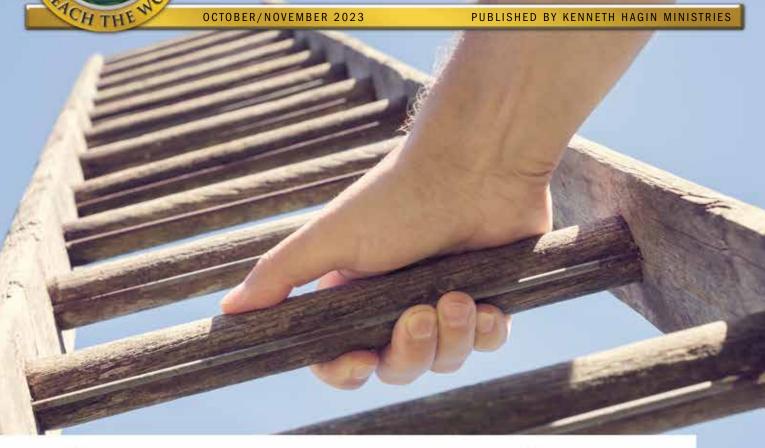


OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2023

PUBLISHED BY KENNETH HAGIN MINISTRIES



CLIMBING OUT

PAGE 10

A DARK CLOUD



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PLEASE SHARE WITH A FRIEND OR RECYCLE.

Overflow With Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving marks a holiday our forefathers in the United States and Canada set aside to thank God. They wanted to thank Him for blessing them and bringing them into a new land rich with material provision. For Christians, however, Thanksgiving also reminds us to thank Him for bringing us into a land rich with spiritual provision—the Kingdom of God (Col. 1:13).

We often fail to receive our needs met from God because we don't thank Him. Thanksgiving is an important expression of our faith. That's because we cannot genuinely thank Him for something unless we believe we have received it.

The Bible tells us the Father has already blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3). He has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). If we really believed those words, we couldn't help but thank Him for blessing us—no matter how bad our situation might seem.

Often we pray over and over about the same problem, but we never thank God for the answer. If we truly believe the Lord has heard and answered our prayer, we will thank Him. But when we continue to pray and pray without thanking Him, we aren't even acknowledging that He has heard us, let alone answered us!

After we ask in faith, thanksgiving will keep us established in faith (Col. 2:7). Instead of talking about what we don't have, we should thank God according to His Word for what we do have. Each time we release our faith by thanking and praising Him, no power in hell can hinder His provision on our behalf.

If we want our lives to overflow with God's blessings, we should thank Him continually from our hearts for what we have. As we overflow with thanks to Him, He will pour out blessings greater than we can imagine. Our gratitude will be the key that unlocks the abundance He has already provided for us. Kennet W. Hagai

Happy Thanksgiving!



Grow Your Faith One Step at a Time KENNETH W. HAGIN

Has your faith ever fizzled out? Discover how you can develop strong faith so you see victory after victory.

Climbing Out From Under a Dark Cloud LYNETTE HAGIN

> On our journey through life, it's important that we reach our destination with joy. Learn how laughter and praise help us when the road gets rough.

Why Me? KENNETH E. HAGIN

Discover where to find answers for your toughest

GROWYOUR I THE THE ONE STEP AT A TIME

ONE TIME AS two blind men were following Jesus, they cried out, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us." Jesus asked if they believed He was able to heal them. "Yes," they replied. Touching their eyes, He said, "According to your faith be it unto you." (See Matt. 9:27–29.)



KENNETH W. HAGIN

Countless Christians today are crying out to God. They're asking Him for many different things. Yet, they are not receiving and they don't understand why. They are disappointed. They may have started out well. But on far too many occasions, their faith has fizzled.

The reason they're not receiving is simple. They are asking God for something that is beyond their ability to believe.

CLIMBING THE FAITH LADDER

Living by faith can be compared to climbing a ladder. The right way to go up a ladder is by taking one step at a time. A person with long legs may think he can take two steps at a time. After all, he'd get to the top quicker that way. What about taking three steps at a time? Have you ever tried to climb a ladder by taking three or four steps at a time? Just think how fast you could get to the top.

It's obvious why taking more than one step at a time is not a good idea. Instead of being quicker, it's actually more difficult and unsafe. A person climbing that way can struggle and maybe even fall and get hurt. The best way to climb a ladder is one step at a time.

The same is true with faith. Trying to take two or three steps or one giant leap at a time is not a good idea. When we do this, we're actually trying to believe God beyond our faith level.

HOW MUCH FAITH IS ENOUGH

Romans 12:3 says, "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." In this verse, the word "the" indicates that all Christians received the same amount of faith when we were born again. So it's not that we don't have enough faith.

Jesus said in Matthew 17:20 that if we had faith the size of a grain of mustard seed, we could move a mountain. We don't need a lot of faith. We just need to exercise the faith we've been given.

Everybody has muscles. But some people develop their muscles more than others do. I'm pretty strong, but if I stand next to a professional bodybuilder, my biceps will look small compared to his. He's developed his muscles more than I've developed mine!

The same is true with faith. Some people have developed their faith muscles far more than others. They can easily believe for something large, while others struggle with receiving small things. THE MORE WE EXERCISE OUR FAITH, THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO SEE THE PROMISES OF GOD MANIFESTED IN OUR LIVES.

