perceived threats.**

However, he went away to college and shortly thereafter broke up with her. She acknowledged that although they practiced celibacy throughout their relationship, they had regrettably broken the biblical call for purity on one occasion, right before he moved away. In the past, he had told her that if he were ever to get a girl pregnant, he would do the “right thing” and marry her.

After the breakup, she noticed changes in her body that suggested she

was pregnant. She told the boyfriend and, sure enough, he asked her to marry him.

But that was six months ago, and this relationship was living on borrowed time.

Numerous doctors told her that there was no fetus, even though her body was acting as if she was with child. An ultrasound imaging test confirmed that she had never been pregnant. Once the boyfriend found out about the test results, he obviously felt manipulated and broke up with her once again.

Now she had to grieve the loss of the boyfriend, once more, as well as the loss of the baby that never existed in the first place. Her admission to the care facility for treatment was very appropriate during her time of deep grief.

Interestingly, she had fooled herself and those around her into believing she was expecting a child and she wanted it so much that her body acted as if she really was pregnant. Our minds are powerful enough to seemingly change reality to fit our needs. However, there is one huge caveat to this apparent solution: whenever we distort reality to solve a short-term problem, there are always long-term consequences to pay.

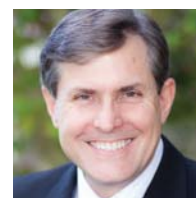
Although this story is extreme, the truth is we are all guilty of changing reality to some degree in an attempt to protect ourselves from perceived threats. Defense mechanisms like denial, rationalization and projection are

all used to change reality to something a little more palatable. Usually we are blind to our own distortions, but those around us may be painfully aware of how we avoid or change the truth.

Jesus said, “The truth will set you free.” The flip side of that is we can become slaves to our own distortions of reality. The Bible says that the heart can be “deceptively evil” and it appears that we are best at deceiving ourselves.

If you try, you can probably think of times where you avoided harsh realities, but the denial only served to make matters worse. There is that phone call you should make, that old debt you owe, that apology you should give. It can be difficult to face these things, but once they are behind you, the relief is amazing.

If you face the challenges that present themselves to you today, rather than kick the can down the road, you will be one step closer to feeling the freedom that comes from living in the truth. The good news is that we have God’s Spirit to guide us, the Scriptures to inform us, and our fellow believers to counsel us back into reality when self-deceptions impregnate our perception of the truth.



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](http://www.lighthousepsy.com).

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JANICE THOMPSON

# Power-up principle: Leaving a legacy of love



If I told you that you could take proactive steps to help keep your family from hating each other after you're gone, would that interest you? Sadly, family drama occurs more often than you think! I recently conducted a joint financial planning/estate planning workshop with my good friend—and outstanding estate planning attorney—Stacy DenHerder. Experience has taught us a few valuable lessons we'd like to communicate that might help prevent unintentional family conflict after you're gone. If you would prefer to leave a *Legacy of Love* rather than division, consider the following:

## Have a plan for your “things.”

Some of the biggest disagreements are over the littlest things. This is often because of an emotional or sentimental attachment to something that belonged to you: jewelry, china, a tool, a trinket, the family dining room table, etc. Others want the more valuable items: a car, stamp collection, or the grand piano. A significant gift you can give your children is a plan for your possessions after you are gone. Preparing a list of who gets what goes a long way. As another alternative, you could specify they draw numbers and each one chooses an item on their turn. Whatever you decide, having a thoughtful plan can avoid a lifetime of division among your heirs.

**Don't make one child the other's keeper.** Picture this, you have a “golden” child who has it all together and another who has made poor choices, particularly with money. You decide to leave your estate equally with the golden child receiving their inheritance outright coupled with the responsibility of doling out the portion to your other child. While it may seem wise, this is a surefire way to stir up strife among the

siblings. Solutions? Consider having an independent third party or a professional manage the share for the child who makes poor decisions to encourage harmony among your heirs.

**Equal or not?** Our children often have differing needs so let's look at two lines of thought related to inheritances: 1) Treat everyone equally, or 2) Love them equally but treat them uniquely. Each is a valid point, but consider this: Regardless of the earning capacity or the needs of one child over another, experience tells us that children of all ages believe that what you leave them is a measure of your love for them. Leaving more to one can lead the other to translate that into “you loved them more.” Consider also that circumstances can change. While one may have high earning capacity now, they could someday be destitute because of a lawsuit, divorce or illness. On the other hand, advocates of the second option say that every child is unique and you should give according to their ability to handle the funds and their needs. You know your family best so if you choose this path, we encourage you to have a meeting to ensure your family understands your philosophy and thought process *before* the fact, rather than assuming they'll understand it *after* the fact.

