

GRAPEVINE



BIBLE TEACHING RESOURCES
by DON ANDERSON MINISTRIES

WINTER 2012

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For the LORD your God has blessed you in everything you have done. He has watched over you every step through this great wilderness. During these forty years, the LORD your God has been with you, and you have lacked nothing.

—Deuteronomy 2:7 NLT



God Is a Giving God: Forty Years of Faithfulness

"Praise the Lord; praise God our savior! For each day he carries us in his arms" (Ps. 68:19 NLT).

During our years at The Firs Conference Center in Bellingham, Washington, we operated on this principle: For the Lord's work, done the Lord's way, the Lord will provide. We prayerfully implemented that principle in December of 1972 when Bible Teaching Resources was born. Forty years later we can say: Our God is Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide.

The verse I have chosen for our 40th anniversary is 1 Corinthians 15:57: "But to God [give] thanks, He who is continually giving to us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (DAV).

According to R.C.H. Lenski, "The emphasis is on 'God,' who is, therefore, placed first and is also in contrast to the forces of sin and death."¹

Robertson and Plummer comment on the use of the present participle in this verse: "'Who is giving us the victory': it is a process which is continually going on, as Christians appropriate what has been won for them by Christ, and in His strength conquer sin."² Lenski calls the action God's "continuous giving by a grand act of grace," a "victory" that "is bestowed upon us now, hour by hour," and that is obtained from "God in ever-increasing measure."³

Hebrews 7:25: "For He is always living to intercede on their behalf" (Phillips).

God has blessed and is blessing and will be blessing us with His bounty throughout eternity. I felt like singing the "Twelve Days of Christmas" here, outlining what my true love gave to me. But when we think of all God has done, we find the gifts to be innumerable. They are gifts which keep on giving, too. Won't you join me as we celebrate 40 years of serving a

giving God?

1. He gave His Son. John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, in order that everyone who is believing in Him may not perish, but may be having life eternal" (DAV).

2. He gives eternal life. John 10:28: "And I am giving eternal life to them..." (DAV). Ephesians 2:8-9: "For it is by grace that you have been saved through faith; and this [salvation] is not of yourselves—it is the gift of God; not because of works, in order that no one might boast" (DAV).

3. With the gift of Jesus come the stocking stuffers of peace, access, and hope. Romans 5:1-3: "Therefore, having been made right by faith, we are having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction (entree) by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we are rejoicing (exulting, glorying) in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also are rejoicing (exulting, glorying) in our tribulations, knowing that this tribulation is producing endurance" (DAV).

4. He provides everything we need. "Seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by means of His own glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3 DAV). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. 1:3 DAV).

5. He is a living Savior who gives an inheritance. "Blessed be the God and Father

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From the Editor

As 2012 approaches, we at Bible Teaching Resources are preparing to celebrate our Savior's birth, and we are also gearing up for a birthday of our own: our 40th anniversary. Great is God's faithfulness! We thank all of you—whether you've been on the journey with us these four decades or have recently come along for the ride. We hope you will join us for one or more of three planned birthday events this year. Details and registration forms are inside for the Texas couples conference, Alaska cruise, and Colorado family camp. Also inside this issue, Dr. Dick Knarr, one of the ministry's founders, shares Christmas greetings from the BTR board, offering both reminiscences of days gone by and a glimpse of what is to come. We know you will enjoy our profile of Curtis Tucker, author of *Majestic Destiny*, who chatted with us recently. Thanks also to *Decision* magazine for allowing us to reprint the feature on Louis Zamperini's recent visit with Billy Graham, and to Granbury, Texas, high schooler Morgan Northcutt for letting us include her award winning cowboy poem in this issue. We hope to see you at a Bible class, conference, camp, or cruise this year...but regardless, may this Christmas and New Year be full of blessings for you and yours. Thank you for your friendship and support.

—Jane Rodgers



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Now There Are Three

Greetings from the Bible Teaching Resources Board

Pearl and I, Dick and Ethel Knarr, John and Loretta Miller, Bill and Dorothy Lawrence...there were four couples involved with BTR from the beginning. Then Bill chose to go home with the Lord to get things ready for the rest of us. His sweet wife, Dorothy, is still involved as she is able. Dr. Dick Knarr's letter from the board is a classic. We have shared so much and he has always been there. He never gave up on us and that's why we are here today at the 40 year mark.

Hello, my name is Dick Knarr. I have lived and worked in Tyler, Texas, since 1966. My wife, Ethel, and I have always been college football fans and in 1967 we heard that a new Christian camp named Pine Cove was starting near Tyler, and that the speaker one night was going to be Don Anderson. I was impressed because the famous Texas Tech running back, Don Anderson, had just signed a pro contract for \$660,000 and here he was coming to Pine Cove. Wow! I was not going to miss that opportunity. You know the rest of the story – rather than a football player, I only got to meet some guy from Oregon, the guy I've called "Coach" all these years, our own beloved Don Anderson. When we first met, I quickly recognized the cause of his success: Pearl. These 40+ years have confirmed that fact.

