

Christian Life Magazine

TAKE MY HAND

BY AMY MOSER

PAGE 5

INSIDE THE COVER:

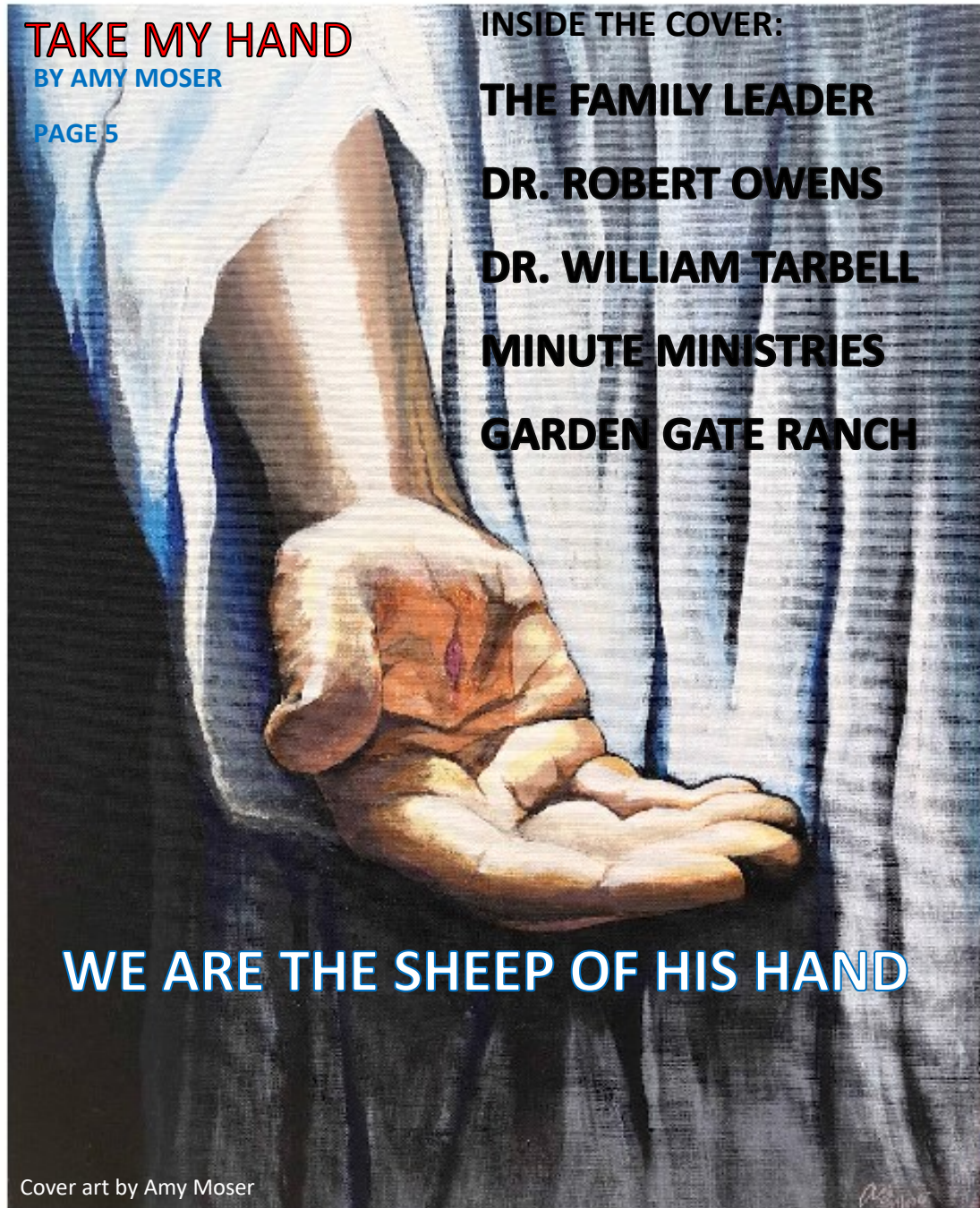
THE FAMILY LEADER

DR. ROBERT OWENS

DR. WILLIAM TARBELL

MINUTE MINISTRIES

GARDEN GATE RANCH



Cover art by Amy Moser

CHRISTIAN LIFE MAGAZINE

A Premier Christian/Political Publication!

Contributors

The Family Leader

Iowans For Tax Relief

Dr. Robert Owens

Dr. William Tarbell

Biologist-David Faircloth

Brenda Long Founder-Garden Gate Ranch

Pastor Don Freeman

Pastor Brad Hendrickson-Minute Ministry

Evangelist Chris Rose-Christ Rose Ministries

PCCI Director-Rita Baker

Amy Moser

Jennifer Boer

Brenda Hendrickson

Darlene Hacker

La Vonne Maxwell

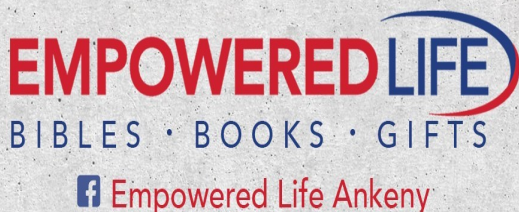
Psalms 95:7

**“For He is our God,
and we are the people of His pasture,
and the sheep of
His hand. Today if
you hear His voice,**

PURE GOSPEL PUBLICATION

A Special thank you to Empowered Life

Visit their store today & Get Equipped!



Equipping You for Success in Christ

2310 SE Delaware • Ankeny, Iowa 50021 • (515)964-8609

Dear Reader,

Some time ago I sat in a chair opposite a man who had a level of power that would either allow or disallow a testimony of Christ's love and redemptive power to be heard, wherever it could be read. This testimony was mine, given to me by the Lord Jesus to share with the world. "Go out and feed many" is what the Lord Jesus requires of me. As my heart pounded with anticipation of what print media could accomplish, I began to pour out my heart, revealing my past, and sharing the ultimate victory of new life, the life of Jesus in mine. At the end of our meeting the man said, "No", and the possibilities of what could have been achieved were dashed. I was filled with disappointment.

When one door closes, another door opens! Asking God for my own platform, gaining God's permission to broadcast His love, and His redemptive promises in the Life of His Son Jesus, without restriction, Christian Life Magazine has become a reality. These reasons are why we stepped out in faith!

Christian Life Magazine is a Premier Christian/Political Publication. In its pages you will hear of God's redemptive power and evidence of His love. You will also hear from godly men and women who labor

in today's political trenches on our behalf. Additionally, we invite you, the reader, to have your testimony published in Christian Life Magazine! How has God touched your life? Submit your story to ChristianLifeMagazine.org today!

What fits well into this publication is the Truth, setting the shackled free. Each writer has received Salvation, and it is our hope that you will witness the outstretched hand of God through His Son Jesus Christ. Needless to say, Christian Life Magazine will publish the name of Jesus!

Christian Life Magazine unapologetically proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ unto the Christian and into the ripened harvest fields. Because of this we are calling for "Ministry Messengers" to send this message of hope out into all the world.

Please see our website for additional details in how you can become a "Ministry Messenger", proclaiming the Truth into a dying world.

Go to ChristianLifeMagazine.org today and prayerfully consider becoming a "Ministry Messenger".

Be blessed,

Christian Life Magazine

**For truth
from the
Word of God,
He listens to**



truth993.com | Des Moines, IA
515-251-2663 | crohloff@truthnetwork.com



God's Beauty Everywhere

Standing on the East side of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and Golden Gate Bridge were fogged in. As I turned around there was a Western Honey Bee on ready to bloom English Lavender. She was prying open a flower to get to the nectar, God's bounty for the hive.

Instead of griping about the pictures I didn't get, I took a picture that has been one of my favorites. Having enjoyed it for many months I just donated it to the Hope Lodge (American Cancer Society) in Iowa City for the enjoyment of University of Iowa Hospital cancer patients staying during treatment.