No one goes to a gym and immediately bench-presses 400 pounds. That person would hurt himself if he tried. He has to start out with lower weights and build his way up. The same is true with boxing. Someone doesn't start to box one weekend and then try to fight the world champion the next weekend.

We laugh at that because it would be ridiculous. Yet some people hear one sermon on faith and then try to fight for the "world championship."

DAVID'S FAITH WALK

David didn't start out by slaying Goliath. He first fought a lion and a bear. By the time he got to Goliath, he already knew how to believe God. He knew what it was like to step out in faith with nothing but God to rely on.

Practical Steps to Build Strong Faith

- 1. Surround yourself with things that produce faith. Turn off the TV, log off Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, and read your Bible.
- 2. Put your faith in God's Word, not in someone's experience. Let God answer your prayers His way. Your answer may come an entirely different way than someone else's.
- 3. Obev God's Word. God requires all of His children to walk in the light of Scripture.
- 4. Remain humble. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Realize you would not be where you are today without God's grace and love.
- 5. Be bold. When you know who you are in Christ, you can boldly demand of the devil your rights in Christ.

David didn't use the armor King Saul wanted him to wear. He hadn't proven it (1 Sam. 17:39). Some Christians make the mistake of trying to do what worked for somebody else. They say, "Well, so-and-so was in the same situation that I'm in now. I'm going to do what he did."

When we do this, we're basing our faith on another person's faith. To get results, we must base our faith only on God's Word.

David wasn't accustomed to a shield, helmet, or other armor. He was accustomed to his shepherd's garment, a staff, and a pouch on his side with stones in it. He had a slingshot and he knew how to use it. King Saul's armor didn't fit him. He didn't try to make what worked for King Saul work for him.

FAITH EXERCISES

A good way to exercise our faith muscles is to believe God for something every day. Make it something that is attainable that day.

In 1974 when we started Rhema, I left home every morning with nothing in my pocket except an empty billfold, a pocketknife, and a set of keys. If I wanted a cup of coffee, a cold drink, or lunch, I had to believe God for it. I never told anybody I didn't have any money. I just trusted God.

Without fail, after I'd teach and go back to my office, a dollar or two and sometimes five would be on my desk.

Later, when Craig and I wanted to ride off-road motorcycles, I believed God for the money to buy the motorcycles and equipment. Even if I had the cash, I would trust God for it instead, because I understood the importance of keeping my ability to believe Him expanded to the limit.

I learned how important it is to believe God for something every day. I know for a fact that if I hadn't continually exercised my faith in Rhema's early days, I would not be able

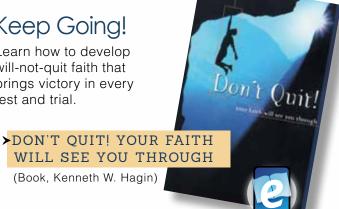
to believe God for the millions of dollars it takes to operate this ministry today.

If we don't continually exercise our faith, it will shrink. But the more we exercise it, the more it will grow. Instead of seeing our faith fizzle, we will see victory after victory after victory!

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INSTRUCTOR

Pull your 'Selfie' Together

JOE DUININCK

WE LIVE IN A selfie-driven world. Millions of selfies are taken every year in the United States. On top of that, people spend millions of hours fixing, editing, and filtering their selfies to make themselves look different than they actually do.

The average person is constantly working on their "selfie." Americans spend billions of dollars each year on apparel, tattoos, beauty services, surgical and non-surgical procedures, and coffee and energy drinks. These are just a few ways people are spending their time, energy, and money to work on their "selfie"—their presentation.

When I look at the Christian community, I can't help but wonder if our "selfie" is lining up with where we should be because I see many Christians living in fear. Many of them are confused about their calling. They don't know their purpose for being alive.

From the pew to the pulpit, Christians of all ages are dealing with depression, anxiety, and discouragement. Many seem to be weary while on their journey. It causes me to think, "Where are we at? What should we do? What can we do?" The answer is, we have to pull our "selfies" together.

For Christians, pulling ourselves together doesn't mean getting rid of wrinkles or gray hair. God has given us the tools we need to present ourselves in the image of who He created us to be. And it starts by looking in the correct mirror.

In the selfie world, people are always seeking recognition. They fix themselves and become preoccupied with what others think of them. But Christians shouldn't look to the world for feedback. The world is not our mirror. Neither are any of these:

- >Parents
- **>**Spouse
- >Kids
- **>**Boss
- **>**Employees
- >Pastor
- >Personality profile
- >Love language
- >Past difficulties and failures
- >Medical diagnosis
- >Gender, age, or physical attributes

Some of those things can help us learn about ourselves. **BUT THE ONLY SAFE AND ACCURATE MIRROR IS GOD'S WORD.** The Word of God overrides all mirrors of the selfie world

MIRRORS REVEAL THE TRUTH

Through the mirror of the Word, we can know who we are, what we can have, what God has called us to do, and how we can have the power to do that. Our mirror is Godbreathed, and it's useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that we may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (See 2 Tim. 3:16–17 NIV.)

AS WE LOOK INTO THE MIRROR OF GOD'S WORD, IT SHOWS US THE TRUTH ABOUT WHO WE ARE, AND THE REVEALER OF TRUTH LIVES IN US.

