

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

activated

Vol 13 • Issue 6



THE WAKEBOARDING CHALLENGE

What's the secret?

Fuel for Growth

What babies can teach us

Is the Bible Relevant?

Clues for today



PERSONALLY SPEAKING

We had two Bibles in our home when I was growing up. One was an enormous family heirloom Bible, a “handcrafted masterpiece to last for centuries,” according to the door-to-door salesman. The other was a nondescript hardback that resided on a bookshelf in the study, between Dostoyevsky’s *The Idiot* and Homer’s *The Odyssey*. (My dad was the reader in our family.) In my teens I decided to read through the hardback, starting at what seemed the only logical place, page one, but I gave up a few pages later when I came to the first excruciating genealogy.¹

Then when I was 20 an acquaintance gave me a modern-language New Testament, which he “guaranteed” would change my life. Again I lost interest after only a few pages, and the book sank to the bottom of the clutter in my closet.

A year later, disillusioned with life, I excavated that New Testament and tried again. This time was different. This time I was starving for answers. The Gospels were simple and clear, and Jesus’ ideals rang wonderfully true. I found myself picking up that book several times a day, and then I couldn’t put it down. Some parts, like the accounts of miracles, I wanted to believe but wasn’t sure I should. Other parts made me squirm. I wanted *not* to believe those, but found that impossible. The book knew me. Things I read there shadowed me. My thoughts took on a new tone, a different quality. Eventually I realized that my self-talk had become a dialogue, sometimes between me and the Bible, and sometimes between me and the God I still wasn’t sure I believed in—a sort of informal, stream-of-consciousness prayer.

That dialogue has been going on for over 40 years now. Through it I have come to better understand myself, God, and the world around me. I can’t imagine a life without it, and I can’t wait to find out where it takes me next.

Keith Phillips
For *Activated*

1. Genesis 4:18–5:32

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Toll-free: 1–877–862–3228
Email: info@actmin.org
www.activatedonline.com

Activated Europe

Bramingham Pk. Business Ctr.
Enterprise Way
Luton, Beds. LU3 4BU, United Kingdom
+44 (0) 845 838 1384
Email: activatedEurope@activated.org

Big Thot Publications

P.O. Box 2509
Faerie Glen 0043, South Africa
+27 (083) 791 2804
Email: activated@bigthot.co.za

Activated India

P.O. Box 5215, G.P.O.
Bangalore – 560 001, India
Email: activatedIndia@activated.org

Activated Philippines

P.O. Box 1147
Antipolo City P.O.
1870 Antipolo City, Philippines
Cell: (0922) 8125326
Email: activatedPI@activated.org

Activated Australia

+61 2 8005 1938
Email: info@activated.org.au
www.activated.org.au

EDITOR Keith Phillips
DESIGN Gentian Suçi
PRODUCTION Samuel Keating

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PRESERVING the LANDMARKS



BY DINA ELLENS

SHORTLY AFTER THE TOHOKU EARTHQUAKE AND ENSUING TSUNAMI OF MARCH 11, 2011, I read an article about the 600-year-old stone markers that previous generations of Japanese had erected in the hills along the coastline where many past communities had been devastated by tsunamis. The boulders marked how far inland the wave from a previous tsunami had reached and warned residents not to build below that line.

The stone markers were disregarded by modern property developers who built far below the safety line, some right up to the coastline. Seawalls were built to protect the new residential areas, and engineers were confident that they would be able to withstand any tsunami. The seawalls failed, and the only villages that were spared were those inland and uphill of the stone markers.

This sad story reminded me of a verse in the Bible: “Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.”¹

We can apply this lesson to our spiritual life as well. If we want to be safe from the storms of life, we need to base our lives on the rock-solid truths of the Bible and the words of Jesus. These are the “ancient landmarks” that will keep us from being washed away by social, political, economic, or personal tsunamis.

Sometimes obstacles and problems loom large over me and threaten to overwhelm me, like the waves of a tsunami. But God’s Word is always there, always ready to serve as my landmark and show me how I can make progress in spite of the obstacles. All I have to do is gauge the position of my thoughts, attitudes, actions, and decisions by the Word. Then I can bravely face anything that life sends my way.

