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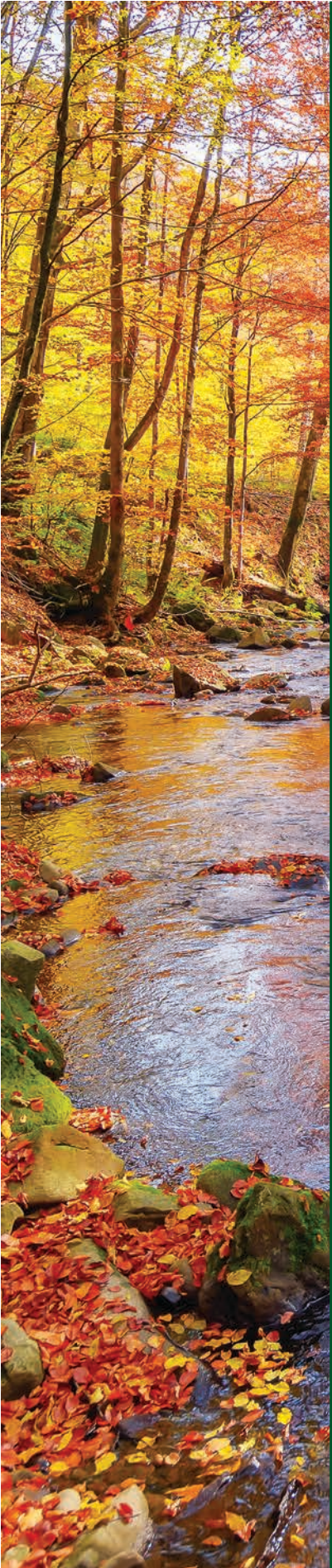



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There is nothing quite like a sure thing. Take this pill, and you will lose 50 pounds in 24 hours. Buy this insurance, and you will never have another car repair expense. Use this deodorant, and you will never have to take another shower. Vote for this candidate, and the world will suddenly become a utopia. Oh, the joys of a sure thing. Yeah, right!

I remember summertime when I was a kid. School was out, days were long, and even if I had chores to do, it still seemed like most every day was a good day. I often got up early, even earlier than school days, because there was just so much good stuff to cram in the day. Those days always seemed to be special. Of course, when you become an adult, things get a little tougher. Good days don't seem to be quite as guaranteed. It almost seems like no matter how hard we try, some days just won't fit into the good day category.

If someone said to you, ***"Have a great cookie,"*** you would likely respond, ***"Thanks...where are they?"*** You do not simply have a great cookie...it must be made or, perhaps, purchased first. The same is true of a great day. Just telling someone to ***"have a great day"*** doesn't make it happen. Great days don't always magically appear like they did when I was a kid. Sometimes they have to be made from scratch. Oh, I know that once in a while, you end up in the right place at the right time and a great day falls in your lap, but for most of us, those times are quite rare.

Let me ask you, what might a great day look like for you? I mean, if you could design it from beginning to end? Might it be a day at the beach, a day with your kids, *or perhaps a day away from your kids?* Maybe a day engaged in your favorite hobby, or for some of us who enjoy work, it might even be a day catching up

on some projects that have fallen behind. I know this, everyone's perfect day will be uniquely their own. What's fun for you probably would not be fun for me. So, if I am going to have a great cookie, I may just have to make it. So, I must accept the fact that there is a vast difference between having a great day and making a great day. Most of the time, great days don't just show up. You don't just have them. Quite often, you have to make them.

It first starts with the right attitude. The Bible says, ***"This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"*** **Psalms 118:24.** You need to wake up with the intention that today is going to be a good day, because the Lord allowed this day to dawn in your life. You need to wake up assured that, even if unplanned things happen, even if things beat you down or throw you off course, you remain determined to maintain

the mindset that God is in control and that things will work out. This may entail looking deep to find the good, because it is not easy to find good on some days. Like David, you need to learn to encourage yourself in the Lord. ***“...but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God” I Samuel 30:6.***

