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CarolinaLIFE Magazine
PO Box 1895
Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895

CarolinaLIFE Magazine

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POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to: Pathway Ministries Group, PO Box 1895, Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895.

CarolinaLIFE Magazine is written for the Faith Partners, Business Underwriters and friends of Pathway Ministries Group.

Subscriptions: *CarolinaLIFE* is provided free of charge to interested parties within the USA, as our Lord provides. All other subscriptions are \$25.00 per year.

Address Changes: Please either send us a photocopy of your mailing label with your partner number or use the provided insert to carefully print your name, new address, and partner number and send it to: Pathway Ministries Group, Subscription Services, PO Box 1895, Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895. Please allow 6-8 weeks for address change information to be activated.

Back Issues: A limited quantity of back issues are available. If needed by churches, businesses, or other groups, bulk quantity information will be available upon request.

Reprints: Call 1-252-747-8887 for reprint information and reproduction rights for select articles.

Letters And Press Releases: There are four ways to send us material. 1. Fax to 866-537-8189. 2. By courier to 1302 South George Street, Goldsboro, NC 27530. 3. Through the mail. 4. Through our web site at GoMixRadio.org. These are in order of preference. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned.

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An Angel Perhaps?

Dr. T. D. Worthington

Years ago, long before the foundations of this world were laid there was a meeting held of the Eternal Committee. Our Heavenly Father was on that committee. The second person of the Trinity, the One we know today as Jesus was on that committee. The blessed Holy Spirit also participated on that committee. I don't know if there might have been observers to witness this meeting, perhaps Gabriel or Michael. But it was God who determined the agenda and outcome of the meeting. The meeting was to establish the Determinate Counsel of God. (*Acts 2:23*)

Long before the first fish swam in the sea and before the first bird was created to fly; our loving and wise Creator looked into the future and saw that

man would fall. But God knew He would bestow an unconditional love upon man, so even before we were created, God determined a complex plan to save us.

The reason for this meeting was to devise a plan to pay for man's sin and rebellion. Long before it was written in the Bible, the penalty for sin was death. Man sinned and someone had to pay that penalty. ***God's righteousness demanded it.*** Man would have to pay his own debt unless someone could be found who was able and willing to pay the debt for him.

The problem seemed almost insurmountable. There would be no member of the fallen race who would be without sin. Man would be a sinner

by choice, but also by birth. So, only someone untainted by human sin could come to earth and die for us.

Maybe God could send an angel to redeem sinful man. Perhaps Gabriel or Michael, as God's faithful servants, would gladly volunteer for the task. But would that work? Angels are certainly powerful creatures. Why couldn't God just send an angel to redeem us? Why should He have to send Jesus? Well, angels are pretty impressive, but they are not in a position to pay the price for man's sin.

First, angels are spiritual beings that may appear in the form of men, but they are not flesh and blood as we are. Sure, we share some characteristics with angels, like being creatures with

differing personalities and possessing a free will, but we are fleshly beings whereas they are spirit beings. As such, they have no blood to shed, and blood is an absolute requirement for atonement. **“...without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22**

Second, since angels are not human by type, they are not our kin, and redemption requires a kinship relationship between the redeemed and the redeemer. The entire book of Ruth develops this theme. Provision was made in the Law to render help for a person who was forced to sell himself into slavery. His nearest of kin could step in and “buy back” his freedom. Four things were required in order for a kinsman to redeem: He must be near of kin, he must be able to redeem by having sufficient resources, he must be free of any need of redemption himself, and he must be willing to redeem. Once the price was completely paid the redemption was complete and freedom was restored.

Jesus was qualified through His incarnation. He was like us in every way except He never experienced sin. In order to identify Himself as a close relative of man, He took the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men (**Philippians 2:7**). Angels do not have nor may they assume human kinship, therefore they would be unable to assume our debt.

Third, only we humans are created in the image and likeness of God Genesis 1:26. This is said nowhere of angels. Humans were purposefully created for a unique relationship to God. We are designed to be sons (**Galatians 4:6**), whereas the angels are servants (**Hebrews 1:14**). As such,

no angel meets the qualifications for a redeemer.