DINA ELLENS IS A RETIRED SCHOOLTEACHER AND LIVES IN WEST JAVA, INDONESIA, WHERE SHE IS ACTIVE IN VOLUNTEER WORK. ■

GOD’S WORD AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM ARE MEANT TO BE CONSTANTS IN OUR LIVES. EVERYTHING ELSE CAN CHANGE—OUR CIRCUMSTANCES, OUR HEALTH, OUR FAMILY LIFE, OUR LOCATION, OUR CAREER—BUT GOD’S WORD NEVER FAILS TO BE AN ENDURING PRESENCE. IT IS OUR SPIRITUAL BALLAST, OUR ANCHOR, OUR GUIDE, OUR MORAL AND SPIRITUAL COMPASS, OUR LIFEblood, OUR JOY, OUR PEACE, OUR HOPE, OUR VISION, AND OUR COMFORT. AS CHRISTIANS, THE WORD IS CORE TO WHO WE ARE—OUR BELIEFS, OUR VALUES, AND HOW WE CONDUCT OURSELVES.

—MARLA FONTAINE

1. Proverbs 22:28

THE GOOD EXPERIENCE

BY PETER AMSTERDAM

SOMETHING THAT I FIND PARTICULARLY WONDERFUL ABOUT JESUS IS THAT HIS LIFE-TRANSFORMING GIFT OF SALVATION IS FREELY GIVEN TO ANYONE WHO SIMPLY ASKS FOR IT WITH A SINCERE AND BELIEVING HEART. One's level of understanding of Christian doctrine may be minimal, but if the heart is hungry, if it is seeking a relationship with God, then the heart will find God—clearly, definitely, and freely—through receiving Jesus as Savior. Salvation is simple; it's a gift. You reach out, receive it, and it's yours.

Even if you don't fully understand all the whys and wherefores of doctrine, you can have solid faith in God. You speak to Him in prayer, and He responds; you hear His voice, you experience His supply, you receive His healing, and you soak up His love. You have a connection with Him, a relationship, interaction. You know that He is there, that He is God, that He is true, not only because of accounts in the Bible or anything others have told you, but because He is a reality in your life, because of personal experience.

Of course, it's very important to progress in your knowledge of God's


Word, to grow to spiritual maturity through living what the Word of God teaches. Experience with God is wonderful, but one's spiritual life is incomplete without the faith that comes through knowing the Word of God.

From a very early age, I felt the call of God. I didn't know how to respond to that call, but I felt it. As a teenager, I still hadn't found a way to respond, and I felt lost. Nothing seemed to satisfy me. I had the age-old questions. "What am I here for?" "What is the purpose of life?" I was searching, but finding no answers.

On three consecutive nights I visited a friend who had joined a fledgling Christian group that eventually became the Family International. As I was walking to my car after the third visit, convinced that I wanted to dedicate my life to Jesus, I realized that I couldn't do that unless I had a personal connection with God through Jesus.

I prayed and asked Jesus into my heart, and the instant I did, I knew something momentous had happened to me. The change I felt, the liberation, the clarity of purpose, and especially the deep peace in my heart, were overwhelming. I knew I was home. I was instantaneously aware

1. Luke 10:27
2. 1 Peter 3:15 NIV



that Jesus had indeed entered my life. I didn't need to know anything else to know that He was real, that He was the Son of God. No theology or further biblical truth was needed at that time to tell me that. I knew He was real because I had experienced Him. He was now involved in my life, and I knew it from deep within my being. I knew He loved me, I felt His love, and that was all I needed. From that day forward I have always known that He is there. I have experienced Him and continue to experience Him.