I imagine what my great day might look like, and then I walk through it in my mind before the day actually begins. The best days come when I assess my own thoughts and state of mind before I check the news, weather, or my text messages. It may sound selfish, but I like to focus on what God’s plans may be for me before I crowd them out with my own selfish agenda. I like to imagine that my day will be awesome. I visualize it being filled with the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. With each new day, I also want to display generosity, productivity, creativity, and the energy that comes from loving what I do. Plus, I hope to learn something with each new day so I can share that knowledge with others. I also want to set a good example before others that they may behold my good works and glorify my Father in heaven ***(Matthew 5:16).***

It is in these things, long before the adventure actually starts, where I find my empowerment to make the absolute best of the day ahead of me. In my life, I know that certain ingredients always make a day better. You probably know the ingredients for your favorite recipe, but do you know the basic ingredients for a good day? A day

that is tailor-made just for you? For me, I’d wake up in the morning next to my wife. Unless I am really tired, I usually wake up with the sun. That means 5:30 or 6:00 in the summer, but much later in the winter. In winter, I need the alarm because the nature of our work requires us to start well before sunrise.

On my perfect day, I would wake up feeling good, with none of the aches and pains that often visit a man my age. The first thing I usually do is to thank God that I have lived to see another dawn. Then, assuming I didn’t have to report for work, after I got up, I would probably work out in the yard for a couple of hours. Around 10:00, I would come in, get cleaned up, and take my wife out to lunch. When we get back home, I might touch base with a couple of people the Lord may lay upon my heart. On my perfect day, I would probably enjoy working on some projects around the house. I would also spend a couple of hours in prayer and study. As the day draws to a close, Sherry and I might find a good movie to watch on television. Then I would close my perfect day

by softly drifting off into peaceful sleep, thanking God for the good day He had given me.

So, what does your good day look like? I am sure my day would be totally boring for most of you. But what events, activities, pleasures, and people would you include? Would it be extravagant or simple, full of spontaneity or intricately planned, lively or low-key?

It has been said that five needs must be met to achieve a state of happiness and contentment: the need to feel secure, to feel good about what we are doing, to be loved, to feel connected to others, and to have a strong sense of control. I guess I can see those needs reflected in my perfect day. In my perfect day, I wake up when my body feels ready. Your body will usually tell you what you need. I desire to spend time with someone I love and touch base with others I care about. It also makes me feel good to accomplish something. I was raised to feel guilty when I sit around and do nothing, so a sense of accomplishment really goes a long way. I also like to do something that





makes someone else feel special. Taking my wife out to lunch or helping her around the house helps me to do that. I also feel that I should better myself and hopefully learn something. Spending time in God's word brings that to pass.

So, what does your day look like? As I said, sometimes making a great day takes effort, but I have given you some hints that help me. Before the day begins, I often spend a few minutes imagining the events planned for the day ahead. Deciding ahead of time to have a good day sets your mind to notice the beauty and small victories that may come your way. Sometimes changing your day is as simple as changing your thoughts.

Here is the way I see it. When someone says, ***"I hope you have a great day,"*** it could just be good manners. They want to say something nice to you. Perhaps, it is another way of saying, ***"I care about you, and I hope your day goes well."*** Does it mean we hope they don't fall and break their neck, or that we hope their dog doesn't get fleas? What does it really mean?

For me, when I say it, it means two different things, depending on whether you are a Christian or not. When I tell a Christian to ***"have a good day,"*** It means I hope they prosper and are in good health. I hope they spend time with the Lord and take opportunities to share Jesus with others and make disciples. I hope that they have the opportunity to have spiritual conversations with others. I hope they hear God's voice and follow Him. I hope the joy of the Lord is their strength. I hope they are anxious for nothing. I hope they remain hopeful and are full of joy despite their circumstances. I hope they are not double-minded but stand firm in their faith. I hope they are protected and that in every battle, they overcome the wicked one. In my opinion, these are some of the things that make a good day for the believer.

However, I also tell non-believers to ***"have a good day."*** So, what do I mean when I say it to them? Well, obviously, I hope that they live long enough on this earth to find Jesus. The best day of my life was the day I accepted Christ. I hope they yield to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

And I hope they find the only truth that can set them free. I wish them no harm, but many of the blessings I can desire for Christians are not available to them, or at least they are not promised. The point is that telling someone to have a good day can mean different things depending on who we are saying it to.