TAKE MY HAND

BY AMY MOSER

Blog Address:

[HTTPS://mountainsandmustardseedssite.wordpress.com](https://mountainsandmustardseedssite.wordpress.com)

Phoenix, Arizona

Take My Hand

I sat in the spine surgeon's office, deflated. I was preoccupied with pain and surgery number nineteen looming on the horizon. The Physician's Assistant, for whom I had a particular fondness, came in and spoke to me about what was ahead. Claire has a smile that warms your heart, a twinkle in her eyes when she smiles, and is strikingly intelligent. I'd firmly come to believe that twinkle in her eyes, to be God's spirit. When we were finished talking about my broken-down body, we began to talk about God. This was not new. I had come to look forward to and enjoy these brief talks. She shared a faith in God, and I felt an unexplainable kinship with her because of it. I could have never known she was about to tell me a testimony that would have a profound impact on me. Claire's expression changed. It was soft but searching. I perceived she was discerning a divine urge to share something. She searched my eyes inquisitively and began to speak, "When my mother was eleven years old she was sick with measles encephalitis. She actually died while being transported to the hospital by ambulance and was blue when she arrived at the hospital. The ER doctor said he normally would never have taken that type of case into

surgery, but he felt he needed to. He was able to resuscitate her and put a tracheostomy in place and stabilize her vital signs. She was in a coma for three days. At 3 pm on Good Friday, while still unconscious, she saw God's hand and the arm of His robe come down and open the palm of His hand to her. She felt an overwhelming warming and cooling sensation take place all over her body, and then she awoke. She felt that God had placed her spirit back into her body." I was astounded at this beautiful miracle. Claire and I sat together trading testimonies for a few more brief wonderful moments. By the time the visit was over, we both had taken turns wiping tears from our eyes, and she gave me a big hug before she left. I thought about that miraculous testimony all the way home and from time to time after that. While I endured surgery on my spine, and some miserable complications, I consciously tried to picture God's hand outstretched. I placed my worries there, and then my life. I did that over and over for months. Post-surgery I had an allergic reaction to the glue that held my incision closed. I developed huge, itchy and stinging blisters on my incision. When that finally resolved, my incision would open and drain but never fully heal. The whole situation felt long and tiring. This warranted another

minor surgery to correct the incision that wasn't healing. That fantastic Physicians Assistant was with me the whole way, walking me through all of it, even calling me during the weekend when my incision had opened yet again. To say that Claire is a fantastic provider seems so puny compared to the impact she has on the lives of her patients. She is a blessing. When I'd finally healed enough, I longed to do something very special for her. I wanted to do something that would be a blessing to her, as she had been such a blessing to me. Claire had shared such a beautiful testimony that had reassured me through so much. She'd also cared for me for nearly four years in an "above and beyond" manner. I prayed earnestly about what to do for her. A thank you card or coffee mug seemed so inadequate. One night as I lay in bed praying, I was picturing that hand of God outstretched to me. Suddenly, God's spirit came over me prompting a thought, "Amy, why don't you paint the hand?"

I mulled this over, wanting to be sure it was God's spirit and not just me. I figured I should at least give it my best shot. About a week later, I found myself home for the weekend with my sick little girl. My follow up appointment with Claire was the next Tuesday. I eagerly cracked out the painting supplies and invaded the kitchen table. I started painting Sunday morning, and I painted all day while praying the whole time, that I would somehow be able to capture the way the testimony made me feel. I desired to paint the mental picture that had made a life changing impact on my soul. This mental picture had comforted and carried me through so much. With Tuesday looming ahead in just two days, I was on a bit of a time crunch. I finished Monday night at about ten minutes till midnight. I finally felt content. I would look at it again in the morning. I had done my best. I prayed to God that He would reassure me that it was His will that I give this painting to her. I didn't want to do something that might seem too personal. I lay down exhausted, and grabbed my cell phone at a few minutes after twelve. I knew my Bible app would have a new scripture for me. I pulled it up and as soon as I read it, I knew God had given me my answer. It read:

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. My heart nearly burst. I had painted for Claire, the right hand of God. This was no coincidence. God had answered my prayer almost instantly. I laughed at God's great sense of humor, and prayed aloud; "Thank you God! Thank you!" She was definitely getting that painting the next morning! I felt the need to write the scripture on the back of the painting, so I could tell her why I knew she needed to have it. Before my appointment, I took one more good look at the painting, and fixed a highlight on the hand and sleeve that needed a tweak. I decided the painting was



as good as it was gonna get. I

threw it into a super classy trash bag, and tried to be as inconspicuous as one can be, while awkwardly carrying a large trash bag wrapped square, into their crowded doc's office. Once I'd made peace with the puzzled stares, I started to feel very nervous about how it might be received. My stomach somersaulted and I sat in that room nervously waiting. Claire walked in as always, with her warm beautiful smile. She quickly got to work removing my stitches and chatting with me. I noticed every time she glanced down at the huge square by my legs, but I waited until the last stitch was out before telling her I'd made her something. I put it up onto the exam bed and pulled the trash bag off. Her hands immediately covered her mouth as she gasped. She turned to me while her eyes filled with tears. "I can't believe you did this for me! Oh, my goodness! Oh, it's almost like you can just reach out! How did you? Oh, I love it! I can't believe you did this for me!" By now, tears had given way to quiet sobs. She hugged me as she cried. I felt immeasurable joy fill my heart and boil over. I knew right then, that this was what God wanted. He had done this.

I told her about how much her mother's testimony had helped encourage me and give me peace. I told her how I'd prayed for reassurance as to whether it was the right thing to give it to her, and the scripture that was given to me just minutes later. I turned the picture over and showed her how I'd written it on the back, and then I pulled the scripture up on my Bible app to show her that it was, in fact, my daily reminder scripture. She was still wiping away tears when I told her, "You know, sometimes God has certain people cross paths for a reason, and I'm so glad you crossed my path". I drove home from that appointment with tears of joy streaming down my face. I couldn't thank God enough for the precious gift it was to be a part of this blessing. Nearly a year later, wearing yoga pants and no makeup, we sat on the couch in her house, having a heart to heart. We had grown so close. It was almost surreal and incredible to think our relationship had evolved from patient and health provider to soul sisters with the same Heavenly Father. This woman who had stitched me up from surgeries was now doing far more profound things for my heart. She had quickly become a best friend. This was something only God could do. As we sipped our coffee and talked, Claire jumped up excitedly as she hurried into her bedroom, and

yelled over her shoulder, "I need to read you something!" She emerged with a journal and a huge smile. I'd grown to adore the expression she got, when sharing something awesome that God had done. She looked lit from within. As she settled back onto the couch, she began to explain, "This is my prayer journal." Before I'd given her the painting, she'd been praying and keeping this journal. She'd realized that my painting was an answer to her prayer. The same week I'd given her the painting, she noticed she was receiving a series of blessings in short succession and my painting was one of them. She read aloud to me from her journal how each prayer was quickly followed up with a blessing. The day before I gave her the painting, she had prayed for God to, "Please, please, reach out His hand to her." The next day, I'd come in and presented her with a painting of God's hand outstretched to her, as well as the scripture letting both of us know that it was indeed God who'd orchestrated this beautiful miracle. It was indeed God who'd orchestrated this beautiful miracle. We may never know how far the impact of one miracle reaches. I have a sneaking suspicion that the ripple effect reaches right into eternity. My prayer is that you will see and feel God's hand reached out to you in your life. God's hand

is always outstretched to us, yearning for our hand to reach out and grip His.

Psalms 95:7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,



Dirty Dogma

By Dr. William P. Tarbell

Dogma. Rigid, unreasonable, unscientific beliefs thrust upon us by unenlightened, unsophisticated, undereducated adherents of religion under the influence of undiluted, unhelpful, unworthy prejudices inherited from un-modern, un-humane, unprogressive ancient, uninformed, unkind oppressors of everything swell and likeable. Why, without doubt, it is said by sages of the LGBTQIA and other authorities of the new humanity, dogma generated by belief in God, Holy Scripture and spiritual disciplines practiced for millennia inspires nothing but undesirable, unliving, unintelligent traits such as haughtiness, hollowness, and hatred.

So, a novel, fresh approach to human community and relationships must be developed to move the new humanity into a belief system that corresponds with its wider, more flexible platform of getting along, getting better, and getting theirs. To accomplish this, a trinity of beliefs worthy of ultimate commitment has emerged through relations to modern, humanistic gurus (often referred to as “experts”).

