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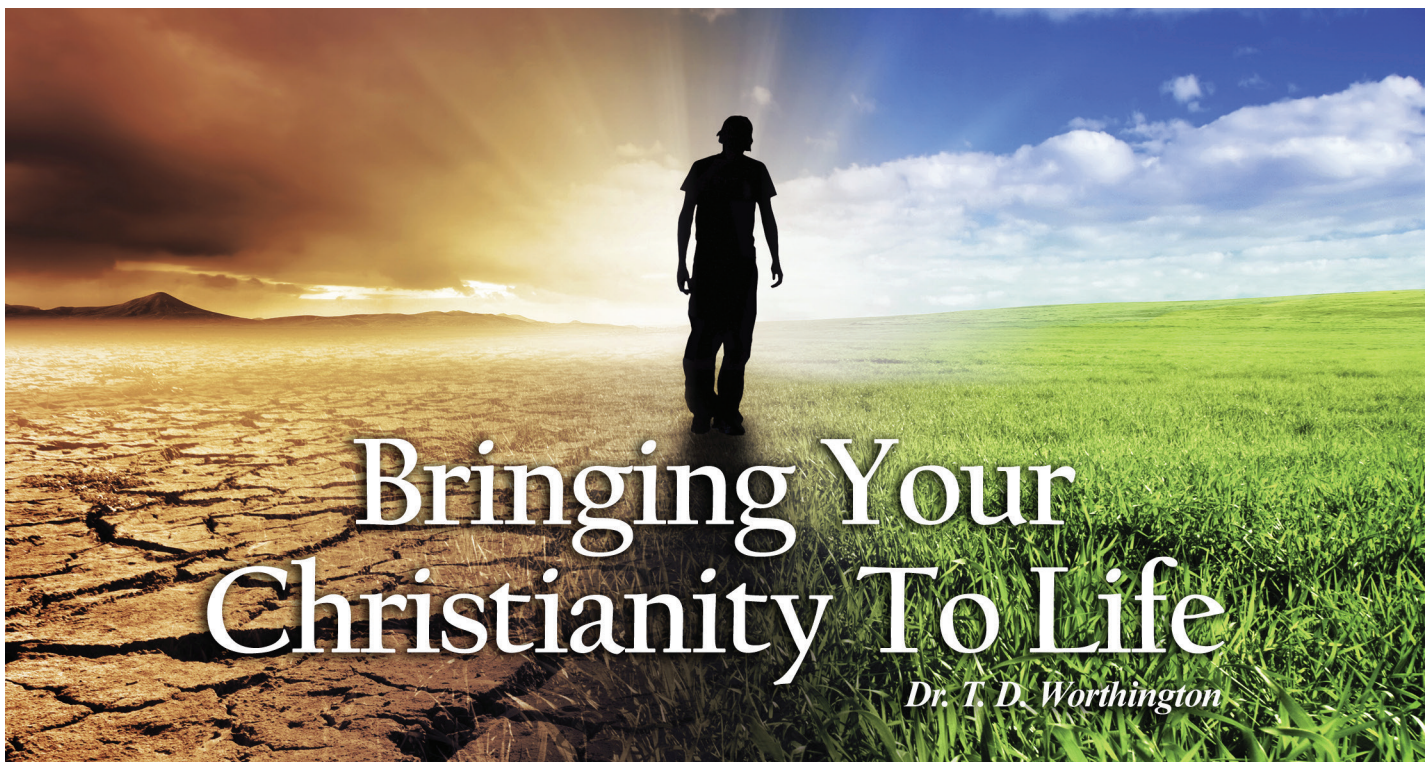
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# Bringing Your Christianity To Life

*Dr. T. D. Worthington*

The Word of God teaches us that our faith should be alive and vibrant. We should all see daily evidences of God at work in our lives. However, sometimes manifestations of blessings are not as apparent as they should be. In most cases, we do not see our blessings because we are not looking for them. In other cases, we are running from God so He cannot bless us in the way He might do so otherwise. Sadly, many are just not excited about their walk with God.

