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NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAYS THE LORD *Pentecostal*

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Also: Power of Negative Thinking


Lifelong Ministry

Sports Outreach

NEW IDENTITIES

Changing lives on California's campuses

100
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adayatatime



Scott Harrup
 Managing Editor

CONTRADICTIONS?

Oxymoron, according to Grammar.about.com, is a “figure of speech in which seemingly contradictory terms appear side by side.” The website includes a list of 100 examples. Some that caught my eye: alone together, civil war, found missing, good grief, growing smaller, minor miracle, only choice.

One entry in the list fit perfectly with a *Time* article I read that had made me look for an online list of oxymorons in the first place — devout atheist.

Josh Sanburn's Aug. 4 piece in the newsweekly, “Nonbelief system. Atheist ‘churches’ take hold, even in the Bible Belt,” examines the growing popularity of meeting places for nonbelievers, such as Houston Oasis, “a church that’s not a church.” Sanburn notes, “Oasis is one of a growing number of so-called atheist churches [a new oxymoron?] in the U.S.”

But an oxymoron is not intended to promote nonsense. As noted above, it is made of “seemingly contradictory terms.” Oxymorons help to illuminate deeper truths, and I believe “atheist churches” illustrates that function.

To the extent followers of Christ demonstrate His love and unity, especially in the public square, people of all spiritual persuasions (or of no such persuasion) will be drawn to that expression of community. Local churches are intended to be inviting representations of the true Church, Christ’s living body of believers. It should come as no surprise, then, that atheists would attempt to emulate that kind of interaction within a setting devoid of any claim to God’s existence or the lordship of His Son.

Responding to such hunger for community is one of the most compelling tools for evangelism. This week’s cover feature, “New Identities” by John W. Kennedy, reports on Chi Alpha’s growth among California’s universities. From small group meetings to public outreaches on campus quads, Chi Alpha invites students to encounter Christ through involvement in a loving community.

As a follower of Christ, you don’t have to be an ordained minister or full-time evangelist to share the gospel. You can reach out with kindness and concern to the people who surround you in your neighborhood, at your job, or in the grocery store.

Who knows, you might even be the means for attracting a member of an atheist church to a genuine house of worship. ■

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

writeUS

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|| the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16). || there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19). || in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His personal future return to this earth in power and glory to rule a thousand years (John 1:1). || in the blessed hope — the rapture of the Church at Christ’s coming (Titus 2:13). || the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ (John 14:6). || regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for personal salvation (Titus 3:5). || in water baptism by immersion (Matthew 28:19). || the redemptive work of Christ on the cross provides healing of the human body in answer to believing prayer (1 Peter 2:24). || the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it. || in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life (Galatians 5:16-25). || in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, the one to everlasting life and the other to everlasting damnation (Revelation 20:11-15).

Vantage Point

Reading “Living for Jesus,” the Vantage Point by Ken Horn in the July 13 *Pentecostal Evangel*, I was overjoyed to see the lyrics for the song of the same name.

While I am incarcerated I rarely find something of value to read, but I couldn’t believe it when, as I was reading the article, the words from that song just flowed out of my mouth as if I were in a church singing the hymn. Thank you for that moment of peace and joy in my life.

AN INMATE
GOWANDA, N.Y.

Reader Feedback

I just read the letter in the June 1 issue by Mary Asti on the March 9 article “Why We Aren’t Prayer Warriors.” She is 84; I am 90 years old.

Prayer is my life. As a child I saw people praying. In fact, my mother was the prime example (after Jesus). She was widowed at a young age with four children. God was her strength, and prayer with hard work was her life.

I seldom heard her pray aloud, but we all knew when “Mama was praying.” No matter the situation, she would lay her hand on our hurt and close her eyes. We got well; the hurt was gone.

The first time I heard her pray aloud, at age 49, I had just been baptized in the Holy Spirit. As I excitedly told her all about it, she just smiled. I said, “You know this, don’t you?” She said, “Yes.” We bowed by her bed and prayed. What a good time. After she died at age 75, I felt the Spirit lay her prayer mantle over me.

Now at our Assemblies of God church in Burney, Calif., I have been asked to be part of a team at the back of the sanctuary that is available for prayer.



As Mary Asti wrote in her letter, I pray others will step in.

MILLIE WEST
CASSEL, CALIF.

Daily Boost

I want to thank and tell you how truly blessed I’ve been in receiving *Daily Boost*. I am really going to miss it. I was always encouraged and challenged. I would often pass it on to my co-workers.

CHARLES CARDONE
VIA EMAIL

Missing Issues of the Pentecostal Evangel

Nearly all existing issues of the *Pentecostal Evangel* (earlier known as the *Christian Evangel* and the *Weekly Evangel*) from our 101-year history are now housed in the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, the world’s largest Pentecostal archive. However, the Heritage Center is missing originals of several early issues from 1913-14. Do you have copies of the *Christian Evangel* (original name of the publication) from its first two years when it was published in Plainfield, Ind., and Findlay, Ohio?

Please contact the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center: 1-877-840-5200 toll-free, or archives@ag.org

visit us online!

Access pe.ag.org to read archived issues of the *Pentecostal Evangel*.

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BY JOHN W. KENNEDY
IN TURLOCK, CALIF.

Walking in the quadrangle at Modesto (Calif.) Junior College his first week on campus, Daniel Rodriguez became intrigued at the sight of a “free spiritual readings” booth.

The spiritually hungry Rodriguez had a history of consulting psychics and tarot card readers for advice. For Rodriguez, Mexican-American and Native American family gang members served as role models.

Those tending the booth, students from Chi Alpha, the Assemblies of God ministry on secular college and university campuses, immediately explained that they represented Jesus Christ and wanted to pray for Rodriguez to see what God had in store for him. A student told Rodriguez she had a word from the Lord about Rodriguez’s sister.

“It was specific and detailed and accurate,” remembers Rodriguez, 22. After 90 minutes of spiritual insights, a counselor asked Rodriguez if any reason existed why he shouldn’t give his life to Christ. Rodriguez had no objections.



NEW

IDENTITIES

Chi Alpha's Spirit-led ministry reaches California students



In the three years since, Rodriguez has led three siblings and his mother to faith in Jesus. Today, Rodriguez is on a student ministry team and playing guitar during Chi Alpha worship services.

The journey for Rodriguez is fairly typical on the six campuses in three counties that comprise the Central Valley Chi Alpha along the

Route 99 corridor. Besides Modesto Junior College, Chi Alpha teams are active at the University of California, Merced; Merced College; Fresno State; Fresno City College; and California State University, Stanislaus in Turlock.

The Chi Alpha “free spiritual readings” feature students who explain Scriptures to and offer

prayers with non-Christians. Kids experiencing trials and heartaches stop by, as well as those who are simply curious.

The outreaches are dependent on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Staff and students pray extensively about their encounters beforehand, and often receive words of wisdom or knowledge for those who stop by.

NEW IDENTITIES

Students who visit a booth or tent sometimes are healed physically, or have a dream interpreted. Before a student departs, he or she is always asked if there is any reason why a commitment to follow Jesus shouldn't be made immediately. During the 2013-14 school year, Central Valley Chi Alpha experienced 120 salvation decisions and 150 physical healings.

"When they come to Christ through spiritual gifts, they become operational in those gifts," says Jeremy Anderson, now in his 10th year as director of Central Valley Chi Alpha. "We didn't plan to grow this way; it just happened under God's direction. We trust in the Holy Spirit's anointing more than my ability to persuade."

As a teenager, Anderson affiliated with a Bay Area gang. At 17, he plotted to kill a young man who had raped Anderson's ex-girlfriend. On the evening he planned to carry out the deed, Anderson instead acquiesced to a dinner invitation from his praying grandparents.

Anderson reluctantly went along with his grandparents to ARCO Arena to hear a speaker they vaguely described as famous. That night in 1995, at the invitation of evangelist Billy Graham, Anderson accepted Jesus as his Savior.

"I had never tried Jesus, I never understood the gospel," Anderson says. "I got saved in more than one way. I would have ended up in prison or dead if I didn't go to the revival, because I

would have killed that guy."

Anderson became Chi Alpha director of the Turlock campus after serving on staff four years. Subsequently, he has overseen planting outreaches on five other campuses.



DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

He met his wife, Debora, during his intern year in Turlock. The bubbly 31-year-old Debora is of Portuguese descent. The couple wed a decade ago.

When Anderson took over as director, no minority students attended Chi Alpha meetings. Now whites are the minority.

"Early on we were very intentional about genuinely embracing students from other nations," Anderson says.

The ministry is subleasing three units from the Miracle Foundation to provide discounted housing for international students. Foreign students are more likely to become Christians if they live in the same complex as Christians, Anderson maintains.

Many students come to the various Valley campuses from such diverse nations as Saudi Arabia, Japan and India because of the comparatively low educational costs.

George Leiva is an international student who was born in Peru and raised in Zambia. He typed "colleges and universities in America" into a Google search, and "Modesto" popped up. That's where Leiva, 19, began studying business administration.

Initially, Leiva says partying and following the wrong crowd occupied much of his free time.

Last September life changed for Leiva as he walked across campus and saw a student placidly strumming a guitar. In an ensuing conversation, Leiva learned the lyrics of the song referred to Jesus. The guitar player invited Leiva to a Chi Alpha meeting.

Other students began praying for Leiva immediately after he entered the gathering. The next day he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

When he came to college, Leiva hoped his education would be the pathway to a lucrative career; now his heart is focused on evangelism. As with many Chi Alpha students, Leiva is more absorbed with ministry goals than studies.

LIFE IN COMMUNITY

At Cal State Stanislaus in Turlock, Chi Alpha leases a building that has room for meetings and offices across the street from the main campus entrance. The fee charged by the Miracle Foundation is \$1 a year because of the ministry's commitment to international students.

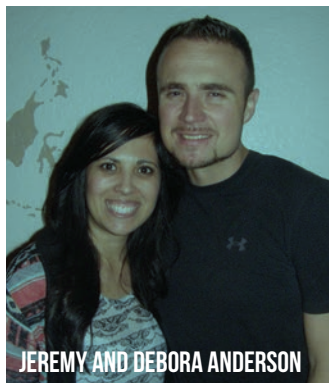
There aren't any fog machines or videogames in the Chi Alpha campus center because Anderson doesn't believe such diversions deepen a person's relationship with God. "The net you catch them with is the net you keep them with," is his catchphrase.

"We don't want to attract people by entertainment," says the even-keeled Anderson. "We want the presence of God to attract them."

Initially, Anderson advocated one-on-one discipleship. He now finds group training more time effective and practical in equipping new Christians.

Growth has transpired, especially in the past two years, because of gender-separated small groups called companies where transparency and disciple-making are expected. About 145 attend each week.

"Small groups are the overflow



JEREMY AND DEBORA ANDERSON



GEORGE LEIVA



BENDU FAVOR NDAMA

of everything we do,” says 24-year-old Eriq Truitt, who leads men’s small groups in Merced. “Living life together

and pursuing the Lord together is foundational.”

Most students are either from California or overseas. The majority of 11 staff members are ministering at one of the Central Valley schools they once attended.

Bendu Favor Ndama is a slender 27-year-old with a broad smile that radiates joy. Ndama, who grew up in Liberia, leads worship and helps international students adjust to the U.S. She appreciates how the Andersons empower students to walk in their spiritual giftings.

“Jeremy and Debora let students figure out their ministry niche,” Ndama says. “They teach a culture of walking in the Spirit wherever they are and in whatever they do.”

Jamil and Vanessa Stell have been on staff for six years while married the past four. They are representative of the diverse student body. Jamil, who conducts evangelism outreaches, is black, while Vanessa is of Filipino and Mexican heritage.

The loquacious Jamil, 28, says he sees Anderson as his spiritual father, and the Andersons’ marriage has been a model for him to follow.

Openness about past mistakes is a hallmark of both the large meetings and small group gatherings. The Stells shared their personal journey during a recent Friday night service at Cal State Stanislaus in Turlock. Both expressed regrets for losing their virginity to others at 15 when they didn’t walk with the Lord. They knew many in the audience could relate.



JAMIL AND VANESSA STELL WITH SON MAKAN

The Stells also told how it’s possible to start anew and live a renewed pure life for one’s future spouse. Jamil proposed on their first date, but the couple didn’t kiss until their wedding.

The animated Vanessa, 27, read 2 Timothy 2:21: “If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work” (NLT).

TRANSPARENCY ABOUNDS

Certainly being part of Chi Alpha requires a hefty dose of authenticity, as well as vulnerability. Facades aren’t allowed. Framed images and mini biographies of 10 students adorn one wall of the meeting room, summarizing the stark realities of past struggles with drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, drug dealing, homelessness, pornography addiction, and abortion. Testimonies wrap up with how the students found hope in Jesus.

Being transparent in church is one thing, but remarkably the same framed testimonies are displayed in various other spots around campus — not to shock, but to evangelize. They are open invitations to those searching for genuineness to become part of the group.

Likewise, at certain venues on campus, Chi Alpha students speak at open-air outreaches nicknamed “I am your sign.” In these amplified testimonies, students reveal their deep, dark secrets — life as it used to be — before culminating with how they found freedom in Christ.

At a recent Friday night gathering in Turlock, worship punctuated by Holy

Spirit-themed songs continued for an hour. The crowd, mostly ethnic minorities, featured students bouncing, clapping, shouting, weeping, whooping, kneeling, dancing and twirling — all with complete abandon.

Also at the weekly student gathering, Jasmine Taylor stood to recite a 7-minute poem from memory of why she is waiting for a godly man as a husband. Taylor spent six months crafting the spoken word after she vowed to the Lord not to pursue an intimate relationship for a year and a half.



JASMINE TAYLOR

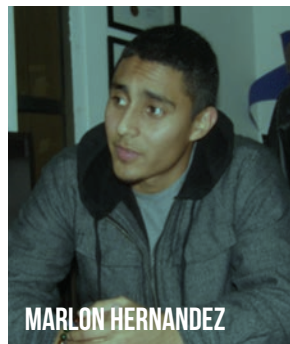
The composition, in essence an ode to Taylor’s future husband, acknowledges that she doesn’t need to know his identity before she starts living for him. Taylor, 23, is a staff volunteer after spending two years as a student in Chi Alpha and graduating with a psychology degree.

Taylor says women in her small group company enabled her to act genuinely for the first time. Other women mentored Taylor, helping her find relief from the guilt and shame from three abortions she had kept quiet. One of the posters on the wall features Taylor. Her formerly private torments are now courageously on display in hopes that others will be drawn to the Lord.

“I never understood before that Jesus desires a personal relationship with me,” Taylor says. “Chi Alpha people loved me through healing and showed how the Lord has forgiven me.”

Influenced by many atheist and agnostic friends, UC Merced

student Marlon Hernandez stopped going to church at 16. In part, Hernandez gave up believing in God because his mother died when he



MARLON HERNANDEZ

This Week in AG History — Sept. 30, 1956

Compiled by Darrin Rodgers

What does a godly life look like?

Howard S. Bush (1908–69), former Assemblies of God executive presbyter and Peninsular Florida District superintendent, responded to this question in an article published in the Sept. 30, 1956, *Pentecostal Evangel*.

Bush encouraged believers to live a godly life following the example of the biblical Symeon (Williams' translation). God promised Symeon that he would see the Messiah before he died. Symeon met Jesus and his parents when they went to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate Jesus. He prophesied over Jesus, recognizing Him as the promised Messiah (Luke 2:22–39).

There were five characteristics of Symeon that Bush claimed would “elevate your thoughts, sustain your convictions, strengthen your ambitions, and develop your faith in God and His Word.”

- He was upright.
- He was devout.
- He remained focused on loving God.
- He was led by the Holy Spirit.
- He was expectant.

Bush offered the following words of encouragement: “Rewards have never been limited to one generation. They will be given to every faithful soul in every age who is upright in character, devout in spirit, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, receiving the revelations of the Spirit, and expecting the fulfillment of those revelations and promises.” ■

(Read the article by Howard S. Bush, “Reward of the Righteous,” on pages 3, 22, and 23 of the Sept. 30, 1956, *Pentecostal Evangel* available digitally at iFPHC.org.)

DARRIN RODGERS is director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center for the Assemblies of God.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

was 4 and his brother died from a gunshot wound in a drug deal gone awry seven years later.