Belief number one is something called fixed orientations, features in human personality defined as “immutable”. Around the year 1970, same-sex advocates became aware of these wonderful, mechanistic features which tell us who we are and what we must do. In fact, some persons who converted from the old, outdated faith of the past began to say that God created people with these fixed orientations. Not to obey them would be to disobey God. Recently, many persons, especially from the LGBTQIA faith community, have received

revelations revealing that transgender and every form of human sexual expression are grounded in fixed orientations. The 2017 Nevada legislature, accepting the authenticity of these revelations, defined in law heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, and every other sexual expression as immutable, necessary characteristics of personality. Change is impossible and therefore illegal. No room for unbelief here.

Belief number two is the invincibility of feelings. Strong desire, deep attraction, spells out our destiny, our orientation, as to who we are and what we must do to be truth to ourselves. No evaluation is needed. If you feel it, you must deal it. Recently, a woman testifying before a Nevada legislative committee stated that her eight year old son felt like a girl and came out as one. With the enthusiasm of someone pounding a tambourine and shouting hallelujah, she immediately started dressing him in girl’s clothing and gave him a new name suitable to his awakened gender. What could be more authentic? A child sensing his orientation, his destiny, his life’s journey to never, never land!

Belief number three is actually a call to action. So important, so foundational to LGBTQIA faith and practice are fixed orientations and feelings first philosophy, the Church of New Humanity is compelled to eradicate any trace of adaptive psychology (100 years in the making) and traditional religious teaching on human responsibility (5000 years in the making). Taking their cue from those who use the point of a sword to make converts, LGBTQIA adherents take aim at every secular and sacred space in society with all the force they can muster. Chanting “Onward Sexual Soldiers”, they march into church assemblies, legislative sessions, public and private schools, and city streets, claiming constitutional pro-

tections of free speech and assembly as they go, while, at exactly that moment, denying others who do not agree with them the very same protections.

Riding the recent wave of resentment toward our political and social heritage, LGBTQIA enforcers recruit judges, legislators, administrators, regulators, professors, and other members of the ruling class to create a friendly climate for them and a hostile environment for anyone who so much as whispers another view contrary to theirs. They strip people of their finances, their businesses, their social standing, their dignity, and above all, their God given free conscientious choice. Smear them. Demean them. Remove them from public service. Do whatever is necessary to institute law and regulation which will destroy traditional faith and practice and replace them with the gospel according to the Church of New Humanity.

What we face at this moment is a re-enactment of the Old Testament book of Daniel. A huge LGBTQIA monolith has been erected in the public square. All of us are ordered to bow the knee to it, worship it as the ultimate truth for humanity, and sing praises to the dogma it proclaims. Strange. All this sounds exactly like the dogma LGBTQIA believers say they hate.

Dogma:

dog.ma

“A set of principals laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true”.

(their authority?)

Odgaard's Rose

By Evangelist Chris Rose,

Christ Rose Ministries

You may remember Richard and Betty Odgaard. They made national headlines after denying two gay men a wedding ceremony to be held at their sought-after wedding venue in Grimes, Iowa. Recently our paths crossed, and I was given an invitation to sit down, to get to know this courageous couple. What makes meeting one another extraordinary is that I once proudly represented the homosexual community and the aggressive posture of the homosexual agenda. Although I had renounced my gay identity and its membership in 2009, in essence I represent the spirit that mistreated, accused, and eventually quashed the Odgaard's wedding lace and butter cream dream. What has so far transpired in our new relationship is nothing short of God's love, and the life of His Son Jesus in each of our hearts.

When I met the Odgaard's for the first time, I couldn't help but reach out and hug Betty and warmly shake the hand of Richard (Dick) Odgaard. I apologetically thanked them for their courageous fight, standing strong in the truth of God's love. While I was saddened by what had happened to them, I was overwhelmed that my life and testimony could give proof that their fight had not been in vain.

By the time Dick had finished touring the same-sex couple around their wedding venue, concern over lost revenue or possible litigation was the furthest thought from his mind.

What became paramount was the image of God imprinted on the souls of the men he had just met. Eventually, Dick and Betty were publically accused, threatened, and ostracized, yet through it all they stood tall and strong for a righteous cause, refusing to feed their guests with the crumbs of justification. Through the life blood of Jesus Christ my Christian Brother and Sister now tangibly witness God's restorative power. My life, once fully immersed in the swamps and muds of homosexuality is now in full restorative bloom, watered and nourished in God's love. I would like to call this series of articles (6) "Odgaard's Rose" because what these heroes of the faith wanted for

Gal 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

those two men is empirically what they see in my life today, restoration!

God works in mysterious ways, some say. The redeemed continue to sing of their Father's faithfulness as God, through His Son Jesus soothes men's pain, graciously mending their broken hearts, their broken spirits, and their wounded broken souls. Dick and Betty Odgaard are vindicated by God's Truth. Yet they have been wounded by strife, accusation, and abandoned by a system of state and federal laws that once honored God's heart. As new laws sound out America's death rattle, liberating man's lawless-sinful nature, the plan for man's sinful condition still remains the same. The nails that were driven into the hands and feet of Jesus Christ, His pierced side, and the cross He died on.

In a moment of love Dick and Betty Odgaard said no to the request of two Iowa men sexually entwined together openly identifying as homosexual. A well thought out decision took the Odgaard's into litigation. They have only one regret, the loss of friends and family who have sided with those who call wrong right and right wrong. What is truly amazing is that despite this hostility the Odgaard's love for the homosexually identified person and their entourage has remained unchanged. Their hope has always been for the righteousness of Christ to be found in all men.

In my heart there no longer remains this hostility for the Christian. Although for many years I carried stones, waiting to assault the Spirit Filled Christian whenever my own righteous sexual laws and standards were violated. Eight years ago I would have been found pacing the floor, casting into eternal damnation anyone who did not see my homosexual life my way, as a righteous provision of God. Sadly, for fifteen years my hypocrisy prevailed as I promoted having the life of Christ in mine. My choices did determine Him to be a drug addicted, fornicating homosexual. I confessed Jesus in my heart and membership in His body. A body that I was bent to change, alter, and disfigure.

So much for me has changed since I surrendered to Jesus in 2009. My former homosexual attitudes and behaviors have been healed by the Healer. The truth is that God has gladly taken up residence in my soul. He has called for an exterminator. Through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, His life was placed in my brokenness, in my darkness, and in my idolatrous heart and mind. Daily I kneel at the cross of Christ and I deny my now crucified flesh calling sin, "SIN". Every morning I recognize new life, the true life of Christ in mine. I am living in resurrection life. Hand in hand I traverse the Jericho road alongside the King of kings. I have traded lust, lasciviousness, lewdness, drunkenness, and uncleanness for Life, and in this Life is found power, strength, joy, peace,

happiness, longer suffering, supernatural victory, and liberty (to name a few).

One man shackled for another man's liberation

You may have wondered what has happened to Dick and Betty Odgaard. Maybe you have wondered what has happened to the two homosexual men who, before attempting to patronize the Gortz Haus Gallery, were already recognized by the State of Iowa as legally married. Time has marched on and the beautifully appointed wedding venue has closed forever, and the state of Iowa continues to debate whether the righteous should continue to be shackled on



Painting by Betty Odgaard exclusively for this article. A special thank you to a special Sister in Christ. May God continue to richly bless you and your family.

behalf of the homosexual's liberation.

When it comes to marriage Dick and Betty Odgaard still defend God's original design. Wedding ceremony after wedding ceremony the Odgaard's were blessed in seeing God's covenant between a man and a woman play out over and over again. Before their eyes men would leave their

mothers and fathers and cleave to their wives just as Adam had been fitted with Eve. The Gortz Haus Gallery was a cathedral of God's love, an ordained venue where Christ was foreshadowed in the receiving of His bride. I have wondered if those two homosexual men knew, in truth, what they tried to dismantle. Although the life of this palisade was cut short which may be a celebrated victory by the homosexual community, the Odgaard's have been promoted.

