



THE Word of Faith

DECEMBER 2019

PUBLISHED BY KENNETH HAGIN MINISTRIES

Merry Christmas

THE GREATEST
GIFT OF ALL

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CRADLE, CROSS,
AND CROWN

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GIFTS AND CALLINGS

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REVIVAL STARTS
WITH US!

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PLEASE SHARE WITH A FRIEND OR RECYCLE.

God Is Always on Time

Christmastime is a special time of year. Gift giving and goodwill make it joyous and festive. We see manger scenes depicting the Christ child. The displays are probably more peaceful than it actually was! Maybe a donkey was braying with sheep running around and rams butting heads. Mary and Joseph were most likely dusty and tired from traveling. But in those humble beginnings, God reached out to mankind when we could not reach out to Him.

There had been 400 years of silence from the prophets before Jesus arrived. People probably wondered where God was! Galatians 4:4 (AMPC) says, *"When the proper time had fully come, God sent His Son."* I want you to realize something noteworthy: God is *always* on time. The birth of Christ was precisely on schedule. His Second Coming will happen at the right moment too. And He will *always* be there when you need Him.

God will meet you where you are and change your life! Galatians 4:5 in the *New Living Translation* says, *"God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children."* Adoption means being placed in the family—as an heir! When you accept Jesus as Savior, you have access to all the benefits God bestows.

If you're struggling, He lends a helping hand. If you're hurting, He extends a healing touch. If you are in lack, He gives abundant provision. If you're bound, He grants the hand of deliverance. If you feel alone, He reaches out a kind hand for you to hold on to during the dark days. If you are lost without a Savior, He gives you His hand of salvation.

Don't limit your enjoyment of the holiday season to earthly human traditions. Receive every heavenly gift God gave to you!

Kenneth W. Hagin



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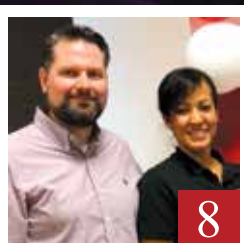
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JESUS

The Greatest Gift of All

THE CHRISTMAS SEASON is a celebration of the birth of Jesus. It should be a happy time of year. But for some people, it's the opposite. It's one of the saddest because many Christians and non-Christians are battling depression. When I thought about why that is happening, a scripture in the Book of John came to mind.

JOHN 10:10 (NKJV)

10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

One way the devil can steal from us is when we take our minds off Jesus. Many people don't focus their thoughts on Jesus, His

life, and the abundance He came to provide. Instead, they dwell on what the thief—Satan—put in their lives to destroy them.

The devil knows if Jesus is our focal point, we will realize he is a defeated foe. So he does anything and everything he can to us. He wants us to keep our eyes on the problem instead of on our solution—Jesus Christ.



CRAIG W. HAGIN

Jesus—The Waymaker

Trouble fills the world. Every day someone is challenged with economic difficulties or physical problems. Mankind battles an endless list of diseases. And many people struggle with emotional issues like fear, worry, hurt, and depression.

But nowhere in the Bible does it say that we have to fight the devil by ourselves. It's not up to us to come up with solutions to the problems he brings our way. Jesus came into the world to overcome and defeat the devil. His victory on the cross makes it possible for us to live above the attacks of Satan.

When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He made God's call on His life clear.

LUKE 4:18–19 (NKJV)

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Notice that Jesus declared He was sent to heal the brokenhearted. If you are struggling with a broken heart, Jesus came to heal you.

Some people become depressed when they don't see anything change in their lives. Maybe they have dealt with the same situation year after year. But no matter what they might face, Jesus is their way out.

Jesus—The Name Above All Names

It doesn't matter what the name of your circumstance or problem is. Jesus' Name is higher than it!

Our Heavenly Father is a turnaround God. He can reverse, dismantle, or undo any adversity we face.

Overcoming Depression

One way to focus your thoughts on Jesus is by focusing on His Word. If you're struggling and can't seem to find peace, get to a quiet place and saturate yourself in God's promises. Below is a list of scriptures for you to read over and over. Let them penetrate your heart, and confess them daily. Cling to them, regardless of how you feel. Your Heavenly Father is always with you. Look to Him! He will lead you out of depression and heartaches!

Deuteronomy 31:8	Isaiah 41:10
Psalms 40:1-3	Psalms 3:3
Psalms 34:18-19	Isaiah 40:31
Isaiah 42:3	Matthew 11:28-30
Romans 8:38-39	Psalms 34:17
Psalms 42:11	2 Corinthians 1:3-4

PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

After Jesus' death on the cross, He received a Name above every name. Nothing is higher than the Name of Jesus. We must keep our focus on Jesus' Name and everything it provides. If we don't, the circumstances in our lives will grow. They will become so huge in our minds that we doubt Jesus' ability to help us.

The opposite happens the more we focus on Jesus. When our eyes are on Him, things like fear, depression, sickness, poverty, and financial problems will fade away. As we maintain our focus on the Word, the hardships we face become smaller. Eventually, they will disappear.

Nothing Is Too Hard for Our God

The Name of Jesus is above depression. It is above cancer, lack, and any other negative circumstance we might face. Too many times, however, we focus on troubles, trials, and sicknesses more than we do on Jesus.

When we keep our eyes and thoughts on Jesus, the joy of the Lord becomes the strength that carries us to victory (Neh. 8:10). It's not that we are joyful *because* of what we are going through. No. We're joyful because we know *in Whom* we believe. And we are confident that He will carry us through!

Our Heavenly Father is a turnaround God. He can reverse, dismantle, or undo any adversity we face. Mark 10:27 says, "*With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.*" To us, a situation may look impossible. But not to God. Nothing is impossible with Him!

Jesus Is Greater!

