

AMAZING FACTS

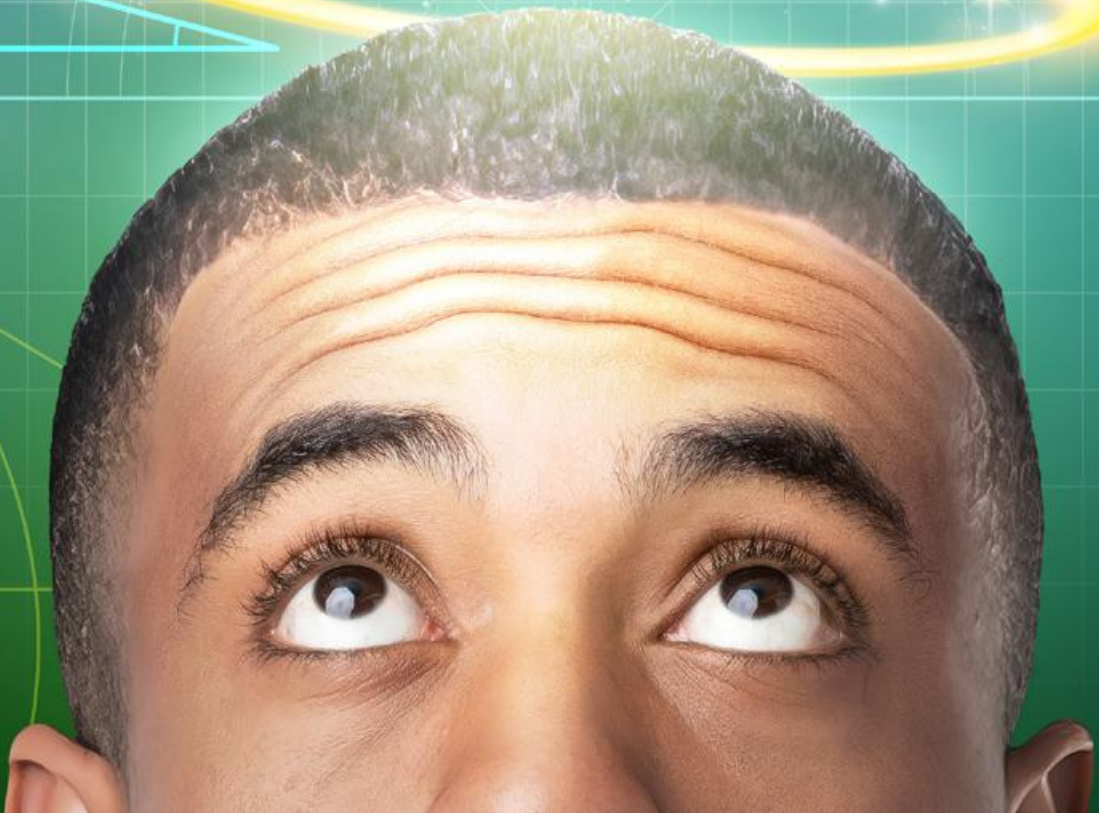
INTERNATIONAL

INSIDE  
REPORT

1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER  
2024

# Should a Christian Be Perfect?

PART 1





# THE GLORY OF THE CROSS SUMMIT

From the Upper Room  
Through the Tomb

A Special, Live Event Presented by



## Friday, March 29 – Saturday, March 30

Hosted by the Granite Bay Hilltop Church, 6605 Sierra College Blvd., Granite Bay, CA