Fourth, redemption is recreation. Since only God can create and give life, only God can redeem and restore life. God made man from the dust of the ground (**Genesis 2:7**); and resurrection is the same as creation, taking us back from the dust of the ground (**1 Corinthians 15:51-57**).

According to the Bible, it was Jesus who spoke the worlds into existence. John declares about Jesus: **“All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:3**

Since Jesus shaped man in the Garden of Eden, He would be the One to restore man. Jesus said: **“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” John 11:25**

Fifth, an angel could not do the work of redemption because of the holiness of the law. What is sin according to the Bible’s definition? John makes it quite clear: **“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 1 John 3:4** Sin is breaking God’s law, and the

law is the reflection of His character in words. Since God’s law is as holy as God Himself, only a holy God could redeem man from its penalty. Angels may not have sinned, but that does not mean they are as perfect and holy as God. Therefore, only an actual member of the Godhead could redeem the fallen race, and not any created being.

Sixth, typifying our new birth into God’s family, Jesus is designated as the first born Son of God. In order to establish a family relationship with God (*to be called the children of God*), we had to be redeemed by a literal member of the Godhead. No one else would have the authority to birth us into the family of God, but one who was already a part of that family.

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:29

Seventh, since man owes a debt to God he cannot pay, it would stand to reason only God could wipe that debt away. Our debt to God is measured by the quality





manifestation of God was as clear and transparent as Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote, ***“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” Romans 1:19-20.***

Indeed, we have been given amazing and abundant revelations of the Almighty God, yet, none were set forth more clearly and fully than God’s final revelation of Himself in the Person of Christ. Since God is an infinite Being, no man could understand Him fully save the Son who is One in equality with the Father. When the Word became flesh He brought to man an adequate revelation of God. Whatever the ancient seers and saints knew about God before Jesus came; we have a more excellent revelation. Obviously, no mere angel could accomplish such a feat.

Tenth, an angel could not reveal man to man. Through His Incarnation Jesus Christ reveals man to himself. He shows us what we are *and* what we may become. Man is grossly ignorant of his real self, and that the mission of the Son’s coming included a plan that would enable man to see and know himself as God sees and knows him.

Man was created in the image of God; however, man did not retain God’s image and likeness. Man sinned and death began to do its work, and the grave for Adam was but a matter of time. When Adam

and priceless of what we have broken. Imagine you have just broken a priceless antique vase in a museum. Could you pay for the damage you did? Man has broken God’s perfect standard of righteousness. Thus, we have nothing with which to pay such a great debt. We stand before Him in penniless insolvency with empty pockets and hands. No justification on our part will clear us. For us it is an unpayable debt. No one has the wealth or authority to wipe that debt away but God Himself.

Eighth, God does not want our praise and worship directed to angels.

“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.” Colossians 2:18

What would be the implications of worshipping an angel at Easter or during the Christmas season? If an

angel redeemed us to God does that mean we would pray in an angel’s name? Could one angel indwell all believers as does the Holy Spirit?

A.W. Tozer once said concerning God and His angels, ***“I am a Bible Christian and if an archangel with a wingspread as broad as a constellation, shining like the sun, were to come and offer me some new truth, I’d ask him for a reference. If he could not show me where it is found in the Bible, I’d bow him out and say, ‘I’m awfully sorry. You don’t bring any references with you.’”***

Ninth, an angel could not reveal God to man. Angels are pretty impressive, but they are not God. God’s greatest revelation of Himself to mankind is in Jesus Christ. Revelation is the disclosure of truth previously unknown. Before the coming of our Lord to earth many varied forms of revelation may have existed, but no

defaced the Divine image and lost the Divine likeness, he begat sons ***“in his own likeness, after his image”*** **Genesis 5:3.** Yes, ***“by man came death”*** and ***“in Adam all die”*** **I Corinthians 15:21- 22.**

The coming of Christ to the earth revealed the heart of man in cruel hatred for Divine holiness. The Son of God was sinless in every respect, yet man, Jew and Gentile alike, crucified Him. The world, having seen the perfect light, turned from the light, for ***“men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil”*** **John 3:19.**

Eleventh, an angel could not have defeated Satan. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same (flesh and blood); that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” **Hebrews 2:14-15.**

By the coming of Jesus Christ into the world, through His death and resurrection, He obtained the power of death from the Wicked One. Death no more holds its lethal grip upon the believer. Death once held man in the vise of hopeless doom, but now Satan is defeated.