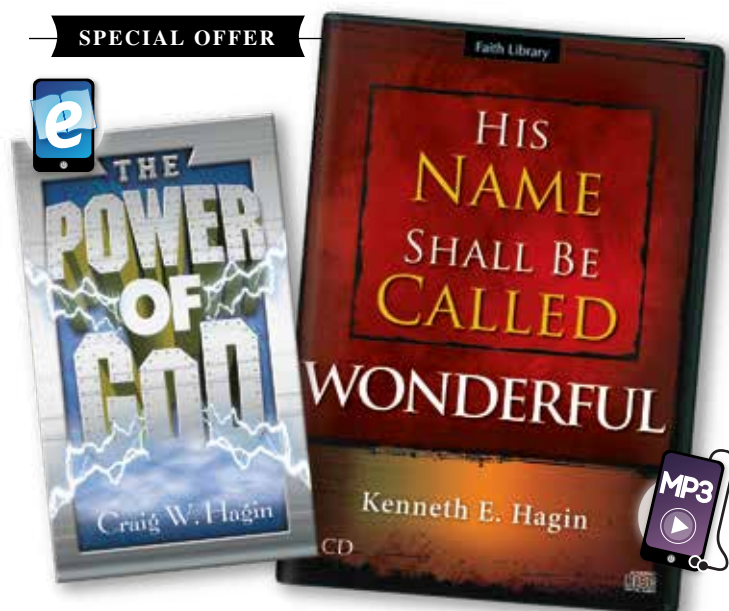
One time I was diagnosed with an incurable disease. The word "incurable," however, is below the Name of Jesus. What looked

like an impossible situation and what medical science could not cure, the blood of Jesus and the Name of Jesus were able to heal!

First John 4:4 (NKJV) says, "*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*" The Greater One dwells in us! Too many people fix their attention on the devil and believe that he is powerful. But Satan is small compared to Jesus. He doesn't have any power or authority. He can only lie and trick you into thinking he can destroy your life.

Because of the Greater One in us, we have everything we need to be overcomers. As we steadfastly gaze on Jesus instead of problems, we will see a dramatic turnaround in our lives. So instead of allowing the cares of life to weigh us down during the holiday season, let's rejoice in God's precious gift to mankind. Jesus was born so we might have life and have it abundantly. Now *that* is a gift worth receiving!♥

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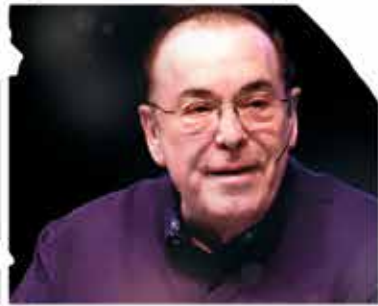


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How Far Can You See?

JOHN GRUNEWALD

YEARS AGO, I was in Colorado with my oldest son, who was 12 at the time. We had just turned onto Highway 24 heading toward Colorado Springs. Zach was occupied with a game or book.

"Look up," I said, "you can see Pike's Peak! How far away do you think it is?"

Glancing up, he guessed, "Ten miles?" When I said it was 100 miles away, he exclaimed, "I didn't know I could see that far!"

Right then, God spoke to my heart. I understood it's the same way with vision. You see something in your heart and think it's 10 miles away when it's actually 100 miles. It might take 10 times longer to get there than you thought!

Where vision is concerned, we can always see further than we think. And it will take longer to fulfill than we realize.

Vision stretches you "beyond you." If you look at your abilities, you probably cannot see yourself doing what God called you to do. To fulfill that call, you must see yourself *in Christ*, where your abilities really lie—far beyond you. ♥

[Editor's note: John Grunewald is the International Director of Rhema Europe, Middle East, and Africa. He and his wife, Michelle, live in London, England. This article was adapted from John's message at Winter Bible Seminar 2012.]

TEACHING FAITH IN GERMANY

SHORTLY AFTER BECOMING born again in the early '80s, Michael Tamme's mother found Kenneth E. Hagin's book *I Believe in Visions* on her bookshelf. Someone had placed it there unbeknownst to her. When she picked it up, the Holy Spirit said, "One day your whole family will go there."

Almost a decade later, the Tamme family moved from Germany to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Michael's parents graduated from Rhema USA in 1993.

Although 18-year-old Michael knew God called him to the ministry, he ran from it. He joined the military when his family returned to Germany. After completing a year of mandatory service, Michael eagerly began a career in the German Army as an Airborne Ranger. However, he sensed his time in the military was about to end.

Michael came to *Winter Bible Seminar* in 1997, wanting to receive direction from God. One night after praying for international ministers, Kenneth E. Hagin stopped. "The Lord arrested me," he said. "I want everyone else who is international to come down here."

"ONLY THE LOCAL CHURCH CAN REALLY REACH AND CHANGE A NATION."

middle, the rest fell like dominos.

"Being the last person in the line, I took an extra step back so nobody would fall on me. And BAM, the holy power of God pulled me to the floor," Michael recalls. While lying there, the Lord confirmed that he was to give up his military career, go to Rhema, and follow Him 100 percent. After leaving the Reserves, Michael returned to Broken Arrow to attend school.

Michael went forward, apprehensive but expectant. He didn't know that what was coming next would change the trajectory of his life. As Brother Hagin laid hands on one person in the

Rhema Bridal School

Kandra admits that moving from Las Vegas to Broken Arrow was a culture shock. After graduating second year, she wanted to return to Nevada.

During Kandra's second and third year, she was a member of Rhema's women's basketball team.* Coach Perry Shockley persuaded her to stick around for a third year. She credits him for instilling in her a "never give up" attitude. During Kandra's third year, she and Michael met and began dating. After graduating in 2000, they were married in Las Vegas.