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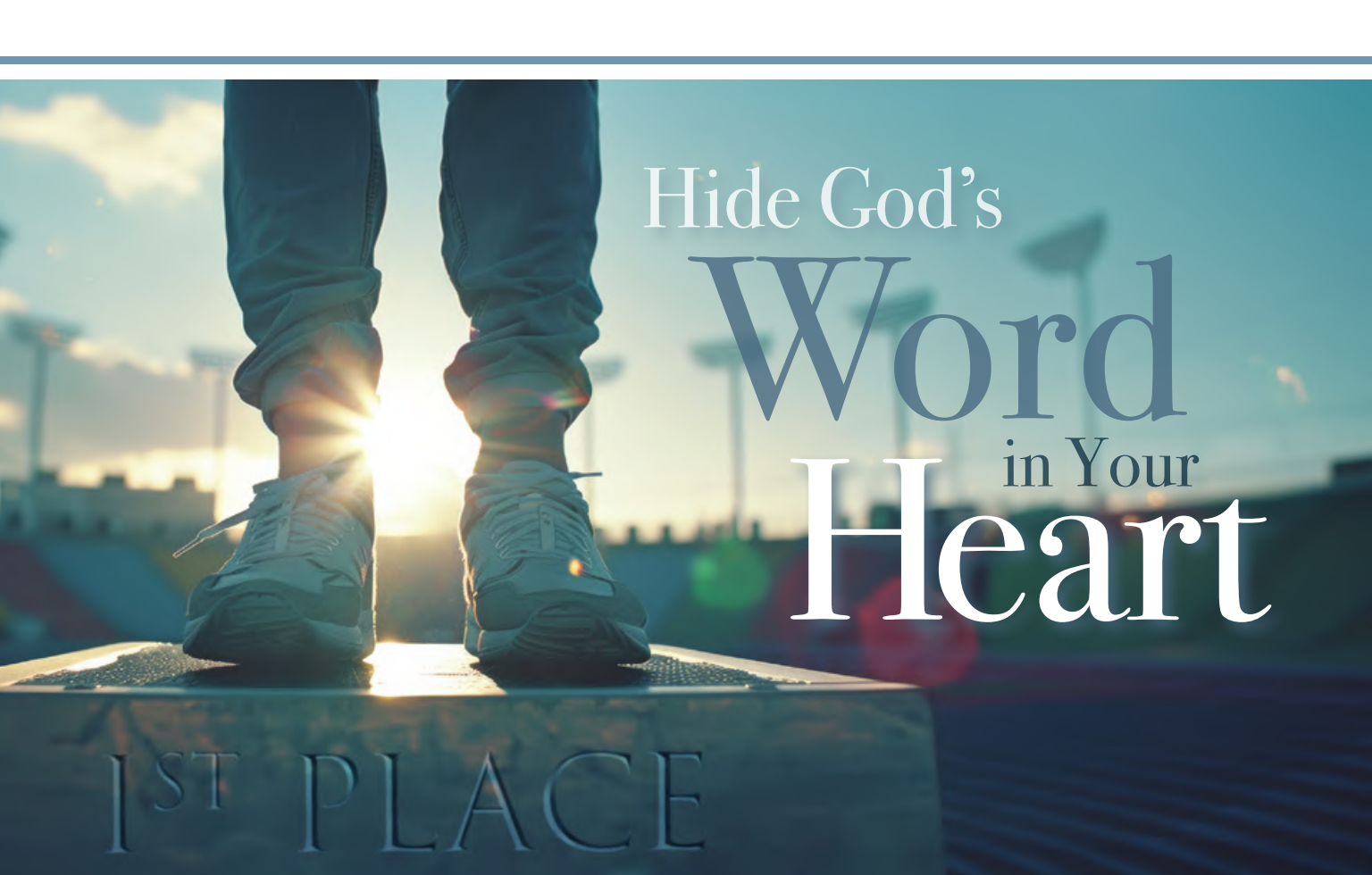


**ARON CREWS**  
Youth & Young Adult Pastor  
Granite Bay Hilltop Church

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A photograph of a person's legs and feet standing on a large, dark trophy that has "1ST PLACE" engraved on it. The person is wearing blue jeans and white sneakers. The background is a bright sunset or sunrise over a city skyline, with the sun low on the horizon creating a strong lens flare effect.

# Hide God's Word in Your Heart

1ST PLACE

Memorize:

You shall be perfect, just as your Father  
in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48).

**D**oes this memory verse cause your heart to skip a beat every time you read it? No doubt, it's a daunting statement from Jesus, who, at the same time, happens to be the only human in history to have actually accomplished the feat!

The idea of being a perfect Christian seems so implausible that few of us think to put our minds to reaching that goal. "After all," we rationalize, "doesn't the Bible say, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves'?" (1 John 1:8). But the truth is, in other areas of life, we often strive for excellence and think nothing of it.

For instance, consider the world's elite athletes. To get where they are, they have set for themselves the highest standard; they have paid attention to every detail, including in their diet regimen; they have maintained mental toughness in adversity; they have been consistent in their training; they have been learning from their mistakes; and they have pushed themselves to constantly improve. Right?

While these attributes may demand a high level of energy, no one would consider them "radical" in the realm of sports. But apply these same attributes to our walk with God, and suddenly, we're quick to label them as radical, legalistic, or perfectionist. Why are so many people adverse to the idea of training to become an "elite" Christian—not for our own glory, but out of our love for God?