We have camped a few nights together, canoed a few rivers together, survived high winds and driving rain together. Once we found that a tornado had passed us by the night before and left us all safe. For a few days on a remote river we survived on honey buns and orange Fantas when we did not plan our grubstake well. After a night in a soaked tent and wet sleeping bag I shall never forget Coach's words: "You never really know a man until you've made a wet camp together." We've sung songs together, watched the dying embers of a campfire together. We've looked up and wondered at the starry sky together, and marveled at God's great universe. And we've pondered how could God love us enough to

sacrifice His only Son for people like us.

For a few years we officed together in Tyler. Coach named it the "Body and Soul Clinic." We are both early risers, and over little things, such as early morning coffee, Coach would frequently quote "Great is Thy faithfulness." For those who love to sleep in, he also pointed out that nowhere in the Bible does it tell you to sleep late. Over the years, he has supplied 90% of the books I have read. I, like many of you, have been enriched by Coach.

And now he is reaching out to all people to tell them Good News. The Internet has opened the door to the world. I have always said Coach is like one of the old circuit riding preachers, but without a mule. He drove a Chevy Suburban instead. But now with video conferencing and the Internet he can travel less and reach more. After many years of watching him handwrite his sermons, study guides, and books, I am amazed at his technological transformation.

Our founding CEO, the late great Bill Lawrence, would be proud to know that the organization he helped start is turning 40. Make your plans to participate in one or more of our three celebrations.

My wish for you is found on the old Irish verse –

May the road rise up to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
May the rain fall gently on your fields
And until we meet again
May the Lord hold you in the palm of His hand

Merry Christmas and on behalf of BTR, thank you for your continued friendship and support,

Dick Knarr



While in North Carolina, Louis Zamperini visited with Billy Graham at Mr. Graham's home. They reminisced about life since the 1949 Los Angeles Crusade, at which Zamperini gave his heart to Christ.



World War II Hero Comes to Billy Graham Library

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE stood in line June 10 to meet Louis Zamperini, an Olympian and World War II hero who is the subject of the best-selling book *"Unbroken,"* by Laura Hillenbrand.

Zamperini's story has captivated people for decades, and Hillenbrand's book has rekindled public interest in this man who competed in the 1936 Olympics, served as a bombardier in the U.S. Air Corps, survived on a life raft for 47 days after his plane crashed in the Pacific, and endured more than two years of torture as a prisoner of war.

After the war ended, Americans labeled him a war hero, but his life was falling apart until he attended Billy Graham's 1949 Crusade in Los Angeles. Zamperini committed his life to Jesus Christ, and he found a new purpose in serving God by working with boys from troubled homes.

Zamperini was at the Billy Graham Library to sign copies of *"Unbroken."* Guests mentioned various reasons for coming; Melissa Pope of Charlotte said that her own father served in the Pacific Theater during World War II, and she wanted to show her gratitude to those who sacrificed their lives there. Others were captivated by Zamperini's indomitable spirit as he survived his war ordeal. Nick Di Virgilio, of Indian Trail, N.C., spoke of Zamperini's transformation after receiving Christ.

"It's just an amazing story," Di Virgilio said. "[The power of God] certainly is there; we just have to open our hearts to it."

*This article was taken from Decision magazine, September, 2011;
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Majestic Destiny

by Jane Rodgers

Catching Up with Curtis Tucker

Check out the city website of Redmond, Oregon, and you'll find the crime statistics for the week ending November 2, 2011. There were two assaults in Redmond that week...no homicides, robberies, sexual offenses, or weapons violations. Property crimes were mostly limited to car prowling with a few burglaries thrown in. Remember, that was Halloween week...when mischief often escalates. All in all it was a typically quiet week in Redmond, a Central Oregon town of about 28,000 located on the east side of the Cascades in the heart of the state.

Lewis and Clark, who explored the region following the Louisiana Purchase, recorded the area's bounties. As the 19th century progressed, Americans had little doubt that what John L. Sullivan called our "yearly multiplying millions" would "overspread" and fill the continent. This was America's Manifest Destiny...a calling we've pretty much fulfilled. Curtis Tucker, pastor of Redmond Community Church, his wife, Angie, and their two boys, Carson and Cooper, love living amidst the promised land of the Pacific Northwest. But for Curtis, the issue is not Manifest Destiny, but *Majestic Destiny*, the title of his 2011 book.

Manifest Destiny referred to a continent and national identity.

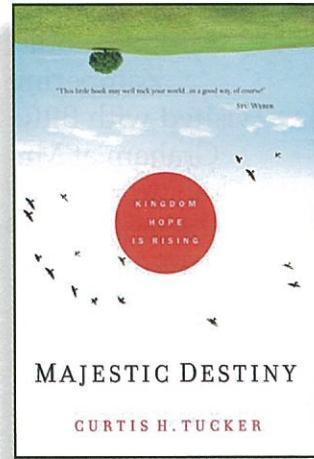
Majestic Destiny refers to another destination: the place of the Christian in the coming kingdom of Christ. Keeping our truly majestic destiny in view as believers frees us to live the Christian life without guilt and with Christ's kingdom fully in view.