Hernandez, whose family came from Honduras, started smoking marijuana, became a drug dealer, and hooked up with prostitutes as a way to escape the confusing reality he faced. Ultimately, he found



A CHI ALPHA TESTIMONY POSTER

drugs, wealth and sex unsatisfying. Remembering testimonies of people being healed during his Pentecostal youth, Hernandez tearfully offered a prayer of desperation to the Lord.

The next morning as he planned to smoke marijuana, as he routinely did every day when he awoke, Hernandez says he heard the Holy Spirit tell him not to light up.

“The Lord became my strength,” recalls Hernandez, 22. “I became a new creation and distanced myself from certain people and places.”

Now Hernandez leads a small group of 20 men who trust him.

Clearly Anderson has allowed other staff and students to lead certain areas of ministry. He doesn't feel the need to micromanage outreaches on every campus.

“If we aren't empowering students, we aren't ministering on the campus,” Anderson says. ■

JOHN W. KENNEDY is news editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*.

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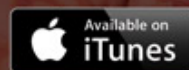
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From the Sept. 19, 2004,
Pentecostal Evangel



THE POWER OF NEGATIVE THINKING

By
Don Meyer

“The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.” — William James

Just about everyone has heard of Norman Vincent Peale’s *The Power of Positive Thinking*. Since it was first published in 1952, this self-help classic has sold about 20 million copies in 42 languages.

For more than half a century untold millions have been transformed by this book, including me.

My maternal grandmother introduced me to Peale’s writings in my teenage years, and the positive effects remain with me to this day.

Yes, there is power in positive thinking. There is also a power in negative thinking. No, I am not referring to the dangers of being a negative thinker. I am instead referring to the positive effects of saying no.

Winston Churchill used to quote Alexander the Great who said, “The Persians would always be slaves because they did not know how to pronounce the word *no*.”

Yes, there are times we must learn to say no. Accentuating the negative can be enormously positive. Life is

made up of these kinds of choices. Here are two categories.

Right versus wrong

These decisions are usually obvious. Debate is not necessary. We know the catastrophic consequences if we place a toe over certain lines. One stupid decision can ruin an

entire life. When avoiding such circumstances, saying no is extremely positive.

From the Garden of Eden to the Book of Revelation, the Bible challenges readers with the power of negative thinking. Over and over God declares the benefits of saying no to sin. Again and again the Bible documents our notorious habit of ignoring God’s prohibitions.

Adam and Eve ate the fruit. Cain killed Abel. Noah’s generation was wicked. Disobedient people built a tower. Abraham lied. Isaac lied. Jacob was a deceiver. Judah committed adultery. And that’s just the Book of Genesis.

We can go on. In Exodus, Israel doubted God, and Moses struck the rock. In Joshua, Achan took what was not his. A whole generation arose who did not know God and they did “that which was right in [their] own eyes” (Judges 21:25, KJV).

What more could we say of Eli, Saul, Solomon, Jeroboam, Manasseh, Jezebel, Judas, and Ananias and Sapphira? The list could go on and on.

Lest one become discouraged, however, another list could also be compiled of those who, with God’s

THE POWER OF NEGATIVE THINKING

“The price of excellence
is discipline and the
continuance of discipline.”
— Elton Trueblood

help, exercised the power of negative thinking. They said no to that which displeased God. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Samuel, David, Hezekiah, Daniel, the three Hebrew children, Peter and Paul. They, along with scores of others, show us how possible it is to say no to sin.

Perhaps the greatest example of the power of negative thinking took place in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus prayed for relief from the burden of the cross. “Take this cup from me,” He asked the Father. But He concluded with, “Yet not what I will, but what you will” (Mark 14:36, NIV). The power to say no to His own will and yes to His Father’s became the greatest positive power in the world.

Without exaggeration, our entire eternal destiny was dependent upon those two choices of two men in two gardens. The first Adam and the second Adam responded differently to the power of negative thinking. One’s choice resulted in our condemnation, and the other’s resulted in our salvation.

Good versus the best

Some choices can get very complicated because principles are involved and we must decide between the good, the better and the best. Priorities matter. I may be concerned with

developing a career or running a marathon or acquiring a degree. How do those priorities blend with other life priorities?

Rather than explicit biblical imperatives to guide these choices, we must look to biblical principles. For example, consider the principle of excellence. Second Corinthians 8:7 says, “But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us — see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”

Excellence. Now that is a challenging principle. We can strive for the good, the better or the best, but what does that mean? Absolute definitions are often impossible, yet the Bible clearly expects choices that move us to “excel in everything.”

That kind of priority can never be cultivated without discipline. In his book *Alternative to Futility*, Elton Trueblood eloquently says, “Any man can pull a bow over violin strings, but it takes years of restraint on fingers and ear to make really excellent violin music when the bow is drawn. ... The price of excellence is discipline and the continuance of discipline.”

Jim Collins begins his well-received book *Good to Great* with these words, “Good is the enemy of great.” He goes on to say that we don’t have great schools, great government, or even great people because we settle for having good schools, good government and good people.

I remember some years ago when I was research deep in my Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Minnesota. My schedule was full and running over. Frequently my sons would ask, “Dad, can we go play tennis?” I had my academic goal to finish in five years. I was also working full time. I was focused and immersed in the tasks at hand. To what should one say no?

A friend told me, “There are a lot of good things that

need to be done in the world, but you can’t do them all.” To this day I do not regret taking seven years to complete my degree rather than sacrificing my best years with Darin and Kevin.

Pecan pie is good, but is that best if I’m trying to lose weight? Watching a favorite TV program or playing a video game may be good, but is that best if I’ll have no time for reading God’s Word? Making lots of money by working overtime may be good, but is that best if it will cause me to lose touch with my spouse?

The power of negative thinking. The gardener says no to the wrong plants (weeds) and grows a horticultural masterpiece. The author says no to the wrong words and writes a literary masterpiece. The sculptor says no to the unnecessary stone and carves an artistic masterpiece.

Even Norman Vincent Peale’s wife said no to him. Peale was in his 50s when he wrote his famous book and had received nothing but a stack of rejection slips. Dejected, he threw the manuscript into the wastebasket and forbade his wife to remove it. She took him literally, and the next day presented the manuscript inside the wastebasket to an accepting publisher. The rest is history.

We should always remember that the ultimate reason for exercising the power of negative thinking is our own good. Our compassionate Heavenly Father cries out, “Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever” (Deuteronomy 5:29). God always knows what is best.

The power of negative thinking. Learning to say no may be one of the most positive things we could ever do. ■

DON MEYER, Ph.D., is president of Valley Forge Christian College (Assemblies of God) in Phoenixville, Pa.

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Do you know what culls are? Do you know how valuable they can become? While serving with a YES! team at Gleanings for the Hungry in Dinuba, Calif., last February, I had the privilege of connecting with local farmer Gordon Wiebe and learning from his inside perspective of the summer gleaning operation.

During the winter season at Gleanings, we package dried soup mix, which is not technically a gleaning process. But as Gordon described summer and peaches, I couldn't help but visualize winter and the older adults who come to serve during this season.

He shared that most of the fruit

comes into Gleanings from the packinghouses, not directly from the fields. The fruit is bruised, scarred, blemished, hail damaged, in odd shapes and sizes, overly ripe, or with split pits — but is not spoiled.

People outside the farming community frequently use the word *seconds* to describe this fruit, but farmers refer to them as culls.

Something culled is picked out and set aside. Culls are not inherently inferior or less nutritious on the inside. But packinghouses are not able to send them to market because of their size, blemishes, or stage of ripeness, and because people shop with their eyes.

Gordon explained our eyes often fool us. The best-looking, marketable fruit may or may not be the best tasting or the most nutritious.

Gleanings is all about giving fruit a second chance, and summer

volunteers can tell you there is quite a process redeeming the peaches, eventually sent out as dried fruit.

Because of what happens to the fruit at Gleanings, it lasts longer, travels much farther, and helps meet deeper needs than the shelf-ready fruit both physically and spiritually (the exported food is always tied to proclamation of the gospel). In the end, food from Gleanings is consumed by hungry people who appreciate it more than we can imagine.

When a shipment of very mature, overripe peaches arrives, Gleanings makes sure the volunteers and conveyor belts shift into high gear. If this fruit sits idle, it will quickly become mushy and unusable.