For most of us a fresh new day awaits us tomorrow morning. So, while I acknowledge that some days seem more prone to be good than others, I remind you that on stormy days, God is good. On days we experience tragedies, God is still good. No matter what we face, God is good. If you believe that simple truth, perhaps tomorrow morning would be a good time to imagine having a good day even before you have it. As the Lord's mercies are renewed every morning, so should our anticipation of receiving those mercies be fresh with every new sunrise. Sure, setbacks may occur, or we may experience less-than-favorable situations, but that does not diminish the fact that God is good and that this is the day that He has made—or, in some cases, this is the day wherein He has already given us the raw materials to make great for ourselves.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for fifty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.

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What Is Your Next Assignment?

Everyone God created has a purpose to benefit someone else in some way. You have what someone desperately needs. You have gifts that others need. You may have the answer to what someone else is praying for. Likewise, our Lord has placed people in your life because they are what you need. As God's children, we are encouraged to seek opportunities to encourage, strengthen, and bless others. We are instructed to do good whenever possible. ***"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."*** Proverbs 3:27

You may ask, how do I decide what my next assignment is? Answer: you don't! Your next assignment in life is not your decision-- but

your discovery. God has already decided His plan for your life. You decide whether to obey that plan. Furthermore, God is the only one who knows if your assignment is really accomplishing anything of value and meaning. Many times, you may not even see the value. Since God is the One who gives the assignments, He is also the One Who assigns their value. Our Lord does not waste the impact of one person He has created. All His children have important assignments—all of them. God has an incredible purpose and role for each of us within the body of Christ! Are you ready to receive God's next assignment?

Many of our Faith Partners have graciously accepted their assignments to support Christian radio for years. From time to time, you may have faced moments of intense struggle as you stepped into your assignment. The path was not always easy or comfortable. Perhaps, regarding your assignment, you were called to let go of old ways of thinking, familiar

environments, or even relationships that no longer aligned with your calling. But as you surrendered to God's will and embraced your divine assignment, you opened yourself to a life of profound impact and fulfillment. Thousands have been blessed, prayers have been answered, and your own life has been enriched.

May we all, like Jesus, have the courage to say, ***"I must be about my Father's business,"*** and the strength to see it through to completion. In doing so, we not only fulfill our purpose, but also bring glory to the One Who called us in the first place. So, are you ready for your next assignment?



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A Purpose for Christ

We are Christians with a purpose. We are here to bring glory and honor to our Heavenly Father. We are here to fulfill the Great Commission and share His Truth with those around us. We are here to be a reflection of Him to a world in need.

The great thing is, there are so many ways we can show His Light today. There are coworkers we can be an encouragement and witness to. There are churches and other ministries in need of laborers and prayer warriors. There are friends and family in need of love and support. Opportunities are abundant if we just make a little effort to pay attention. Those opportunities will become clearer when we take the time to ask our Lord to guide us.

Right now, we'd like to share another opportunity with you. Our **Fall Share-A-Thon** is scheduled to begin on

October 5th. Our **Pre-Share-A-Thon** mailers will be headed your way soon. Won't you please prayerfully consider sending in a financial gift to help this ministry continue to thrive? We are so very thankful for your continued support!