Tucker begins *Majestic Destiny* with the simple claim that the world is filled with those who want a "more just king" and a "better kingdom" (12). Humankind and the earth are imperfect and no amount of secular striving will change that. "Is the church the answer to the mess of this world?" Tucker asks (15). He addresses the question with a resounding no, chronicling the various movements,

trends, and fads of recent church history as indicative of a "vicious cycle of searching and striving for something to attain, some goal to arrive at, some new gimmick to get us there" (15). Small groups, cell groups, home churches, seeker-driven churches, seeker-sensitive churches, "purpose-driven" churches, the emerging church, liberation theology...such trends and fads are "subtle attempts to realize the kingdom through our own effort" (17). There is, to echo Solomon, nothing new under the sun.

Yet the church does have a purpose, Tucker claims. It is not to save the planet, but to "remind people that a Savior died for them and promised to return" (17). "Our King is coming.... Nothing else will truly satisfy" (18). The big idea of *Majestic Destiny* is the big idea of scripture, Tucker argues, and that is the "kingdom plan of the Messiah" (18). The coming kingdom will overwhelm our feeble efforts at a human version. It will be the "triumphant coming of Jesus Christ to set up His kingdom here upon this earth" (19). And it will be truly perfect, blowing our utopian aspirations out of the water.

Tucker's theology is clear. Believing in Jesus as Savior makes us children of God. We are saved by grace. But God's plan is a "kingdom plan" (28) which He intends for the "culmination of history" on earth (29). Writes Tucker, "Our participation in the kingdom is totally dependent upon how we live for the glory of our heavenly Father" (29). Because we are saved, we will enter the kingdom. Our sufficiency is in Christ alone. The purpose we as Christians must share is to live for the kingdom...to be "kingdom minded" as was Christ...and to live for His glory (40). With this premise in mind, Tucker interprets scripture from what he calls a "mile-high perspective" (49). God's glory is revealed



in creation, in history, in scripture. We are freed from performance to embrace a destiny that is not only guaranteed, but glorious—as rulers in that kingdom. This liberating principle enlivens the Christian life and opens scripture. Jesus' parables can be interpreted for what they really are—explanations of kingdom life rather than accounts of human shortcomings. No wonder the likes of Earl Radmacher, Stu Weber, Bruce Wilkinson, Joseph Dillon, and Don Anderson have endorsed Curtis Tucker's book. Read it...you'll like it and you'll be blessed and perhaps even freed from guilt and uncertainty about your efforts to please God. But beware, the book will make you think and may cause you to question this or that latest church trend or program.

We caught up with Curtis Tucker over the phone recently, and he graciously responded to our questions about his book, family, Texas roots, and life as a pastor of a church in Central Oregon.

Q: How did you come to write *Majestic Destiny*?

Curtis: I actually did not know for sure that I would ever write a book. I wanted to say something that hadn't been said or I wanted to say it in a way it had not been said before.

Q: Were you responding to questions people had about assurance of salvation?

Curtis: Yes. That issue has come up repeatedly in my nearly 20 years of ministry in the church. The book is based on sermons and teachings I've presented over the years. People would come up and say things like "I've been in the church for 20, 30, 40 years and I've never heard this." This response became almost normal. The effect of this message on people who have grown up in churches bound in legalism and fear, who never had assurance, has been amazing. It has changed people's lives. Folks asked me, "Please write this down so we can hand it out to others." God was at work. He brought someone into our congregation who had a background in publishing. People badgered me to write the book and I finally did. It took me from

November till April; then David Van Diest of Last Chapter, a small publishing house, printed it. David is a literary agent. We are still in conversation with a few of the big trade publishers, too.

Q: How has the response been?

Curtis: We have a website with contact information. People send emails describing how the book has impacted them. We've been very fortunate with endorsements and reviews from around the country. The response has been favorable.

Q: You have a M.Div. from Western Seminary. Was this book a product of your masters thesis?

Curtis: No (chuckling)...the subject of the major paper for my M.Div. was James 2:14-26. I'm a glutton for punishment.

Q: Faith without works is dead? How does that mesh with *Majestic Destiny*?

Curtis: I don't think there is any contradiction.



Understanding the kingdom provides a better understanding of James than most people have. James is discussing walking by faith for the production of good works, which vindicates us and our walk of faith before men. As Peter says, "To our faith, we must add excellence." This means that my faith must be put into action or it is not living faith, despite the fact that it is real. We all need to live by faith, and an active walk of faith does good!

Q: Have you studied the kingdom for many years?

Curtis: The kingdom has been second to none in my interest for the past 20 plus years. I have read as many books as possible on the subject and have done significant study since 1994. I remember talking with one man who was raised with a charismatic background. He was never secure in his salvation. After reading this book, he is so on fire with understanding God's grace and believing he has something to live for that he is a changed man.