From 2013 the Odgaard's are a little older and a lot wiser. God has set in their hearts a similar work as their former employ demanded. Today they usher men and women into Heaven's banquet hall, sending out invitations for a bride to be received by her soon coming bridegroom. Their wicks are trimmed, their oil is refreshed daily, and they are found in a plenteous supply. Although they are still assailed with harsh and wicked treatment the Odgaard's unswervingly plant seeds of life into the hearts of men. They know for every seed planted God will call for it to be watered. God will give an increase as He has increased me. Today God's Original Design Ministries and Christ Rose Ministries have become associated. There is a lot to learn as these two ministries converge forming a new conversation. Religious liberty meets the liberated former homosexual. Together, we pray that there will bloom another Odgaard's Rose.

The Family Leader

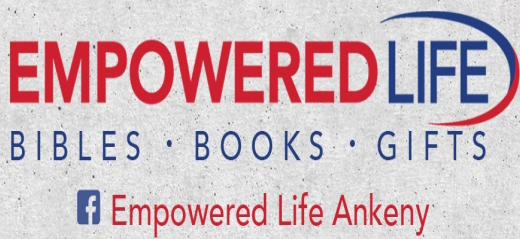
Used by permission

How A Simple Trap Muffles The Church, By Gregg Baker

To be the “Timeless Voice,” the Church needs to be a voice of timeless truth into the culture, not just another voice of culture itself. In other words, “In the world, not of it.” But this recent Thanksgiving revealed to me just how hard that can be. I had been reading Ezekiel recently, and a verse about Egypt really stuck out to me: “But they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; they did not get rid of the vile images they had set their eyes on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt” (Ezekiel 20:8). God was upset with Israel, because they never removed Egypt from their hearts. Egypt had more



of an effect on them than they did on Egypt. That made me think of my own heart. How much of Egypt is still in my heart? How much does this world still impact how much I think? This reality of “Egypt” still being in my heart overflowed this Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is one of the few days a year that I buy my local newspaper ... because I want the ads. I want to see the Black Friday deals. Now, being excited for deals in and of itself is not the issue. What it does to my heart is the issue. Thanksgiving is supposed to be a holiday where we reflect on all of the provisions God has given us and be thankful for them. It is a holiday of contentment. For me and for so many other Americans, however, it has become the kickoff day for the season of wanting more – the season of shopping and obsessing over all the things we long to have or believe we now need, as the culture around us tells us we need them. Alas, this is not the only time that happens. I feel a need to buy the Under Armour brand, and when I see sales on Under Armour, I use them to justify my purchases. Why do I feel compelled to buy? It is not a premeditated thought. It is just an overflow from my heart. My eyes see Under Armour every day, everywhere, and my heart begins to think I need it.



Equipping You for Success in Christ

2310 SE Delaware • Ankeny, Iowa 50021 • (515)964-8609

This world is after our hearts. It wants us to embrace and find life in the things it has to offer. When we give in, however, we lose focus. We lose the bigger picture. We are no longer ambassadors of Christ, but we become ambassadors for “Egypt” instead. Yet resisting the world’s siren call is not as simple as changing a few of our actions. It is not as simple as, “Just quit buying things and remove yourself from the world.” “Egypt” is a problem in the heart. There is a reason God tells us to guard our heart, because everything we do really does overflow from it (Proverbs 4:23). And changing the heart begins with realizing we are most productive for the kingdom of God when our eyes are focused on the kingdom. We are most productive when we have an eternal perspective, look at the unseen, and put our treasures in heaven. Life cannot be found in the things of this world. They cannot satisfy our innermost desires. And if we are going to share this freeing message, this timeless truth, with the world, then we must actually believe it and illustrate it to others. Only then can we have an eternal impact on culture. For those who are in Christ, Satan cannot separate you from God, but he can distract you and take you off mission. Your flesh and this world ally with him in this endeavor. Therefore, we must guard our hearts. We must tear down the idols of “Egypt.” In a world that never seems to find contentment, satisfaction, rest, or peace, let us instead show them rest, satisfaction, contentment, and peace – the kind that can only be found in Christ Jesus our Lord. Be content this holiday season. Be joy-filled, and let not the world sway you. And when the world asks why you are not doing as they do, point to Christ (1 Peter 4:4). Brothers and sisters, let’s live a life that stands out in one of the greatest empires of world history. Let’s guard our heart to be the timeless voice.

**For truth
from the
Word of God,
He listens to**



**truth993.com | Des Moines, IA
515-251-2663 | crohloff@truthnetwork.com**

DO YOU SEE HER?

By Brenda Long



Will You Help? Human Trafficking, Domestic Sex Trafficking, Modern Day Slavery, The Life, Commercial Sexual Exploitation, Hustling, Sex Work, Pimping, The Game, Prostitution. Call it what you will, but it's wrong, it's a biblical and social injustice....Exploitation is happening in the USA and even in Iowa and we want to help. Garden Gate Ranch is here to tell the stories. Let's start at the beginning; SUPERNATURAL, what is it? Wikipedia describes supernatural; refers to unexplained or non- natural forces and phenomena. That's what happened to me late January 2015. Hi, my name is Brenda Long, an ordinary woman, a wife, mother, and a grandmother. Life happens, season's change, things happen in our lives that change what our normal looks like. That's where I was when I encountered a supernatural happening. Let me explain, 2010-2015 were not easy times for me or my family, one life-altering event after another was taking place. As soon as we caught

our breath from one, another trial hit. Let me share with you just a few things we were experiencing minus the details. My parents home burnt to the ground, later my father passed from this life, my mother had a life-threatening bacteria, our adult foster daughter was diagnosed with brain cancer while pregnant, my mother had a brain aneurysm rupture, a brother was killed in a head-on car collision, and there's more but I think you get the point. What do all of these have in common? The only thing that truly matters, our trust and faith in a God who loves us and is always faithful in good times and in bad. I recall the day like it was yesterday, I went to my prayer room as I often do, and honestly I was going to pray yet again and continue to do what I'd been doing for month's, for years. I had my idea of how things should turn out AND how we needed to get there in this most recent life-altering event. As I sat before the Lord that day and wept, I couldn't do anything but say to Him, "Thank you! You've got us, You are SO faithful and you've got us". I told him, "I don't know what this will look like from this day on, but one thing I do know, we will be exactly where you want us to be when this storm has passed, and we will do what you want us to do. You have been so faithful to us and I trust

you". Then I did something unplanned, I had the audacity to ask Him a question, I said, "Since you've got us, what can I do for you? Who can I help for you?" That's when the supernatural took place. As soon as I asked the question, my room filled with this amazing presence in which I had no doubt who had entered. I felt Him completely engulf me in his presence and He took me to what I believe was a secret chamber in His heart. I felt what he felt and then I felt what they felt. I supernaturally knew he was asking me to help free his daughters from the evil of human trafficking. I started hearing their cries saying, "will anyone help"? "does anyone see me". "does anyone care?" I heard Him say "my daughters are crying out for help, will you help them?" I said YES and my life has never been the same.



www.gardengateranch.com

Garden Gate Ranch was birthed out of the heart of compassion and a stand against biblical and social injustice. Hearing the silent cries of those trapped, compels us to do whatever it takes to get her off the street and to safety. These young women don't need Garden Gate Ranch just because they are victims of sex trafficking. She needs a place like Garden Gate Ranch so she can realize she is more than what happened to her, what happened doesn't have to define who she is. She was born on purpose for a purpose; she has a future and a hope. She just needs the space, time, and love from people who believe in her, until she can believe the truth of her creator and believe in herself. Garden Gate Ranch's mission is to offer her that pathway. A

pathway to hope, a pathway to restoration, tools for empowerment, dignity, and purpose in a safe faith-filled environment. Do You See Her? Will You Help? #ForTheLoveOfOne

To be continued....next edition.

Do You See Her?

Will You Help?

#ForTheLoveOfOne



Brenda Long - Founder of
Garden Gate Ranch
www.gardengateranch.com

How Can You Stay So Optimistic?

By Dr. Robert Owens

People ask me often “How can you spend so much time following the news and writing on the bizarre twists and turns of our political theater of the absurd and still remain so happy and optimistic?”

The answer is, “It’s easy because my hope is in Christ, and all of this is just a soap opera.”