That's the challenge that Pastor Doug tackles in this issue's main feature, called "Should a Christian Be Perfect?" We hope that you will be inspired by this "controversial" message to re-examine your walk with Christ so that you may be filled with hope and expectation that you will also say one day, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord ... will give to me on that Day" (2 Timothy 4:7, 8). 

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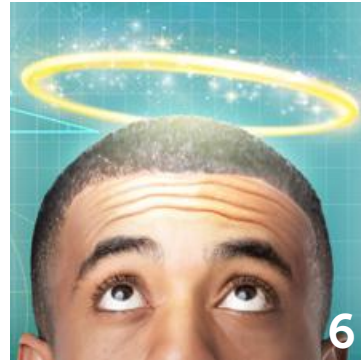
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# Connect with Amazing Facts

## From the Mail Bag



### A Blessed Encounter

On the morning of May 23, 2016, Thomas suffered a cardiac arrest while at his small school in rural Ohio. His own parents had to perform CPR for 20 minutes before medics arrived. The survival rate for a sudden cardiac arrest is only 10 percent, but Thomas came through the ordeal without suffering any brain damage or other ill effects. No cause was ever found, but he was given an implantable cardioverter defibrillator to protect him if it were to occur again. When Make-A-Wish granted Thomas's wish to travel to California, he wanted to see if he could also meet one of his favorite evangelists, Pastor Doug. So, on one of the days, the family got



up at 1:00 AM to drive from Los Angeles to Granite Bay. When they arrived, they were able to spend some time with Pastor Doug. Thomas and his family were also given a tour of the Amazing Facts headquarters and the Granite Bay Church. They loved taking a look behind the scenes and hearing about all the great work going on at Amazing Facts! We thank Thomas for stopping by and saying hello!

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# Should a Christian Be Perfect?

PART 1

By Pastor Doug Batchelor

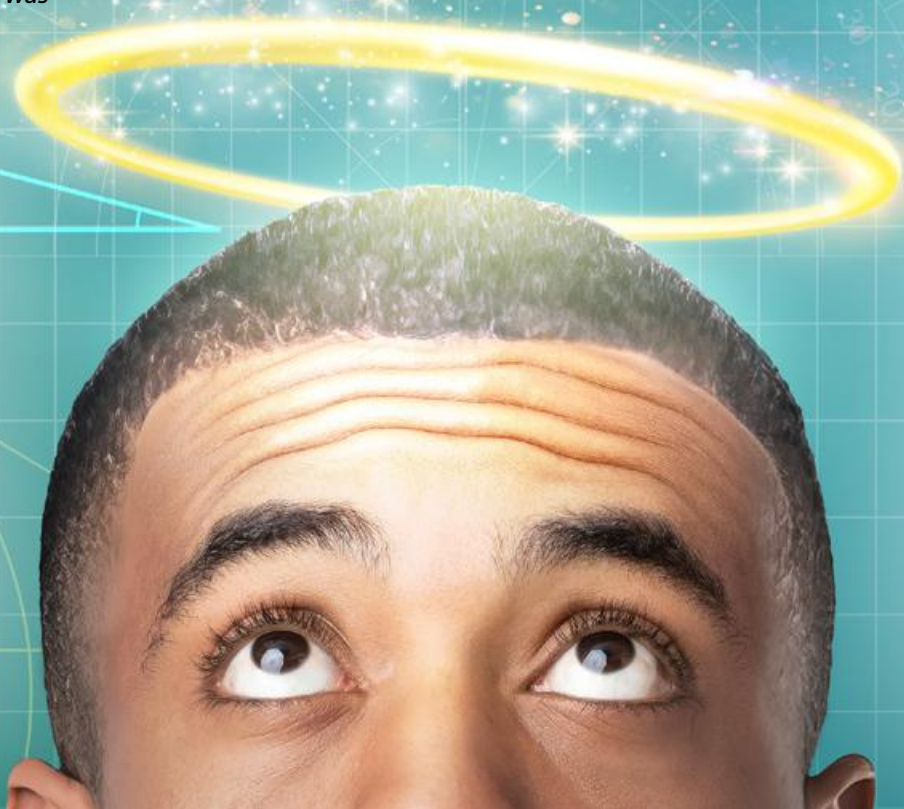
## AN AMAZING FACT:

*Did you know that bumble bees have also been called "humble bees"? It was once thought that the name "bumble" was meant to describe the awkward, clumsy movements of adult bees in flight. With their small wings and hairy, fat bodies, it was also thought that it was aerodynamically impossible for them to fly. However, scientific studies have since revealed that God created these tiny creatures for perfect flight.*

One night in a hotel room, I tossed and turned while trying to get a good night's sleep on a lumpy, high-mileage hotel bed. I awoke from my troubled sleep the next morning to discover that, in the process of thrashing around all night, I had managed to expose the mattress corner and revealed the bed's brand name: "Perfect Sleeper."