**Blended family.** If you are a blended family (his kids/her kids/our kids), we can't stress enough how important it is to plan. If you leave it up to your spouse to carry out your wishes, there is a high probability your bloodline will be disinherited. Consider just a few of the possible pitfalls:

- The surviving spouse is the same age as the kids—so the kids may inherit nothing.
- Everything is left to the surviving

spouse who promises to take care of your kids (it never happens).

- The surviving spouse has to “account” to the children of the one who died (challenging).

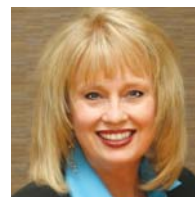
An entire article could be written on blended family dynamics alone.

## Correct beneficiary designations.

Check beneficiary designations on your retirement accounts, annuities and life insurance at least annually. Life changes—marriage, children, employment, etc.—and it is important that your beneficiary designations reflect your changing priorities. If you have a trust, make sure your attorney advises you on whether the trust should be the beneficiary. Stacy stresses, “Every year I see situations where the family discovers that the beneficiary on the deceased's life insurance is not who that person would have wanted ... and there is no remedy.”

## The solution? Plan, plan, plan!

There is no substitute for wise, experienced counsel to guide you. With the help of an attorney, an accountant, and a financial advisor you can build a strong foundation and design a Legacy of Love that will bless your loved ones long after you are gone.



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](http://www.onedegreeadvisors.com).

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# Dad, will there be dinosaurs in heaven?

Sometimes I wonder if we Christians have missed the mark when it comes to discussing dinosaurs. I think about this often because I have a 6-year-old who, honestly, wishes he were a triceratops.

Too often we seem to get lost in arguments over the when and how—for instance, “Did they live thousands or millions of years ago?”—and we fail to ask a more basic question: Why did God create dinosaurs? For instance, did He make these majestic creatures simply so we could split up into two camps (young-earthers and old-earthers), or did He make them for the same reason He made the rest of creation: for His glory? And if he made them for His glory—which He did—then why did He have them all die off before you or I would even see them?

Here’s what I think: It’s because we will see them again someday, after creation is restored. There is scriptural evidence for this, and that should excite all Christians—your kids, my kids and the “kid” in all of us—and make us even more amazed at God’s plan for the future.

To build the case for why dinosaurs just may be in heaven, we need to start with a more basic question: Will animals be in heaven? I don’t know whether your specific pet or mine will be in heaven, but the Bible seems clear that animals—generally speaking—will be there. Consider ...

First, after God created animals (days 5 and 6 in Genesis 1), He called them “good.” He said the same thing about light and land and seas and plants—all were “good,” and all are things we expect to see in the future in what Scripture calls the new heavens and new earth.

Second, animals were in the pre-Fall Garden of Eden—which is a picture of what creation not only should look

like but will again someday. Before sin entered the world, Adam named the animals (Genesis 2:20). He perhaps petted the goats, ran with the gazelles, and even climbed high onto a giraffe’s neck.

Third, the prophet Isaiah used animals to describe God’s future Kingdom: “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together ....” (Isaiah 11:6). Not only will there be animals, but they will be tame.

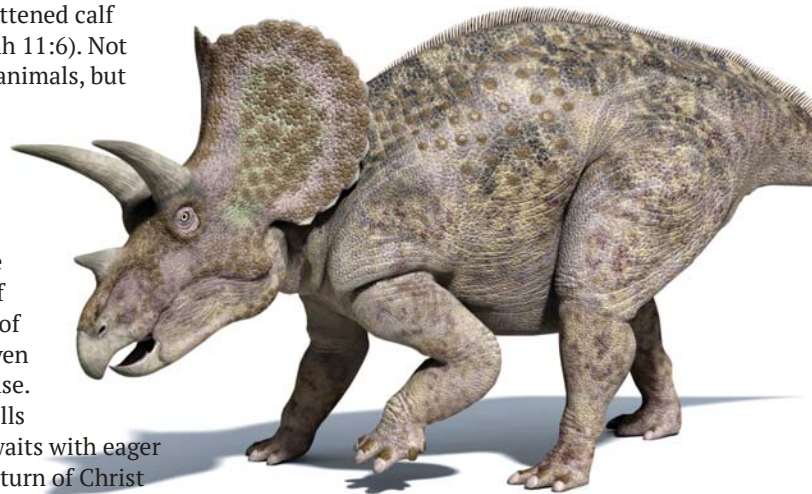
So animals will be in heaven, but what about dinosaurs? To answer that, we have to use a bit of Scripture, a touch of philosophy, and even some common sense.