Sure, I tune in multiple times every day to see what my people are up to. Yes, I follow every twist and turn in the plot. I cheer when my favorite characters triumph, and I hiss when the evil nemesis unfairly pulls them down.

However, all in all I realize I’m something like Horton. I hear the Who. And like Horton I realize there’s a whole world living on a speck of dust flying along oblivious to the fact that dust in the wind is not the most stable place to exist.

Fleeting flowers and beautiful sunsets like snowflakes and icicles dazzle the eye, inspire the imagination, and then they are gone. Look at the sweep of History. We can read of empires long ago. The amazing DNA tests available through a multitude of sources can tell us where we come from. Ancestry web sites tell us who we come from.

In reality what do we know of those billions who have gone before? What were the names of your eight great grandparents? If by some miracle you can name all eight, what do you know about

their lives? Can anyone reading this name their sixteen great-great grandparents? I would wager 100 to one no one can. So in our own lives our knowledge of History dissolves before 100 years has elapsed. Sure we can read and memorize facts about the past, but how far back does that really go? At most 5,000 years. Conservatively the earth is at least four billion years old. The universe itself is estimated to be at least thirteen billion years old.

A voice in my ear said, “Why don’t you try God?”

And our direct knowledge goes back maybe one hundred years. Our knowledge gained through study maybe five thousand. Get the picture? We are the Who.

If that was all there was I would jump up on a table and sing.

Is that all there is, is that all there is. If that’s all there is my friends, then let’s keep dancing. Let’s break out the booze and have a ball if that’s all there is

And for thirty years of my life that’s what I did. The emptiness and futility of it all led me to the edge of insanity and beyond. I wandered about aimlessly muttering, “I’ve got to try something. I’ve got to try something.”

Until a voice in my ear said, “Why don’t you try God?”

That day changed my life. That day led me to a road that led me to Christ.

From that day to now, I have hope and joy and nothing I see prancing

across the stage of this earthly drama can take it away.

In America our standard greeting is, “Hi how are you doing?” Not that anyone really cares. Not that anyone ever really listens to your answer. That is just a customary greeting. I always answer, “I’m blessed.” This often brings questions such as, “Why?” This gives me an opportunity to tell them I’m blessed because I have eternal life and that Jesus gave it to me and the devil can’t take it away.”

Sometime people answer, “I am too.” And it’s always a joy to meet a brother or sister wherever they may be.

So, though it is interesting and it helps pass the time as we hang on to our speck of dust as it swirls about in the wind don’t let the story-line get you down. Just skip to the back of the book and you’ll find out that Jesus is God, God wins in the end, and no matter how bad it gets we should pray, “Come Lord Jesus.”

Dr. Owens teaches History, Political Science, and Religion. He is the Historian of the Future @ <http://drrobertowens.com> © 2018. Contact Dr. Owens drrobertowens@hotmail.com. Follow Dr. Robert Owens on Facebook or Twitter @Drrobertowens or visit Dr. Owens Amazon Page / Edited by Dr. Rosalie Owens

Tags:

Faith, Dr. Robert Owens, Hope, depression, Jesus, Jesus Saves

The views and opinions expressed by each contributing writer are theirs, and are not necessarily the views and opinions of: **Christian Life Magazine**, its board of directors, its advertisers, and/or its financial contributors.

Christian Life Magazine is a non-profit organization, and a proud supporter of free speech and Christianity, our religious expression.

We want to publish your testimony.

Write a letter to the editor.

Please send your letters of 500 words or less to:

Christian Life Magazine

P.O. Box 445

Newton, IA 50208 or to:

ChristianLifeMagazine.org

Submission does not guarantee publication.

All letters containing hateful, graphically lude gestures of disrespect, or gross misuse or that missing of holy-biblical scripture will not be published.

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”. James 5:16.

All mail will be prayed over.

All letters received, including digital correspondence becomes the property of **Christian Life Magazine** and will not be returned, even when instructed.

Who spends your hard earned dollars better? ***YOU OR THE GOVERNMENT?***

ITR speaks for YOU, the Iowa taxpayer.

Join today! Follow on Facebook & Twitter.



IOWANS FOR TAX RELIEF

— THE TAXPAYERS' WATCHDOG —



itr@taxrelief.org



[@IowansforTaxRelief](https://www.facebook.com/IowansforTaxRelief)



[@ITRWatchdog](https://twitter.com/ITRWatchdog)

The Taxpayer's Watchdog

By Christopher Ingstad

For 40 years Iowans for Tax Relief (ITR) has fought on behalf of the interests of the taxpayer's in Iowa. ITR believes Iowa's high tax rates discourage economic growth and make our state less competitive. ITR believes the only special interest that should be represented in Des Moines is the taxpayer.

ITR's history began in the mid-1970s when stagflation had settled in across the country. High state and federal tax rates were helping keep Iowans stuck in the national malaise of both high inflation and unemployment. David Stanley was an Iowa legislator who had served parts of three decades in the Iowa House and Senate. As a leader of Iowa's conservative movement, Dave believed that sound fiscal policy was more than just good economics; he believed it was a moral issue.

For his entire career Dave championed the principles of limited government and the protection of Christian values.

In the aftermath of a close U.S. Senate loss to John Culver in 1974, Dave chose to place his time, talent, and resources into an organization focused on giving the Iowa taxpayers a voice, instead of returning to the legislature. In 1978 Dave and other like-minded individuals founded Iowans for Tax Relief.

Dave knew that even back in the 1970s, Iowa was a state full of special interests. He believed that what Iowans needed, limited government and economic freedom, was going to be achieved through citizen advocacy and not more lawmaking. In other words, the answers resided on Main Street, and not within the state Capitol.

Dave remained the Chairman of ITR from its founding in 1978 until he passed away in 2015. Dave frequently said, essentially, "It is easier for politicians to yield to

the noisy special interest groups when the taxpayer keeps QUIETLY paying the bills." That's where ITR comes in. We are the taxpayer's voice at the Capitol, reminding legislators they were elected to serve the people back home and not necessarily the groups at the Capitol that are asking for more of your tax dollars.

ITR works on supporting good policy and opposing bad policy. It's not much of a stretch to say that all bad policy leads to a tax increase. And as much as we work on the policy/legislative side of things, the truth is the best taxpayer protection is winning elections. The reality is that Iowa is still a very purple state. If conservative legislators are defeated, they are usually beat by high tax and high spend politicians not by someone who is more conservative.

Dave believed the reason for high taxes and out-of-control spending was the powerful special interests pressuring legislators to keep the money flowing.

Sadly, that dynamic remains. ITR is one of the few groups speaking for you, the Iowa taxpayer.

The solution is also still the same: put state government on sensible, reducing diet. That diet could be in the form of two constitutional amendments. First, limit spending to 99% of estimated revenue to slow the rate of growth. Second, make it harder to take more money from Iowans by requiring approval from two-thirds of the legislators in the house and senate for any tax or fee increase. Neither one of these amendments will require painful cuts.

Iowa does not need just tax reform, we need tax relief! Our tax system is too complex. Our top end individual income tax rate is the second highest of the surrounding states and our corporate income tax rate is the highest in the nation. We need to simplify the system, lower rates, and stop picking winners and losers through so many tax credits.

ITR believes our work is really a two-way street. While we do work on your behalf, and try to keep you aware of what is happening at the Capitol, we need you to do work for us, and to keep us informed about what is happening in your community.

Ultimately, the question we want to ask each of you is this, do you

believe Iowans should keep more of their own dollars in their own bank accounts? If you agree with that then it's worth keeping in mind what Dave Stanley first alluded to years ago, that "it's easier for our leaders to keep spending money on special interests if we the taxpayers keep QUIETLY paying the bill." Let your elected officials know what you want from them. Help us be your voice at the Capitol. Visit our website, taxrelief.org to become a member and receive our email newsletters. Like and follow us on Facebook (@IowansforTaxRelief) and Twitter (@ITRWatchdog) to engage on social media.