Laughing within, I thought, *I wouldn't call that a perfect night's sleep!*

Most people agree that the word "perfect" is open to interpretation. So what exactly did Jesus mean when He said, "You shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven





# τέλειος

is perfect"? (Matthew 5:48). After all, even we Christians say that "nobody's perfect," let alone as perfect as our Father in heaven!

And doesn't the Bible say:

- "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10);
- "Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no one living is righteous" (Psalm 143:2);
- "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8)?

Most Christians understand that when we turn to Christ, we receive perfect justification and are declared sinless because of Christ's sacrifice. But what I want to discuss in this article is sanctification and whether God expects Christians to perfectly obey Him after we receive justification.

Matthew 5:48 has been an ongoing source of both irritation and inspiration for various Christian camps and a catalyst for much debate. What exactly is Jesus saying when He commands us to be perfect?

The phrase "perfect Christian" can conjure up images of people who have become some kind of sterile, stainless-steel, sanctified robots that have a direct cable to heaven from which they receive their automated signals.

But perhaps a closer look at several words would provide a more complete picture. In the King James New Testament, the word "perfect" appears 42 times and is usually translated from the Greek word *teleios*, meaning

"complete in labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc., of full age." Here are a few other examples where *teleios* is used:

- "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made **perfect** in one" (John 17:23 KJV).
- "Let us therefore, as many as be **perfect**, be thus minded" (Philippians 3:15 KJV).
- "If any man offend not in word, the same is a **perfect** man" (James 3:2 KJV).

The word "perfect" is found in the King James Old Testament more than 50 times, and it is usually translated from the Hebrew word *tamiym*, meaning "entire, integrity, truth, without blemish, complete, full, perfect, sincerely, sound, without spot, undefiled, upright, whole."

# תמיים

- "Noah was a just man and **perfect** in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9 KJV).
- "The LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou **perfect**" (Genesis 17:1 KJV).
- "Thou shalt be **perfect** with the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 18:13 KJV).

## The Taboo Topic

The subject of Christian perfection is such a volatile issue among Christians that most preachers don't venture anywhere near it—it's a theological quagmire. If a minister is reckless enough to admit that he believes that God wants us to stop sinning, then



he becomes an instant target for the question, "Have you stopped sinning?"

Well, here I go: I believe that God wants us to stop sinning!

So now is your chance to ask, "Pastor Doug, have *you* stopped sinning?"

No, I haven't. But I'm also in good company.

- The Bible says that Noah was perfect and walked with God. Yet it also says that he drank wine and stumbled around drunk (Genesis 6:9; Genesis 9:20, 21).
- Zacharias and Elizabeth are said to have been "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1:6). But in the same chapter, it tells us Zacharias did not have faith in the promise of the angel and was struck speechless for his unbelief.
- Elijah was so connected with God that when he prayed, fire and then rain poured down from the heavens. But a few verses later, we see him running away—fearful, discouraged, and praying for death (1 Kings 19:4).
- Daniel is a man described as beloved of heaven and filled with the Holy Spirit, yet in Daniel 9:20, we see him confessing his sins.
- Paul said that he did not consider himself perfect: "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12–14).

Maybe this is the key for us when it comes to understanding Christian perfection—looking at the examples of God's people throughout the Bible. They certainly made their fair share of mistakes, but after they fell and repented, they would forget the things that were behind them and then press on to be



Christlike. Like Daniel, they would confess their sins and then press on toward perfection. This is why, at the end of his life, Paul could tell Timothy with confidence,

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day (2 Timothy 4:7, 8).





We need to guard against the popular mindset among Christians that we are saved *with* our sins and not ultimately *from* our sins.

Countless times, I have heard people say they believe that most politicians lie on a regular basis as though it were part of the job description. So that means when it comes time to vote, we are essentially just choosing the most likable liar. In the same way, because there are so many counterfeit Christians in the world, most people have come to believe that the concept of a consistent Christian is as remote as finding an honest politician.