What wonderful parallels to our YES! team and other “overly ripe” individuals serving with us. Our colorful crate of culls — up to 86

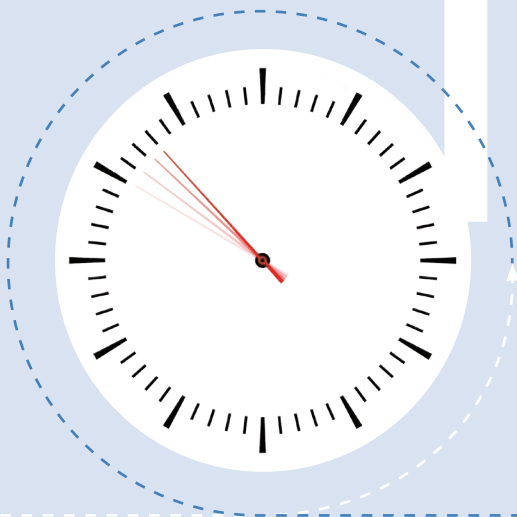
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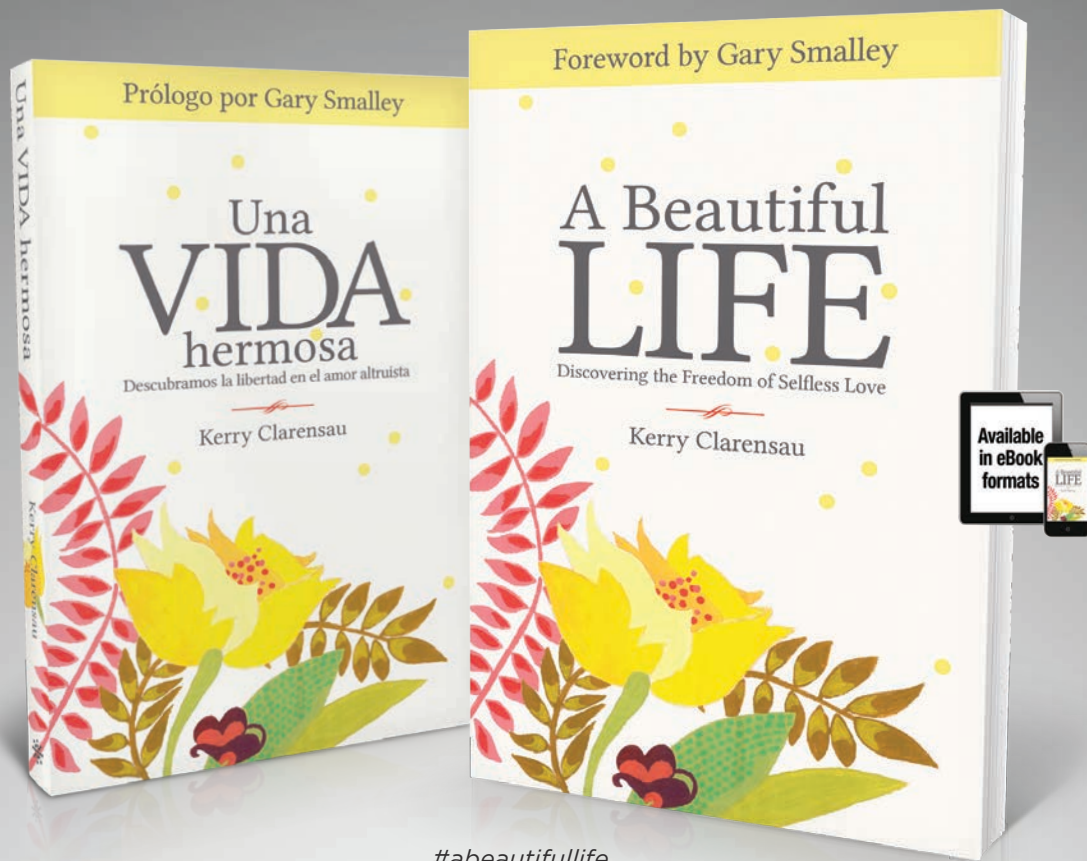
TIMELINESS

Value

By Wes Wick



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Kerry Clarensau is the Director of a national women's organization that numbers over 340,000 members. She is a credentialed minister, a mentor, and an international speaker. A prolific writer, she creates resources for women and is the author of *Secrets*, *Love Revealed*, and *Redeemed*. Kerry has served in ministry with her husband, Mike, for over 20 years.



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TIMELESS *Value*

years ripe, some with canes, limited sight, special needs, physical challenges, and even split in the pit relationships — prepared 2 million servings of soup for shipment and made 30 quilts in the 4½ days we served!

For a moment I am tempted to mutter, “Those stupid consumers who shop with their eyes!” But then I catch myself, knowing I’m often in that swarm of shallow shoppers.

In these later years of life, we do at times get set apart because we’re not shelf-ready in the eyes of consumers.

I’m convinced we’re often too quick to slap on the “ageism” label. Could it just be a reality of the aging process, a season when God is eager to redirect our path? Does He want to open our eyes to value not immediately recognized by American consumers? Value we ourselves might have skipped over in earlier years?

The labels “old,” “senior,” and “elderly” do not in themselves constitute ageism — in fact, many cultures apply to them special seals of honor, lush with value and respect. The trouble comes when we make the wrong assumptions about these “Son-kissed” brands. We can waste energy meticulously trying to peel labels off the skin of these succulent peaches — or we can embrace what’s inside for all they’re worth!

Our challenge is helping seasoned adults and leaders understand we’ve been set aside for greater purpose. We must be willing to subject ourselves to the sometimes-painful process of pruning — renewing



Wes Wick (above) with wife Judy helps coordinate teams of YES! volunteers.

our minds so our full potential for spiritual fruitfulness can be gleaned. As this city kid learned from the farmer and Glean-

ings, there is a world of difference between “CULL” and “NULL”!

Our scrappy YES! Young Enough to Serve team from a dozen different churches returned to our dozen different packinghouses with a renewed sense of our current value in God’s economy and of our continuing far-reaching potential — in spite of the hail damage we’ve experienced along the way. We pray this renewed spiritual vision multiplies as we probe beneath the surface and recognize both deeper and broader potential in others.

None of us is a “second.” We are culls. Culled by God for a greater purpose.

Jesus knows rejection. He knows overlooked value. And He knows how to inject culls with renewed value and purpose. ■

WES WICK and Judy Wick are the founders/executive directors of YES! Young Enough to Serve and live in Scotts Valley, Calif.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

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connections: E. Scott Martin

THE NEW CHI ALPHA

E. Scott Martin became the seventh national director in Chi Alpha's 60-year history in April following a yearlong search. For 32 years, Martin has been a part of the Assemblies of God ministry that is active on 313 U.S. college and university campuses in local, district, national and international capacities. Martin recently sat down with Pentecostal Evangel News Editor John W. Kennedy.

evangel: *You have been a part of Chi Alpha for a long time.*

E. SCOTT MARTIN: My first day in college in 1981, my biology professor asked how many in the class of 350 believed in evolution; 338 hands went up. He then asked, "How many of you believe God created the earth?" Eleven students raised their hands.

I was a good Assemblies of God kid, but nominal. I was a Christian narcissist who typically prayed, "Jesus bless me today and make all my dreams come true." When I didn't raise my hand in class, the Holy Spirit spoke to me: *Scott, you're a weenie Christian because you didn't have the courage to take a stand.* God knows how to speak our vernacular. I had a revelation that I didn't have what it took to live for Christ outside the insular environment I had been in so long.

I saw posters on campus for an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship meeting that night. There were 80

students there with a passion for God I had never experienced in my own age group. I sensed the tangible presence of the Lord when I walked in that room, and it triggered a hunger in my heart.

At 18 I read the Bible through for the first time, and the words of Jesus became reality to me. During my freshman year at the University of Arizona in Tucson, I and some other young radicals for Jesus pioneered a Chi Alpha group.

evangel: *You went with Chi Alpha full time after obtaining your bachelor's degree?*

MARTIN: I intended to go to medical school. I was doing cancer research. But I went to a SALT (Student Activist Leadership Training) conference where Rick Howard, who had served as the fourth national Chi Alpha director, shared about the judgment seat of Christ. I had a Damascus Road experience.