Full of faith in God and peace in their hearts, Michael and Kandra moved to Germany after their wedding. Michael's parents had started Lebendiges Wort Internationales Christliches Glaubenszentrum (Living Word Int'l. Christian Center) in 1999. Michael and Kandra became their assistant pastors.

Rhema Hamburg

Although the Tammes were content in the church, they believed God had more. "My dad, Kandra, and I had it on our hearts to start a Rhema campus," says Michael.

Apparently, it was on God's heart too! The Lord had long been orchestrating the establishment of Rhema Hamburg, partly through the prayers of one woman. After discovering the faith message and Kenneth E. Hagin books, she began a word of faith church.

"[People] didn't accept her because she was a woman," says Michael. "But she stuck with it and prayed: 'God, send a Bible school like [Rhema] to our city.' She took a lot of arrows for the faith message. I believe the campus came into existence because of her."



MICHAEL AND KANDRA TAMME

Rhema Hamburg was launched in 2012. The student body includes men and women from over 20 churches and various denominations. Besides Germany, students hail from India, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, with over 27 languages spoken between them.

As campus coordinators of Rhema Hamburg, the Tammes oversee campus logistics, communicate with the students, and ensure the curriculum stays within Rhema's guidelines. As instructors, Michael and Kandra see firsthand how the Word transforms students' lives.

Healed of Cancer

One person whose life was changed is Katharina. Feeling empty and stagnant in her relationship with God, she wanted to attend a Bible school and asked God to show her the right one. At that same time, Katharina was diagnosed with stage 3 cancer. With death knocking at her door, she didn't understand why she had such a strong desire to go to Bible school.

Two months after beginning radiation, Katharina's church started holding midweek lessons on faith. She attended the sessions and loved what she heard. The guest teachers were from Rhema Germany. After listening to them, Katharina knew Rhema was the Bible school for her.

Katharina jumped on the opportunity to attend Rhema's *Get Acquainted Weekend*. A few days beforehand, however, the hospital called. Her test results didn't look good. But instead of

"These students have never heard this. It's a whole new way of thinking," says Kandra. "You see them come to class, and they're clueless. When I see the light go on, I can cry!"

Reaching the Unchurched

Shortly after settling into their roles at Rhema Hamburg, Michael's parents asked the pair to become the senior pastors of Lebendiges Wort. The Tammes concede that it has been a "juggle," but they are more than up for the task. "What God has for us to do is so much bigger than ourselves," says Kandra.

Hamburg, known as the city of bridges, is the second largest municipality in Germany. Like many European cities, most of Hamburg is "unchurched." The Tammes are "building bridges" to change that.

"Through the love of God, new bridges are being built into churches that are ethnically secluded," says Michael. The couple is also working to bridge the gap between denominations by developing connections with other pastors.

The Tammes want to see the message of faith taught to all God's people. One way they plan to do that is to help establish churches.

"Only the local church can really reach and change a nation," says Michael. "We're here to help strengthen the local church. The goal is to get people to pioneer more churches."

"As the students get the word of faith," Kandra adds, "they will take it back and establish those churches. Then they train, coach,



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**INTERPRETING FOR
REV. TONY COOKE**

going back to the hospital, she went to the *Get Acquainted Weekend*. While there, she thought, "This is crazy, why am I going to Bible school when I am facing death?"

"Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you" rose up from her heart!

Later that day, the director of Rhema Germany shared how a student was healed of a serious heart condition while sitting in class. That was the confirmation Katharina needed. Her mind was made up; she was going to Rhema! After undergoing more tests, the results came back good. Everything was okay!

Despite challenges early on, Katharina finished her first year strong. Today she is thriving physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

and multiply. It keeps going." The vision is not only for Germany but for other nations too.

The spiritual atmosphere has changed since Michael and Kandra arrived almost 20 years ago. But they both agree much work needs to be done. "We want to equip and train people the same way Rhema has trained and equipped us," says Kandra. "The Word is too good to keep for yourself. You gotta give it away."♥

*The Lady Crusaders women's basketball team started in the '98-'99 school year. They won the 1999 and 2000 NBCCA National Championships. In 2001, the team's name was changed to the Lady Eagles.

To **LEARN MORE** about Michael and Kandra Tamme visit, lwvh.de.

Seven Pounds of Salvation

KENNETH E. HAGIN



GOD WRAPPED HIMSELF in human flesh and came to earth, born as a baby in Bethlehem. When a child is born, one of the first questions is, “Boy or girl?” Then, “How much does he weigh?” When Jesus was born, He could have weighed seven pounds. That’s seven pounds of salvation!

The Messiah wasn’t big, just an infant weighing a few pounds and lying in a manger. But He took on the biggest job that was ever assigned—the responsibility to redeem you and me. **JESUS WAS DESTINED TO GROW UP AND PURCHASE SALVATION WITH HIS OWN LIFE.**

The apostle John tries to help us understand this in John 1:14 (MSG), “*The Word became flesh and blood. . . . We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish.*” Jesus Christ, the eternal God, the Creator of the world, became flesh for one reason—to save us.

Because Christ was born, we have the opportunity to be redeemed (or bought back and “saved”) from sin. This gift of salvation means we can choose to spend eternity in God’s family, and that can start right now. We choose to be rescued from darkness. **WE CHOOSE TO ACCEPT OR DENY JESUS CHRIST AS OUR LORD AND SAVIOR.** We choose to open His wonderful gift.

Without Christ, there is no Christmas. Without salvation, there is no celebration. Without deliverance, there is no hope of Heaven, no healing, no infilling of the Holy Spirit. But with Christ, we have it all! And Christmas is the time we celebrate His birth.

Don’t let this be just another holiday! Along with all the other festivities, let’s remember what the angel said in Luke 2:10–11 (NKJV), “*Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*” ♥

[Editor’s Note: This article was adapted from Kenneth E. Hagin’s book *Classic Sermons*.]