Twelfth, an angel could not rule the earth. When the Incarnation had been announced, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, ***“...where is He that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him”*** **Matthew 2:2.** The steps in our Lord’s humiliation were temporary steps

leading to a permanent exaltation, culminating with the bowing of every knee and the confessing of every tongue in heaven and in earth, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

A perfect kingdom demands a perfect King. At the end of the conflict of the ages, Jesus Christ, the God-Man will return to earth to establish His righteous kingdom which will never be destroyed. His kingdom of glory,



and His throne in the midst, was God’s first promise through the mouth of the angel Gabriel to Mary, and it links together the Incarnation and reign of the Son of God. ***(Luke 1:31-33)***

Thirteenth, an angel could not restore creation. Though the salvation of man was God’s chief concern, His plan was never limited to the world of mankind. It is written of the eternal Son, who was with God and who is God, that ***“all things were made by Him”*** **John 1:3.** Now, through the sacrifice of Christ, creation will be restored to its former glory and beauty.

So, an angel could not do the work of redemption. Since Jesus was the one who created man with His own hands, He would be the one to redeem man, with His outstretched hands on Calvary! As you can see, Jesus is uniquely qualified to be our Saviour.

Although it is true that angels frequently appeared to take on human form in the Bible, it is important to note that they did not become human. These powerful appearances were not the equivalent of Jesus taking on humanity. He was born of a woman and grew into full adulthood like all of us. Angels, as created beings, appear to have been created at full maturity and without a biological process.

So, the plan was that God Himself would come to earth, become a man, and live on the earth for 33 years. During His visit to Earth He would never sin. He would never think, say, or do anything He shouldn’t. So, God became flesh, His name was Jesus Christ, the Messiah. He came to the Earth and lived a perfect life. And this was all planned by the Determinate Counsel of God before the foundation of the world.

So, an angel would not suffice. It was determined that Jesus Christ would go to the cross, and on that cross, He would pay our debt so we might live forever as the children of God.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for over thirty-five years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries.



The Work Nears Completion

Hopefully, our new satellite project will be up and running within the next few weeks. We had originally set a goal to activate our programming by January 1st, but due to a few set-backs, it will take a bit longer.

As many of you are aware, several of our transmitters receive their signal over the public telephone system. Although the system usually works fine, there are times when the link is not reliable. This results in a loss of programming to our stations.

We decided several months ago to raise the funds to place a satellite system on the air. As usual, our **Faith Partners** overwhelmingly responded during our **Share-A-Thon** to meet the need. We filed an application with the FCC to construct an earth station, and thankfully, the license was granted. Subsequently, the required equipment was ordered.

This system will beam a stereo signal to an orbiting satellite which will then relay the signal back to our transmitter sites. This should prove to be a far more reliable system.

Doug Johnson and **Jeremy Worthington** have been working with Engineer **David Robinson** to complete the installation. The transmission dish and related equipment has been installed at our Goldsboro campus. Now, we must install equipment at our various

transmitter sites to receive the signals. We anticipate this to take a few more weeks, depending on the weather.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support. Soon, by God's grace, many of our listeners should have a more reliable signal from their local **GoMix** station.

(Above: Final connections being made to our new satellite transmission dish. Left to right: David Robinson, Doug Johnson, and Jeremy Worthington.)



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Divine Energy!

Time is something we rarely seem to have enough of these days. When making a daily to-do list, the slots seem to fill up too quickly. Often times, activities have to be moved to the next day's list just to pencil in a few hours here and there to eat and sleep. At the beginning of the week, we think of relaxing when the weekend comes only to find a yard that needs raking, laundry to be folded, and an extra shift at work quietly waiting to pounce on us. Sometimes, the more we do, the more things just seem to add up. Will we ever get ahead? Where is the light at the end of the tunnel everyone talks about?