The Lord interrupted me and said, *I don't want you to go to medical school; I want you to preach My Word.* I had no idea what that would entail. I didn't have a model because I had been involved in a student-run Chi Alpha.

Soon the Holy Spirit stopped me on campus as I saw thousands of students walking. He said, *This is where I want you.* I had no credentials, no training, but I convinced the presbyters to release me as a Chi Alpha campus leader.

I was at the University of Arizona for 15 years of remarkable ministry. We really believed we could have global transformation from the University of Arizona. We were active in short-term missions. We started going into the Middle East before we even knew to ask permission.

Then God said to step aside and pioneer the student mission arm of Chi Alpha. My wife, Crystal, and I spent 18 years in that capacity. It was a joyful, alacritous time for us.

evangel: *How do you follow someone who has held the national leadership post for 35 years?*

MARTIN: Dennis Gaylor was and is a dear friend. He's known me since I was 19 years old. I worked for him for 18 years, so I have a tremendous understanding of Chi Alpha at this level as well as the General Council. I served on the Chi Alpha national executive leadership team. So it's not a big jump. The position had been one year in vacancy.

evangel: *What are some of your specific initiatives?*

MARTIN: A culture is either what you create or what you permit. Our first initiative is to make sure we cre-



E. Scott Martin and his wife, Crystal, speak at a Chi Alpha event.

ate a leadership culture in Chi Alpha that is based on honor, respect, unity and prayer. We want the same values happening at the national level to be felt down at the local student level.

Secondly, names say something. They are a reflection of who you are. Jesus saw something in Cephas and called him Peter. Saul was changed to Paul. I want to change the image of what was formerly the national Chi Alpha office. I felt like it was seen primarily as an administrative and bureaucratic entity.

Our missionaries working here are Kingdom people. So we changed the name to the National Chi Alpha Ministry Center. Even though this is a corporate setting, we want to implement Chi Alpha core values.

Every morning at 9 our staff has a deliberate and strategic time of prayer. Every Wednesday morning at 9 we extend that and there is an impartation of Kingdom principles. We pray for visitors before they leave the office.

My third priority is to broaden the voice of influence in national Chi Alpha initiatives and programs. Although people are still serving in positions, let's change the institution.

We've retained a group of national leaders and area directors who have served on a national leadership team. But we've opened the door to younger voices and created a platform for them to speak to initiatives by providing area-wide nominations for three-year terms on the new Guiding Coalition of National Chi Alpha.

In the field I've seen some people with tremendous potential, but not the opportunity to have a significant voice in the direction of national Chi Alpha. We are working to rectify that. The initial three items I would like the Guiding Coalition to strategize over are: elements that make a healthy Chi Alpha group; a national pioneering strategy; and increasing the diversity

of our Chi Alpha missionaries.

We think these new structural initiatives will help us truly grow. I'd rather have one campus group of 300 students who can make a deeper impact rather than 30 groups of 10 people.

evangel: *Talk about hindrances to ministry that didn't exist earlier, especially the trend of "discrimination clauses" on campuses.*

MARTIN: We are facing times of dynamic change in the secular universities. For instance, the California State University system is evaluating a potential antidiscrimination clause that would force the allowing of homosexuals or those of another religious faith to serve in Chi Alpha leadership.

The secular university is the fulcrum of societal evolution. Everything that happens in culture — health care, arts, political science, government — is driven from the secular university.

How we deal with antidiscrimination clauses becomes critical. We can be labeled beyond intolerant. Of course, Jesus wants us to be tolerant, but there are biblical truths we are unwilling to compromise under any circumstance.

Access on the campus as an official group often hinges on whether this clause is signed. A day may come when Chi Alpha will have to find a new place to meet because we are denied access on the university. ■

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

abc's of salvation

To know God and be ready for heaven, follow these steps:

a. Admit you are a sinner.
"There is no one righteous, not even one ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:10,23 (See Romans 5:8; 6:23.)
Ask God's forgiveness and repent of your sins.
"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13 (See Acts 3:19.)

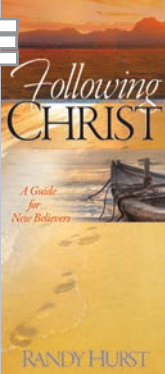
b. Believe in Jesus (put your trust in Him) as your only hope of salvation.
"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (See John 14:6.)

Become a child of God by receiving Christ.
"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (See Revelation 3:20.)

c. Confess that Jesus is your Lord.
"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
Romans 10:9 (See verse 10.)

For further help, contact an Assemblies of God church near you.

FREE
(Please see back cover.)



Following CHRIST
A Guide for New Believers
RANDY HURST

Getting in the Game

Churches make community inroads through sports

By Christina Quick

It's one activity most Americans enjoy on Sunday, and it's not church.

A whopping 64 percent of U.S. adults — including nearly three-quarters of men and 55 percent of women — watch the National Football League on television, according to a poll by Harris Interactive.

"It would be safe to say that on Sundays, most households are tuned in to a game," the survey concluded.

By comparison, a Pew Research Report found that 37 percent of Americans attend religious services each week. And 29 percent of the population say they seldom or never darken a church door, a rate that has grown 4 percent during the past decade.

From fantasy football to children's soccer games, there is no shortage of sports-related weekend distractions. Some church leaders lament that athletic events siphon away church attendees. In a recent study of 16 declining congregations in the U.S. and Canada, pastors pointed to family conflicts with kids' sports activities as a major factor in lagging Sunday morning church attendance.

Not every church is staying on the sidelines, however. Some see the cultural fixation on sports and physical fitness as a way to build relationships and reach people with the message of spiritual wellness through Christ.

"In our community, sports is what people do," says Andy Pursley, senior pastor at Forks (Wash.) Assembly of God. "Sports is a big connecting point, so we've started looking at sports as a ministry opportunity."

The church recently opened Fitness Garage, a gym that offers \$10 monthly memberships to adults in the community. Maintained by church volunteers, the fitness center has a weight room, a basketball court, certified trainers, and a regular rotation of exercise classes. Since the gym opened less than a year ago in the rural town of about 3,500 residents, it has signed up more than 100 members.

"We want to be a place where real people can sweat together, pray together, and encourage one another in reaching their goals," the Fitness Garage website proclaims.

Pursley sees the fitness center as an outreach to the many gym regulars who don't attend services. He says it's the perfect environment for congregants to build friendships, strike up conversations, and model faith among non-Christians.

"We're really out in the middle of nowhere, so a lot of people are looking to do something for fun," Pursley says. "Working out and participating in sports is how they interact with one another. The goal is to have Christians in there working out with people. Christian trainers from our church have built a lot of bridges."

The congregation is already planning new ways to make community connections through sports, including an upcoming fun run. The church also opens its gymnasium to youth athletic teams, hosting practices and games for students in junior high and high school.

"We've eliminated the message that says sports are not good for you as a Christian," Pursley says.

"Our goals are to bring in people from outside the church and get them connected.

Through these kinds of outreaches, we can accomplish both at the same time."

— Joe Schafer

"We encourage people that wherever they are and whatever they're doing, they can be missional and connect people to Christ."

Upon entering Allison Park Church near Pittsburgh, it is apparent this Assemblies of God congregation is serious about sports. Basketball goals claim space in the foyer, where court lines are marked out in tape on the carpet. Every Saturday throughout the season, a small army of kids, parents, coaches and officials descends on the church for Upward basketball and cheerleading.

"We're a middle-class community where everyone wants their kids involved with sports," says Joe Schafer, next generation pastor, who oversees youth and young adult ministries at the church.

"Families will get plugged in with sports regardless of where it's offered. It's a great way to get them in the church doors."



Forks (Wash.) Assembly of God operates the Fitness Garage gym.

It takes 120 church volunteers to oversee the 400 basketball players and 40 cheerleaders who attend the events. Schafer estimates about 75 percent of participants are from outside the church, though many families eventually show up for Sunday services.

“We have practices every evening,” Schafer says. “It takes a huge toll on our facilities, but we value it enough to keep investing in it. Our goals are to bring in people from outside the church and get them connected. Through these kinds of outreaches, we can accomplish both at the same time. We don’t see sports as competing with church. We view it as something that helps facilitate our mission and message.”