The Lord has made it clear that this consistent obedience is rare, but it is also possible.

- "The LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?'" (Job 2:3).
- "Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:14).

Because there is so much failure and imperfection in the world and in the church, many have concluded that God "grades on the curve" and is content for the saints to wear crooked halos until Jesus comes. But I believe that, although we are not called to be robots, we are

commanded to be perfectly surrendered. I like the way Dr. A.J. Gordon puts it:

We gravely fear that many Christians make the Apostle's word, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," the unconscious justification for a low standard of Christian living. It were almost better for one to overstate the possibilities of sanctification in his eager grasp after holiness than to understate them in his complacent satisfaction with a traditional unholiness. ... If we regard the doctrine of sinless perfection as a heresy, we regard contentment with sinful imperfection as a greater heresy.

## Does God Want Perfection?

Of course He does!

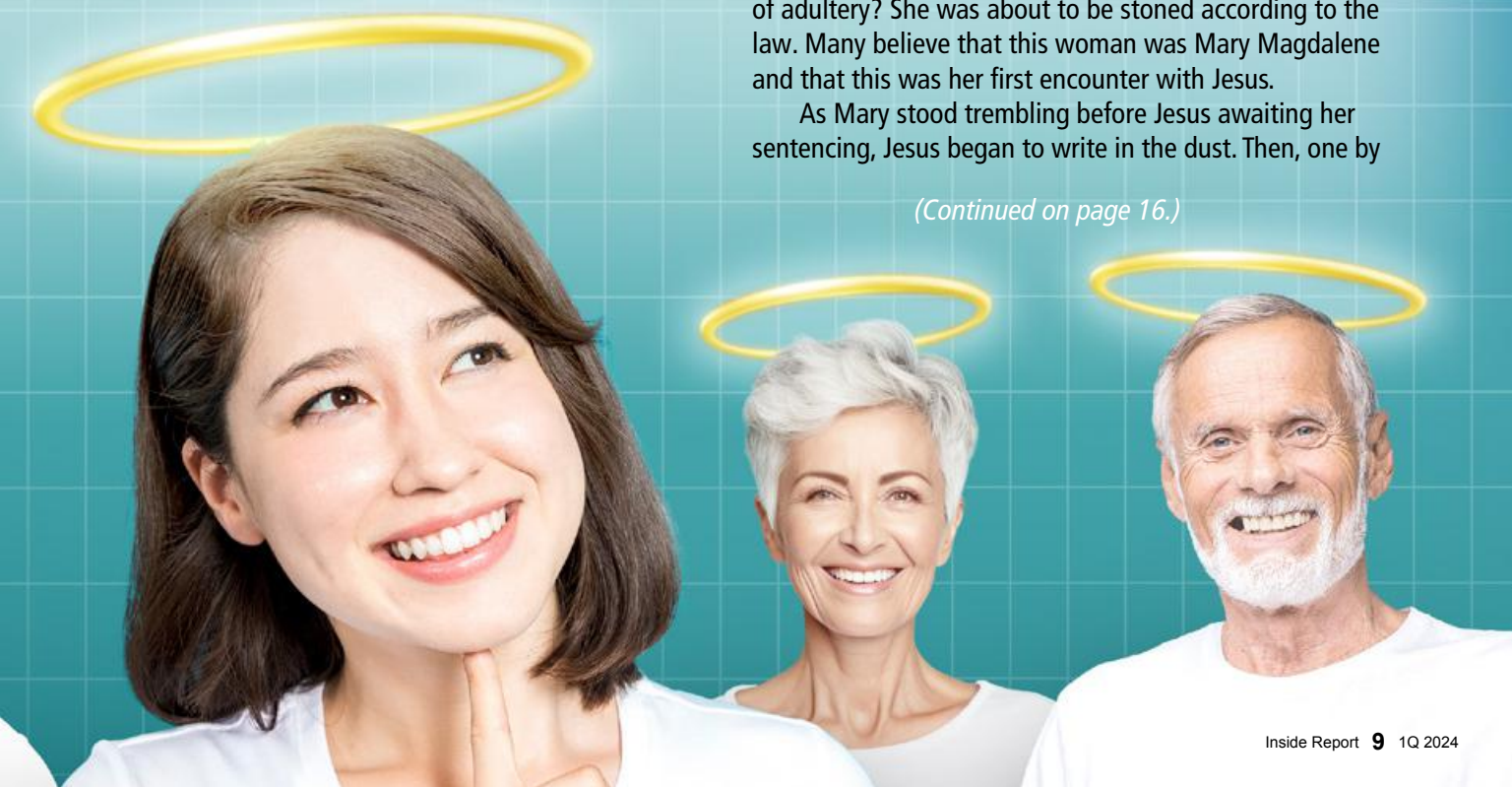
How could a perfect, holy God be content with an imperfect standard? Or how could a perfect Creator, who originally made a perfect creation, be satisfied with an imperfect one?