Romans 8:19 tells us that “creation waits with eager longing” for the return of Christ when “creation itself will be set free.” In other words, creation will be restored to God’s original intent.

If we believe that animals will be in heaven, then why wouldn’t we believe that every animal that God ever made will be there, too ... even the extinct ones? After all, if the new heavens and the new earth are all about a restored creation, then wouldn’t filling that restored creation with every animal God ever made be part of that plan? We’re not just talking about dinosaurs here, but also the dodo bird, the saber-toothed tiger, even the woolly mammoth.

To leave out extinct creatures would seem to give victory to death and Satan—perhaps tantamount to saying there are some parts of His creation that God can’t restore.

Of course, this is all up to God. But it’s hard to imagine animals not being in heaven. They are amazing and spectacular creations. We take vacations across the continent and world to see them in the wild, and each weekend, flock to zoos to catch a glimpse. And dinosaurs? They’re arguably the most incredible land animals God ever made. If animals



are in heaven, surely dinosaurs will be there, too.

So when my son asks “will dinosaurs be in heaven?” I answer with a (some-what) confident “yes.” I’m looking forward to seeing a T. rex and a triceratops there, but—I tell my son—I’m looking more forward to seeing Jesus Himself—the Creator of those huge animals. Still, it surely will be fun for my son to play “triceratops” ... right alongside a real triceratops.



Michael Foust is the father of three small children, a writer and editor, and blogs about parenting at [www.michaelfoust.com](http://www.michaelfoust.com).

DAVID & LISA FRISBIE

# Humility: The key to a stronger marriage

“I deserve to be happy!” Bob says, staring at a pretty girl as she walks by our table at Il Fornaio in Del Mar. “I haven’t been happy in my marriage in a long time.”

Bob called this meeting. He wants to tell us why he will soon be divorcing his wife of a dozen years. For the next hour he explains to us, in richly textured detail, his lack of personal happiness at home. He continues to reference the fact that he “deserves” to be happy, and that he “should” be happy in life.

Bob is hoping we’ll affirm his self-centered focus on personal gratification but he’s breaking (fresh, delicious) bread with the wrong set of counselors today.

If selfishness is the end of many marriages—and it is—the beginning of a stronger union is a deep humility that bonds a couple more closely together. When instead of “me” and “mine” our focus becomes “you” and “yours,” growth happens.

**When a husband and wife each embrace humility, their embrace of each other becomes more durable and more desirable, more complete and more considerate.**

In a healthy marriage union the focus is on serving, not on being served.

When a husband approaches his wife with a servant heart, hoping to ease her burdens and make her life easier, a marriage is about to get better. When a wife approaches her husband with an attitude of helping him succeed and thrive, a relationship is about to grow stronger. When each partner’s focus is on serving instead of being served, then each partner is contribut-

ing to a closer and deeper connection, and each one is building a fuller and more fulfilling relationship. What do you call a marriage between two people who genuinely want to serve and help each other? A God-send.

In a healthy marriage union the focus is on loving, not on being loved.

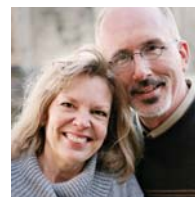
One of the most common complaints we hear from wives is, “He doesn’t love me any more,” which generally means that the husband is not as affectionate, not as attentive, or not as caring as he once was. This arc from compassion to complacency is not unusual in a husband or in a relationship, but it doesn’t have to signal the beginning of the end. In fact, when a wife changes her focus from “being loved” to “loving the man she married,” stand back and watch what God is about to do.

In our recent book *Becoming Your Husband’s Best Friend* we detail some actual cases of amazing transformations in marriage which were prompted by a wife’s decision to humbly focus on loving her husband, despite his inattentive or complacent behaviors. The key is a God-focused humility that is willing to go the extra mile, accept

the extra burden, and do the additional work. When a wife puts her focus on “loving the man she married” there is often a radical response in the heart of a previously unresponsive or apathetic husband. Does this mean that the wife should carry the primary burden in making a relationship work? Of course not—but do you want to keep talking about “who is responsible” or do you want to focus on “how to help this relationship prosper and succeed?”

Scripture frequently describes the relationship of Christ and the church as being a marriage, with Christ as the groom, and with the church as His bride. In weddings and sermons this imagery may have the flowery patina of a romantic interlude, but in Scripture the relationship appears much different. In fact, Scripture very clearly describes how Christ functions in the role of the groom or husband. Instead of insisting on being treated like royalty, Christ takes a refreshing and unusual approach to being the leader. “He humbled Himself, and walked the path of obedience, all the way to death...” is how Paul describes Christ’s process (Philippians 2). When a husband dies to his own agenda and his own needs and his own role as “head of the household,” and instead walks the path of humility, a deep and close bond begins to grow between a husband and wife. How long has it been since you observed a husband whom you would describe as being “humble” in his marriage?