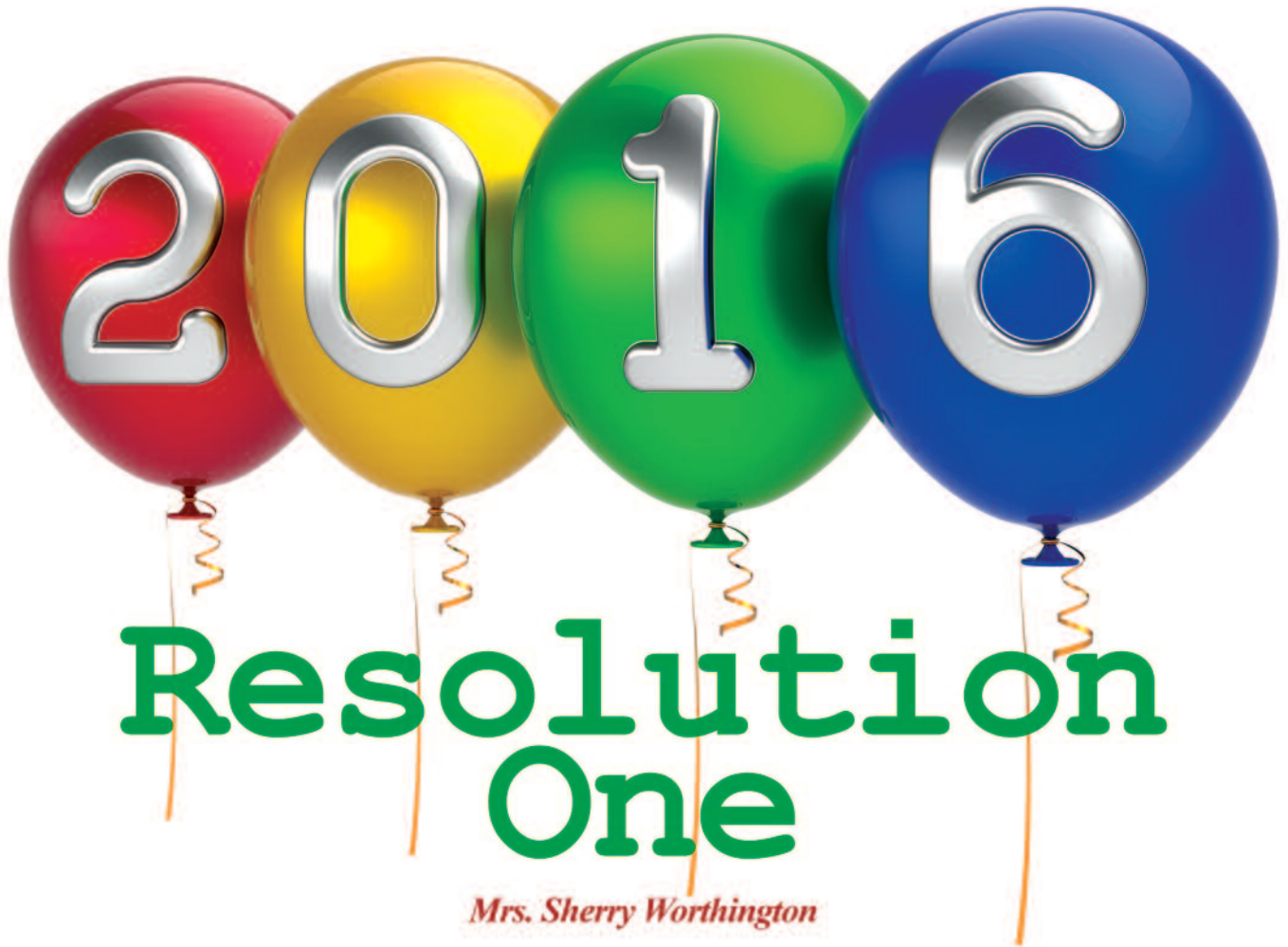
Maybe it's not a light at the *end* of the tunnel we should look for, but rather a Light *in the midst* of the tunnel.