That doesn't mean I didn't read and study the Bible or the writings of other Christians. Doing so over the years has caused me to grow in faith, in my understanding of God, and in my relationship with Him. In this day and age when people are generally well informed and many are questioning or skeptical, a deeper explanation of faith and the Christian message is often needed before someone will understand the need for Jesus and accept Him. When you are sharing your faith at your workplace, or in your neighborhood, or with family or acquaintances, being prepared to give clear answers to deep questions and explain the Christian belief system

can be even more challenging than it was in some times past. Your life shows the fruit of your faith, but it is your ability to articulate your beliefs that helps to answer the queries of others.

When asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind," to which He added, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹ Learning more about Christian doctrine can be a manifestation of loving Him with our minds. When we possess a deeper understanding and knowledge of the truths, principles, and precepts that are the foundations for our faith, both our faith and our ability to articulate the reasons for our faith are strengthened. That's what will make it possible for you to "give an answer to everyone who asks you,"² which is often key to sharing your faith with others.

THIS ARTICLE IS ADAPTED FROM PETER AMSTERDAM'S "THE HEART OF IT ALL" SERIES. PETER AMSTERDAM AND HIS WIFE, MARIA FONTAINE, ARE DIRECTORS OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL, A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF FAITH. ■

FUEL for GROWTH

BY BONITA HELE



THE FIRST BIBLE VERSE THAT I REMEMBER COMMITTING TO MEMORY WAS 1 PETER 2:2: “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.” I was a little over three years old at the time and had a new baby brother. My mom used the opportunity to teach us older children how we needed God’s Word to grow spiritually as much as our baby brother needed his mother’s milk to grow physically. I clearly remember feeling grown up and liking the verse, but the depth of that lesson was lost on three-year-old me.

As we children grew, Mom didn’t only teach us more of God’s Word

through Scripture memorization and the Bible stories she read us each evening; she lived her faith and applied the lessons she taught us. Many of my early memories are of her explaining some spiritual principle related to our everyday experiences.

I can also still clearly picture her early every morning, reading the Bible or another devotional book. Sometimes one or another of us would question why she read from God’s Word each day instead of doing other seemingly more exciting things, and she would always answer with more or less the same reply. “You may not understand now, but when you grow up, you’ll see that

you can’t live without it. If I don’t have my time with the Lord every morning, I can barely get through the day.” No, I didn’t understand. I found other things more interesting and exciting. Still, each morning without fail, Mom would help us memorize bits from the Bible and read to us from children’s devotional books. As we grew older, she encouraged us to read and study the Bible on our own.

Eventually I moved away from home, and I have since married and started a family of my own. When our daughter Jessica was a baby, she loved to nurse. When she began teething and was having quite a hard



time, sometimes nursing was the only thing that would soothe her. As I nursed her one night, 1 Peter 2:2 came to my mind once again: “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.” The milk was my daughter’s sustenance; it was what gave her the nourishment she needed to live and grow. But that wasn’t all it was. It was also a source of comfort when nothing else would console her.

As an adult, I have come to understand just how important God’s Word is. It has given me answers when all I had were questions. It has

given me strength when I felt weak and weary in spirit. It has shown me the way to go. And in times of hardship it has been a greater comfort to me than any friend could be, because Jesus’ eternal, unfailing love shines through it.

Thank you, Mom, for instilling in me this truth. I understand now. God’s Word is what keeps us alive and growing spiritually. It feeds our souls and brings us security and comfort, and it helps us grow in faith and the knowledge that His enduring love, like that of a parent, will never fail or fade. I have Jesus, my mother, and my daughter Jessica to thank for driving this lesson home.

Now my hope is to nurture in my own children the same love for God and dependency on Him and His Word that my mother instilled in me. They, too, will be grown one day. When they are, I want them to know that God’s Word will always be there for them when they need it most.

BONITA HELE IS A FREELANCE WRITER AND EDITOR IN THE U.S. AND A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL. ■

Do you feed your body but starve your soul? Don’t be like the man in the Bible who stuffed his barns full of grain, only to have God say to him, “You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?”¹

Having a full stomach and a full purse and a full head cannot give you a full heart. If you put the desires of the flesh above the needs of your spirit, then you will find that nothing ever satisfies. You will be like the man who despaired, “I have drunk of every cup of pleasure and every goblet of excess; I have indulged myself in all the charms and delicacies of the world, and yet I die of hunger.”