ADJUST YOUR SELFIE

We must make the Word our only mirror—our selfie-taker for life. How do we do that? By faith. Galatians 2:20 says, "We have been crucified with Christ. The life we now live in the body, we live by faith in the Son of God."

The Lord has empowered us to walk out the life of faith. The Revealer helps us adjust our selfie when we look into the mirror of the Word and do what it says. As we do, before we know it, we'll find ourselves in God's will—overcoming obstacles and walking in the Promised Land.

As you adjust your selfie, remember three simple things:

- 1. God saved you because He wanted to. You are a valuable and precious treasure to Him.
- 2. If you're still breathing, there's a reason for you to be alive. God has a purpose for your life.
- 3. Whatever God calls you to do, He empowers and equips you for. You don't have to do it alone.

If you're feeling weary and discouraged on the journey, it's time to find your selfie. You won't find it using the world's systems. Sheer willpower isn't enough. Let the Revealer speak to you as you look in the mirror of the Word. You have a purpose. So pull your selfie together.

[Editor's Note: Joe Duininck is an instructor at Rhema USA.]



"The only safe and accurate mirror is **God's Word.**"



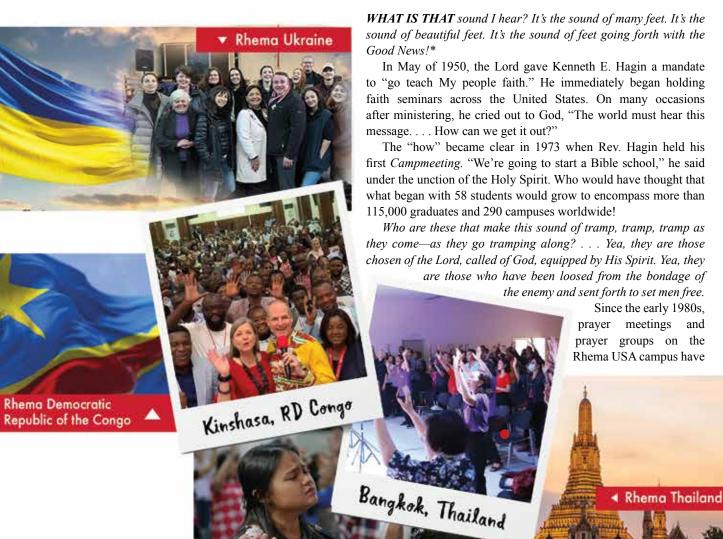
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Fast Facts

• 116,381 Worldwide Rhema graduates • **290** Campus in **56** nations

Rhema India

• 3,476 Churches (U.S. & International) pastored by Rhema graduates

prayed for the harvest. Over the years, we have seen those prayers being answered. The fall of the Berlin Wall in Germany and the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union have resulted from prayer. As these prayers have continued, we have seen more doors open to the Gospel.

Where are they going? They're going unto the uttermost parts of the earth. They're going where an empty hand is reaching out for help. They're going where the hungry cryhungry for the bread of this life and hungry for the true Bread of Life. . . . They're going around the world to tell the story, to proclaim the message, to do the work that God called them to do.

Every Christian plays a part in spreading the light of the Gospel in this dark and dying world. Some are called to go; others are called to send. Whichever we do, we all share in the reward of souls

Rhema Italy

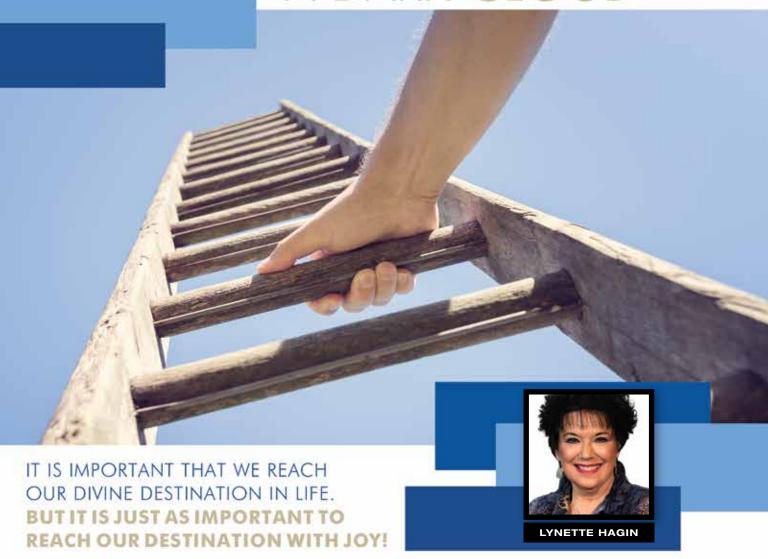
won for God's Kingdom (1 Sam. 30:24 NIV). When we all work together, the job gets done. The need is great, for there are many souls to be won. More men and women—young and old alike—need to be trained so they can go to every corner of the earth.

* The paragraphs in italics are from a prophetic utterance given by Kenneth E. Hagin at the 1979 RBTC graduation.



CLIMBING OUT

FROM UNDER A DARK CLOUD



ONE DAY MY best friend, Lanell, called me because she was having a terrible day. She was feeling down. When I answered the phone, she blurted out, "Do you like me?"