Receive God’s Gift

God gave what He treasured the most—Jesus, His only Son. His gift of eternal life is free to those who believe it is true. Have you accepted His gift by believing in Jesus as your Lord and Savior? If not, you can! Pray this prayer from your heart:

Father, I believe you love me and that you sent Your only Son to die for me. I turn from my way of doing things, and I turn toward Jesus. I receive the free gift of His life in exchange for my old life. I place my faith and trust in Jesus alone to save me.

Thank you, Jesus, for dying for me and forgiving all my sin. I receive you as my Savior and Lord. I want to know and follow You all the days of my life. Let today be the beginning of my new journey as a member of Your family. Thank you for being the way for me to come home. Amen.

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2019 Setting Up a New Season

WHAT HAPPENS AROUND THE WORLD IN A YEAR? MORE THAN WE CAN DESCRIBE IN TWO PAGES! HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019.

The Mandate Expands

“Go, teach My people faith.”
—God’s Word to Kenneth E. Hagin,
May 1950

Matthew 28:19 (NKJV) says, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.”* The word *disciple* means “a student.” Kenneth Hagin Ministries has been teaching students since 1974. A revolutionary mark was hit in 2019—just under 85,000 men and women worldwide graduated from Rhema Bible Training College!

Every country is on the radar for growing RBTC campuses. Teaching faith and

training students to lead others in the things of God translates into more churches and ministries reaching more people. There are currently 253 international campuses in 51 nations.

45th RBTC USA Graduating Class

“From here on forward, [these students] are going to be involved in the greatest work of God in the earth.”

—Tad Gregurich, Dean, Rhema Bible Training College USA

Get ready world! Rhema USA just trained 277 more graduates to carry faith and power to a lost and dying world. Matt Beemer, the graduation keynote speaker, summed it up well: “I believe the Rhema family has moved into a place of going like they’ve never gone before. . . . An apostolic ‘go’ is on this class!” (See the August issue of *The Word of Faith* for more.)

Travel

“I’ve had the privilege of traveling to many nations. It’s humbling to see what God has done.”

—Kenneth W. Hagin

This year, Kenneth, Lynette, and the crusade team traveled to 11 states for 13

crusades. Europe beckoned the Hagins to England, Croatia, Albania, Italy, Greece, and Malta. (See the September issue of *The Word of Faith* for more.)

In Greece, a woman was brought by her sons for healing. They traveled all night by boat. She had suffered a stroke and could not walk. Even before the prayer for healing was offered, she had taken steps and now is fully walking again!

Events

“We are entering a season individually and corporately. We must be strong.

We must be courageous. . . . And we must listen and obey the instructions that God gives us.”

—Lynette Hagin,
Winter Bible Seminar 2019

Throughout the year, a variety of events brings powerful voices from around the world to speak into people’s lives. Two paid events—*Kindle the Flame Women’s Conference* and *A Call to Arms Men’s Conference*—bolstered adults who took time to get away and hear from God.

Winter Bible Seminar and Worldwide Homecoming was something to behold as 50 nations descended on Tulsa. Brazil’s delegation of 235 was the largest. Great testimonies were shared about how Rhema



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KENNETH W. HAGIN MINISTERS HEALING AND SALVATION IN ITALY.

Brazil now has campuses in their prison systems.

Campmeeting held another key turning point as Kenneth W. Hagin proclaimed, "Today is the day to declare that we hear the sound of the abundance of rain. The end-time revival is here!"

Many people were healed, saved, and filled with the Holy Spirit. The reports of life-changing experiences in the Lord's presence by children and youth at WBS and *Campmeeting* were especially precious. God is charging up the entire family—natural families and the Rhema worldwide family!

Restoration & Renovation

"It's time to change your world!

The point we all need to get to is one of forgetting about our past great moments and opening up to what God wants us to move into."

—Kenneth W. Hagin (from *The Master Restorer: God Will Do It Again*)

Renovation and restoration are taking place at Rhema Bible Church! The massive structure is undergoing a gradual transformation. *Winter Bible Seminar* saw the first glimpse of the grey palette with

new pews and carpeting in the sanctuary. *Campmeeting* enjoyed the next phase with stone around the stage and carpeting in the entries and hallways. From lighting to curtains, each element is progressively shifting into something fresh to bring the Word of God to the world, whether through on-site events or international broadcasts and live services.

The Printed Page

"Books can go places we can't—into the homes!"

—John Grunewald, Int'l. Director of Rhema Europe, Middle East, and Africa

While eBooks gain popularity in America, people in much of the world still prefer the printed page. As Rhema campuses are expanding into additional countries, more and more Faith Library Publications books are being translated into new languages.

When the Hagins went to Europe, several new book translations were released in the countries they visited. Ministers in the pastoral meetings received *Called by God*, by Kenneth W. Hagin, translated in their own language. Gratitude and stories of how FLP books had changed their lives was a strong theme.

Missions

"From this place will be a great work that encompasses the whole world."

—Rupert Bailey (a young man who prayed on the Rhema property in the early 1900s)

Rhema seems to be on the go everywhere! Over spring break, teams stayed busy with missions to Peru, the Navajo Nation, and locally in Tulsa. Students from the Rhema School of World Missions

interned in Botswana, Europe, Guatemala, Lebanon, and Zambia.

It isn't all "going." Some of it is receiving those who come to Rhema USA, whether for their first years of school or advanced training (not offered internationally). This year, 53 men and women came from 22 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Myanmar, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, South Korea, Vietnam, and Sweden.

Word Partners

"There is something about the Rhema family—when we come together as one, things change!"

—Craig W. Hagin,
Winter Bible Seminar 2019

Our utmost thanks go to our Word Partners. You make all this happen by fueling the fire! You make it possible for anyone to have the advantage when attending Rhema USA. Your giving equates to a 70% tuition scholarship for each student! You have a part in what our students and graduates do. Anyone around the world ministered to through a member of the Rhema family is because of you!