Just like you have to eat in order to have physical strength, you have to feed from the Word to have spiritual strength. You’ve got to feed your soul or you will never fully develop or mature spiritually. And if you really want to grow in spirit, you will feed from the Word every day!

—David Brandt Berg

Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

—2 Corinthians 4:16 NIV

1. Luke 12:20 NLT

GOD'S TIMELESS

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE UNIVERSAL, timeless principles and promises that we find in the Bible, and the instruction and guidance that God gave to specific people for specific times or situations, which are also recorded there. God's timeless Word consists of those passages that apply to everyone, everywhere, and will never change. For example, "God is love"¹ is one of the most powerful truths expressed in the Bible, and one that is immutable. "Love your neighbor as yourself"² is a core principle of the Christian faith, and that also will never change. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and other teachings are every bit as relevant to us today as they were to those who heard them from Jesus' mouth two thousand years ago.

God's Word is overflowing with beautiful, timeless principles and promises that apply to us and which the Bible says were recorded for our benefit, so that we can learn from others' experiences.³ On the other hand, there are many passages in the Bible that can't be applied literally to our lives today. A good deal of the Old Testament is historic in nature, chronicling the lives and times of the Jewish people and their forebears, and holds little relevance to our lives today. The fundamental principles of the Word are timeless, but we must apply them in the context of contemporary circumstances.

That's nothing new.

The Mosaic Law had been the Jewish people's standard for more than a thousand years, although how to apply it had often been a complicated and controversial matter. Jesus shone new light on the matter. His teachings focused on love, mercy, and humility, in sharp contrast to the exacting, legalistic interpretation held by the religious leaders of His day and their predecessors.

"You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,'" Jesus said in His Sermon on the Mount. "But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. ... You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I

1. 1 John 4:8

2. Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39

3. Romans 15:4

4. Matthew 5:38-41, 43-45 NLT

5. Matthew 5:17

6. Galatians 3:24-25

WORD

BY MARIA FONTAINE

say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.”⁴

Only moments before, Jesus had said that He hadn't come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets, but to accomplish their purpose.⁵ Jesus ushered in a new era of faith that made obsolete the complicated rules and regulations, customs, and ceremonies detailed in the Old Testament, which the Jewish people had held to for over a thousand years. “The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be [made right with God] by faith,” Paul the apostle explained. “But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”⁶

As Christianity has developed over time, methods, concepts, and applications have continued to change and evolve. The early church faced the challenge of organizing and evolving from a small group of persecuted believers to an established religion with influence on the world of their day. And like the early church, the believers of each era since have had to be prepared to adapt to the world around them to some degree in order to reach people and to be relevant. Whenever the church tried to halt the process of change or was unwilling to adapt to the times, it ran into trouble; it either became too rigid and controlling, or it became irrelevant and people lost interest in Christianity.

As Christians, we should strive to identify the timeless principles of the Word, but at the same time understand that how these principles are applied may change as the context changes. ■

The one thing the New Testament forbids us to do is to treat it as a static document to be used as a set of proof-texts for instant solutions to complex and controversial contemporary problems. To misuse the New Testament in this way is to deny its dynamic character and to fail to realize that the Word has to be applied in a specific context.

—Karl Paul Donfried

It will greatly help you to understand scripture if you note not only what is spoken and written, but of whom and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goes before and what follows.