"What planet is she coming from?" I thought. But I said, "Of course, I like you. Why?"

"I'm having some problems today. I feel like nobody likes me, and I had to talk to somebody who likes me."

I assured Lanell that I liked her and began telling her one funny story after another until she burst out laughing.

After a few minutes, Lanell said, "I really needed to laugh today!"

Sometimes we need a good laugh to cheer us up and get us out of the depressing moods that try to come against us. Proverbs 17:22 says, "A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones" (NKJV).

All my life I was extremely close to my father. I was definitely "daddy's girl." One of the most devastating times I have been through was when my precious daddy passed away. Even though he was almost 90, I wasn't ready for him to go home to be with the Lord. It was like cutting my earthly umbilical cord, and it hurt.

I'll never forget the Sunday after Dad's memorial service. My husband and I had visited a church in Dallas that morning, but somehow I hadn't received the touch I needed from the Lord. When we got back to the hotel, a horrible feeling of depression started to close in on me.

I recognized what it was and knew I had to do something. I turned on the television, hoping to find something uplifting to watch. But I couldn't find any Christian stations. As I flipped through the channels, I kept thinking, "Lord, I need to hear something that lifts my spirits."

Art Linkletter's face flashed across the screen, and I remembered how I always enjoyed watching his programs. He was celebrating his 90th birthday and looked wonderful. He began describing what helped him to be successful through the years. He said, "I've never stopped learning. I'm always looking for something new to learn. And I've always kept laughter in my heart."

By the time I finished listening to Art Linkletter, I was laughing and my spirits were lifted.

That program wasn't the encouragement I expected to receive from the Lord. But it proves that God is not limited in what He can use to cheer us up and encourage our hearts.

It shows why it's important to look for the tiniest things God may send our way to encourage us. We need to reach out and receive every bit of encouragement we can from the Lord.

THE PRAISE CURE

I remember a situation in our ministry one time when one of our departments had somehow gotten off track. The entire department seemed to be in chaos. As I worked to get things back in order, I felt a cloud of depression trying to come over me.

I told my staff members, "Please get me some music tapes! I need to listen to joyful, upbeat music. I don't want to hear any slow songs. I need lively praise music to help get my spirits back up again."

We started bringing music tapes to work and played uplifting praise music all day long. I said, "We're not going to get depressed. We're going to get ourselves back on the right course with joy!" And we did!

It is important that we reach our divine destination in life. But it is just as important to reach our destination with joy! The Apostle Paul said in Acts 20:24, "None of these things move me ... so that I might finish my course with joy." If it was important for Paul to finish his course with joy, it should be important for us too.

Isaiah 61:3 tells us God has given us a "praise cure" to help us overcome the depression and discouragement that try to come against us in this life. He's given us "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." The Lord is saying to us, "Praise Me during those dark and troubled times, and I will set you free."

If you want to rise above the dark clouds of depression and discouragement, surround yourself with uplifting music that ministers to you. There's nothing like praise music that speaks directly to your heart.

When Satan attacks you with discouragement and depression, begin praising God. Tell the Lord how much you appreciate Him. And remember, the Lord inhabits the praises of His people (Ps. 22:3).

We respond to the praises of our children, don't we? When a little girl crawls into her daddy's lap and says, "I love you so much, Daddy. You're such a great daddy!" his heart just melts. When she asks him for something, the answer usually is, "Honey, whatever you want." And he gives her even more than she asks for.

When we praise our Heavenly Father, He opens His arms and says, "Child, you can have whatever you want. Is that all you want? I have more for you!" Then He surrounds us with His presence. And that's when the cloud lifts, because fullness of joy is in His presence (Ps. 16:11). Those dark clouds of depression and discouragement can't stay in the presence of our God!

DON'T CAMP IN THE VALLEY

Have you ever experienced depression? If you have, you know how dark clouds can roll in on you. Everything around you starts getting darker and darker. If you allow yourself to be engulfed in that darkness, it will surround you. But thank God, the Lord has made a way for you to climb out from under those

If you're feeling down and discouraged, call on the Lord, and He will give you the encouragement you need. Start praising Him and listening to praise music, and you will feel your spirit lifted. And always make room for laughter in your life.

YES, YOU MAY WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY, BUT YOU'RE NOT **SUPPOSED TO CAMP THERE.** You're supposed to cross over to the other side.

On the other side is joy, peace, and an assignment from the Lord. Ask Him to let that assignment burn so brightly in your heart that it lights your path all the way to victory!♥

SPECIAL OFFER

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OCTOBER 18-20

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806 E. LYNN BLVD STERLING, IL 61081 815-626-1827 PASTORS SCOTT & TERRI PORTER WED. 7:00 P.M. THURS.-FRI. 10:30 A.M. & 7 P.M.

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EXPECTANCY FILLED the air as believers from across the U.S. and around the world gathered on the Rhema campus. *Campmeeting 2023* was packed with energizing praise, timely preaching, and moves of the Holy Spirit. From *Summer Blitz* to Rhema Kids to the adult services, all ages experienced encounters with God. Here is a taste of what attendees heard.