God will always honor our faith, but for faith to manifest itself, a vehicle must be provided. This vehicle gives a place for faith to be verified and displayed for the glory of the Lord. A man, who says he has faith but displays no real evidence of it in his life, is being deceived. It is a claim without verification. God provides no picture to be displayed because there is no frame in which to place it. As God works through us Christ is glorified, the church is strengthened, the lost may be won, and we can bring a new dimension of life to our Christianity.

## ***First, A Godly Prayer Ministry May Help Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

We all make decisions every day. Some of them are minor, like what to wear and where to go for lunch. Others are major, requiring much thought and prayer. Jeremiah once prayed and asked God for guidance. This is still a good prayer for us to pray today.

***O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Jeremiah 10:23.***

On our own, we are not smart enough to have a good marriage or to be a good parent. We do not have the discretion to plan our own course. The carnal Christian does pretty much as they please, but the mature Christian seeks the will of God in his decisions. We must all adopt the attitude of John the Baptist who declared of Jesus, ***“He must increase, and I must decrease.”***

When you are in the midst of making a major decision, you need to ask

the Lord to give you grace to walk in holiness so there will be nothing hindering you from hearing His voice. You will bring your Christianity to life as you begin to experience answered prayer.

Don't just speak prayers out loud; listen for the voice of the Lord as well. Keep a journal so that you can write down what the Lord speaks to you in these special times. Prayer is an essential Christian discipline that should be a part of every mature believer's life.

## ***Second, A Godly Dream May Help Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

When God wants to work in your life, He often gives you a dream. The dream will focus on what the Lord wants you to do and how you can best prepare for your mission. He may also give you advance information on how your life will advance the Kingdom.

God gave Noah the dream of building an ark. He also gave dreams to

Abraham, Nehemiah, and others. He may be attempting to do the same for you.

How do you know when a dream is from God or when it's just something you've thought up yourself? Perhaps this is how:

***“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” Ephesians 3:20.***

More than mere human ideas or thoughts and more than our highest desires, hopes, or prayers, that's what the power of God can do. In other words, if a dream comes from God, it will be so big in your life that you can't do it on your own. If you could do it on your own, you wouldn't need to exercise faith to accomplish it. The Bible teaches us ***“whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23).***

God often attempts to bring your Christianity to life by giving you a dream. The danger is you may not recognize it for what it is. You may think it is just some random thoughts, but perhaps not! They may be utterances from God which may be the very thing needed to bring your Christianity to life.

***Third, Godly Memories May Help Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

***“As he thinketh in his heart, so is he” Proverbs 23:7.***

As we go back and carefully look over our Christian life, we will see miracles which may have been overlooked as they occurred. Tragically, we are often very insensitive to manifestations of God working in our lives.

We need to understand that we usually remember things we consider to be important. Most of us didn't forget to show up on our wedding day, nor do we usually forget to eat. Sadly, we are often prone to forget important stuff while remembering things we should forget. I once heard a story about two friends who were talking. One of them asked the other, ***“Don't you remember that time when your husband did this?”*** Her friend replied, ***“No, I don't recall him doing it, but I do distinctly remember forgetting that he did it.”***

If you delight in holding on to your painful memories, go right ahead. But you're not going to be happy! Why not make a choice to be grateful for your life and saturate your thoughts with good memories.

We can easily develop patterns of thinking whether positive or negative. For example, when you listen to a certain song it may get *“stuck”* in your mind. Likewise, when we think about anything for an extended period of time, we create a *“sound”* in our minds. This sound has a way of dominating our perspective of life, eventually making us sensitive to things that have the same *“tone.”*

Then, like a man with a tuning fork, we begin to attract and be attracted to people, circumstances, and feelings that are tuned to that same pitch. Our minds become reinforced in their beliefs by the influence of others. It has been said that whatever fills your mind will eventually fill your life! So, think on good things as they can help bring your Christianity to life.