Through Rhema, the anointing is caught, and the Word is taught. Whether by attending school or reading books, attending events or listening to broadcasts, the message of faith is imparted inside all of us. We are able ministers, ready to share the Gospel with our neighbors and the nations. We are people prepared to go boldly into the harvest. We are family, and we are building God's kingdom! ♥



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Our Christ:

His Cradle, Cross, and Crown



IN THE BEGINNING of mankind, Adam gave in to temptation. It threw humanity into a state of unrighteousness. But Jesus came to change that! To do so, He began His journey like all of us—as a human child. Through His birth, death, and resurrection, He restored our righteousness. We can all be brought to a place of abundant life *if* we accept Christ as our Savior. The baby we see at Christmastime is much more than part of a nativity scene. He is the Redeemer of mankind!



KENNETH W. HAGIN



A Cradle

The first recorded scene of Christ on the earth opens in a stable. A feeding trough for the livestock has a surprising addition: a baby boy! This lowly manger became the cradle for the King of kings and the Lord of lords. God's Son took the form of a human being. In this place, Emmanuel (meaning "God with us") identified with us. God came to earth to live as a human to identify with humanity. The cradle is the place where the Son of God became one of us!

A Cross

That's only the beginning of the story. This baby in a manger was destined to live a life of sacrifice. Jesus didn't come to grow old on the earth. He came only long enough to face what we endure and overcome it. He came to die on a cross—for us. Jesus Christ came to take our place in judgment so humanity could be free from sin and the tyrannical rule of Satan. The cross is the place of substitution where Christ received what should have happened to us!

A Crown

But that's still not the end of the story. The tiny baby born in a stable was foreordained to be exalted. He would be crowned with honor and authority. He would be given a Name above all names: Jesus. Every knee will bow in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth. Seated at the right hand of God, Jesus not only rules and reigns—we do too! The crown bestows the benefits of God's Kingdom to all who are saved and raised up with Christ.



EPHESIANS 2:4–7 (NIV)

- 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,
5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.
6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

The entire story is that we spiritually sit in heavenly places with Jesus—right now. We exist in two realms at the same time! We have been redeemed by the Christ child in the manger who was crowned the King of Glory. Jesus offers us Heaven while we live on the earth: redemption, life, liberty, prosperity, healing, and all the good things God wanted mankind to have.

The Rest of the Story

This story doesn't end. It continues today with you and me. Have you rejoiced in the baby in the manger? Have you accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross? Are you enjoying the benefits of His crown?

May the Holy Spirit speak to your heart. May the eyes of your understanding be enlightened. Don't let this Christmas season pass without experiencing and rejoicing in everything Jesus offers to you through a cradle, the cross, and now His crown!♥

The Baby Is Only the Beginning

"And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

"Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.'

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'

"So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.' And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."

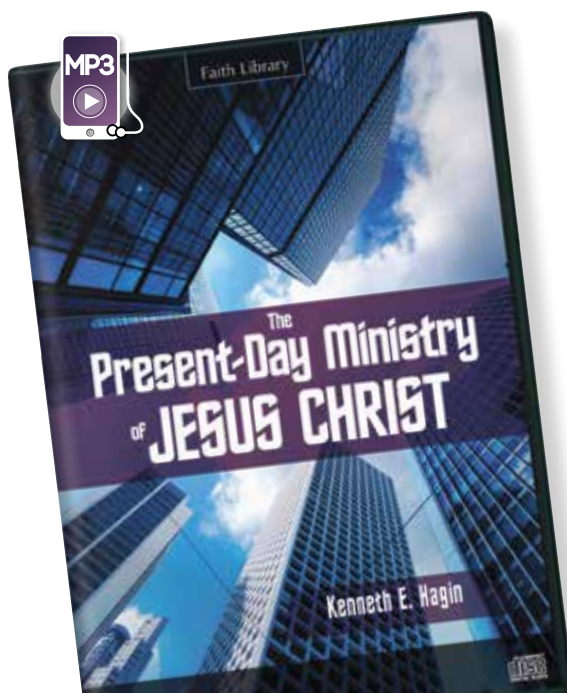
—Luke 2:1–20 (NKJV)

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? If not, we have a prayer on page 10 you can pray right now! Or visit rhema.org/salvation to pray and share your testimony.

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God's Irrevocable Gifts and Callings

ROMANS 11:29 SAYS, “*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*” “Without repentance” means that God will not change His mind about what He wants you to do. If God has called you, the calling is on you, regardless of whether you have obeyed. And if God gave you a gift, that gift is still there!

Paul told Timothy to “stir up” the gift in him: “*Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands*” (2 Tim. 1:6). If you want to walk out God’s plan, it’s time to stir up that gift within you!

Are All Christians Called?

In Ephesians chapter 4, we read about some of the “gifts” God has given.

EPHESIANS 4:8, 11–12

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . .

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

The “gifts” in this passage refer to the fivefold ministry gifts: apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. You might not be called to the fivefold ministry. But everyone can be involved in

IF GOD HAS CALLED YOU,
THE CALLING IS STILL ON YOU,
*regardless of whether
you have obeyed.*



#RhemaWOF

the ministry of helps, which is a necessary and important part of the Body of Christ. And in one sense, we are all called to preach.

To *preach* means “to proclaim or to tell.” All believers are supposed to share the Good News of the Gospel—the story of how Jesus reconciled us to God. We are all supposed to witness to others. Second Corinthians 5:18 says, “*And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.*” According to this verse, we have all been called to be in ministry—the ministry of reconciliation!