Christopher Ingstad is President of Iowa's for Tax Relief, West Des Moines, Iowa

Over \$440 Million Reasons to Control Spending

By John Hendrickson

State spending is a major area of concern of many in Iowa, especially when government continues to demand more taxpayer dollars. The Iowa code already limits the legislature to spending up to 99 percent of the projected reve-

nues, but this is a weak spending limitation law.

Currently, 15 states have a spending limitation requirement written into their constitutions. Although spending limitations can vary in their strength and design, they provide both a protection for taxpayers and sound fiscal policy by keeping spending in check.

As the legislature debates another round of deappropriations because of lower than expected revenues, it should be noted that Iowa collected close to \$8.4 billion in revenue over the past twelve months. The reasons for slow revenue growth in Iowa can be debated, but the fact remains that Iowa must address spending.

Strengthening Iowa's 99 percent spending limit with a constitutional amendment will make it more difficult for the legislature to circumvent or change the current law. In addition, a spending limitation amendment would allow state revenues a chance to grow at a faster rate than state spending, which would allow the legislature to reduce the income tax burden.

During the last legislative session, the Iowa Senate passed Joint Resolution 9, a spending limitation constitutional amendment. This [measure](#) would “limit the annual increase in spending from year to year to the lesser of 99 percent of the estimated revenue for that fiscal year, or 4 percent above the prior year’s revenue.” [Fiscal analysis](#) of Joint Resolution 9 by the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) applied the rules of the resolution to the past ten legislative sessions and they found that “appropriations would have been lower than the enacted appropriations in seven of the fiscal years.” State Senator Charles Schneider [wrote](#) the LSA analysis “shows that if the spending limit had been in place since fiscal year 2012, state government could have spent \$488.2 million less than it has.”

The impact of this would have been substantial, especially with Iowa’s current tight budget.

“Going into fiscal year 2017, we could have had a carryover surplus of at least \$442.8 million. Had that been the case, we would not have had to deappropriate funds for fiscal year 2017, and we would not have to dip into the cash reserve fund to fill the remaining budget gap for this fiscal year,” [stated](#) Senator Schneider.

Strengthening the 99 percent spending limitation would help slow the growth of state spending.

Constitutional scholar Rob Natelson [wrote](#) that “history teaches that politicians seldom control spending unless the constitution that regulates their conduct requires them to do so and the courts choose to enforce the constitution.” This problem is clearly seen at federal level with the uncontrollable spending that has resulted in a \$20 trillion national debt.

Taxpayers deserve better constitutional protections against the unquenchable appetite for government spending. Families and businesses across Iowa often must make difficult budget decisions on a regular basis. Seldom does government, at any level, say that they can function with less, it is always more and more funding. Policymakers need to remember that income is an element of property. “When Americans formed their state and federal governments, they granted those governments considerable power over private property. This power included authority to seize and regulate as well as authority to tax property and to spend and borrow,” [wrote](#) Natelson. Government is necessary to provide essential services, but government should not have a blank check to continue to tax and spend.

If lawmakers are successful in keeping spending low and reducing the tax burden they will be encouraging Iowa’s economy to grow and at the same time be re-

spectful of taxpayer’s dollars. Natelson [argues](#) that “raising taxes and spending usually impedes, rather than stimulates, state economies.” Policymakers need to remember government spending is not the solution for economic growth, nor can government solve every policy problem. Several states have demonstrated lower levels of spending and taxation not only lead to economic growth, but also the ability to adequately fund the priorities of state government.

Iowa taxpayers deserve constitutional protection and the best way to do this is to protect taxpayer interests through a stronger spending limit.

John Hendrickson is a policy analyst with Iowans for Tax Relief, West Des Moines, Iowa

When God Becomes Your Husband

By Jennifer Boer



I dashed to the car with my newborn in tow, cradling her car seat in the crook of my arm. It was a damp and rainy night in Kirkland Washington, and I was tired from my first day back to work after being on maternity leave. The thought of a warm fire, snuggling deep into my couch while savoring a hot meal sounded wonderful. Unfortunately, that thought didn't last long.

First, I would need to take a trip to the grocery store. The thought of lugging a diaper bag, and car seat through the drizzling rain caused more exhaustion. However, during these moments as a new momma, I knew I would need to just push through, especially since there would be countless trips in the future, just like this one. Now at home, famished and exhausted, I placed my baby very carefully in my bedroom. Aaahhh!!! I could make a warm dinner and eat before she wakes up for her feeding. Well, as any mother knows, the chances of getting a hot meal is slim to none. As soon as I put the water on the stove to boil and turned on the oven, my sweet 8 week old baby girl wanted to eat.



I turned off the boiling water, left the stove on, and made sure the kitchen was safe to leave unattended while I tended to my baby. As I picked her up, just the sight of her sweet face caused my hunger pains and exhaustion to disappear. I cherished every moment with her during our feeding times. These moments consisted of looking into her eyes and singing to her, reading a book, talking, and saying lots of prayers, simply talking to God.

Well, in that particular moment I did talk to God, made it very clear to him that I needed a husband. I know he provides all my needs, BUT, he can not cook a hot meal. "Lord," I said, "This is exactly why I need a husband! So when I am not able to cook or clean or tend to the baby, then I have someone who can help me!" Being a parent can be exhausting, let alone a single parent. Sure, I had roommates since the time she was born. However, they did not sign on to be a parent, and my daughter is my responsibility.

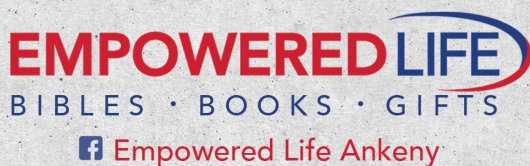
Adonia finished her feeding and was fast asleep. I quietly laid her in her crib and left the room. I was famished and ready to eat! As I entered the kitchen, my roommate turned around holding a plate with freshly cooked chicken and mashed potatoes. I took the plate from her hands and started crying. "I just made your chicken and potatoes for you," she said. With a look on her face, as if I were crazy, I quickly explained to her how I was just telling God how I needed a husband, because God himself could not cook for me.

In that moment, I saw God in a way I had never seen him before. Yes, God has provided for me, more times than I could count. But this time, God was telling me, "My beloved, I am your creator, I am also your husband". Isaiah 54:5. In that very moment, God was drawing me to himself, telling me, "I heard your prayer, I have heard your cries, and I am going to show you how I will supply all your needs." (Philippians 4:19) And in that moment, I knew I needed to rest in the promise God had given me.

Is it easy to rest in his promises day after day? NO! Daily tasks, financial struggles, illnesses, times when you feel you have no more left to give, they all can take my eyes off the promises God has given to me. Yet, there are times, like this very moment, that I reflect back on the last 9 years of my life, as a single mom, and the evidence of God's strength floods my mind. God has truly supplied my every need. I have never been without a car, a home, food, clothes, and he gives me the strength to press through the darkest hours.

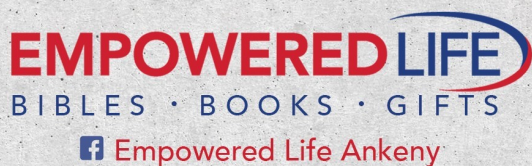
God will supply your every need. No matter where you are in life, you can rest in his sovereignty and his promise to take care of you. Maybe your situation is financial hardship, a recent loss, rejection, a dream you have had that has died, or raising children on your own. God who created you is also your husband. Press into who God is! God is your provider, healer, protector, He is the Great I am! When you find yourself saying, "I need a husband", remember this...God is all you need! He is the only One who will complete you and make you whole. The moment you think you need a husband, is the moment you will begin to settle, and not wait with God for His best for you. If you are like me, and still single, draw close to God. Allow him to captivate your heart and show you your worth and identity in Him. Allow Him to be your husband.