***Fourth, Fasting May Help Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

Fasting from food can be done for a variety of purposes, either physical or spiritual. So abstaining from food alone doesn't constitute a Christian fast. Instead, a Christian fast is accompanied by a special focus on prayer, often substituting the time you'd spend eating with prayer instead.

Fasting offers a way to impose self-control in your life; it gives you a *“splash in the face”* to awaken you to the need to take charge of your life. Remember, you are dependent on God for things far more important than food. Fasting isn't a complicated business. When you fast, you don't eat. You stay away from all food or refrain from specific types of food for a set amount of time. The duration





of the fast may be a solo meal, one day, or several days, and it is one way God can use to help bring your Christianity to life.

#### ***Fifth, Giving May Help Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

God specifically tells us to test Him in this one way. Tithing is an act of faith—faith that when we give to God, that He will still provide our needs. When we give generously we declare, ***“God is my security. God is my comfort. God is my provider. I am trusting God, not myself.”***

Giving takes faith. Therefore, if you want to grow your faith, give. Give to see the good news of Jesus advance. Give to your church, to your neighbors, and to help the poor and afflicted. You’ll feel the stretch, it won’t be easy, but don’t worry, you’re growing those faith muscles, and it may help bring your Christianity to life.

#### ***Sixth, Studying the Word May Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

***Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.***  
**Matthew 4:4**

Jesus is using a natural human idea to convey a spiritual thought. He’s saying to us that what food is to the body, the Word of God is to the spirit. You can feed your spirit on God’s Word and thereby feed your faith, because God’s Word is faith food. So, utilizing the Word of God can help bring your Christianity to life.

#### ***Seventh, Celebrations Can Help Bring Your Christianity to Life.***

Many believers dislike most all holiday celebrations, which of course is a matter of personal choice. Personally, I might agree with some of their concerns, although I would not necessarily agree with their conclusions.

When, in a godly fashion, we celebrate Valentine’s Day, birthdays or other events it can bring glory to the Lord. It is often a way of celebrating His blessings upon us. Actually, God originated many celebrations Himself. These celebrations, usually called *“feasts”* were for the nation of Israel. You may recall that the first three feasts Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits occurred in rapid succession in the spring of the year over a period of eight days. They came to be referred to collectively as *“Passover.”*

The fourth feast, Harvest, occurred fifty days later, at the beginning of the summer. By New Testament times this feast had come to be known by its Greek name, Pentecost, a word meaning fifty.

The last three feasts Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles extended over a period of twenty-one days and occurred in the fall of the year. They would come to be known collectively as *Tabernacles*.

Most of these feasts required a preparation time. They usually continued for several days, they often involved food, they often involved fellowship with family and other believers, they often involved music and decoration, and they certainly involved worship, praise, and reflection.

My point is, learning to extract everything possible out of your celebrations can bring life to your Christianity. Experience the joy of giving and receiving, the joy of decorating and baking, the joy of praise and worship, the joy of the stories, the music, the movies, the history, and the memories. Experience the celebration, make sure your festivities glorify the Lord, and then make them last as long as you can.

After all, it was God who taught us how to celebrate through the various feasts of the Old Testament, several of which pointed directly to Christ. So, although we are not under some ritual law, let us celebrate; for in doing so, we might easily bring a renewed spirit of life and vitality to our faith.

So, to those with a dreary faith and a sluggish testimony, the way to bring your Christianity to life is to breathe a little life into your Christianity. Hopefully, these few suggestions might be beneficial in this regard.



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



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## My Valentine

*“For a man is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.”*

**1 Corinthians 11:7-9**

Have you noticed that often if a man is affluent and wealthy, you will often find his affluence and his wealth expressed in his wife?