THE HAND OF THE LORD

KENNETH W. HAGIN

God's hand is on those who will step out of the boat and begin doing something for Him. He will enable you to do things you've never done before. **GOD WILL OPEN DOORS THAT HAVE BEEN CLOSED AND STRAIGHTEN THE CROOKED PLACES.** He will make a way where there has been no way. God will lift you out of the valley and set your feet to dancing. It's time to realize the hand of God is there for you. He wants to do more for you than you've ever seen.

TAKING JESUS TO A LOST AND HURTING WORLD

CRAIG W. HAGIN

We live in a generation that wants to see miracles. They are looking for somebody to lead them into the Kingdom. THEY ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS ENOUGH BOLDNESS AND WHO'S WILLING TO TOUCH THEIR GENERATION. It's time for revival. But we have to be willing to step out. We have to be willing to let God move in our services. God is looking for people to step out where it looks like they can't step out. It doesn't matter that it's impossible because Jesus is with us.





ENDURANCE IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

DENISE HAGIN BURNS

We need to develop our endurance. It is an important quality to have because life is tough. Here are two things I want you to do every day to build your endurance. First, feed your faith. If you're not eating the Word daily, you won't make it through the journey God has for you. Second, fix your focus. WHEREVER YOU'RE LOOKING IS WHERE YOU'RE GOING. Is your focus on Jesus or on the problems around you? If you do these two things every day, you will be complete and mature, lacking nothing.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR CAMPMEETING 2024! JULY 21–26







"Our race is to become like Jesus. As we run our race, we won't grow weary in our soul when we consider Jesus. We're going to throw off the sin and the weight. We're going to begin to move through life to win and become more like Jesus."

// MARK BINTLIFF



"We ought to be going from faith to faith, glory to glory. It will take another degree of glory for this generation to see the glory of God. To see His glorious Church shining so brightly, they want to run into it. Nothing else will satisfy them."

// MARCI GLISSON



"Is God faithful? Before releasing your faith, that question has to be settled first. You have to know that God will do what He said He would do, and He will do it for you. Then you can be immovable as you stand on the promises of God."

// CHARLES COWAN



"The anointing of the Holy Spirit is called the oil of joy. Some of you need an oil change. One touch of the anointing will destroy every yoke the enemy has tried to put on your life and reconnect you to your divine destiny in Christ."

// MARK HANKINS



"Jesus said, 'As the Father loved me, so have I loved you.' When we understand how much God loves us, it's easy to have faith and trust Him. Without this revelation, it's hard to believe God will bless us and do what He promised in His Word."

// KENNETH ESTRADA



"We need to constantly rediscover the truths we've learned. We have allowed the enemy to steal the faith we once walked in and the power of faith that was in our lives because now the Word is more of a memory than it is a revelation."

// DARRELL HUFFMAN



"God knew us before we were formed in our mothers' womb. Books were written beforehand about our destinies. Everyone has a purpose. And just like Jesus was sent to the earth to redeem mankind, God needs every one of us to fulfill our purpose."

// LYNETTE ESTRADA



"We acknowledge every good thing that is in us. Greater is He that is in us. Where is He? In you! Greatness is in you. Great power, great joy, great potential, great anointing, great ability. If you don't get good at acknowledging the good, your faith won't be effective."

// RODDY SHAFFER



"Jesus is coming back for a church without spot or wrinkle. The next greatest move of the Spirit of God will be a church so mature that the glory in the house attracts people on the outside to come in."

// EARL GLISSON



"What are you going through today? I encourage you to look to the peace of God that dwells in you. Often, we are geared toward responding to situations from a natural standpoint. But if we listen to the Holy Spirit, He will lead us into paths of peace."

// PHILLIP SLAUGHTER



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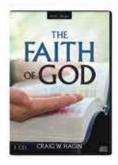
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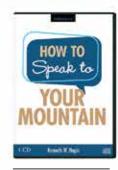
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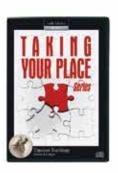
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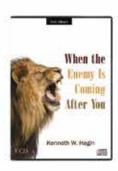
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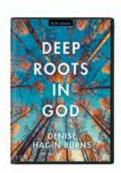
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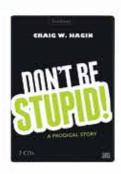
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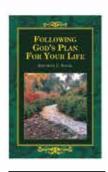
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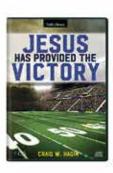
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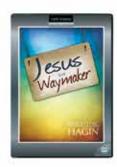
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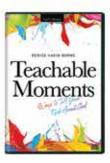
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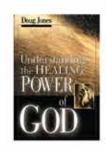
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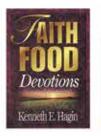
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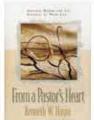
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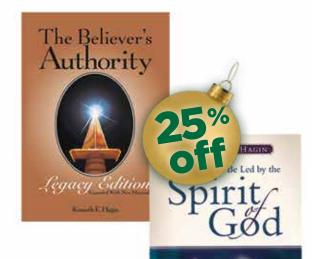
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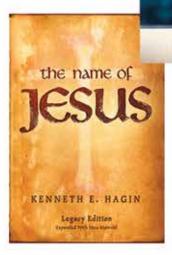
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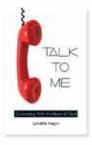




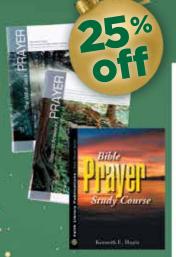
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FIVE ATTACKS

ON EVERY MAN'S SOUL







JESUS WAS TEMPTED in every way we are, yet He didn't sin (Heb. 4:15). Before the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness, Jesus was full of the Spirit (Luke 4:1). So when the devil tempted Him with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eves, and the pride of life. He was prepared. Jesus answered "It is written . . ." to every temptation.