Q: When did you become a Christian? Tell us about your background and family.

Curtis: When I was 19, I came to Dallas and interviewed for a job in Irving. The man conducting the interview, Charlie Blackwell, a member at that time of First Baptist Euless, shared the gospel with me during the meeting. I initially rejected the gospel, but

I got the job. Charlie, months later, recommended I read the gospel of John, and I did. Through a series of events, I came to know the Lord. I became active in Fellowship Bible Church of Dallas while I stayed in business in management consulting, selling large consulting deals to Fortune 500 companies. Before that I was a corporate headhunter. After a few years, I felt it was time to go into full-time ministry. I was reluctant to leave a good job, had been on a good career path, but my joy came from serving and studying, and it became evident that I needed to pursue seminary education. I started by taking classes at Dallas Theological Seminary while I served at Northwest Bible Church in Dallas. Western Seminary, with its [then] pastoral emphasis offered what I was looking for, so I moved to Portland, Oregon. I like to say I moved there to meet my wife, a native Oregonian. We've been blessed with two boys, Cooper, 11, and Carson, 13.

After I finished seminary, we moved back to Texas briefly while I worked with a church in North Dallas. Angie loved Texas. Then we moved back to Central Oregon where I worked for Multnomah publishers for six months before starting a search for a church position. We came to Redmond Community Church about 12 years ago; I was actually the interim pastor. The church had dwindled to next to nothing, but now we have 450-500 members. Redmond is a small town. I guess you'd say we are the mega church here! We are just north of Bend, Oregon, a community

of about 70,000. Oregon is incredibly low in church attendance. East of the Cascades, people tend to be more conservative, but Oregon and Washington are overall very liberal, with strange ideologies regarding religion or spirituality.

Q: Where do you see Redmond Community Church going in the next few years?

Curtis: The longer I serve in the capacity of pastor, the more I see that promoting growth for its own sake is not my purpose. I am called to be healthy, preach the word, and pray. As God raises up people, we will plant churches or send people, and miraculous things have happened. The size of a church does not determine its value to the ministry.

We are too easily distracted trying to create a kingdom of our own design...trying to accumulate the most goods and wealth—even in the church.

Q: Were you raised in a Christian home? And are you a native Texan?

Curtis: No, I grew up in southern California. My parents divorced and I moved with my dad to Kerrville, Texas, where I graduated from high school. I returned to California briefly following high school graduation, but that was not a good idea. I went to Dallas with a friend from Kerrville.

I was not raised in a churched home. My grandmother was employed in accounting at a Presbyterian church in California; the church is actually more biblically based today. Then it was more of a social church which I remember attending with my grandparents occasionally. My family went to services at Easter and Christmas. I remember Winchell's doughnuts and kids' songs...not a solid foundation! I had no knowledge of Christ till I moved to Kerrville and heard the gospel in high school. It was not God's timing yet. I was a rebel in high school. My best friend, Craig McGinnis, and I moved to Dallas and that's when I met Charlie Blackwell. Craig's parents, Glen and Crystal, owned the Christian bookstore in Kerrville. They had been praying for a Christian friend for Craig for years. I don't think I was what they had in mind! Glen and Crystal were steady eddies in our lives while Craig and I were running wild. They were always positive and encouraging, especially once we got on track with the Lord. Craig is still a good friend today; he lives in Flower Mound. I performed Craig's wedding to his wife, Betsy.

Today my mom lives in Kansas City with my sister. My mom came to know the Lord in Dallas, as did my sister, who is married to a wonderful man who is very active with ministries like Josh McDowell's work. They attend a large church. Dad has come to know the Lord, too. He still lives near Kerrville.

My wife, Angie, is from Oregon. Her father is in the tree farming business; he was a pastor's kid. Angie's grandfather was a minister.

Q: What do you hope people will take away from *Majestic Destiny*?

Curtis: The opening chapters explain that we are made to rule in God's kingdom, that God created us for a majestic, wonderful purpose. Salvation is God's gracious and loving way for us to get back on track with His kingdom program. We are too easily distracted trying to create a kingdom of our own design...trying to accumulate the most goods and wealth—even in the church. We look to create that which will fall short. Our purpose in creation and salvation is for God's glory and this will be consummated in time and space in the kingdom. Once we understand this, we get the overriding theme of salvation by grace alone through Christ alone. The biggest thing this book accomplishes, I hope, will be to liberate people from fear, shame, guilt...and bring peace, security, even zeal and enthusiasm that life on earth is filled with the hope of glory.

Curtis Tucker's biography on the back of *Majestic Destiny* calls him a "normal guy," and in many ways he is just that—a small town pastor, husband, and dad who is humble, good humored, and delightful to interview. Normal though Curtis may be, God has given him some refreshing and remarkable insights into scripture and has gifted him with the ability to communicate these truths clearly. Get ready. The kingdom is coming...on earth as it is in heaven!