He may buy her expensive clothes and jewelry. If he has two cars, he will probably give her the better vehicle. He will also wish to provide her with a nice home. Of course that can be because of pride, but it is also a part of our God-given nature. A man who loves his wife will desire to express his blessings through her.

That is the human illustration of the Biblical truth that the glory of the man is the woman. He rejoices in her, he boasts in her, he is proud in her, he is grateful to God for her, and he will express that gladness and glory in his wife.

Furthermore, it appears to please God for man to be that way. It pleases God for man to rejoice in

the woman, just as it pleases God for the woman to be a helper to her husband.

The love we have for our spouses should be shown throughout the entire year, however the Valentine Season is a wonderful reminder to be grateful and appreciative to the one God has called to be our mate.

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## *Father Of Our Country*

This month, we celebrate the birth of the “Father of our Country”. History has given our world few men to equal George Washington.

Back in 1799, a little more than 30 months into his retirement, the 67 year old Washington complained about a cough, runny nose, and a distinct hoarseness of voice. His physicians had been summoned and found the former President already in a weakened condition.

Using the best known medical procedures of the day, the physicians removed more than 80 ounces of his blood (40 percent of his total blood volume) over a 12-hour period. Modern medicine would agree that this massive blood loss could not have helped the president’s condition, and likely hastened his death.

It is easy to criticize Washington’s doctors. However, the fact is they did the best they could using methods accepted by the medical profession of the day.

Just like all of us, General Washington hoped his physicians would help him to recover, and if recovery was not possible, perhaps they could help him face an

easy death. Tragically, neither was possible at the time—nor are they possible today.

Of course, medical science has greatly advanced over the past 200 years, but it is still God who must heal. He may use the skill of the physician or the chemistry of the medicine, but it is still the Great Physician who heals. The surgeon may cut the flesh and sew it back together, but it is God who truly mends the flesh. Furthermore, it is not possible to face an easy death apart from the intervention of God. Medicine may dull the senses, but only Jesus Christ can bring peace to a soul entering eternity.

Although it is apparent Washington believed in God, we are a bit unsure of his relationship with Christ. Yet, in a day when we find so few real heroes in public life, the patriotism exhibited by this great man serves as a wonderful example. As we reflect on the life and death of George Washington, let us also join together in asking our Heavenly Father to raise up a new generation of leaders who might bring our nation back to the One who can not only heal men, but can also heal nations.



Wow! I really zoned out that time! Have you ever been listening to a conversation or a lecture and you had no clue what the person was talking about? I have, and when I do, I gracefully nod my head on cue and look intelligent. If I am very comfortable with the person, I may ask questions.

When my husband uses radio lingo, I don't know what he's talking about half the time. It can be some real complicated stuff-much like teaching algebra to a first grader. There are many topics and words in life which are way over my head. Well, to be honest, I probably have not made many things a priority to learn, while others, I just don't have what it takes.

Sometimes even a word can be difficult to understand. My friend at work taught me the word penultimate. I guess I had never needed the word before, but she likes to use it quite often with the kids when they get close to graduation or completing a course, and they remember it, too. I grasped what that word meant quite easily; it means next to last. There are many other words we are exposed to that are not so easy to understand.

I believe the most difficult word to experience and understand is a certain small word. It is easy to spell, and most people think it is easy to give. This word brings joy, but it also brings pain. It is easy to accept, but

truly hard to give. Everyone throws it around like a ball and doesn't take its meaning seriously. You guessed it! LOVE!

The three little words "*I love you*" can bring so much joy. We find the perfect person to call our soul mate, the one we want to spend our lives with. We think of him or her day and night, and it makes the pit of our stomach feel all funny when we hear them say, "*I love you!*" We finally tie the knot and say, "*I do.*" Then, shortly after the ceremony, we think, "*Ouch, this is not what I bargained for.*" The "*I love you*" doesn't have the same effect. Our mate no longer thinks the world revolves around us. Our spouse suddenly wants his or

her way and doesn't want to put up with our selfish ways anymore. The hard reality is both of us are selfish and never really meant the words "I love you" to begin with. The unconditional love that the Bible teaches is hard to find and hard to give. Our love in marriage can bring us joy as well as pain.