Specific Callings

In Ephesians 4:11, we see there are different pulpit ministries God calls people to. God set these specific ministry gifts in the Church. Anyone who is called to the full-time pulpit ministry will

operate in one of these areas. A person can also be called to stand in more than one office.

For instance, according to Acts 13:1 and Acts 14:14, we see that Barnabas and Paul were prophets, teachers, and apostles. The Holy Spirit gifted them to stand in these offices.

When someone first becomes born again, they may have such a desire to see people saved that they might think God called them to be an evangelist. If that is the case, they should obey the call. But if it isn't, they can still help get people saved by being a minister of reconciliation.

I started preaching when I was 17. Wherever a door opened, I filled it. In 1936, another minister and I held a revival meeting

out in the country, and a number of people were saved. Because there was no church in that community, the people wanted to start a church.

An empty building was offered to us free of charge. We fixed it up, and I preached there on Sundays. They wanted me to be their pastor. I told them I wasn't a pastor, but I kept preaching there. When no other door was open to me, I finally said that I would be the pastor.

I started pastoring at 18 and pastored at five different churches for nearly 12 years. The last church I oversaw was the best. It offered the nicest parsonage. My family was more comfortable and better cared for than we had ever been before. We had the highest income we'd ever had. The church was thriving. People were getting born again, filled with the Spirit, and healed. The attendance was the largest in the history of that church. I had every reason in the world to be content there. Yet, I felt dissatisfied. It felt like washing my feet with my socks on! It just didn't feel right!

So in the winter of 1947-48, I began spending extra time in prayer. I asked God what was wrong with me. I kept praying. After several months, the Lord said, "The problem is that I never called you to pastor to begin with. That's not your calling. But I permitted you to do so."

Someone may say, "I guess you missed God all those years." No, God will take us through a learning process. And we may have to learn some things before we move from one office to another. We may have to learn some things before we can fulfill the call of God on our lives.

Although the Lord didn't call me to pastor, I prayed before taking each assignment. And for every church except one, the Lord told me to take it. I missed God on the one church He didn't instruct me to take.

Someone may ask, "If God called you to do one thing, why would He let you do something else?" Because there is always going to be a proving time. No matter what God has called you to do, He will prove you out before He promotes you.

We have to be faithful, obedient, and patient to fulfill God's call. The Lord may temporarily lead you to do something. That doesn't mean the gift is gone or the calling has disappeared because the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. In other words, God doesn't change His mind!

Use Your Gifts

According to First Corinthians 12:27, you and I are the Body of Christ and members in particular. Each member has a part to play in the Body. What is your role? What has God gifted and called you to do?

Whatever your calling is, God has gifted you to do it. You may not have heeded God's call in the past, but it is still there. Decide today to stir up the gift within you and fulfill what God destined you to do.

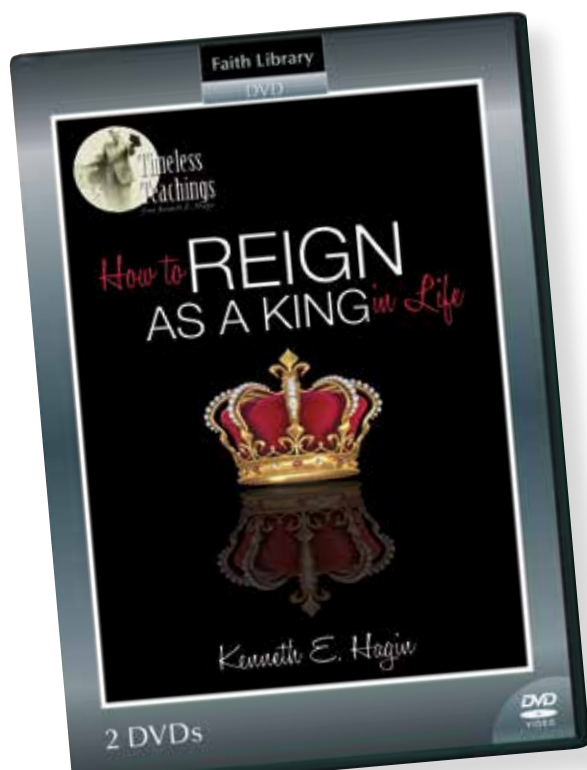
Maybe God is leading you to be in full-time ministry. Or possibly He has gifted you with a business sense or an artistic talent. Perhaps you feel called to raise a family. Whatever God's gifts and callings for you are, determine in your heart to be faithful and obedient to carry out His plan for your life. 🙏

[Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the December 2004 *Word of Faith* magazine. For more information about the gifts and callings of God, go to rhema.org/store to purchase a copy of *He Gave Gifts Unto Men*.]

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—Jennifer

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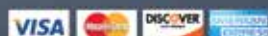
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REVIVAL

BEGINS WITH YOU



LYNETTE HAGIN

THE APOSTLE PAUL tells us in Second Timothy 3:1–5 (NLT) that we will experience difficult times in the last days. People will only love themselves and their money. They will scoff at God, act religiously, and

reject the power that could make them godly.

We are seeing Paul's words fulfilled in the church today. An "it's all about me" attitude has invaded the Body of Christ. Instead of Christians asking God what they can do for Him, they are more concerned about what He can do for them.

Believers must rid themselves of that mentality if the words of the prophet Joel are to be fulfilled: *"I will pour out my Spirit upon all people"* (Joel 2:28 NLT). God's children must understand it is not about them! Our purpose is to fulfill the assignments our Heavenly Father has for us.

I believe the Lord is ready to pour out His Spirit on all flesh like never before. It will bring about the greatest revival the world has ever seen.

But revival starts with you! It begins with your longing for it. Instead, Christians are concerned about natural things like what church is the most exciting? Which place has the best programs? Who sings the latest music? People are judging by the natural

instead of the supernatural. The right question to ask is which church is on fire for God!