Dan Dangerfield, children’s pastor at LifeChurch Assembly of God in Williston, N.D., reaches out to kids and families each summer through MEGA Sports Camp, a ministry that uses athletics — including flag football, basketball, soccer, baseball and cheerleading — as a forum for presenting the gospel.

“MEGA Sports Camp has given our church the opportunity to provide something different from the traditional Vacation Bible School offered in many other churches in

our community,” Dangerfield says. “Attendance has increased significantly from previous years of doing VBS, and we’re attracting more unchurched kids.”

Dangerfield says some of the families who signed up for the sports camp last summer have since started attending church.

“We have found it to be a very effective tool,” Dangerfield says.

Ken Wilson, the men’s pastor at Christian Faith Center (AG) in Nampa, Idaho, knows few things can bring together a bunch of guys like sports. A former football player and Greco-Roman national wrestling champion, Wilson applies sports terminology to virtually every aspect of his ministry — from monthly gatherings he calls “locker rooms” to “head coaches” (small group leaders) who choose their “teams” in an annual draft.

“I tried to find something that would pull guys in,” Wilson says. “I know about locker rooms, so I use those metaphors to build relationships. Men inside and outside the church can understand those terms.”

Among other activities, the men’s groups often gather in homes to watch sports on television. The church also purchases season

passes to college sporting events so the men can attend together.

“It may not seem very spiritual, but the relationships they’re building are vital,” Wilson says. “When these guys have problems, they can turn to their ministry team members and coaches instead of going back to their old drinking buddies.”

Gregg Nass, men’s ministries leader at South Hills Assembly of God in Bethel Park, Pa., uses outdoor sports activities, such as biking, golfing and

fishing, to engage men in ministry groups.

“It’s an easy way to invite an unsaved friend to a church function,” Nass says. “Just about everyone can relate to sports. Ministry shouldn’t be limited to the activities inside the church. We’re called to be outside the church, fulfilling the Great Commission by every means God gives us.” ■

CHRISTINA QUICK is a freelance writer and former *Pentecostal Evangel* staff writer.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.



STUDENT MINISTRY

Missionary Couple Launches First Alaskan Chi Alpha

By Peter K. Johnson

Leveraging discipleship strategies learned as former Assemblies of God world missionaries in Southeast Asia, Paul and Crystal Burkhart anticipate God blessing America's Last Frontier through their pioneering the state's first Chi Alpha program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF).

The Burkharts say two years ago God urged them to return to the U.S., a move they never expected. But on a work trip in Bangkok, Burkhart says he audibly heard God telling him to move to Alaska. Reluctantly he told the Lord, "I'll be

obedient, but You must convince my wife."

Upon returning home days later, Paul discovered Crystal on her computer viewing homes for sale in Alaska.

"I was taken back and shocked," he says. "We didn't want to leave Asia, but God has confirmed our decision repeatedly."

Serving in Asia for 10 years, Burkhart learned with his team that making disciples one at a time and training them to return to their villages yielded hundreds of reproducing converts and dozens of home churches. He seeks to



Paul Burkhart has found a new mission field in Alaska.

replicate a similar model at UAF aimed at Alaskan natives and American Indians, which number almost 20 percent of the 10,000-student population.

Seven missionary associates, all Chi Alpha disciples, joined Burkhart this fall.

"We are beginning by taking a native studies course at UAF and building relationships," he says. "We hope to establish biweekly home groups followed by larger weekly meetings in 2015."

Burkhart's passion is for converts to return to their isolated communities after graduation to share Christ and to plant churches.

Kevin and Lindsay Welch, saved through Chi Alpha at Sam Houston State University in Texas, are joining the Burkharts. The Welches say they were drawn to the Lord by friendship and discipleship, and will try to teach that model at UAF.

Members of various AG churches in Alaska have been praying for a Chi Alpha ministry for years, according to Robert Ferguson, pastor of Valley Full Gospel Chapel in Healy.

"We are excited because many revivals in history have started in universities," Ferguson says. "What happens in Alaska could impact the world." ■

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Gay, Transgender Workers Gain Job Bias Protection

President Barack Obama has ordered employment protection for homosexual and transgender employees who work for the U.S. government or for companies holding federal contracts, telling advocates he embraced the "irrefutable rightness of your cause."

"America's federal contracts should not subsidize discrimination against the American people," Obama declared

at a July 21 White House signing ceremony.

Obama refused to grant any exemption for religious organizations regarding sexual orientation or gender identity.

The National Association of Evangelicals expressed regret at the lack of an exception.

"Religious groups that have longstanding and principled positions should be allowed to compete for federal con-

tracts on an equal basis," said NAE President Leith Anderson. "Our entire society suffers when our government discriminates against religious groups and loses access to their services."

The change for federal contracting affects 24,000 companies with 28 million workers, or one-fifth of the U.S. workforce.

While few religious organizations are among the biggest federal contractors, they do provide significant services, including overseas relief and development programs and re-entry programs for inmates leaving federal prisons. ■

DISCIPLESHIP

Magazine Article Wrong on Sunday School's Demise

A Feb. 11, 1957, *LIFE* magazine cover feature labeled Sunday School "The Most Wasted Hour in the Week."

Many readers viewed the article, written by Wesley Shrader, as a prophetic statement heralding the eventual demise of Sunday School within the local church.

However, the reality is that *LIFE* is no longer around, ceasing publication April 20, 2007. On the other hand, Sunday School is alive and well.

Wes Bartel, director of Assemblies of God Discipleship Ministries Agencies, says there are 11,283 Sunday Schools within the Fellowship, with nearly 1.1 million enrolled, and 115,000 people teaching.

"Sunday School is the indispensable, founda-

tional ingredient of effective discipleship, due primarily to the fact that it uniquely provides age level, systematic study of the Bible," Bartel says.

Today is National Sunday School and Teacher Recognition day within the AG.

"This would be a good time to recommit ourselves and our churches to the study of God's Word through the great ministry of Sunday School," Bartel says. "It would also be a great time to corporately express appreciation to the many teachers who provide this quality instruction."

Bartel says some church leaders view religious instruction as an ordeal, but it doesn't need to be. The "most wasted hour" can become the most meaningful hour of the week, Bartel says. ■

"Endless opportunities to do things online might translate into less time engaged in face-to-face activities in one's religious community, such as attending Bible study or services. ... Who or what are we more likely to place our faith in on a daily basis — God or Google?"

— The New Atlantis Senior Editor **Christine Rosen** in *The Wall Street Journal*



"I don't want any expectant mother to feel that pain or confusion when they get a prenatal diagnosis. I want this law to give women hope. Chloe was a blessing."

— **Margie Kondrich** in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* when Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett signed the *Down Syndrome Prenatal Education Act*, known as *Chloe's Law*, after her 11-year-old daughter. The legislation requires health-care providers to make women with a prenatal Down syndrome diagnosis aware of the full range of supports available through the state department of health.



"I'm hopeful that once we are able to get this blot on my career taken away that I can get back to doing what I do best."

— **Bob Eschliman** in an *Associated Press* article after filing a religious discrimination complaint with the *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*. Eschliman was fired as editor of the *Newton (Iowa) Daily News* for posting remarks on his personal blog that gay organizations wanted to reword the Bible to make their sinful nature right with God.



The opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the *Pentecostal Evangel* or the Assemblies of God. This column contains quotations from a broad spectrum of people, including non-Christians.

TOBACCO

Researchers Suggest Link Between Smoking, Suicide

A new study published in the journal *Nicotine & Tobacco* suggests that cigarettes are a health risk beyond lung cancer and other known associated diseases. Research by Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis indicates that people who smoke are at

a higher risk of suicide. "Nicotine is a plausible candidate for explaining the link between smoking and suicide risk," said psychiatrist Richard A. Grucza, lead author of the report. "Like any other drug, people start using nicotine to feel good, but eventually they need it to feel

normal. And as with other drugs, that chronic use can contribute to depression or anxiety, and that could help to explain the link to suicide."

The researchers recommended that states raise cigarette taxes and implement more smoke-free air policies as a way to lower the suicide rate.

Analyzing National Center for Health Statistics data from all 50 states between 1990 and 2004, the research team concluded that for each dollar increase in cigarette taxes suicide risk dropped by 10 percent. On the other hand, states with lower cigarette taxes and fewer regulations on smoking in public experienced a 6 percent increase in suicide. ■



CHILDREN

Limiting Screen Time Yields Myriad Benefits

Parents who limit the amount of time their children spend with media on a daily basis see a vast array of behavioral improvements, from lowering the risk of obesity to sleeping better at night, according to a new Iowa State University study.