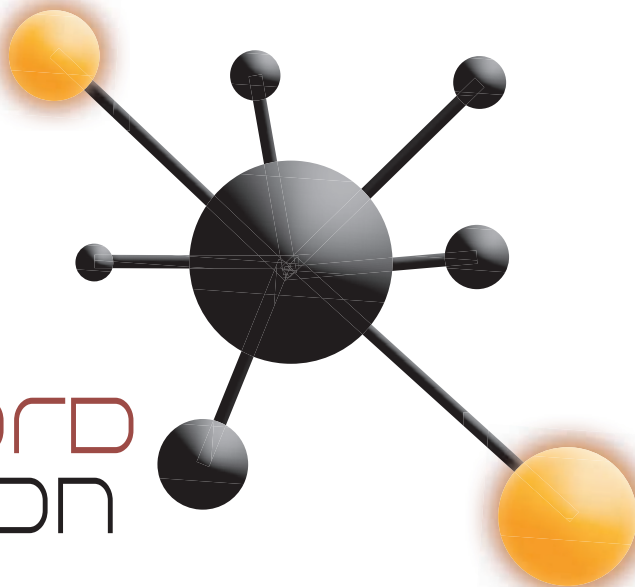
—Miles Coverdale

Times change. God doesn't, but times do. We learn and grow, and the world around us shifts, and the Christian faith is alive only when it is listening, morphing, innovating, letting go of whatever has gotten in the way of Jesus and embracing whatever will help us be more and more the people God wants us to be. ... Every generation has to ask the difficult questions of what it means to be a Christian here and now, in this place, in this time.

—Rob Bell

POINTS TO PONDER

The Faith-WORD CONNECTION



IF SOMEONE WERE TO HAND ME A BOOK THAT WAS AS SIMPLE TO ME AS THE MULTIPLICATION TABLE, and say, “This is the Word of God. In it He has revealed His whole will and wisdom,” I would shake my head and say, “I cannot believe it; that is too easy to be a perfect revelation of infinite wisdom.” There must be, in any complete revelation of God’s mind and will and character and being, things hard for the beginner to understand; and the wisest and best of us are but beginners.

—*R. A. Torrey*

Don’t neglect God’s Word. It is food for your soul and gives you strength for the daily battles of life. It is His Word by His Spirit in His love that makes you strong. So read it prayerfully and ask God to increase your faith, and He will. He never fails! He’ll always answer the hungry heart.

—*David Brandt Berg*

When you have read the Bible, you will know it is the word of God, because you have found it the key to your own heart, your own happiness and your own duty.

—*Woodrow Wilson*

By studying God’s Word, you will come to understand His loving ways. This will give you faith that whatever your circumstances may be, He is in control and has your best interests at heart. When disappointments, obstacles, and setbacks wear on you, taking a little time to read from God’s Word will put things back in proper perspective.

—*Jason Rae and Shannon Shayler*,
Understanding God’s Word

You can’t stand effectively on “blind” faith. You must have a “knowing” faith, and that comes from believing wholeheartedly what the Word promises.

—*Gloria Copeland*

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

—*Romans 10:17*

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, the importance of God’s Word to the walk of faith is paramount. Jesus, echoing Moses, said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”¹ David the psalmist said that God has magnified His Word above His name.² His words provide a foundation for our faith, as well as guidance, instruction, counsel, encouragement, motivation, enlightenment, education, and power. They provide the strength to do His will, and they help us continue to grow spiritually.

—*Maria Fontaine*

You get faith by studying the Word. Study that Word until something in you “knows that you know” and that you do not just hope that you know.

—*Carrie Judd Montgomery* ■

1. Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3

2. Psalm 138:2



The Wakeboarding Challenge

BY CLARISSE CALAYAG

WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU TRIED DOING SOMETHING COMPLETELY NEW TO YOU?

My last time was when a friend and I decided to sample wakeboarding, and I got to put my courage to the test.

My heart pounded as I lined up at the beginner's line. "God, please help me to make it at least a few feet away from the dock," I prayed. Frankly, at that point, a few feet seemed like it would be a huge accomplishment.

Before we began, the instructor gave me several tips. "Relax. Keep your arms straight and your toes pointing up. Bend your knees. Don't pull the rope toward you."

The first thing I did was pull on the rope, of course, and I instantly fell flat on my face in the water.

I kept trying, though, and on my third attempt I made it to the other side of the small lake and back. I felt a rush of adrenalin, and couldn't wait to do it again.

As my friend, also a beginner, prepared to take her turn, she asked me how I had managed to catch on so quickly. I thought about that for a moment and realized it was because of the instructor's coaching.