Scripture says we are overcomers. But that means we'll have challenges to overcome. I want to talk about five attacks every man faces in his soul and ways to overcome them.

PRIDE

Pride is not coachable. Some men never get started on their purpose because they can't humble themselves to learn, grow, and change. Growth without change and some pain is impossible.

Pride makes excuses. Humility makes adjustments. Pride lies when sin is confronted and errors exposed. A hardened heart repents only when it is caught. A deceived heart doesn't repent even when there's undeniable evidence. Pride is no laughing matter.

YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

Identity theft is a big problem today. Here's my question to men: Do you know the Word well enough to resist the enemy's lies that try to steal your identity in Christ?

Renewing your mind to who you are in Christ is your identity theft protection. First John 3:1 (MSG) says, "What marvelous love the Father has extended to us! . . . We're called children of God! That's who we really are." Look in the mirror of God's Word and let it change you.

PASSIVITY

Matthew 11:12 (NKJV) says, "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." A passive attitude lets things happen without resistance. If you don't fight, you'll lose by default.

Passive people want good things to happen to them but don't do anything to make them happen. You can't have what someone else has if you don't do what they did to get it.

ISOLATION

Have you ever watched a nature show where lions are hunting for food? Which animals do they go after? People often say the weakest. But it's the most isolated.

We need to run inside the protection of our pack—our company. That's why my wife and I come back to Rhema for conferences. Our roots get nourished. The Spirit of God refills us. We move forward better equipped to win our battles.

King David was at his best when he was connected to Jonathan or his mighty men. He fell the hardest when he was isolated and not accountable. He looked at things he shouldn't have because he was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

If you've been hurt, separating yourself might seem safe. But isolation exposes you to more danger than it protects you from. It cuts you off from the assembly and the supply of the Spirit. Isolation sets you up to be an easy target.

LUST

Regardless of the socioeconomic class, every man is tempted with lust. Porn is a huge cultural problem. Why? Because it's anonymous, accessible, and affordable.

Statistically, there are men in church looking at porn. How do men overcome this? By making adjustments. Have you ever heard of the word repent? It means to change your direction. Turn to God for His help, and He will set you free.

Proverbs 28:13 (NKJV) says, "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."

Fall back in love with God's Word. It will heal your soul. To win these battles, you need grace every day. But it's the humble who get more grace.

Pray and stay filled with the Holy Spirit, or you will lose heart and quit. Catch up on your praise and fight the good fight of faith. Make sure you have a pastor over you and that your pastor has license to speak into your life. Choose your friends wisely. They'll make or break vour life.

[Editor's Note: Joe Coyne pastors Harvest Church in Greensboro, North Carolina. This article was adapted from his A Call to Arms 2019 message.]



Men's Conference.

Fall back in love with God's Word. IT WILL HEAL YOUR SOUL.



As long as questions crowd your mind, you'll have doubts. And as long as you have doubts, your faith will be hindered.

I know from my own experience on a bed of sickness that I had questions in my mind that had to be settled before my faith could be effective. I had to find the answers myself. That's why I was bedfast for 16 months from ages 15 to 17.

Sometimes it would take me weeks and months to find the answer to a question. And just about the time I found one answer, the devil would bring up something else.

For a long time, the devil tried to tell me God had afflicted me and was punishing me for some wrongdoing in my life. I listened to that for a while. But finally I said, "Devil, I was born this way. I was born with a deformed heart and serious internal trouble. What would be the use of God punishing me for something I don't even know about? That must not be true."

Sometimes the devil would say, "You're sick because of something your parents did." That's what the disciples thought about the man who was blind from birth. They asked Jesus, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2).

Some people misquote Jesus' reply in verse 3 as "Neither

God could heal him." Wouldn't that be a terrible

thing to accuse God of? Here is a grown man, blind from birth, and God made him blind just so He could heal him? If that were true, God would not be much of a God, would He?

But that is not what this scripture says. It says, "but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me" (vv. 3-4). Notice that Jesus said, "I must work the works of him that sent me." He immediately did the works of God by healing the man.

When the devil saw I was going to believe in healing anyway, he tried to convince me it was not God's will to heal me. He said, "Healing is real, but it is not God's will to heal everybody. You're one of those it is not His will to heal."

Many people believe the lie that it is not God's will to heal them. YET, IT IS ILLOGICAL TO BELIEVE GOD HEALS, AND AT THE SAME TIME, BELIEVE HE WON'T HEAL YOU.

I rejected this argument too. I kept searching for answers.

All I knew was what I had heard preachers and other people say. Some said, "Your sickness is God's work. God is doing all of it." I could not accept that explanation. Others said, "Well, maybe

God didn't commission it, but He permits it for a purpose." That is about the same thing.