A research team led by Douglas A. Gentile studied more than 1,300 elementary-age children near the beginning and end of a school year. After seven months, pupils whose parents set more limits on the amount and content of media got more sleep,



gained less weight, received better grades, showed more helpful and cooperative social behaviors, and were seen by teachers as less aggressive with their peers.

Gentile, author of *Media Violence and Children: A Complete Guide for Parents and Professionals*, noted that parents won't notice the

incremental improvements and initially there may be a lot more complaining from kids. But over time, Gentile said, setting and enforcing limits on both time and content has powerful benefits for school performance, physical health, and social outcomes.

Researchers now urge parents to consider "total screen time" rather than focusing on television, video games, or computers. That means adding up daily activity interacting with TV, DVDs, iPad, Facebook, and

video games on consoles, computers and handheld screens.

"Every hour in front of electronic screens is an hour not doing homework, reading, exploring, being active, or going to bed," Gentile says.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that elementary-age schoolchildren spend no more than an hour of screen time per day, excluding classroom use. For secondary schoolchildren, the suggested maximum is two hours daily. ■

acrossthefellowship

Rocky Mountain District: Terry Broadwater, lead pastor at Grace Community Church (Assemblies of God) in Centennial, Colo.; director of Chi Alpha Network; and member of the national Church Multiplication Network leadership team, died in a fall July 2 while on a missions trip to India.

Broadwater, 53, was on the trip with his oldest son, Casey, and several members of Grace's leadership and pastoral team. The group was ministering in a remote part of the Himalayas when the accident occurred.

For three decades, Broadwater was involved in ministry, including pastoring at The Worship Center (Leesburg, Va.), Bethel Assembly (Hagerstown, Md.), as part of the LifeHouse Church network, and, most recently, as senior pastor of Grace Community Church.

"Terry represented the best of innovative entrepreneurial leadership," says E. Scott Martin, national director of AG Chi Alpha Campus Ministries. "He was committed to Chi Alpha values and mission and saw the great missionary potential of our graduates."

"Terry Broadwater was an optimistic visionary who did everything in his power to help others know Jesus," says Steve Pike, president of Urban Islands Project. "He always did everything all the way. It wasn't enough to plant a church. He planted a network of churches."

Broadwater is survived by his wife of 34 years, Jo Ann, and three adult children. ■



SEXUALITY

CDC Study Finds Fewer Identify as Gay, Lesbian

The first comprehensive government survey tracking Americans' sexual orientation has revealed there are fewer gay, lesbian and bisexual people than previously assumed.

For years, various researchers and homosexual rights groups have contended that between 4 to 5 percent of the U.S. population is gay. But a new National Health Interview Survey reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that only 1.6 percent of adults self-identify as gay or lesbian, while 0.7 percent call themselves bisexual.

The federal research is considered accurate because of the large sample size (33,557 adults ages 18-64) and its thorough methods, which include in-person interviews and

follow-up phone calls.

The report also found that a higher ratio of women (0.9 percent) consider themselves bisexual than men (0.4 percent).

The CDC found that a lower cigarette smoking rate among heterosexuals, 19.6 percent, compared to gays or lesbians (27.2 percent) or bisexuals (29.5 percent). In addition, those who identify as straight are less likely to have engaged in binge drinking during the past year (26 percent) than gays or lesbians (35.1 percent) or bisexuals (41.5 percent).

The analysis showed a higher ratio of adults who see themselves as bisexual (11 percent) experienced serious psychological distress in the past month compared to those who are heterosexual (3.9 percent). ■

TEEN MINISTRY

Missouri Church Snags 2nd Consecutive Bible Quiz Title

James River Church in Ozark, Mo., captured a second consecutive Teen Bible Quiz national championship in July in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

The team of Daniel Quick, Hannah Quick,

Kacie Garrison, and Josh Clark overcame Bellevue (Wash.) Neighborhood Church by a score of 165-130 to land the title. The win marked the third national championship for Coach John Porter and the second for Garrison, a high school junior.

In 2009, Clark and the Quick siblings were members of the Junior Bible Quiz national championship team from Central Assembly in Springfield, Mo., making the trio the

first quizzers to garner top team honors in both JBQ and Teen Bible Quiz.

In the semifinal round, the James River "Blazing Fire" team defeated First Assembly of Muskogee, Okla., 225-180, while Bel-

States Most Residents Would Like to Leave

- Illinois: **50 percent**
- Connecticut: **49 percent**
- Maryland: **47 percent**
- Nevada: **43 percent**
- Rhode Island: **42 percent**

— Gallup poll



States Where Most Residents Want to Stay

- Montana, Hawaii, Maine: **77 percent**
- Oregon, New Hampshire, Texas: **76 percent**
- Colorado, Minnesota: **75 percent**
- South Dakota: **74 percent**
- Wyoming: **73 percent**

— Gallup poll



The James River team included (from left) coach John Porter, Josh Clark, assistant coach Beverly Porter; Hannah Quick; Daniel Quick; Kacie Garrison; assistant coach Gary VanLuven; and James River West Campus Student Ministries Director Steve Svoboda.

levue upset top-seeded Cedar Park Assembly of Bothell, Wash., 205-190. Cedar Park took third place by defeating Muskogee First AG 220-100.

Bible Quiz is a discipleship ministry for teens in sixth through 12th grade. Each year students memorize a different book or books of the New Testament. Throughout the year, students attend meets

within their districts to test their ability to memorize and understand the Bible. District and regional meets take place annually in the spring, with the top teams advancing to nationals.

In the individual standings at nationals, Cedar Park's Abby Rogers won a record fifth straight title. Jacob Wyatt, of Spring (Texas) First Assembly, was second, and Luke Wagner, from the Muskogee team, finished third. Daniel Quick led James River and finished fourth overall in scoring.

Rogers scored 2,535 points over 19 rounds and "quizzed out" (the term for answering the maximum five questions in a 20-question round) in every match but one. She scored a perfect 150 points in the third-place match. Rogers also was the Quoting Bee champion for the fourth year.

The 2014 national finals teams competed over 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and 1, 2, and 3 John. ■

BOYS MINISTRY

Royal Rangers Week Set

National Royal Rangers Week is Oct. 5-11 and groups across the country will be conducting special activities.

For more than half a century, Royal Rangers has worked to develop

boys into godly men through a variety of interesting activities designed to meet the specific needs and interests of young males. In recent years, Royal Rangers has been reconfigured to be more interactive, and to incorporate a broader variety of activities beyond camping. "Royal Rangers today is more diverse and flexible than ever," says John Hicks, Royal Rangers national programs coordinator. "Featuring a selection

of uniform options, leadership titles, and meeting plans, Royal Rangers now provides churches with the ability to create a boys mentoring program that fits their unique culture and image."

Hicks says with a variety of activities ranging from technology-based topics to fine arts as well as ministry to hands-on trades and professions, boys can be engaged through a lineup of activities that meets their diverse interests. ■

october

Bible **reading**

Habakkuk 1-3	1
Zephaniah 1-3	2
Haggai 1, 2	3
Zechariah 1-5	4
Zechariah 6-10	5
Zechariah 11-14	6
Malachi 1-4	7
Matthew 1-4	8
Matthew 5, 6	9
Matthew 7-9	10
Matthew 10-12	11
Matthew 13, 14	12
Matthew 15-17	13
Matthew 18-20	14
Matthew 21, 22	15
Matthew 23, 24	16
Matthew 25, 26	17
Matthew 27, 28	18
Mark 1-3	19
Mark 4, 5	20
Mark 6, 7	21
Mark 8, 9	22
Mark 10, 11	23
Mark 12, 13	24
Mark 14-16	25
Luke 1, 2	26
Luke 3, 4	27
Luke 5, 6	28
Luke 7, 8	29
Luke 9, 10	30
Luke 11	31

Centennial Reflections collects archived material about the Assemblies of God and its beliefs drawn from a variety of historical resources. The following excerpt from the Pentecostal Evangel reports on a Chi Alpha-sponsored outreach at an unnamed state college in 1963, 10 years after J. Calvin Holsinger started the first Chi Alpha group at Missouri State University in Springfield.