A Vision to Go!

With the start of a new year, many people set goals for themselves or have dreams they want to accomplish. The Body of Christ's primary goal should be going into all the world! Revival starts with going to your lost neighbors. You may have neighbors that could die and go to hell tomorrow. Have they heard about the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ?

When you focus on the lost, revival will spread to your neighbors, your city, your state, and your nation. It will take two things for revival to start: 1) a passion for seeing it and 2) persevering prayer.



REVIVAL STARTS WITH PASSION

God is passionate for the lost. He wants the sick healed and the oppressed set free. What is your passion? Do you remember how excited you felt when you first became born again? You probably thought it was the most awesome thing in the world. And you enthusiastically told people about Jesus. Do you still have the same eagerness? A Christian without passion is like a river without water.

If you feel as though you have lost your passion for God, ask Him to ignite a fire in you. It is never too late to stir yourself up and let the fire of God burn in you again. However, if you do not keep the fire burning, you risk becoming so apathetic to the things of God, you won't even miss them!

I love Mexican and barbeque food. I could eat them every other day. Because I eat them regularly, I crave both frequently. But what if I lived in a place where these foods were not available! My cravings would eventually leave, and I would no longer miss them. The longer you go without something, the less you desire it.

Sadly, this is happening in the Church today. Many have let the fire and anointing of God in their lives wane, and they no longer crave it. It is time to refire and get back to your first love, so you can complete the assignments God has for you.

Dry Bones, Live!

The prophet Ezekiel was a man of God confronted with a congregation of people who were discouraged, displaced, and spiritually dead. They desperately needed revival. The Lord took Ezekiel to a mountaintop, and he had a vision. The Holy Spirit carried him to a valley filled with dry bones that were scattered everywhere on the ground. They represented the people of Israel. The Lord told Ezekiel to tell the dry bones that they would live again. When he did as the Lord commanded, the bones came together as skeletons. Muscles and skin formed over the bones, and the breath of life came into them. (See Ezekiel 37:1–14.)

You may have become weary, discouraged, and disappointed. Perhaps you experienced something that didn't turn out the way you hoped. With God's grace, you can forget the past and tell the dry bones in your life to live again!

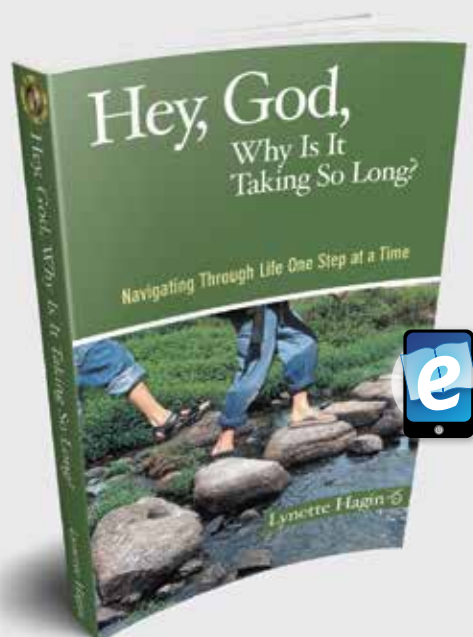
A CHRISTIAN
WITHOUT
PASSION IS
LIKE A RIVER
WITHOUT
WATER.

being consumed with your desires, develop a passion for the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20). Don't allow yourself to lose sight of the job God has for you to do. And that is to win the lost, lay hands on the sick, and cast out devils.

There has never been a time more perverse than today. You have a great opportunity to tell your world that Jesus died on the cross for them. People are looking for answers, and you have them. Reignite your passion today, and let revival begin with you!♥

*Bounds, E.M. *The Classic Collection on Prayer*. (Newberry, Florida. Bridge-Logos Publishers, 2002), 490.

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2 REVIVAL STARTS WITH PRAYER

Prayer is vital for revival to happen. I believe because we have not dedicated ourselves to prayer, the Church has not advanced as quickly as it should. E.M. Bounds said, "The prayers of God's saints are the capital stock in Heaven by which Christ carries on His great work upon [the] earth."*

Throughout Church history, all great moves of God have happened when people became so hungry for God to move that they continually gave themselves to prayer.

When you love someone, it is natural to want to stay in constant communication. Yet many Christians neglect talking daily with their Heavenly Father through prayer. Then they wonder why the world or their lives are in such bad shape. If you want to see situations change, if you want revival to come, it's time to commit yourself to prayer and place the things of God above everything else.

It's Your Move!

The Lord is waiting for you to take your place and complete your assignments. God wants to use you! Instead of

SEED

Thoughts

// LYNETTE HAGIN

"THE LORD WILL GUIDE YOU ALWAYS; HE WILL SATISFY YOUR NEEDS IN A SUN-SCORCHED LAND AND WILL STRENGTHEN YOUR FRAME. YOU WILL BE LIKE A WELL-WATERED GARDEN, LIKE A SPRING WHOSE WATERS NEVER FAIL."
— ISAIAH 58:11 (NIV)

CHRISTMASTIME: A GREAT TIME TO CONNECT

FOR MOST PEOPLE, December is a hectic month. Most importantly, we should celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The holiday season is also when we get together with friends, fellow employees, and family. And it's a time to express our love and appreciation for each other through gift giving.

The Christmas holiday can be an exciting, fun-filled time or a depressing, lonely time. It's great when family or friends that we haven't seen in a long time come home. However, it can be a sad time for those who miss family because they live too far away or they have passed.

I remember the first Christmas after my father died. I was very close to him. He was always there to encourage, comfort, and give me fatherly advice. I missed him dearly. But instead of focusing on his absence, I concentrated on the fact that he was in my future.