I NEEDED ANSWERS

I was born again while bedfast, but even after that, questions arose in my mind: Why was I born this way? Is God the author of the sufferings in the world today? Who is responsible for all of this?

"Why me?" I asked God.

"Why did I have to be born as a premature baby who weighed less than two pounds? Did You cause me to be born prematurely?

"Why did I have to be afflicted? Why couldn't I have had a normal childhood? Did You rob me of my childhood?

"Why couldn't I have known happiness? Are You the One Who caused me to sit and watch as others ran, jumped, and played?

"I am bedfast, and five doctors say I have to die. I didn't have anything to do with it. God, did You?

"I had hopes of growing up, marrying, and having a family, but I will never know what it is if I die now. Do I have to die?"

Such questions demand an answer, but nobody really gives you an answer. They will give you some theological concept that does not amount to anything. But thank God, the Bible has the answer. We can believe God's Word and be delivered, or we can doubt His Word and remain bound.

I'm so glad I found the answer. I found it in Acts 10:38: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

This verse told me that Satan is the oppressor. Satan is the one who caused me to be born prematurely with a deformed heart. Satan is the one who caused my body to be almost totally paralyzed and gave me an incurable blood disease. Satan is the one who kept me bound for 16 months on a bed of sickness.

But Jesus is the Deliverer! Jesus is the Lifegiver! Jesus is the Savior—God manifested in the flesh!

I never was so thrilled with anything in my life as when I discovered this truth! Yes, God's Word is truth.

After I saw what the Bible said and received my healing, I crawled out of bed and said, "I am not going to die! I am going to live, and someday I am going to have a wife and children."

I was 17 years old then—just a boy. I had never heard healing preached in my life, but the Bible said it, I believed it, and that settled it. I told everyone I met what I was going to do.

Today I am the result of what I said in those days. I have enjoyed perfect health, and God gave me a lovely wife and family. Faith works! That is the reason I get happy preaching about it. I know what He has done for me. ♥

[Editor's Note: This article was adapted from Kenneth E. Hagin's minibook *Don't Blame God.*]

FAITH IN ACTION

Speak the Word!

Say the following confession. Get it into your spirit. It will help you get and keep your healing.

Healing belongs to me. It belongs to me because sickness is from the enemy. It belongs to me because sickness is a curse, and Jesus redeemed me from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13). [Specify sickness] can't stay in my body. By Jesus' stripes, I am healed and whole (1 Peter 2:24)!

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WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT . . .



FOR MANY, Thanksgiving is just a holiday to gather with family and friends, eat turkey, and watch football. But what does the Bible say about giving thanks?

Throughout the scriptures, we see verse after verse highlighting the important role thankfulness has in the Christian life, despite the circumstances. As believers, we shouldn't limit giving thanks to a single day. It should be such a habit that it naturally flows out of us every day. We should be so full of appreciation for everything God has done for us that we just can't keep silent.

The following scriptures will help you begin to be grateful or remain motivated to live in gratitude. Incorporate them into your daily devotional time. And share them with your family and friends as you gather around the holiday table.

1 SAMUEL 12:24

24 Be sure to fear the Lord and faithfully serve him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you.

1 CHRONICLES 16:8

8 Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done.

PSALM 50:7, 23

7 "O my people, listen as I speak. . . .

23 "Giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors me."

1 It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to the Most High.

2 It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening.

PSALM 100:4

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name.

PSALM 103:1-2

1 Let all that I am praise the Lord; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name.

2 Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me.

PSALM 107:8-9

8 Let them praise the Lord for his great love and for the wonderful things he has done for them.

9 For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

PSALM 136:1

1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.

EPHESIANS 5:4

4 Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes-these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God.

FPHFSIANS 5:20

20 And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

COLOSSIANS 3:17

17 And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

18 Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ lesus.

HEBREWS 12:28

28 Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe.

HEBREWS 13:15

15 Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name.

JAMES 1:17

17 Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.



PRAYER FOR A HEART OF THANKSGIVING

Lord, forgive me for neglecting to give You thanks and praise each day. Forgive me for whining and complaining instead of being grateful. Teach me to pray continually, to be joyful always, and to give thanks in all my circumstances. Help me to start fresh and make daily praise and thanksgiving a habit. I want to begin by thanking You for Your love and Your grace and for all the times You've already blessed me, in the Name of Jesus.

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SEED houghts

/ 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)

FORGIVING OTHERS

I LOVED HEARING my father-in-law teach on Mark 11:22–24. For a point of reference, let's review those scriptures. "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Reading and believing this passage raised him from the deathbed at age 16. He spoke on those verses often. I never grew tired of them. However, I wasn't as excited about the scriptures that came immediately after.

He continued to Mark 11:25–26, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." Then he would say, "If you don't practice Mark 11:25, your faith will not work."

If we want to live a successful life, we must learn to forgive. Some people find it easy to forgive. Others do not. Forgiveness is not an option for the Christian. It's a command.

Forgiveness isn't easy to master, is it? When someone hurts us, lets us down, or disappoints us, it's hard to forgive them. We can be gracious and understanding when it happens once. But when someone hurts us several times, we determine we can't forgive them again. Jesus understood how important forgiveness was. I'm sure He knew we would have many opportunities to forgive each other.