Contact Curtis Tucker at curtis@redmondcc.org. To order *Majestic Destiny*, visit the website www.majesticdestinybook.com. To order quantities in bulk, call 541.280.3152.

The Last Cowboy

The cowboy knelt in silence,
Wiped a tear away.
His sweat stained hat in hand,
The cowboy began to pray.

The rustic cross that stood before him,
Cast a shadow across his face.
His horse stood loyally behind him,
Not moving from its place.

Would this day be his very last,
Of barbed wire fences and herdin' cattle?
Would not the days begin and end,
Sittin' proudly up in the saddle?

Baptized in a trough of water,
His whole life had been the cowboy way.
Collections put in boots of leather,
These memories wouldn't die today.

No, it's not him who's dying,
Or those he holds so dear.
But the REAL cowboy is fading
For that is what he fears.

Slowly, as he began to stand,
And lift his head from prayer,
The cowboy whispered once again,
Not today: For I still care.



Morgan Northcutt wrote THE LAST COWBOY as a 12 year old in the fall of 2008. She entered the poem in the Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering Poetry Contest where she received the first place award. Morgan combined her love of western heritage with her strong Christian values to produce the images brought to life in her poem. Morgan is currently a sophomore at Granbury High School in Granbury, Texas, where she is an honor student and a member of the varsity basketball and track teams. Poem used by permission. All rights reserved.



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Clipboard

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of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and unfading, which has been reserved in heaven for you, you who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you are rejoicing, though now for a little while, if it must be (if there is need for it), you have been distressed in the midst of various kinds of testings" (1 Pet. 1:3-6 DAV). "The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the wealth of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18 DAV).

6. He provides grace and strength. "And He has said to me, 'My grace is adequate for you, for power is finding its consummation (reaching perfection) in the presence of weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Cor. 12:9 DAV). "I am having strength for all things in the One who is making me strong" (Phil. 4:13 DAV). "That He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16 DAV).

7. He gives wisdom. "And if any of you is deficient in wisdom, let him keep on asking from God, who is giving to all generously (without reserve) and who does not reproach, and it shall be given him" (Jam. 1:5 DAV). "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it'" (Isa. 30:21 NIV). "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Prov. 3:5-6 NIV). "Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway" (Prov. 8:34 NIV).

8. He gives the victory. "Because everyone that has been born of God is conquering the world; and this is the victory which conquered the world—our faith. And who is the one who is conquering the world, except the one who is believing that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5 DAV). "But thanks be to God, who is always leading us in His triumph in Christ, and

is making known through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place" (2 Cor. 2:14 DAV). "No, in all these things we win an overwhelming victory through him who has proved his love for us" (Rom. 8:37 Phillips).

9. He gives the Spirit. "And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Helper, in order that He may be with you forever; ... But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, that One will teach you all things, and recall to your mind all that I said to you" (John 14:16, 26 DAV).

10. He gives peace. "Peace I am leaving with you; my peace I am giving to you; not as the world gives, am I giving to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" (Jn. 14:27 DAV). "The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever" (Isa. 32:17 NIV). "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace" (Num. 6:24-26 NIV).

11. He gives spiritual gifts. "But to each one is being given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7 DAV).

12. He gives weapons for warfare. "Put on the whole armor of God, to the end that you may be able to hold your ground against the stratagems of the devil. Because we are not wrestling against blood and flesh, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. On this account, take the whole armor of God in order that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and after proving victorious over everything, to stand your ground. Stand therefore, after you have girded your waists with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having sandaled your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace. In addition to all these, taking the shield of faith, by means of which you can put out all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:11-17 DAV).

13. He gives fruit from our relationship. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. Against such things as these there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23 DAV).

RECIPE CORNER

Donna's Delights

Donna Anderson Skorheim offers a delicious treat for our readers.

CHOCOLATE LAYER DELIGHT

Crust:

2 c. flour
2 sticks margarine (softened)
2 c. pecans, chopped

Using a pastry cutter, cut butter and flour together until crumbly. Stir in pecans. Press mixture into 9X13 pan. Bake at 350 for 20-25 minutes. Cool.

Layer 1:

8 oz. cream cheese (softened)
1 cup sugar
1/2 largest size Cool Whip

Cream together sugar and cream cheese. Whip in Cool Whip. Layer this mixture over the cooled crust.

Layer 2

1 large box instant chocolate pudding.

Make pudding per directions on package and spread this over the cream cheese layer.

Layer 3:

Spread the other half of the Cool Whip over the pudding layer.

HERO HUMOR

Won't Be Home for Christmas

It was the 22nd of December, and I was just finishing up another embed in Iraq. We were on a rooftop doing a live interview with a Marine. At the end of it I said to him, "You're not going to be home for Christmas. Is there anyone you'd like to say hello to?" The Marine grinned as he sent well wishes to his family, asking them to keep him in their prayers.