Besides the advice he gave me before my first attempt, he continued to instruct me throughout my ride. When I struggled to keep my balance, for example, he would yell from the boat, "Hold that position!" or, "Keep your arms straight!" or, "Don't pull the rope!" At other times he would shout, "Center your weight!" or, "Now try standing up!" When I followed his instruction, the rope didn't seem to pull so drastically at my muscles and joints, but rather helped me to keep my balance.

Through the Bible, God has given us instructions to guide us and correct us when we're about to fall.¹ And He didn't stop there. His voice is always there to guide us, just like the instructor who continued to tell me what to do after we had pulled away from the dock.

Whether or not we apply these instructions as we live our day-to-day lives is entirely up to us, however. If we don't, we will most likely fall flat on our faces in the murky water of failure and mistakes, disappointment and heartache. But if we do apply them, we are in for a safe, successful, exhilarating ride—the ride of our lives!

CLARISSE CALAYAG IS A SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. ■

1. See 2 Timothy 3:16.

12 TIPS FOR QUALITY SPIRITUAL FEEDING

BY CHRIS HUNT

JUST AS GOOD FOOD IS ESSENTIAL FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH, we must nourish our spirits in order to stay healthy and grow spiritually. We do that by making reading or listening to the Bible and other faith-building material a habit. Here are some tried and proven tips for getting the most from those times.

1. Pick a time and duration.

Try setting aside at least 20 minutes daily for reading and reflecting on God's Word. It can be difficult to get much out of this time if you don't spend at least that long. If you aren't able to fit it in daily, then try three or four days each week. Whatever you decide, it will be easier to follow through if you establish a definite time slot and make it part of your routine.

2. Find a place.

Find a quiet place to read where you will not be interrupted or distracted. Turn off your cell phone and disconnect from the internet.

3. Decide what to read.

You may want to plan what to read over a period of time, such as working your way through a book of the Bible or a devotional book, but be flexible. Variety is important for holding your interest too.

4. Pray before you read.

Ask Jesus to help you concentrate and have an open heart so you can get as much as possible from this time. "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law."¹

5. Read the Word carefully, prayerfully, and thoughtfully.

If you were to gulp down a meal as fast as you could, you wouldn't get as much out of that food or enjoy it as much as you would by eating more slowly. The same principle applies to your spiritual food. To be nourished spiritually, you must take time to absorb what you read.

6. Apply what you read.

When you're reading, often a certain point will stand out. You may have read the same passage before, but suddenly it comes to life and you understand how the spiritual principles apply to you personally.

7. Put what you read into action.

The way to really experience the power of the Word of God is by doing what it says. "Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."² And Jesus Himself promised, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."³

1. Psalm 119:18

2. James 1:22

3. John 13:17

4. Psalm 119:11

8. Keep a “spiritual diary.”

Copy key points or passages from what you read into a special notebook for future reference. Putting your thoughts about what you read into words serves two purposes: It crystallizes the lessons and reinforces them in your mind so you will be more likely to remember them when opportunities to apply them arise. It also serves as a useful review. You might also want to use this diary to record spiritual lessons and milestones in your relationships with Jesus and others that aren't necessarily connected to your times of spiritual feeding.

9. Memorize.

Whatever we take in, consciously or unconsciously, by choice or by chance, has an effect for better or worse on our thinking and thus on our actions. But we can choose what input we want to influence and motivate us the most. If you want that to be God's Word, commit to memory key Bible verses or points you come across in your times of spiritual feeding. “Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”⁴ Scriptures you've memorized will be a source of comfort and strength in times of trouble or decision, as well as provide help and answers to share with others in need.

10. Don't be overly concerned if you don't understand something.

Augustine of Hippo (354–430) was once greatly perplexed about a particular aspect of faith. While walking by the seashore, he saw a little boy with a seashell repeatedly running to the water's edge, filling the shell with water, and pouring it into a hole in the sand. To Augustine's surprise, the boy explained matter-of-factly that he was putting the ocean in the hole. Augustine realized that was like what he himself had been trying to do. “Standing on the shores of time,” he would later write, “I was trying to get into this finite mind of mine things which are infinite.”