Many times the couples struggle through and go on to have children. What a special moment! It is so exciting and we didn't think we could love another human being so much. We hold the little ones in our arms and dream of being the greatest parents on earth. We are a little nervous because this is a new experience. We sure do love our little one, another of the most joyful love experiences on earth. Oh, but how it hurts when they hurt. Our heart breaks whether a little friend deserts them, they are sick, or they are in a car accident. It never stops no matter how old they get. However, if we are truly honest, we still don't love our child more than ourselves. We wouldn't let anything hurt them or abuse them, but we still don't love them unconditionally. We don't have the tough love we need to have. It is tough to do what is best instead of what they want or what you want for that matter. Sadly, when we don't do what is best, many times it results in a lot of pain down the road. The love for the child brings sadness instead of joy. The soft decisions we make raising our children gives rise to soft adults. Children who are selfish and always thinking of themselves, incapable of unconditional love, bring heartache for their parents as well as their future spouses and many people they come into contact with. Our love for our children can bring joy as well as pain.

Oh, but let us not forget the grandchildren. My heart just melts when I hear them say "I love you, Grandma." It doesn't matter if it is from the oldest or the youngest; it brings a great amount of joy. My heart lights up! My husband and I pray that all of our grandchildren will grow up to follow our Lord. We pray the parents will teach them His ways, and hopefully, their grandparents will show them God's ways, too. If you haven't experienced it yet, the grandchildren can bring pain, too. The hurt comes when they hurt as



well. So, love for grandchildren can bring joy as well as pain.

Love can be painful in other ways, too. My brother's death was painful. He died at a young age and left behind two young girls. I don't understand it, but I learned to trust God. Watching a loved one die of a debilitating illness is very painful. Observing the people I love age is not a pleasant part of love. The joyful part of all these experiences is the memories you have of the love you shared together, as well as

the new memories you are making. Love for others can bring joy as well as pain.

By far the person who brings me the most joy on earth when he says, "I love you" is my husband. I have no doubt his love is unconditional. He shows me every day. I also know our love for each other will one day bring us pain. Oh, we already hurt when the other hurts, but one day one of us will be alone. That is not a pleasant thought. I cannot imagine life without him. That will be the ultimate pain from the experience of his beautiful unconditional love for me.

The most painful love of all may be the love which is not returned. The unconditional love for someone that is spit upon, ignored, or taken lightly must be the worst pain of all. Jesus died on a cross for all humans because of His unconditional love for us. Many people have refused and ignored His gift. They are choosing hell for their eternal home instead of going to Heaven with Him. Can you imagine the pain that must cause? I wonder though? How much pain do we cause when we ignore the Lord's direction? When we ignore all He is trying to tell us, we cause Him so much pain. He loves us so much. It would be far better to bring Him joy when we say "I love you!" May we strive to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. *Luke 10:27.*