Have you ever been working outside or in a workshop when the sun begins to go down? Little by little things get harder to see. Although you may be trying to hurry and doing your absolute best to get your work done, you're slowed down by the absence of light. So it is

with all of our daily tasks. When we forget to put the Lord first in our lives and spend time with Him, we may as well be working with the lights out. Sure, we might get a little done here and there, but are we really being efficient and working to the best of our abilities?

C. H. Spurgeon said in his sermon titled *Jesus In Our Midst*, "*Oh brother, oh sister, I beseech you do not estimate yourself according to your ability, according to your experience, your learning and the like, but according to that divine energy which rests upon you if you are called of God to service.*"

We have a Divine Energy today! We have our very Creator at our fingertips. He is ready and willing to offer His guidance throughout your day. Maybe all you have is five minutes to spare on your drive to work. Hey, it's a start! Seek His guidance in *all* things. It might not make your day any less busy, but it will make it more productive and a little less stressful. Go ahead, work with the Light on!



What is the magic about January 1st? Many people seem to feel that New Year's Day is the perfect day to fix everything. For some reason, that is the day to begin anew. According to the *Statistic Brain Institute*, the number one New Year's resolution is losing weight. That was no surprise. Can you guess what number two is? Everyone wants to get organized. I guess we feel we can get so much more accomplished that way. The third resolution was to save more and spend less. That is obviously an important one. I was surprised that spending more time with family was way down at number ten.

Although the things on the list were not bad things, it shows us our focus. There are so many things I would have deemed more important than the top ten listed. What would be an ideal list of resolutions?

1. Put God first.

Oh, I guess the list stops there. Do you realize that if our relationships with God were where they should be, then all of the other things would fall in place?

I am not saying it would be easy because we will always be tempted. But if we let Him, the Lord would empower

us to be disciplined and say no to the temptation.

What if every time we put a bite of food in our mouth, we got our Lord's permission? OK, Lord, is it OK to eat this third donut? Of course, in this case, we know the answer without having Him tell us. The point is, if we got in the habit of asking first, I wonder where that habit would take us. If we were trying to lose weight, perhaps He could help us stop before the first donut. He could, if we would listen and obey.

According to the statistics, we are an unorganized people. What if we

dedicated our day to the Lord each morning? How do you want me to spend this hour, Lord? I think we would be surprised how much more efficient we would become. We should all make a plan for our time, but we should ask Him first so He can endorse or veto our plan. He can get us organized, if we listen and obey.

We can all agree that we need to save more and spend less. The best way to do that would be to give God our finances. First and foremost, we must give Him our tithes. He cannot bless our finances if we are stealing from Him. Saving money is a matter of putting God in charge of our wallet. We have to be sure He is guiding us with our purchases and our savings. He can straighten out our finances, if we listen and obey.

I assume if Christians were polled, our top resolutions would be different from the ones listed. I hope putting God first would be number one on the list, and being a better spouse and parent would be second. I also hope we would want to deal with our besetting sins, the ones we just can't seem to control.

Perhaps we need to conquer anger and selfishness. Maybe we gossip or are harboring bitterness. God can fix all of these things, if we listen and obey.

The truth is that whatever poll we read, if we all put God first, the rest of our difficulties would fall into place. There would be no further need of any resolutions. Matthew 6:33 reads, ***“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”***

How do we put God first? What are the tools He has given us? Our Heavenly Father gave us great tools to get close to Him. We have the gift of prayer. We have a line to our Lord any time, day or night. We have the ability to praise Him and make our requests known to Him.

Our Lord also went to great lengths to give us His Word, the Bible. Over many years, men penned the Words of our Lord by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. His Word helps us through our daily walk and to draw closer to Him. We need to memorize and meditate on the Scripture. It needs to be our shield.

We can get closer to Him and get to know Him by learning about Him.

His Spirit is constantly trying to talk to us and help us in our walk with Him. The Holy Spirit is our comforter and our guide.

When we study God's Word, pray without ceasing, and listen to His Holy Spirit, it enables us to crawl up into our Heavenly Father's lap and learn about Him so much more. When we have the experience of crawling into His lap, we learn to seek Him first.