11. Don't worry about all the details of Bible history and geography.

History and geography can be interesting, but spiritual principles are of far greater value. For example, when we read the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, we see a pattern of love in action that we know we should try to follow; when we read the Psalms and other devotional passages, we find thoughts and principles that we can apply to our own prayers.

12. Spice it up.

The four Gospels, Psalms, and Proverbs are the most read (and reread) devotional books of all time, but don't stop there. Variety is the spice of life—and a key to making your times of spiritual feeding a daily high point.

CHRIS HUNT LIVES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND HAS BEEN READING *ACTIVATED* SINCE IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1999. ■

THIS ARTICLE WAS ADAPTED FROM *12 FOUNDATION STONES*, A FREE ONLINE COURSE FOR GETTING TO KNOW AND LIVE GOD'S WORD. <<http://12foundationstones.org>>

IS THE BIBLE RELEVANT?

BY ABI F. MAY

THE BIBLE IS MUCH MORE THAN A HISTORY OF GOD'S DEALINGS WITH INDIVIDUALS, peoples, and humankind in general, interspersed with a number of prophecies about future events. It was also written for now—whether “now” is AD 112, 1112, or 2012.

What direction, comfort, or assurance does the Bible have to offer? The following worries and troubles resonate with many of us today, and the Bible addresses them all.

FINANCIAL INSECURITY

Do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own

things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.—*Matthew 6:31–34*

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

—*Philippians 4:6 NLT*

DISCOURAGEMENT

Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again.

—*Psalm 42:11 NLT*

Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.—*Psalm 55:22*

PERSONAL CRISES

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though

the mountains shake with its swelling.—*Psalm 46:1–3*

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.—*Hebrews 4:16*

DECISION MAKING

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

—*Psalm 32:8*

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.—*Proverbs 3:5–6*

LONELINESS

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.—*Psalm 23:1–3*

I will not leave you nor forsake you.—*Joshua 1:5*

STRESS AND STRAIN

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.—*Matthew 11:28–30*

Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.—*Galatians 6:9*

ANXIETY OVER THE FUTURE

I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.—*Psalms 34:4*

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.—*2 Timothy 1:7*

REMORSE OVER MISTAKES

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;

according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.—*Psalms 51:1–2, 10–12*

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

—*Romans 8:35, 38–39* ■

I opened it [the Bible] and “chanced” upon the Beatitudes! I read, and read, and read—now aloud with an indescribable warmth surging within. ... I could not find words to express my awe and wonder. And suddenly the realization dawned upon me: This was the Book that would understand me!
—*Dr. Emile Cailliet (1894–1981), French philosopher*

A single line in the Bible has consoled me more than all the books I ever read besides.

—*Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), German philosopher*

God’s Word is as good as He is. There is an old saying that a man is as good as his word. Well, God is as good as His Word. His character is behind what He has said.

—*J. Vernon McGee (1904–1988), American minister, teacher, and theologian*

FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

How to get the most from life

It's sad how many people are content to let life pass them by. Sure, they may be busy keeping up or trying to get ahead, and they may fill every spare moment with activities that they hope will be relaxing and enjoyable, but where is all that busy activity taking them? When do they really live?

The secret to getting the most out of life is living close to Me and My Word. I don't mean that you should hide away and give yourself solely to quiet reflection and study; I mean that you should try to include Me in your daily activities and apply My Word to whatever you're doing. If you do that, your life will take on new meaning and depth. You will not only be much happier and more fulfilled, but you will brighten the lives of those around you as you reflect My love and the light of My Word in all you do.

It starts by your making a habit of taking a few quiet minutes at the start of every day for prayer and reading My Word. Then take what I have taught you in the "classroom" and apply it throughout the day. If you don't know how, just shoot up a quick prayer and I will show you. On the job, running errands, or relaxing with family and friends, I can make you a blessing to others and bless you in the process. Life will become richer and more meaningful as I help you make more time for the most interesting and rewarding thing I have going—people.