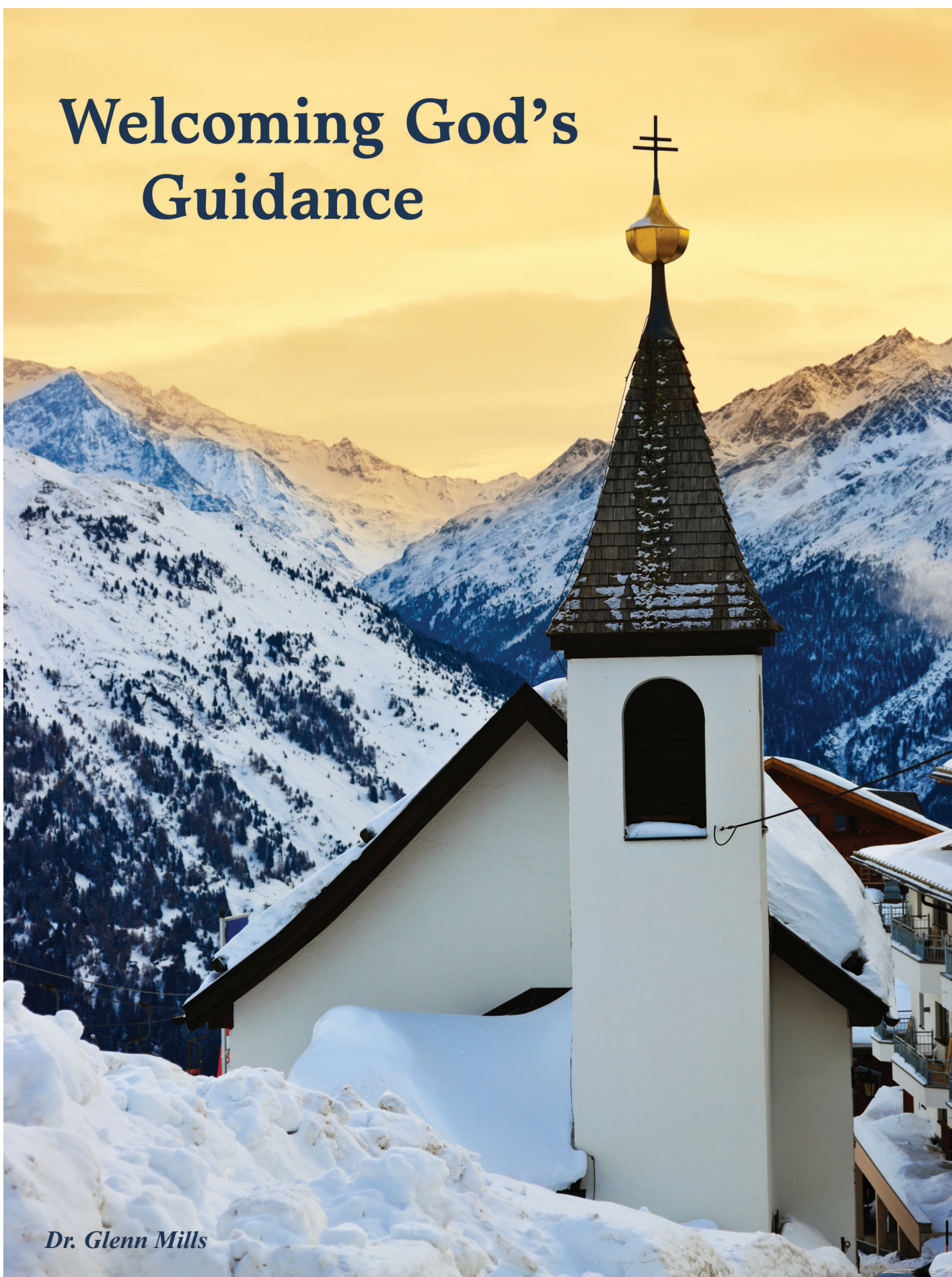
No matter how much pain love brings, it is always worth it. Take the risk and love unconditionally. God did!



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



# Welcoming God's Guidance



*Dr. Glenn Mills*



*“Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.”*

**Psalm 26:2**

Let’s be honest, when was the last time you prayed a prayer like the one in **Psalm 26**? Being serious, when was the last time you prayed for God to take a real close look into your heart and mind? Not that He does not already know, but are we willing to allow Him to not only look but also reveal what He finds in us?

To examine means to inspect someone or something in detail to determine their nature or condition; to investigate thoroughly. Do we really have the nature of God? The Word teaches us that the old man dies, and we take on the new man in Christ Jesus (**Ephesians 4:22-24**). We are called in the Word, “new creatures”. That new man should look like Jesus as we live in Christ. Whereas we once walked in the sin nature, we now walk in Christ and live by the Spirit of God. What does our nature reveal about who we are in Christ?