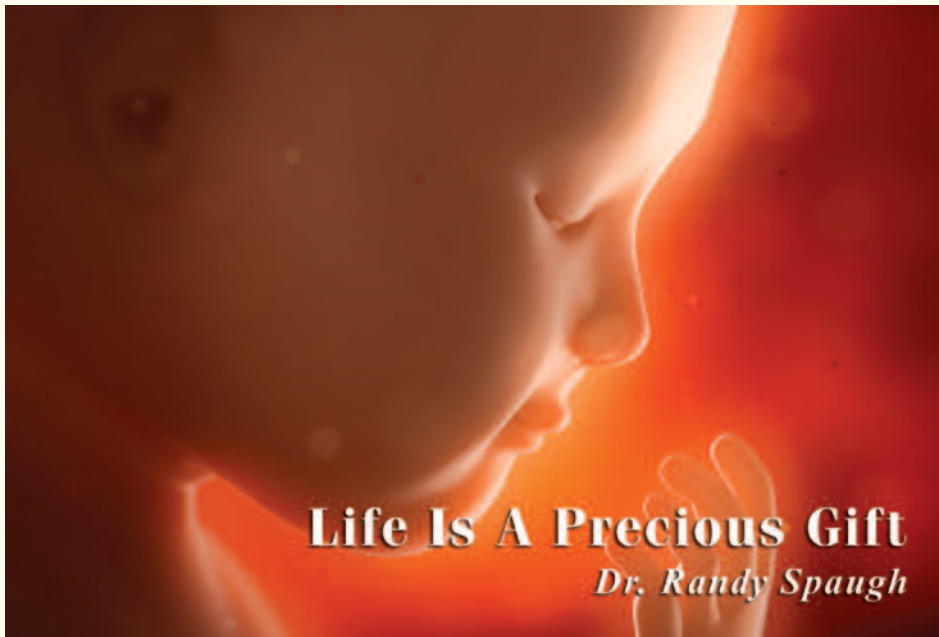
So, what is your resolution? Seek Him first and all of the other things in life will fall in their proper places. We just have to seek, listen, and obey. Put God first! Let that be our number one resolution each day.

Happy New Year!



Mrs. Worthington has five children and eight grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.





Life Is A Precious Gift

Dr. Randy Spaugh

As a pastor, there are some activities I find non-beneficial and some I find particularly horrendous. The Bible is formative in these matters, and gives particularly good guidance. For me personally, abortion is one of those issues that is most troublesome. It is certainly not an unforgivable sin. However, it is taken much too lightly in our society, and the church seems to have given up on a change ever being made.

Abortion is usually a lack of respect for human life. It is crushing a life God has given to us. This can be done because we see this child getting in the way of the life we have imagined. This seems to be the mantra of our society. We feel justified in ridding the world of anything that seems to be getting in our way. Yet, in this situation, we are destroying a life that we cannot re-create, even if we wanted to.

We are sending a message to the world that human life does not really matter. It seems

to matter more when there is another shooting in town. Another innocent bystander is shot by a stray bullet. We are not making the connection between the two, but we should. If we do not value life in one situation, it will not be long before a life is seen as a throwaway object in another situation.

We have tried to change this since it became legal in 1973. We elected officials that we hoped would bring about change. Late-term abortions were declared to be illegal, only to have the decision overturned by the courts. We seem to lose time after time.

It is no surprise that we feel defeated. Perhaps it is time for a new game plan. Yes, we might change the laws. In my opinion, that is not likely to happen. We haven't managed to change the law since 1973. At least it is going to take some time for this to happen, if it happens at all.

When Jesus taught, he never spoke of changing the law, because that

was not a possibility. He seemed to prefer to change one life at a time. We need to revert to His way of doing things. Instead of being against something, we need to spend some time being for something, namely Jesus and the life He gives.

Perhaps it is time for the church to talk about the sanctity of life. I am not even sure this should be a secondary message. Yes, we need to speak of salvation, but it was God who gave us life to begin with. He knew us before we were born (**Jeremiah 1:5**), and after He created everything He said it was very good (**Genesis 1:31**).

We may even have to change our tactics. When an unwed mother decides to keep her child instead of aborting it, we should stand in support of that decision. It doesn't mean that we support children coming into this world outside of marriage, but it does mean that we will support those who choose life over abortion.