(Read Isaiah 54:5; Philippians 4:19)



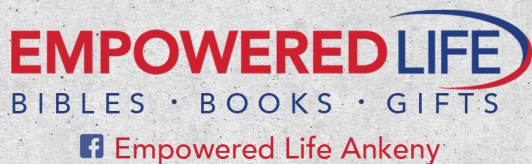
Equipping You for Success in Christ

2310 SE Delaware • Ankeny, Iowa 50021 • (515)964-8609



Equipping You for Success in Christ

2310 SE Delaware • Ankeny, Iowa 50021 • (515)964-8609



Equipping You for Success in Christ

2310 SE Delaware • Ankeny, Iowa 50021 • (515)964-8609

The Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa – An Introduction

By Rita Baker

Executive Director- PCCI

The Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa is a Christian Ministry that will gladly provide information and support to those who are pregnant or think they might be. We are composed of a dedicated group of trained volunteers and staff who believe in the sanctity of life of both mother and unborn child. We are committed to caring for moms, dads and their families in a non-judgmental and sincerely caring atmosphere.

The Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa was established in 1991. We are a non-profit, community based agency. We are member affiliates of Care Net, Heartbeat International and the American Association of Christian Counselors, who provide us with training and teaching materials. In addition, these organizations provide us with current information, advice and guidance to help PCCI better help and serve our clients.

We are governed by a board of directors. Paid staff includes an Executive Director and an Administrative Assistant. We currently have five trained volunteer counselor/teachers and four additional volunteers who help with our facility and our store. A family physician from the Newton Clinic, Dr. Esgar Guarin, educates our clients by providing a monthly Lunch and Learn opportunity. We will soon

be offering appointments for consultation with social workers and registered nurses on a wide variety of areas concerning maternal and child health and well-being through collaboration with Public Health. We also offer referral services for areas of life such as community resources, housing, medical care, domestic violence, child welfare and others. We hope to realize a dream and goal of having an ultrasound machine by the end of 2018.

Our purpose is to provide physical, emotional and spiritual support to women and families who may experience pregnancies, unplanned or planned. We are committed to providing our clients with accurate and complete information about prenatal development, pregnancy, parenting, adoption, abortion, step-parenting, life skills, developmental milestones and toddlers. We also offer Bible Studies for those who want to learn more about faith and a walk with the Lord.

Clients are able to participate in our Earn While You Learn Program covering all of these topics. Our teaching materials are from Heritage House and are updated regularly. For each lesson clients complete and each homework they turn in they earn “Mommy Money” and “Daddy Dollars” which they can then use to purchase items for their babies and children in our on-site store. We carry furniture and equipment for babies and toddlers, diapers from preemie through 4T-5T pull-ups, infant and child care products, clothing

from newborn through 4T, and maternity clothes. Because of our current abundance of clothing, we are not charging for those items. Furniture and equipment includes such items as cribs, bassinets, swings, car seats, pack and plays, walkers, and car seats for all ages and sizes.

We accept donations of “gently used” items in all categories. If a client has accumulated the “Mommy Money” to purchase a crib, a donated one is sold for a certain number of “dollars.” If we do not have the desired item in stock, we purchase a very frugally priced new version which the client may then purchase for a bit more. All involved with PCCI agree that helping parents provide for their little ones is an important part of our ministry, particularly in the area of child safety in cribs and car seats.

Our Parenting Classes are also offered to those who are attempting to achieve reunification with their children. Special efforts are made to schedule these classes around the working hours of those clients in need of this service.

We also offer free pregnancy tests and counseling in all areas surrounding pregnancy, adoption, still-birth and post-abortion experiences. We are here to help in any way possible.



Photo by womensweekly.com.sg

The Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa provides all services at absolutely no cost to our clients. We are funded through the blessings and generosity of individuals, businesses and churches from Central Iowa. In addition, we hold two annual fundraising events, the Walk for Life in early May and the Fall Banquet in October. We welcome involvement with both events, and are constantly seeking new supporters. We strive always to use all donations as efficiently and effectively as possible. Some groups and churches hold Baby Showers for PCCI, inviting their members to bring gifts of baby needs for us to share with our clients at the Center.

Grants are another source for providing for the needs of our clients. In 2017, the Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa received a Theisen's Foundation Grant that enabled the ordering of new and updating of existing teaching materials. The Jasper Community Foundation also awarded PCCI a grant for the purchase of ten cribs, ten rear-facing car seats for infants, and ten front-facing car seats for toddlers of a specific age, height and weight.

All volunteers and staff at the Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa work diligently to create a place for our clients to come, share, seek guidance, receive assistance and become better parents for their children. We strive to maintain a homey atmosphere that creates comfort and acceptance for all who enter through our doors. Many of our clients become "family." It is a true joy to follow a client through pregnancy, birth and par-

enting, sometimes for several children! One of the ways we celebrate the birth of each of our babies is by providing a layette of new baby items and clothing. A very special volunteer hand knits each newborn a sweater, complete with a Bible verse that is included with the layette.

We are located at 709 1st Avenue W., Suite 1, in Newton, Iowa. We are "around the back of the building and down the ramp." But, we serve all of Central Iowa, with clients coming to us from all surrounding directions and communities. Regular hours of operation and appointments include Monday through Thursday from noon to 4:00 PM, but we are here to serve the needs of our clients and will work to meet special requirements if at all possible. We encourage appointments, but walk-ins are welcomed. We give and accept referrals to and from many other agencies in our area, all for the maximum benefit for our clients.

We welcome any and all who would like to visit the Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa and see firsthand what we offer. The Executive Director is willing to speak to groups about PCCI. Also, feel free to contact us with questions, for further information, or with referrals at 641-792-3050. Email us at director@pcciowa.com or pcci@iowatelecom.net. Visit our web site: www.pcciowa.com and find us on Facebook at Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa. We exist to serve the mothers, babies, children and families of Central Iowa.

Psalm 139: 13

You created every part of me; you put me together in my mother's womb.

**For truth
from the
Word of God,
He listens to**



truth993.com | Des Moines, IA
515-251-2663 | crohloff@truthnetwork.com

Minute Ministries

Got Faith?

By Pastor Brad Hendrickson

The other day as my wife and I were driving to church I said, "it's interesting how we can't see the wind but we know it's there." We can "feel" it. We can see the flags waving and the branches shaking because of it.

It made me think of how often we believe in things we do not see. Like when flip a light switch and the light comes on. We never question the electricity. Another example is when we go to work we believe, we expect, that our earned money will be in our account on pay day. We never doubt that we will be paid.

This is the kind of faith we need to walk in with our Heavenly Father.

Hebrews 1:11 says: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

We must have an expectation when we go to God, for anything. Faith is important to God. Hebrews 11:6 says: But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently

seek Him.

What are you putting your faith in? Is it the things of this world, or is it the God who spoke things into existence?

F
A
I
T
H

Lessons from the Fig Tree

By Pastor Don Freeman

Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Matthew 24:32–34

The Boy Scout motto is “Be Prepared.” In my youth, I went through the Boy Scout program. With the encouragement of my parents and many others I was able to attain the rank of Eagle. At every level, the motto spoke loud and clear into my thinking: Be prepared.

Those two words have stayed with me through the years. Life is always changing, and there are so many things that happen that it is impossible to be ready for everything. Still, I have found it to be wise if I can be as ready in mind, body, and spirit to do the right thing at the right time as I am able.

When Jesus teaches about his return he usually makes two points

clear: we won’t know exactly when that is and we need to be ready. He calls us to be prepared for an event for which we don’t know the exact timing.

We do not know the day or the hour of his coming, but there are signs that it is near. I believe that we are in the last generation before Christ comes again.

One of the signs that Jesus gave was that Israel would be reborn as a nation. Watch the fig tree, he said. When it blossoms and puts out leaves, summer is near. Here and in other places in the Bible, the fig tree is symbolic of Israel. For almost 2,000 years the people of Israel were scattered all over the world. They didn’t have a homeland.

That changed on May 14, 1948. Against all odds, Israel reemerged as a nation. Jews from all over the world began to return to their ancient homeland. The barren land has once again become green and fertile.

The “fig tree” has put out leaves, and Jesus said the generation that sees this happen will be the last generation before his return. I think Genesis 15 suggests to us that a generation is 100 years. God says to Abraham, “*Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there... In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here.*”

This is just one of many signs that we should be prepared for the return of Jesus.

Find a quiet space where you can think and not be disturbed. Ask yourself this question: Am I ready? Whether this is the last generation before Jesus returns or not, this is *your* last generation. We all need to be ready. Sadly, our communities are not.

This is a time for prayer. Christ’s return is a joy for God’s people. For those of us who believe it is like entering a wedding banquet. It is for those without faith that we must diligently pray.