Fifteen seconds after the live shot ended, my satellite phone rang. It was my wife, Betsy. Apparently she'd turned on the television right at the end of the interview. "Did I just hear you say you won't be home for Christmas?"

I've missed more than my share of Christmases and other holidays, and I'd promised her that I would be there this time, no matter what.

"Of course not, honey," I replied, getting that sinking feeling that a man gets when his husband points are disappearing down a black hole. "I said I'd be there and I will," I assured her.

"You'd better be," she growled. "If you leave me here alone with eight grandchildren, you might as well stay in Iraq. You'll be safer there than in this kitchen."

I made it home for Christmas.

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Pearl's Reflections

by Pearl Anderson

The Centerpiece of God's Plan is Jesus

The birth of Jesus was the start of the first great movement toward the restoration of man with God. It is no wonder the angels sang on that first Christmas morning!

The birth of the Lord Jesus was the fulfillment of the promise in Ephesians 1:10. Paul tells the Ephesians, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him" (KJV).

The birth of Jesus is the reckoning point (division) of all time: B.C. before Christ; A.D., *anno domini*, signifying the "year of our Lord," the time period after Christ's birth.

"Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness; He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Tim. 3:16 ESV).

The God who is referred to in this verse is Jesus. He is the only one who did all these things. "There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them" (Acts 4:12 NLT).

The work of redemption is the second great step. The cross is the redemptive gift of Jesus to cleanse us from our sin.

We cannot have a relationship with God until we accept by faith the redemptive work of Christ on the cross.

Colossians 2:14 states: "He [Jesus] canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross" (NLT). He wipes our sins from the slate. He erases the record.

The Spirit of God witnesses to the redemption of our Lord Jesus and draws us to Him. I find joy in singing "Jesus Paid It All": *"For nothing good have I Where by Thy grace to claim, I'll wash my garments white in the blood of Calv'ry's Lamb. Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe; sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow."*

How precious He becomes as we walk with Him. A song special to me is "Jesus is the Sweetest Name I Know": *"And some day I shall see Him face to face to thank and praise Him for His wondrous grace, which He gave to me, when He made me free, the blessed Son of God called Jesus. Jesus is the sweetest name I know, And He's just the same as His lovely name, and that's the reason why I love Him so; oh, Jesus is the sweetest name I know."*

Happy birthday Lord Jesus Christ—Son of God.

Thank You for Your birth, coming to earth,
A gift of salvation for us,
A gift of love to teach us Your way,
A gift of eternal life—Your death on the cross.

On our 40th anniversary I just want to share a personal word. We are so blessed to have you as our friends, on earth, and, greatest of all, for eternity in heaven. These times make it seem like a great time for the *rapture*!



In the Arena (OMF), Green Leaf in Drought (OMF), Stones of Fire (OMF), Nothing Daunted: The Story of Isobel Kuhn by Gloria Repp (Journey Forth), Second-Mile People (OMF), and By Searching: My Journey through Doubt into Faith (China Inland Mission).

Over the last few months Pearl and I have been reading the works of Isobel Kuhn. She and her husband, John, were missionaries for years with the China Inland Mission. These are rich books, full of insight and inspiration. You will not be sorry that you have added Kuhn's works to your devotional reading.

A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God's Sovereignty

by Joni Eareckson Tada (David C. Cook)

All of Joni Eareckson Tada's books are inspirational blessings. There's something different about this newest book. Joni offers a special sense of peace and contentment with the assurance that God loves us and that He has a sovereign purpose for each of our lives. This work is going to be a treasure, part of Joni's legacy, I highly recommend it, not only for yourself but for others who are suffering at this time. Joni writes in the book's conclusion:

As I have stated in the pages of this book, so many have tried to get me to say that my accident forty-three years ago was never part of God's plan. That my paralysis was never His intention. That quadriplegia was never necessary. That chronic pain didn't have to be. That suffering was never part of His plan. That the many tears and groans and struggles and sleepless nights were needless and a waste of my energy and my life.

I know differently.

It was all planned long ago, and God brought it about in His perfect

faithfulness. And because He allowed it and permitted it, because He has walked with me through every moment of it, His plan has been marvelous for Joni Eareckson Tada. And let me add this. I mean these words as much as I have ever meant any words:

I am content. (197)

Yes, this is a must-read.

Embraced by the Spirit: The Untold Blessings of Intimacy with God

by Charles R. Swindoll (Zondervan)

Over the years we have reviewed many of Swindoll's books. This book is like good wine—aged well, brimming with the wisdom of the author's long experience. Its personal tone makes it exceed many of his other works. I love what Swindoll writes on page 21: "As a child of God, you have God Himself living inside you. St. Augustine, who found himself yielding to sin on one occasion, turned and ran. Finally, all alone, he stopped and put his head in his hands and said, 'Oh, soul, dost thou not know that thou art carrying God around with thee?'"

Again, this is a good work to include in your reading program.