Humility is not just one of the Christian graces, it is an essential element in the process of growing a stronger, closer, deeper relationship. When a husband and wife each embrace humility, their embrace of each other becomes more durable and more desirable, more complete and more considerate. We have a wonderful example of humility in Christ our Lord. Let’s try living “His way.”



Dr. David and Lisa Frisbie serve together as executive directors of The Center for Marriage and Family Studies in Del Mar. They are the authors of dozens of articles and

25 books about marriage and family life, including their recent book “*Becoming Your Husband’s Best Friend*” (Harvest House Publishers).



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JOANNE BROKAW

## The unsung celebrity

*Normally, I like to write something amusing for this column, but in September my hometown of Rochester, NY was rocked when police officer Daryl Pierson was gunned down while trying to apprehend a suspect, the first officer killed in the line of duty in this city in more than 50 years. I've been reflecting a lot on honor and sacrifice, so instead of blathering on about nothing this month, I'd like to share a piece I wrote a few years ago about a soldier I met in an Ohio airport.*

He looked like just another fresh-faced, Midwestern college student heading back to classes after spring break. Tall and handsome, dressed in jeans, a hooded sweatshirt and baseball cap, he was surrounded by what could only be his family, gathered together to send him back into the big world.

I was returning home to Rochester, New York, after spending three days in Dayton, Ohio, for the Erma Bombeck Humor Writer's Conference, where we'd been encouraged to see the humor in the mundane, the laughter in our surroundings and the comedy in our pain.

Maybe that's why I noticed the young man. A woman who I assumed was his mother was wrapped tightly around his waist, reluctant to say goodbye, a gesture I was all too familiar with whenever I used to send my daughter back to college, an entire hour from home.

I was with two other women from the conference, chatting and laughing, and the young man ended up behind us in the security line. I leaned across our group and tapped him on the arm. "Where are you going that your family is going to miss you so much?" I asked with a smile.

"The DMZ in South Korea," he responded politely.

It took a minute for that to sink in. The DMZ is the Demilitarized Zone. He

wasn't a student. He was a soldier.

Suddenly this wasn't so funny. I looked beyond him, and noticed that his family was still gathered beyond the security ropes, his mother teary-eyed and wringing her hands, not daring to take her eyes off her son for even a moment lest she lose him forever in the crowd.

I leaned back to the young man.

"What's your name?"

"Kyle," he replied.

"I'm going to pray for you, Kyle," I promised, and turned around, not sure what else to say.

We were directed through different security lines, and Kyle was through the checkpoint before me.

As I met up with my friends and we headed to the coffee shop before going our separate ways, I saw Kyle off to one side putting his belongings back into his carry-on. I wanted to stop and talk to him, but I didn't know what to say. I wanted to run back and tell his family that he would be OK, but I didn't know if that was true.

So I said nothing, and headed for the coffee shop, where I found a group of reality TV celebrities who had been in town for a charity event. Chatter and laughter poured out into the terminal, and fans were getting autographs and taking pictures. I had my picture taken just for kicks.

As I put my camera back into my bag, I looked down the terminal and noticed Kyle walking by himself to his gate. In an instant, the contrast between the pseudo-celebs and Kyle became all too clear.

I was standing with a group of people who were admired simply because they'd been on television, enduring a month on some tropical island, eating coconuts and rice, and battling each other for a cash

prize and the chance of product endorsements. They were surrounded by fans who wanted to shower them with attention.

And here was Kyle, headed out to endure a real bout with survival. Real enemies, real sacrifice, real danger. And no one noticed him.

I know almost nothing about Kyle. Surely, he is someone's son. Quite possibly, he is someone's brother. Very likely, he is some young woman's Prince Charming.

**You are more than any television survivor, more middle-American than any Average Joe. You, Kyle, are my hero.**

But I know now what I want to say to you, Kyle.

You are the foundation upon which this country is built, young men and women willing to leave behind safety, security and family so that I may remain at home and enjoy the fruits of freedom, even if that includes watching mindless television and writing columns just for laughs.

You are more than any television survivor, more middle-American than any Average Joe. You, Kyle, are my hero.

I missed my chance. You are the real celebrity, and I should have had my picture taken with you.



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](http://www.joannebrokaw.com).



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