In 1979, Southwestern Bell, which later became AT&T, launched the slogan, "Reach Out and Touch Someone." It was meant to encourage people to use their telephone service to contact their friends and family. That was the era when calling someone outside your city was a toll call. I remember that we always kept our long-distance calls to a minimum because of the expense.

In the age of cell phones, we can call someone instantly regardless of where they live. But we often resort to texting instead. We are guilty of saying, "I'll just text because I don't want to take the time to talk." I am concerned that we are so caught up in technology that we are neglecting to touch people in a personal way.

We encounter hurting people every day. As Christians, it is our privilege and duty to reach out to the lonely, depressed, and brokenhearted. Jesus' mission in coming to this earth is found in Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV), "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*"

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, He delegated that mission to the Church. He also left these instructions to the disciples, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father*" (John 14:12 NKJV).

As Christians, we are responsible to "reach out and touch someone." During the holiday, let's be sensitive to those who are experiencing loss in their life. Each year Ken and I reach out to someone who is going through a difficult situation and include them in our Christmas dinner.

We have reached out to those who were going through a divorce, those who have lost loved ones, and others who have no family close by and would spend Christmas alone. We invited them to celebrate with our family. Often they've said, "We don't want to intrude." Our response always was, "You are not intruding. That is what Christmas is all about—giving to others."

I want to encourage you to reach out and touch someone this Christmas. Let it be a time to minister to the needs of others. Make sure you are not so wrapped up in the busyness of preparing for the holiday that you fail to enjoy time with your family.

I used to get so stressed out about finding the right gifts to surprise my family that I dreaded the Christmas holiday. One year I decided that was ridiculous. So I asked everyone to give me a list of what they wanted. I have even taken them shopping before Christmas and let them pick out their gifts.

Then I would tell them, "You can't have these presents until Christmas." I wrapped and put the gifts under the tree. By the time Christmas came, they had forgotten what they had picked out and were still surprised!

In conclusion, I want to say "thank you" to you, our partners. You make it possible for us to reach the world with the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ. Have a wonderful Christmas!♥

Lynette



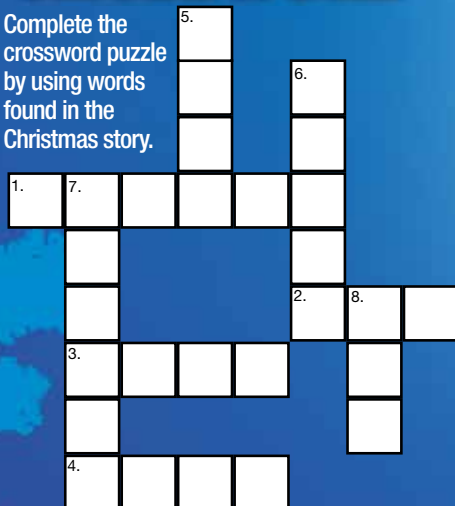


Kids' Page

Fearless, **A**nointed, **I**nward-Led, **T**rustworthy, **H**eirs of God

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Complete the crossword puzzle by using words found in the Christmas story.



1. What was baby Jesus laid in?
2. "We have seen his star in the east and have come to worship _____."
3. What direction did the wise men come from?
4. What the wise men were following
5. "Where is he who is born _____ of the Jews?"
6. One of the gifts given by the wise men
7. The very first Christmas carolers
8. Jesus was born in a stable because there was no room for them in the _____.

jokes & riddles

"A merry heart does good, like medicine."
—Proverbs 17:22 (NKJV)



What did one snowman say to the other snowman?

"Can you smell carrot?"

What do you have in December that you don't have in any other month?

The letter "D."

What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?

"It's Christmas, Eve!"

The CHRISTmas Tree

Hanging there upon the tree, ornaments of every size.
Glittering tinsel, dazzling lights, now they shine before my eyes.
And as I kneel beneath the tree, I find a gift that's just for me
Given by someone who cares, and my name is written there.
Christmas tree, O Christmas tree—O what joy you bring to me!
For in you I can see a glimpse of Him Who died for me.

For, hanging there upon the "tree," Son of God bleeds and dies.
Love and life abundantly, now they shine before my eyes.
And as I kneel beneath *that* tree, I find a gift that's just for me
Given by the One Who cares, and my name is written there.
Calvary, O Calvary—O what joy you bring to me!

For in you I can see the very first CHRISTmas tree. ©1994 Greg Lane



Find the Differences



See if you can find at least 10 differences between these 2 pictures of Christmas carolers.



What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet?

The Christmas alphabet has no "L" (Noel).

NO TWO JUST ALIKE?

They say no two snowflakes are alike. But two of the snowflakes below are exactly the same except for their size. Can you find them?



Answers:
CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD:
1. manger 2. him 3. east 4. star 5. King 6. myrrh
FIND THE DIFFERENCES:
1. girl's scarf missing 2. tie of scarf missing
3. yellow dots on hat missing
4. boy with dark green jacket eyes are different
5. light green jacket snap missing
6. yellow scarf fringe missing 7. red hat top missing
8. bottom of pole missing 9. lines in star missing
10. halos missing over Mary and Joseph.
NO TWO JUST ALIKE:



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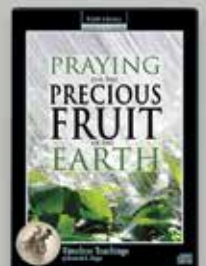
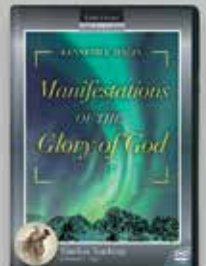
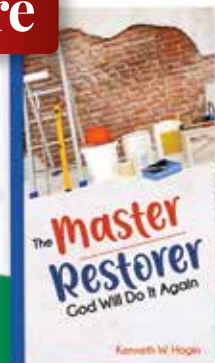
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*There's
Still
Time!*



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