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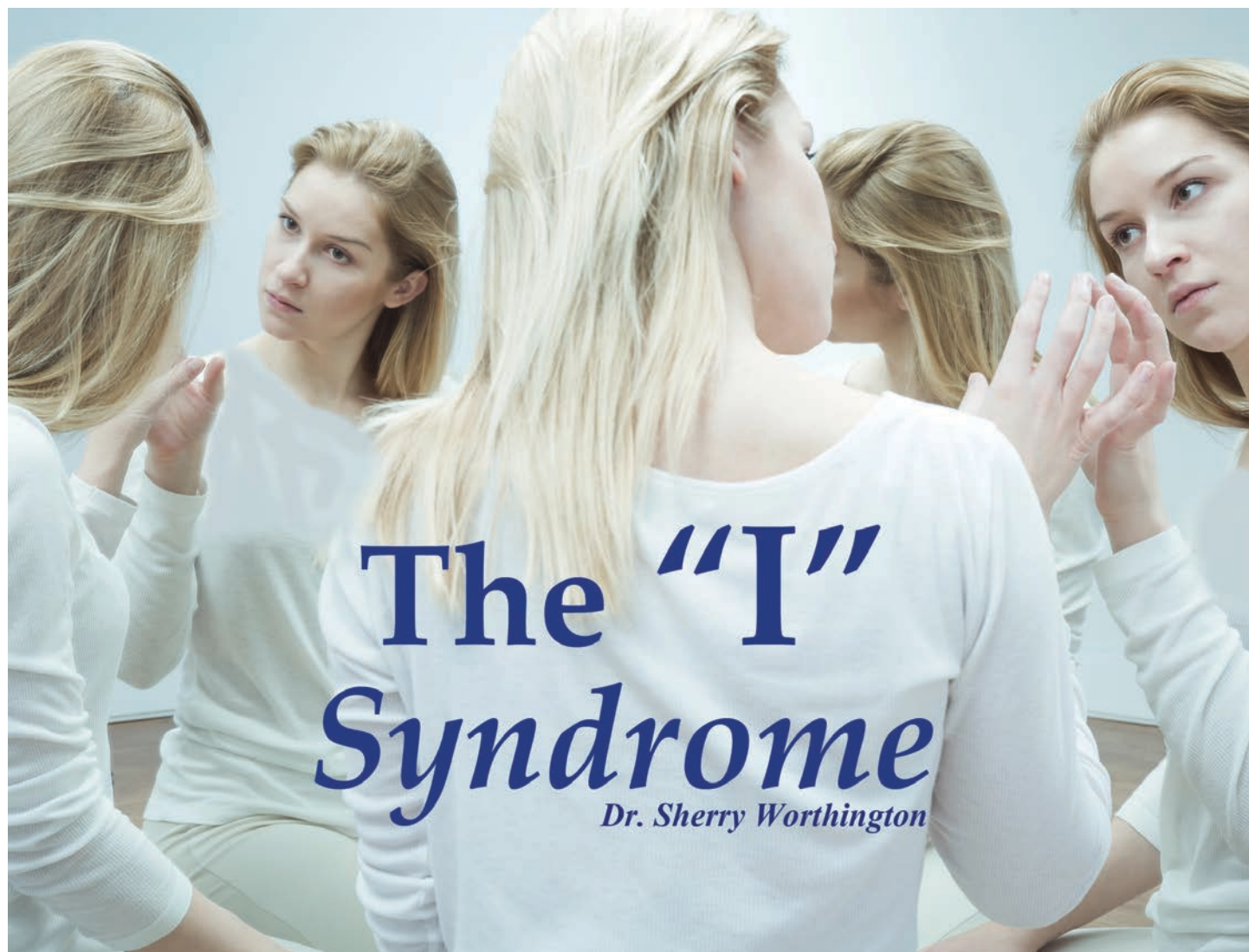


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It is always interesting to look at old pictures. I am amazed at how much my grandchildren have grown in just one year. A couple of them are over 6 feet now and are still growing. I get a kink in my neck when I am talking to them. When I look back at their baby pictures, it seems like it was just yesterday that they were walking around in diapers with pacifiers in their mouths. Life sure has changed.

When we are babies, we only have one thing on our minds. We are in this world for one purpose only. Our needs and wants must be met. We don't care if our parents need to sleep or if we make a mess for them to clean up. As long as we are satisfied, who cares about anyone

else? Unfortunately, many of us never grow out of that stage. We hide it better, but it is often all about us. Many people feel their needs and wants must be met, no matter what it costs others. We never grow up. If we could see on the outside what people are like on the inside, there would be many older children and adults walking around with pacifiers and needing their diapers changed. I do believe that all of us need to grow up in one way or another. I hope I have at least reached the training-wheel stage on my bicycle. Mastering dying to self is a battle I often face. Some days I do, and some days I don't.