Religious emphasis week at a western state college revealed true hunger among college students. The Chi Alpha chapter, which is our Assemblies of God collegiate organization sponsored by the National C.A. Department, invited Dr. Harold Fischer [director of the Department of Religious Education at the Assemblies of God's Southern California College (now Vanguard University) in Costa Mesa] as their speaker. Great crowds did not attend these scheduled meetings, nor were the speakers mobbed by anxious throngs of students.

Surprising, however, was the sincere and open response of the students when the speakers ministered in classes, fraternity houses, general assemblies, dormitories, and at breakfasts. A Lutheran minister, a Presbyterian psychologist, a Jewish rabbi, and an evangelical minister were the other guest speakers.

Whenever Dr. Fischer ministered, whether in fraternity house, dormitory, classroom, associated hospital assembly, or to smaller informal groups, the subjects were related to existentialism, conformity, or guilt. No compromise with truth was ever employed in these discussions, and so it was expected that the students would be antagonistic, or at least cool toward the thoughts expressed. On the contrary, the students and some teachers were receptive and inquiring. There seemed to be no disagreement with the Christian standards expressed, and many asked questions about how to attain

a better life and how to handle their wrongdoings.

Though it was shown that the agnostic existentialist had utterly failed in handling the guilt question, and also that the usual level of rationalization was not the answer, none seemed to demur. Following naturally were references to the scriptural method of forgiveness through the finished work of Christ, pointing to the Bible as presenting the only complete answer to the problems of life, and extolling a Savior who is able also to keep.

Publically and privately, there was sober inquiry about the realization and maintenance of better standards — and not a few tears were in evidence. Some of the most thoughtful queries came from instructors, one of whom asked in the presence of his class about the “unpardonable sin.”

In a radio broadcast, Dr. Fischer was interviewed about the breakdown of the family and juvenile delinquency. Phoned-in inquiries were entertained by the station and people appeared burdened about the depth of today's dilemmas.

As the week progressed the seriousness of the atmosphere seemed to deepen. Repeatedly it was asked, “Where are the churches that teach such an experience and that help one to live better?” Apparently there were a number of persons who, in private conferences, found real peace. But there was so much more to be done — and this was only one of our many great state colleges!

Chi Alpha chapters organized on the campus not only afford our students the opportunity of needed worship, training, and fellowship, but give them a united front and voice at college. Many more chapters will need to be organized if we are to retain the 12,000 C.A.'s who will be attending college on secular campuses this fall. ■

“Spiritual Hunger on a College Campus”
Oct. 6, 1963, *Pentecostal Evangel*



PRICKLY Animals

Handle with care

It's easy to love a soft bunny, fluffy kitten or furry puppy. But other animals aren't so cuddly. In fact, some — like porcupines and hedgehogs — are downright prickly. These spiky creatures are cute. But they can also pack a painful jab.

Porcupines are rodents, like mice and squirrels. But unlike other rodents, porcupines grow thousands of sharp quills. The quills are specialized hairs made of keratin, the same stuff found in your hair and nails. Baby porcupines, called porcupettes, come into the world with soft, harmless quills.

But within a few days, the quills are stiff and sharp.

Quills are a good defense. The crested porcupine of Africa has quills that are nearly a foot long.

Some people think porcupines can throw or shoot their quills. But that is just a myth. You can't launch the hair off your head, can you?

Animals with quills can't shoot their prickly hairs either. But if an animal gets too close, a frightened porcupine may whip its prickly tail toward the threat. Some porcupine quills have barbs, like fishhooks, that can become stuck in a predator's skin. This is a painful experience. Once

a dog or other animal messes with a porcupine, it will likely think twice about doing it again.

Though it isn't related to the porcupine, the roly-poly hedgehog also has spiky quills. These make a point to other creatures that the hedgehog wouldn't make a good snack.

Some people keep hedgehogs as pets. Hedgehogs don't have flaky skin dander like dogs and cats, so these animals may be a good choice for people with allergies. However, you do need thick skin to handle these prickly pals.

Have you ever met a person with a "prickly" personality? Some people are just hard to handle. They have thorny attitudes and use sharp words that can leave you feeling gouged and hurt. It can be enough to make you want to poke back. But God has a better way.

"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing" (1 Peter 3:9, NIV).

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44, NIV).

Jesus wants you to show His kindness to everyone so others can come to know Him. When someone gets under your skin, pray for that person. And ask Jesus to fill you with His love and patience.

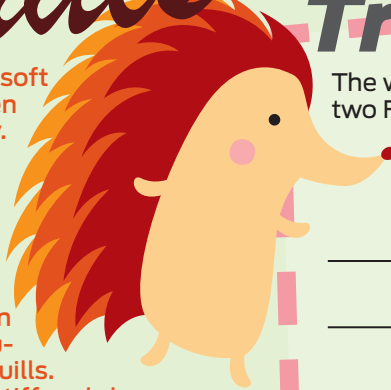
did you know?

The armadillo lizard is covered in spikes. It has such a powerful bite it can accidentally break its own jaw.

American Indians once used porcupine quills for ornaments and hair decorations.

Try this!

The word porcupine comes from two French words that mean "thorny hog." How many words can you make from the letters in PORCUPINE?



JUST FOR LAUGHS

Why do porcupines win most arguments?

They have a lot of good points.

What do you get when you cross a hedgehog with a cucumber?

Dill prickles.





FAITH AND FAMILY

In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him. (Mark 15:31,32, NIV)

In Jesus' first three hours on the cross, He suffered more than excruciating physical agony. He was assaulted by the taunting words of passers-by and the religious leadership who had engineered His death.

Even the robbers being crucified on His right and left mocked Him. Luke's Gospel, however, gives us a more expanded version. As the morning wore on, one of the thieves had a change of heart. He had listened as Jesus began His hours on the cross with a word of forgiveness towards those crucifying Him (Luke 23:34). No crucified person would respond to suffering by pardoning those who nailed him to a cross.

After several hours, the truth sank in. One of the robbers came to faith. He said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42). In those words, the robber revealed the depth of his faith — that he did not believe the spirit died with the body, that he did believe Christ had a kingdom, and that Jesus could bestow the favor asked.

Jesus did not ignore the thief. He did not say to him, "I'm dying for the sins of the whole world; I don't have time for you." Nor did Jesus deny that He had a kingdom to offer. Instead, Jesus promised the thief instant access to paradise — no waiting period, no purgatory — just, "Today you will be with me" (Luke 23:43). Salvation is instant upon our request to be saved!

This is the only request made of Jesus while He hung on the cross. It's the request Jesus desires to grant for every human being who asks. It's why He came into this world — to save us from our sins! While Jesus is dying for

the sins of the whole world, He takes time to save one individual.

Martin Luther wrote: "This [man's request] was for Christ a comfort like that supplied to Him by the angel in the garden. God would not allow His Son to be destitute of subjects and now His church survived in this one man. Where the faith of St. Peter broke off, the faith of the penitent thief commenced."

Near the end of His first three hours on the cross, Jesus also addressed His mother and the beloved disciple (John 19:25-27). We know Jesus had four brothers and at least two sisters (Mark 6:3). Only His mother is at the cross. The rest of His family was not there. It's a testimony to the rejection experienced by Jesus that "his own did not receive him" (John 1:11).

There is something infinitely moving in that Jesus, in the agony of the cross and in the moment when the salvation of the world hung in the balance, thought of the loneliness of His mother in the days when He would no longer be on the earth.

Thus, He honored the faith of the robber and honored the love of His mother.

From 9 a.m. until noon, Jesus spoke in short sentences three times from the cross. His dying themes were forgiveness (Luke 23:34), faith and family. These are words also for us to live by! ■

DR. GEORGE O. WOOD is general superintendent of the Assemblies of God. Visit On Your Mark at pe.ag.org for a link to On Your Mark video and audio podcasts.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

*Lord Jesus, receive me also
— when my day is done —
into Your eternal kingdom. I
cannot do this for myself; only
You can save me.*

A prayer of response



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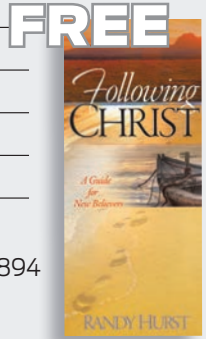
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