Matthew 18 covers many subjects that Jesus instructed His disciples on. They asked questions and He answered them. Peter asked in Matthew 18:21–22 (NLT) " 'Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?' 'No, not seven times, 'Jesus replied, 'but seventy times seven!'"

The Jews of that day taught you could forgive someone as many as three times for an offense, but after the fourth time, there was no forgiveness. Peter knew Jesus' heart of compassion, so he doubled the number and added one. "Is seven times enough, Lord?" What did Jesus say? Seventy times seven, which equals 490 times.

Most people have difficulty forgiving one time. I'm sure your thoughts could be like Peter's, "Why would we want to forgive seven times?" Jesus was saying it's not about a number; it's about forgiving. In the light of the enormous forgiveness that God gives us, how can we do anything but be just as forgiving?

Jesus said in Matthew 5:7 (NASB), "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." Any wrong that has been done to us cannot compare to the wrong we've done in God's eyes, and He has forgiven us. He sent His Son to die on our behalf to pay the debt we owed for our sins.

When we refuse to forgive others, we are not only breaking God's law, we are breaking His heart. *Forgive* is defined as "to cease to feel resentment against an offender." Forgiveness is a choice. Just as we choose to hold a grudge—to keep a record of all the wrongs done to us—we choose to forgive.

Forgiveness isn't an action of the mind or emotions. It's an action of the will. If you wait until you feel like forgiving, you'll never get there. Being hurt is an emotional event and emotions don't heal by themselves. They heal with the help of your will.

The Bible says a lot about forgiving. "Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:31–32 NLT).

How do we forgive? Jesus gives us the formula in Matthew 5:44, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." The Lord brought these scriptures to me years ago when I was struggling with forgiveness. It changed my life, and it will do

the same for you.





"AND "I" BELONG IN

JESUS CHRIST

The greatest thing the letters "U" and "I" will ever do is be in the Name of JESUS CHRIST. And the greatest thing "YOU" and "I" will ever do is be "in" Jesus Christ too! So, what do you and I get when we are in Christ Jesus? Here are just a few things that we have "IN CHRIST." But the letters "U" and "I" are missing, so you have to fill in the blanks with the correct letters to complete the words:

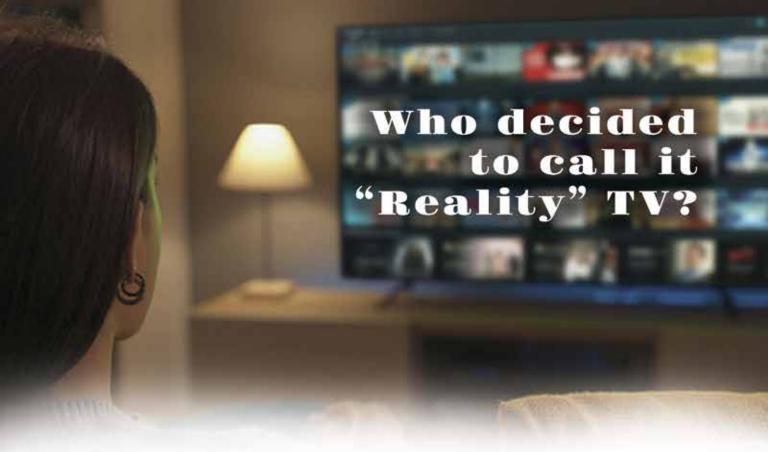
2. R GHTEO SNESS (2 Cor. 5:21)

3. J_ST_F_CAT_ON (Rom. 4:25)

. A_THOR_TY (Luke 9:1)

It's wonderful to know that we have all of these things "IN CHRIST." But, we must also remember that before we can be "IN CHRIST" there is first something "U" and "I" must be "WITH CHRIST"—

5. CR_C_F_ED (Gal. 2:20)



Let God show you true reality—the reality of His love.

The Bible says we all have sinned.

"All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory" (Romans 3:23 CEV).

"The Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin" (Galatians 3:22 NLT).

And the penalty for sin is death.

"Adam sinned, and that sin brought death into the world. Now everyone has sinned, and so everyone must die" (Romans 5:12 CEV).

"The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23 NLT).

But the good news is, God loves us so much that He sent Jesus, His only Son, to die for us and pay the penalty for our sins.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16 NKJV).

"God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful" (Romans 5:8 CEV).

To be saved—to receive everlasting life—we need to call on the Name of the Lord Jesus.

"The Lord will save everyone who asks for his help" (Acts 2:21 CEV).

"You will be saved, if you honestly say, 'Jesus is Lord,' and if you believe with all your heart that God raised him from death. God will accept you and save you, if you truly believe this and tell it to others. The Scriptures say no one who has faith will be disappointed. . . . All who call out to the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9–11, 13 CEV).♥

ARE YOU READY TO EXPERIENCE THE REALITY OF GOD'S LOVE?

If so, say this simple prayer from your heart:

God, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. I admit that I have sinned and fallen short of Your glory. I am asking for Your help. Please forgive me and wash me clean from all my sin. Thank You for sending Jesus to die for me and pay the penalty for my sins. Jesus, I ask You to be my Savior and my Lord. I receive God's free gift of eternal life. Thank You for saving me!

If you have prayed this prayer for the first time, we want to send you some materials to help you in your new life with Jesus. Call us or send us an email today! We would love to hear from you!



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