We often have devotions at school on dying to self. One of the

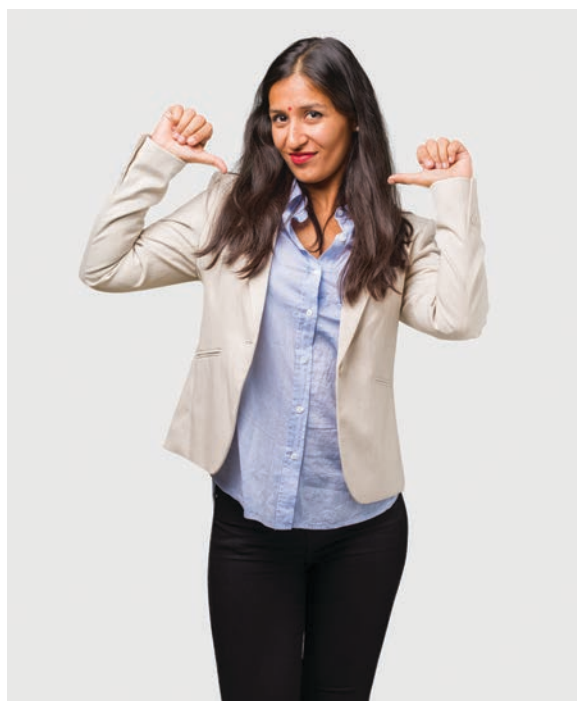
assignments I give to my students is to keep a count of every time they use the word "I". Most of them give up pretty quickly. One student tried to stick with it, but after he counted over 50, he stopped. Although there are times we need to use the word "I", most of the time we use it when we are talking about ourselves. I wanted to teach my students that to care about people, we need to learn about them. We need to be more concerned about others than ourselves.

I would guess that ninety percent of problems are the result of "I" being on the throne. I know it is in the school setting. We realize that drama, as well as other problems, is caused by people wanting their

way in a situation. Many times, as a teacher, I investigate a problem, and it all boils down to someone or several “*someones*” wanting their way. For the very young children, it may be as simple as wanting to go first. As they get older, it is the same problem in disguise. Our goal is to help the students grow in this area alongside their academics. If a child graduates high school, still always wants to be first, and doesn’t care about others, the adults in their lives have failed him. He will not make a good husband, father, or employee. We never arrive, but by graduation, young people should be well on their way to defeating the “*I*” syndrome.

However, putting ourselves first doesn’t stop when we get out of school. I would venture to say that the “*I*” syndrome follows us until we die. It is a constant battle. The sad thing is we seem to get upset over such petty things. Sometimes problems need to be dealt with and worked out. But most of the time, we need to let things go. Knowing when to choose is a sign of maturity. Will dealing with this problem help the individual grow? Will it help the kingdom? Is it a battle worth fighting? When we take the “*I*” out of the picture, we can see more clearly. In **1 Corinthians 15:31b**, Paul states, *“I die daily.”* If Paul has to die daily, I most certainly need to. I hate to admit that I find myself having to die many times a day. I can’t seem to give up the throne to God completely. I want to give Him 100 percent, but quite often I shove Him aside.

Sometimes the things we refuse to give up are not always bad; they are just not in the right priority. **Matthew 10:37** states, *“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”* I have observed and heard of many situations in which parents come to blows over their children. Don’t get me wrong, if someone was walking in my door to hurt my child, I



would do everything I could to stop them. However, we put our spouses, parents, and our children in the wrong priority when we put them above the Lord. Sometimes we have to say “*no*” because the request interferes with God’s plan for us, or we feel it is not what God would want our children to do. It doesn’t make us popular when we say no, but God has to come first.

God coming first doesn’t mean what you do for Him, but what you do with Him. To get to know God, we must spend time with Him. I have

heard two messages on this topic recently, and they both ministered to my soul. To learn His will, we must read His Word and know what He commands us to do. It is our instruction manual. To know Him, we must spend time in prayer. However, to really know Him, we must become conscious that He is with us at all times. We don’t even have to be talking to Him. We just feel His presence. Sometimes my husband and I will be driving somewhere and won’t say a word, but we delight in being together. Isn’t it time we just delight in being with God?

If we delight in being with God, and we are conscious of the fact that He lives within us, it will become easier to die to self. The “*I*” syndrome will disappear. We won’t get upset over the petty. We will ask Him how to handle problems, because they will come. Jesus had many difficulties. Even though He was perfect, many people hated Him. He was crucified because He loved us. Isn’t it time we crucify the “*I*” in our lives and “*go with Him all the way?*”

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20



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



Just a few weeks ago, while most of us were going about our normal daily activities, the odometer on the United States' national debt quietly rolled past a number no honest mind can comprehend: \$40 trillion. That's our national debt. Forty trillion dollars. And it arrived months earlier than the forecasters said it would, which tells you something about the speed we're traveling. Spoiler Alert: We're going too fast!