I do not think that we are going to make a difference by allowing this to be a part of a sermon every now and then. The value of God's creation, and particularly life itself, should not be a minor subject in our churches. If we begin to make the culture of life a major part of our conversation, we might change a life or two. In fact, we may save a life or two.



Dr. Randy Spaugh is the Pastor of Faith Fellowship Church in Kinston, N.C.
www.faithkinston.org



Give Your All To God

Ms. Debra Wallace

If you read my stories much at all, then you probably already know my mother and I “pet sit” my granddaughter’s pug, Allie. Dogs have always been a part of my life; especially pugs, which I have to say, are one of the keenest and kindest breeds God’s ever created. To know Allie is to love Allie. I say this because Allie’s so in tune, so super sensitive, to mine and my mother’s needs and moods. For instance, if I’m feeling tired, if I’m sick, or I’m just having a flat-out bad day... somehow, somehow, Allie picks up on it, and she responds appropriately.

Frankly speaking, Mother and I love Allie. She’s our faithful companion and our fun-loving buddy. Even more than that, Allie’s a member of our family. And that’s why I let Allie sleep with me.

The other morning I woke up to discover Allie was awake. Usually, she’s a late sleeper. Allie was already sitting up and scattered near the foot of my bed with her toys. Come to find out while I’d slept, Allie had snuck out of my bed, and one toy at a time, had carried her

toys from her toy chest located in the den to my bedroom. Then, with the toy in her mouth, she’d jumped up on my bed and deposited the toy at the foot of my bed. In fact, she’d emptied the entire contents of her toy chest on the foot of my bed! Bless her little heart. It’s a wonder she hadn’t worn herself out while I slept.

Still lying in bed, I thought about the One who knows me like none other, even knowing the intents and motives of my heart. I thought about the One who remains faithful to me even when I am faithless. I thought about the One whose loving-kindnesses and compassions toward me never fail. I thought about the One who loves me and who demonstrated His love toward me by giving his Son to die for me while I was still a sinner. I thought about the One whose family I now belong to.

Then I asked myself, “Am I willing to empty my toy chest at God’s feet? Better yet, am I willing to give God my all?”

How about you? Are you willing to give God your all?

“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”

Matthew 19:27-30

“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”

Luke 14:33



Debra Joy Wallace is a Christian columnist and speaker. More information is available at www.debrawallace.com.

And Finally...



Thankful In The New Year...

I am very thankful that God has blessed me to be entering the New Year at age 86. My husband is also very blessed to be entering at age 91. We celebrated 68 years of marriage this past August 6th. We are both able to stay alone and take care of our daily needs. We are thankful for four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. God has been so good to us and we praise His name.

B. M.

The things I am most thankful for are my church and church family. My church, located in Macclesfield, NC, has been there for my family many times. Three years ago, my husband passed away. Through his illness and passing, they were there with prayers, visits, emotional, and spiritual support for my family. They helped to make his last days much easier. Most of my extended family lives out of state, and I don't get to see them very often. The members of my church have become my extended family, and I thank God every day for them.

S. W.

I'm thankful for the opportunities I have. Opportunities like being able to attend school and get an education to chase my dreams. The support I get from my professors and classmates help me get better every single day, and it will be tough to leave at the end of the school year. I know graduation is fast approaching and I still have a lot to learn, but I know when the time comes to walk across the stage, I'll be ready.

K. B.

I am thankful for God's grace and mercy that covers me every day! I am thankful for this amazing opportunity God has given me, and even more so for trusting me to be a faithful disciple. I am thankful for all of the support I have received from my friends, family, and even people I don't know that God has placed in my path. Thankful doesn't even seem like a word big enough to express the gratitude I have for all that God has placed in my life. It is so easy to be thankful for what I already have, but today I am also giving Him praise; praise is not for what I have, but for what I cannot see yet, praise for the spiritual growth I know I will be gaining this coming year; praise for the miracles that I will witness on the mission field of life, and praise for the relationships and bonds that will be made.

M. S.

“Easter”

We'd like your help for an upcoming edition of “And Finally...”

Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us why you love Easter. The deadline for submission is January 15th, 2016.

You can send an email to: Attn: CarolinaLIFE
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