We live in a culture that is skin deep. The focus of the world is on the superficial. As the time draws nearer, things like entertainment, fashion, celebrity, and money will all fail people miserably.

We need to be on our knees before God and ask Him to awaken people to His return. We don’t know everything that this world will face, but we can be ready for Christ’s return.

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. Matthew 24:42-44

He is coming soon. Keep watch. Be ready.



CELEBRATING 60 YEARS



KIDS EAT FREE

Enjoy one free kids meal with the purchase of any adult entrée. Days and times of availability may vary. Contact your local Perkins® for more information.



MYPERKINS®
— E-CLUB —

JOIN NOW AND SAVE

20%

MYPERKINS®
— E-CLUB —

JOIN NOW AND SAVE

20%

<https://stores.perkinsrestaurants.com/us/ia/newton/1505-w-19th-st-s.html>

Galatians

By Brenda Hendrichsen

While there is much to glean from the Bible with regard to information, what to do with it or how we use it is equally as important a lesson.

Through our faith in Christ for salvation we are afforded power and authority. The scriptures hand us instruction on how to carry out a Christ centered life. Galatians 5 is where I would like to start sharing God's blueprint for speaking His word into our

lives and the lives of those we love or are compelled to pray for. Galatians 5:1 says: For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. (ESV) He gives us the perfect prayer, backed by the Word of God to stand on. I would invite you to pray this scripture out for yourself or anyone needing it, in this manner; Thank you Jesus, that you have set (insert name) free from the bondage of _____. We stand on Your Word, God, that (insert

name) receives this freedom, and believing Your Word, does not submit to _____ again. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Activating the Word of God will lead to a deeper relationship with Christ and equip you for the plan He has for your life.



His Light In Me Images ~ Rhonda Darr

Focal Point

By Darlene Hacker

Last week I helped a friend decorate (fluff) her house. It wasn't work to me as I enjoy decorating. A big part of my satisfaction came from seeing her joy as the recipient. I believe a big part of her joy was that I worked and she enjoyed the benefits!

In interior design there's a term called the focal point. The meaning behind this word is to design each room around an area that would be the focus of the room. When done right, it should draw everyone's eye to that certain point of interest.

With this decorating concept in mind we all have a choice as what our own individual focal point will be in our life.

For so many years as a Christian I chose my focal point to be me. I got into striving struggling "trying to be right" with God. With my attention drawn to my own self-efforts, I grew more confused, worried, wearied, fearful and dis-

appointed in my relationship with the Lord.

In today's scripture it says "looking away to Jesus". As a New Creation what am I to look away from? Anything that distracts you from Jesus!

The Old Covenant System; "If I do this, then this will happen".

So, I am learning to look away from the old me, Old Covenant, old way of thinking and now "looking to Jesus".

Fix your eyes on Jesus and His perfect work on your behalf.

FACE TIME THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

**Jesus is the focal point
When I choose Jesus as my Focal
Point people look at me and
their eyes will be drawn to Jesus
"Look to Jesus"
Is
To perceive clearly, be attentive
to, be persuaded of and turn
one's mind to JESUS!**



His Light In Me Images ~Rhonda Barr

Community Testimony

By Margaret J.

Newton, IA

"If you go anywhere in the car today, watch the brakes. You sort of have to pump them", said Jim as he left for work. It was 1959. We had 4 children then, and my 86 year-old Grandma was spending a few days with us.

It was a beautiful September day. We did go somewhere. While the 2 older children were in school, Grandma and I and the two younger ones went to town in the station wagon. Yes, I had to pump the brakes when I approached the stop signs, and the brakes did work every time. We came back home and put the baby, Peter, down for his nap.

I wanted to go visit with a neighbor who lived about 4 miles away, so leaving Grandma with the sleeping baby, I took Barry, who was three, with me. I was planning to be home before the school bus brought the other two children home. After our visit, we got back into the car to go home. I had almost forgotten about the brakes, but as I crested the top of the hill, I remembered Jim's instructions. At the bottom of this long hill was a T-intersection and you had no choice but to turn either left or right. So, just at the top of the hill, I gently pumped

the brakes but this time there was no response, nothing, again- nothing.

We had moved from a small house in town to our large old farmhouse acreage the year before, and for at least 6 months we were meeting at a neighbors house, every Friday night for a one hour Bible study. During this time, I had knelt beside my bed and prayed, "Jesus, I believe in you-I have believed in you from childhood, but I don't know if I have ever asked You to come into my life. So, just in case I never have, I am asking you right now. Forgive me. I want you to come into my life and I want to be born again."

I remember thinking that there should be a bright light or bells ringing or something significant. I wasn't sure if God had heard me, so I prayed that way again a few days later.

About 2 or 3 weeks later I had lost my temper over something small, but I was suddenly filled with Joy! At that time I had realized it had been quite a while since I had lost my temper, and that was unusual! Jesus really had come into my life, I was experiencing a new nature as explained in II Corinthians 5:17. By now I was reading my Bible almost daily, going to Bible study, and as a family attended church for a few years.

Because of this, when the brakes failed completely going down that hill, I did not panic. I thought we were probably going to die, but it was alright.

Someone had recently told me that the safest place, during a collision, was underneath the dashboard. So, I told my son Barry to get down on the floor and put his head down. He obeyed.

I remember feeling very peaceful going down that hill. I tried the emergency brake but to no avail. I began to pray, I felt close to God. When we got to the bottom of the hill, I turned the steering wheel to the right. The next few minutes were a blur. We flipped over, probably more than once, and came to rest at the bottom of a very deep ditch. Barry had one hand caught in the driver's side door, but with a little pressure from me the door released his hand. From the broken out windshield Barry and I escaped the wreckage, and crawled up the steep banks of that muddy ditch. As we looked around a cement truck came by and gave us a ride home.

Barry lost one shoe, and his hand was slightly bruised, I also had some bruises, and a muddy coat, but all it took was a good bath, a quiet evening, and a night's sleep to be back good as ever. Jim was

home from work when we got home, and with the driver of the cement truck they went back to the scene of the accident. Later, Jim revealed to me that the station wagon had been crushed flat from the impact except for the front area where Barry and I were kept safe. I was so thankful that Grandma and the baby had not been in the car with us, and I was



so thankful that we were alive!

Eleven months later our son John was born, and I remember thanking God for Life. Life to live, to raise my children. It was not my time to die and go to heaven that day. God had work for me to do, and more children to raise. (We had three more, God blessed us with 8 children total. And Barry? He is a children's Pastor in Ft. Wayne, Indiana.)

Letters to the Editor!

From Ernie A.

How Iowa Compares

U.S. News & World Report recently ranked Iowa "best state in the nation for infrastructure, healthcare, and quality of life." The same report also ranked Iowa near the bottom for entrepreneurship and business environment. Improvements can be made, especially to our state's high and complex tax code.

Iowa has some of the highest individual and corporate income tax rates in the nation. By lowering rates and keeping spending levels low, Iowa can deliver true tax relief that benefits all Iowans and supports economic growth and financial freedom.

Advocates of big government use the Kansas story to warn the dangers of tax reform. Kansas created a self-inflicted budget crisis because they did not control spending. Not because of tax rate reductions.

Instead of Kansas, look at the tax relief success of North Carolina. The Tar Heel state cut tax rates and restrained spending growth at the same time. They now have budget surpluses and a booming economy. Over two years, North Carolina public school teachers have received an average salary increase of 9.6 percent.

The purpose of tax relief is not to gut or eliminate government, but rather create more opportunities by encouraging private sector growth. When we do, Iowa's economy will be another reason our state is one of the best places to live.



We are a local recording studio based out of Newton, Iowa. We pride ourselves on quality and customer service.

\$35/hr, including mixing & mastering.

Contact Information

Nick Maggard

641-275-0325 nicholasrosecocoe23@gmail.com

YOUR AD HERE

Your advertisement will be seen in print and digital formats! Go to:

ChristianLifeMagazine.org for more information about advertising. Inquire Today!

ChristianLifeMagazine.org

We are a registered non-profit organization.



**YOUR
AD HERE**