I'd like to try for a moment to make that number mean something, because it's so large it's likely to slip right past you. Let's say you sat down and wanted to count to 40 trillion. You count one number every second with no sleep and no breaks. Did you know it would take you nearly 1.3 million years to get there? So, for the sake of argument, let's speed you up. Let's say you were allowed to count a full million every single second. Tick - a million. Tick - two million. At that blistering, impossible pace, it would still take you a year and three months before you reached 40 trillion. Yep, that would mean counting by a million every second for 40 million seconds (or 463 days) nonstop.

That is our debt. And regrettably, there is no end in sight because the elected politicians running this show have no serious intention of turning it around. I have come to the point where I believe they've already done the math the rest of us are afraid to do. I believe they looked at the enormous size of this thing and quietly concluded that this Titanic will not turn. And having concluded that, they've decided they might as well keep dancing on the deck until she goes down, grabbing every dollar they can while the getting is still good.

Here is the part Scripture will not let us look away from.

Proverbs 22:7 plainly says, ***"The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."***

Read that slowly. God did not call the borrower a "partner." He did not call him a "customer." He called him a servant! And we, a nation founded by passionate men who crossed an ocean to escape servitude, have voluntarily marched our 335 million "free citizens" back into it. At the same time, we have enslaved our children, and our children's children, to foreign lenders - many of whom do not wish us well. **Proverbs 13:22** says, ***"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children..."*** Instead, we are leaving them a bill they never voted for, a chain they never forged, and a heavy weight they cannot get off their backs. That's the stewardship crime. But there's a bigger story here we also need to pay attention to.

Why isn't America in Bible prophecy?

For years, thoughtful believers in America have asked a question that troubles them a little: Why isn't America mentioned in Bible prophecy? We're the wealthiest, most powerful nation the world has ever seen. How do we simply not appear in the final chapter at all? I'd gently suggest we've been asking this backwards. The question isn't why America is absent. The question is what happens to a superpower that removes itself from the equation at a rate of trillions of dollars? I believe we are watching the answer accumulate right in front of our eyes.

Turn to **Revelation** chapter **6**. When the Lamb opens the third seal, John sees a black horse and its rider carries a pair of balances (scales) in his hand. And a voice cries out: *“A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny...”* (**Revelation 6:5-6**)

That is a picture of a day’s wages for a day’s bread. An economy where a man works from sunup to sundown and takes home just enough grain to survive the night. It is the image of money that has collapsed, of scarcity measured out by the ounce, of a world where the scale rules the table and not the storehouse.

Now let’s look at our ledger again. Forty trillion in debt. And get this: Our interest payments on that debt this past year outran what we spend on OUR ENTIRE MILITARY! Friends, I hate to say this, but we have a government printing and borrowing against a future it has no plan to pay for. And ours is not the only one. Nearly every government on earth is losing the same fight against this same evil, gluttonous appetite. This is not an American problem the Americans will solve. This is a global reckoning the whole world is racing toward together. The black horse is being saddled. You can hear him neigh off in the distance.

So where does that leave those of us who see all this coming?

Not panicked. Never panicked. If you belong to Christ, the black horse is not your master, and the collapsing scale is not your storehouse. In fact, the opening of this 3rd seal, as mentioned above, occurs during the Tribulation Period, a time that graciously,

we will not see. While the world is clutching its crumbling currency, our King is preparing to miraculously whisk His bride away from the Earth.

But hear me: We can’t allow our theology to turn us into escapist. The watchman who sees the enemy on the horizon and says nothing, has the blood of the city on his hands. We are watching a sign of the age unfold in real time, in real numbers, on a real Treasury ledger. This is one of the birth pangs mentioned by Christ before the time of the end. That means now more than ever we must be about the Father’s business, keeping our lives above reproach to this world and reaching out to them in more ways than we ever have. If we can visibly see all this coming down the road, we don’t have much time.