Radical Together: Unleashing the People of God for the Purpose of God

by David Platt (Multnomah)

You will remember that we reviewed David Platt's first book, *Radical*. I wondered, after reading about his incredible passion and ideas for teaching the word and reaching the world for Christ, what the follow-up would be. I love this second work because it offers an update on what's been going on in their church and around the world. People are responding and answering the call of God to give of themselves fully in whatever area of service that He calls them. David Platt makes it clear that his ministry has not been all

peaches and cream. There have been challenges, such as this: "Last week a man from another church who is not a big fan of *Radical* said to me, 'You just need to leave and go live in another country, and I'd be happy to help you get there'" (126).

Yes, God is blessing David Platt, his passion, and his ministry. This second book will be most fulfilling for you.

Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey

by Gary L. Thomas (Harvest House)

We have reviewed a number of Gary Thomas's books, many of which concern marriage. This book draws from the Puritans and early church fathers, forging realistic concepts to help us hasten Christlikeness in our lives through cooperation with the Spirit. It is loaded with helpful insights. I suggest that you do what I did—include it in your morning devotions. Read a page or two as you start the day. Thomas gives the following challenge regarding accountability:

One of Satan's favorite ploys to keep us from truth is to make us despise the messenger of truth. If our director speaks a difficult word to us, we will be tempted to ignore the truth by trying to find the same or a similar fault in our director. This is nothing but evasion. Other people may have the same faults we do—even our spiritual directors—but that doesn't mean we don't need to address our own shortcomings. Imperfections don't disqualify people from being used by God to speak truth, conviction, and healing into our souls. (263)

Glorious Pursuit: Embracing the Virtues of Christ

by Gary L. Thomas (NavPress)

In this work Gary highlights the early writers of scripture and applies biblical principles. This work also added much to my devotional reading.

Majestic Destiny: Kingdom Hope Is Rising
by Curtis H. Tucker (Last Chapter Publishing)

This work will get you excited about the kingdom and the part that each of us will play in it. My seminary classmate, Dr. Earl Radmacher, offers his wholehearted endorsement as well. Be sure to check out our profile of Curtis Tucker in this issue of the *Grapevine*.

Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand (Random House)

The captivating story of Louis Zamperini is one you will enjoy. Be sure to check out the article from Decision magazine on page 5.

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Couples Conference



MAY 4-6, 2012

WITH DON & PEARL ANDERSON

Russell & Carolyn Newport

Larry & Mary Kent

LAKEVIEW CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

WAXAHACHIE, TX

COST: \$400.00 PER COUPLE

(\$150 DEPOSIT PER COUPLE DUE AT REGISTRATION)

CONFERENCE INCLUDES:

⊗ TWO NIGHTS LODGING ⊗ SIX DELICIOUS MEALS ⊗

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(Conference begins Friday @ 6:00 p.m. and concludes Sunday @ 1:30 p.m.)

Registration Information (please print):

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Husband's Name: _____ Wife's Name: _____

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Payment Method:

Amount: \$ _____ Check MasterCard Visa American Express Discover

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Name on Card:	
Billing Address:	
Daytime Phone #:	
Alternate Phone #:	

Room Preferences or Special Needs (we will attempt to accommodate your needs):

--

Do you want us to charge the balance to this credit card on 3/30/12? YES or NO
If so, the balance as you understand it to be which will be charged is \$ _____

Signature: _____

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Bible Teaching Resources

40th Anniversary

Celebration

Family Camp

August 13-18, 2012



Trail West

Buena Vista, Colorado

with

Don & Pearl Anderson
Russell & Carolyn Newport
Larry & Mary Kent
BTR & Trail West Staff



Join us for a celebration of our 40th Anniversary!
Larry & Mary Kent will lead in worship. Russell Newport will thrill your hearts with special solos. And Don will teach the Word!

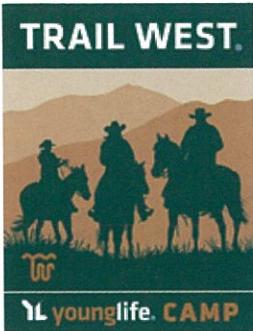
Total package includes:

- Five-night stay (Monday-Saturday)
- 14 meals (Monday dinner – Saturday Breakfast/Brunch)
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**HOPE TO SEE
Y'ALL THERE!**



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Our registrar will contact you for additional information (guest ages, special needs, etc.)



Trail West Family Camp

Aug. 13-18, 2012

Join Don & Pearl, Russell & Carolyn Newport,
and Larry & Mary Kent @ Trail West!

(Please fill out one form per group)

Guest Payment Information

of Rooms Needed: _____

of Guests in your group: _____

We do have rooms suitable for large families.