To prove means to demonstrate the truth or existence of something by evidence or argument. With this in mind, it means to allow God to look at us in line with His Word. His Word is truth! So how close are we to living the truth? There is no doubt whatsoever you are living at some level of His truth, but how much? Are we living by what our society says is the truth or what God says is truth? Jesus said we could know Him (Truth)

and that He would set us free. The freedom He offers is nothing less than abundant life in Him.

A test is a procedure to establish the quality, performance, or reliability of something. Without a doubt, we are valuable to God. Why else would He offer up His Son for us? How valuable are we to the body of Christ where it also counts? If you or I stopped attending church today, would it even make a difference in that particular ministry? What are we worth to others God has put in our path? On a scale of 1 to 10, how reliable are we in the things of God? How well are we performing the task He created us to do?

While asking God to examine, prove, and test us would seem like a tough thing to do, it would be the best thing we could do. We are not asking God to judge us and bring sentence on us, but to simply show us who we are, where we are currently with Him, and where He desires for us to be. It is God’s desire we become all He has created us to be. When we take a test, it reveals what we know and what we don’t know. If we seem to fail in some part, it allows us to know where we need to study more.

In **Psalm 26**, David was not seeking God’s judgement, but instead, he was welcoming God’s



guidance in the areas he was coming up short. Are you ready to go further, dream bigger, love larger, live more abundantly, and grow stronger spiritually? If so, pray this Scripture and allow God to reveal some areas that may be hindering your promotion. He is already blessing the things you are doing right in accordance to His Word. Don’t be afraid of the improvements He is going to make. God is loving and longsuffering toward us so He will not put more on us than we can bear. Let’s thank God for the things we are getting right, and let’s trust Him with the things we can do better.



*Dr. Glenn Mills is a full-time Evangelist with the Open Arms Evangelistic Ministry. He can be heard each weekday on GoMix Christian Radio.*

# And Finally...



## My Pet...

*Garfield, a large orange and white farm cat slept in a barn owned by dad. When my dad died, Garfield came to live with me. He adapted to inside living very well, now sleeping on the end of a baby grand piano. He loved to watch the traffic and birds from his window view. He lived his new “life of luxury and love” for seventeen years. Health issues finally took away a quality of life, so our wonderful veterinarian came to our home to put him to sleep. I held him in my arms as the procedure was done and prayed that God would let angels and my dad be with him. Garfield was buried in our back yard that quiet August afternoon near his favorite bird watching spot.*

**C. B.**

*My pet’s name is Odie, like the dog on Garfield. I’ve known Odie for about 6 years, and he has become my precious little boy. He jumps like a deer when he is ready to eat and likes to stick his ears up. He likes the outdoors, but he has allergies so I try not to let him sniff in the grass too much. He hates a bath, but I give him one every now and then. He sleeps with us at times and uses his nose to let us know he wants to go under the covers. I love my Odie.*

**T. B.**

*In 2010, my husband had multiple health issues and surgeries resulting in the loss of his 36 year career.*

*That year, our beloved Pomeranian had congestive heart failure, and we lost her too. My son called one day and told me he thought his dad was depressed. He suggested a puppy. So they ventured out on a snowy day in search of a puppy. They came home with a Pomeranian which we named Captain Jack. The first year with Jack was tedious, to put it politely. He definitely has a mind of his own. However, Jack has become very important to our family. I know God has blessed us with everything we have, including Captain Jack.*

**L. D.**

## “Antiques I Cherish”

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

April 9th, 2016, is National Cherish an Antique Day! Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us about an antique you treasure. The deadline for submission is

February 15th, 2016.

You can send an email to: Attn: CarolinaLIFE  
wago@gomixradio.org

Or write to: Pathway Ministries

PO Box 1895

Goldsboro, NC 27533



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