And so, I’ll leave you where a watchman ought to - with your lamp trimmed and your eyes up. The Titanic will not turn. Our leaders know it, even as they dance. But we are not passengers clinging to a doomed deck. We are children of the King, waiting for a rescue that was promised before the foundation of the world. In the meantime, the fields are white and ready to harvest.

Let them count their trillions. We’ll be counting the days.



Rev. Jason Sherman serves as an Administrative Assistant at Christian Bible College and Assistant Pastor at Pathway Baptist Church. He and his family reside in Snow Hill, N.C.

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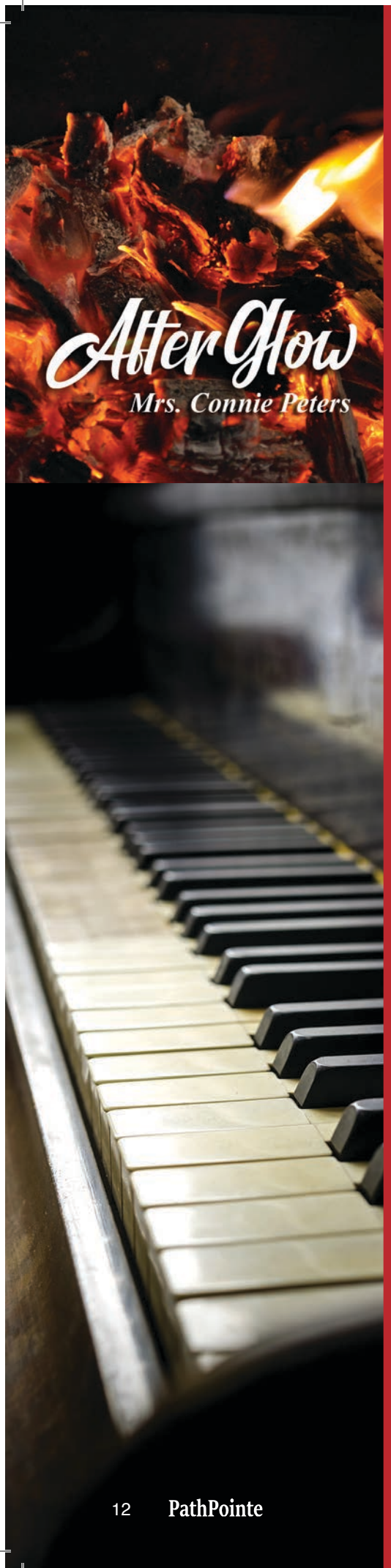
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Confessions of a Musician

As the only practicing pianist at my church, I have experienced a wide variety of successes and shortcomings . With limited formal instruction and years of experience, my church family is grateful for some musical accompaniment and they tolerate and overlook my mistakes. Playing the piano has become a major form of worship for me. Occasionally, I especially sense God's smile as I play a song for Him. At other times, I find my mind wandering as I play.

If I am comfortable with the notes, I like to sing along. If I don't know the song, I focus on looking at the words. Being distracted by the words, sometimes I lose my place in the music. Then as I fumble through the notes, I frantically search for my place and lose the meaning of the song. At other times when I am not familiar with the words, I find myself playing the notes mechanically and without feeling.

Recently, I was singing "I Love to Tell the Story" with great enthusiasm until I listened to the words and heard the words of God in my heart, "*Do you really?*" Ouch!! If I really loved to tell the story, I would be actively looking daily for opportunities to announce that beloved, life-changing story to those I meet. The fact is that I was into the tune, singing the words, without really comprehending what I was singing. How often do we sing songs of consecration when we are holding back some area of our lives or songs of surrender when we are clinging to what the Holy Spirit tells us to lay aside? We sing songs of praise when we don't recognize His blessings in our lives, and we sing songs of blessings without heartfelt gratitude.

The major purpose of the music in the church service is to center our hearts and minds on God and to prepare ourselves for a message that is specially given to us from God Himself. If we are distracted or mechanical during the music time, we have missed part of what God wants us to hear. As a musician, my greatest desire is to enhance the message through music. Are you listening to what God has for you in the church music, or are you distracted or inattentive to the words?

Ponder that.



Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. Now retired, she formerly served as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.

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