Cost: \$500 per person / double occupancy

\$750 per person / single occupancy \$400 per child (age 3-14) \$0 per child (2 and under)

Date: _____
Name: _____
Processed by: _____
Deposit amount: \$ _____

Example: Room #1	Cost	Room #2	Final Cost
Guest John	\$500	Guest Margaret	\$1,250
Guest Mary	\$500	Guest Grandmother	\$500
Guest Tim	\$400	Guest	\$400
Guest		Guest	
Guest Anna (rollaway or crib)	\$0	Guest (rollaway or crib)	\$0
		Total Amt. Due	\$2,150
		Non-refundable Deposit Amt. (\$150 per person)	\$600
		Balance Due	\$1,550
Room #1	Cost	Room #2	Cost
Guest		Guest	
Guest (rollaway or crib)		Guest (rollaway or crib)	
Room #3	Cost	Room #4	Cost
Guest		Guest	
Guest (rollaway or crib)		Guest (rollaway or crib)	
		Total Amt. Due	
		Non-refundable Deposit Amt. (\$150 per person)	
		Balance Due	

Payment Method:

Check MasterCard Visa American Express Discover

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____

CID #: _____ (last 3 digits on the back of card. Four digits on the front of American Express)

Name on Card:	
Billing Address:	
Daytime Phone #:	
Alternate Phone #:	

Room Preferences or Special Needs (we will attempt to accommodate your needs):

Signature: _____

Daytime Phone: (____) _____ Home Phone: (____) _____

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Clipboard

continued from page 11

14. He gives Christlikeness. “But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18 DAV). “Being sure of this very thing, that He who began in you a good work will bring it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6 DAV). “And everyone who is having this hope on Him is purifying himself, even as that one is pure” (1 John 3:2 DAV).

15. He gives blessing. “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it” (Mal. 3:10 NIV). “For surely, O Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield” (Psa. 5:12 NIV). “He will bless those who fear the Lord—small and great alike” (Psa. 115:13 NIV).

We have only just started celebrating; there's so much more. God gives exceedingly, abundantly, above all we could ask or think.

Listen to Joel 2:14: “Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing—grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God” (NIV). There's more on the way.

Job 42:12a: “The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first” (NIV).

How about Philippians 4:19? “And my God shall fill to the full your every need according to His riches (wealth) in glory in Christ Jesus” (DAV).

Talk about a blank check that covers it all. The instrument of our victory is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who signs the checks. He is alive, aware, and available to meet our every need.

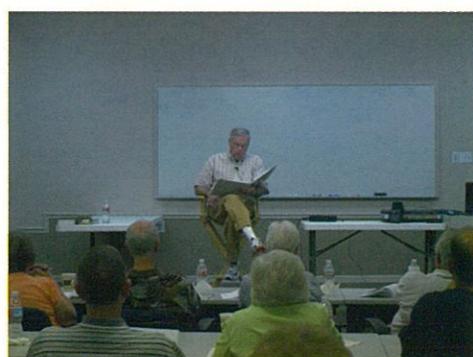
1. R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of First Corinthians*, Augsburg Publishing. © Augsburg Publishing House, 1963. p. 750
2. Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, T & T Clark. © Unknown, 1955. p. 379
3. Lenski, *ibid.* p. 751.

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Winter Tour 2012

(CLASS CURRICULUM LISTED BELOW)

January 23-March 1, 2012

MONDAY – January 23 & 30, February 6, 13, 20 & 27 (LIVE)

6 week study in Colossians

12:20 p.m.—FT. WORTH BUSINESSPEOPLES NOON CLASS

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 10th & Lamar
Ft. Worth, TX 76102

Class host: Garner Roberts, office: 817.763.5831
(Lunch available at 11:50 a.m.)

MONDAY – January 23 & 30, February 6, 13, 20 & 27 (LIVE / CAMCORDING)

6 week study in Revelation

7:00 p.m.— Granbury Evening Class

Jan. 23, Feb. 6 & 20

@ Don & Fran Saddoris' home

9409 Monticello Dr (Pecan Plantation)

Don & Fran Saddoris: 682.936.4097

Jan. 30, Feb. 13 & 27

@ Ken & Carolyn Stanford's home

9623 Champions Dr (Pecan Plantation)

Ken & Carolyn Stanford: 817.579.5562

TUESDAY – January 24 & 31, February 7, 14, 21 & 28 (VIDEOCONFERENCE)

6 week study in Colossians

7:00 P.M. —WICHITA FALLS EVENING CLASS
4414 Weeks Park Ln

Wichita Falls, TX 76308

Class hosts: Tres & Julia Ward: 940.696.3211

WEDNESDAY – January 25, February 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 (LIVE / CAMCORDING)

6 week study in Colossians

7:00 P.M. —TYLER AREA EVENING CLASS
13631 Peninsula Rd

Whitehouse, TX 75791

Class hosts: Ken & Sue Kummerfeld, home:
903.839.3795

THURSDAY – January 26, February 2, 9, 16 & 23, March 1 (VIDEOCONFERENCE)

6 week study in Colossians

7:00 P.M. —DALLAS AREA EVENING CLASS
3921 Winter Park Rd

Addison, TX 75001

Class hosts: Gary & Sydney Smith, cell:
972.322.9050