Here's the next question: Does God tolerate imperfection? Once again, of course! Otherwise, He would vaporize you and me on the spot. In fact, the whole world would be instantly destroyed if God did not at least temporarily tolerate imperfection.

Although it is clear that Jesus did not come to condemn sinners, neither did He come to condone sin. Remember the story about the woman caught in the act of adultery? She was about to be stoned according to the law. Many believe that this woman was Mary Magdalene and that this was her first encounter with Jesus.

As Mary stood trembling before Jesus awaiting her sentencing, Jesus began to write in the dust. Then, one by

*(Continued on page 16.)*





# PROPHECY WATCH

*“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who ... receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (Revelation 17:12, 13).*

**B**ible prophecy consistently uses “ten horns” to represent the divided kingdoms of Europe (Daniel 7:24; Revelation 13:1). Although these kingdoms “will not adhere to one another” (Daniel 2:43) to form a single nation, they have created a military alliance that could one day empower “the beast”—the papacy (Revelation 13:1–8, 18; 17).

NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a military alliance of 29 European states, the United States, and Canada. It was formed in 1949—20 years after Vatican City was established as an independent state—with 12 countries. Since then, it keeps expanding, with Finland as the latest to join in 2023.<sup>1</sup> Sweden will be next if every NATO member approves.<sup>2</sup>

In response to Finland’s (and potentially Sweden’s) new membership—which doubled the alliance’s border with Russia<sup>3</sup>—it is feared that Russia might one day retaliate by attacking NATO’s eastern countries.<sup>4</sup> Even now, Russian officials warn of a potential “big war” due to NATO military drills near Russia’s border. Dubbed “Steadfast Defender 2024,” the operation, which began in January and is scheduled to end in May, is NATO’s largest

since the Cold War—with 90,000 troops, 1,100 vehicles, 80 fighter jets, and 50 aircraft carriers.<sup>5</sup>

If anything, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has motivated Finland and Sweden, once neutral countries, to join the alliance—originally formed in response to Soviet aggression.<sup>6</sup> The ambitions of Vladimir Putin have only made that alliance stronger. And with the looming threats of China and Iran joining Russia to form a new “axis of evil,”<sup>7</sup> it is expected that NATO will continue to expand its military powers, with the possibility of Switzerland and other neutral states joining.<sup>8</sup>



Someday, those expanding powers just might be useful for the Vatican to enforce its counterfeit worship on that side of the Atlantic. Of course, the United States, one of NATO’s first 12 members,

will play a leading role in “[causing] the earth ... to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (Revelation 13:12). How it all plays out is yet to be seen.

1 “What Is NATO?” *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index.html>.

2 Justin Spike, “Orbán’s party boycotts a session of Hungary’s parliament to further stall Sweden’s bid to join NATO,” *The Associated Press*, February 5, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/hungary-orban-party-boycotts-sweden-nato-vote-4357681b8ca9aa20d594d4d71a447027>.

3 Paul Kirby & Jonathan Beale, “Nato’s border with Russia doubles as Finland joins,” *BBC*, April 4, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65173043>.

4 Arpan Rai, “Norway must brace for conflict with Russia amid Sweden and Finland’s Nato bids, warns defence minister,” *The Independent*, February 6, 2024, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-ukraine-war-norway-defence-minister-b2491211.html>.

5 Thomas Kika, “Putin Ally Issues Stark Warning on How ‘Big War’ With NATO Will Begin,” *Newsweek*, February 3, 2024, <https://www.newsweek.com/dmitry-medvedev-stark-warning-big-war-nato-begin-1866631>.

6 Arthur I. Cyr, “NATO—the enduring alliance grows and expands its footprint,” *Stars and Stripes*, February 4, 2024, <https://www.stripes.com/opinion/2024-02-04/nato-expands-footprint-sweden-12895137.html>.

7 Nile Gardiner & Robert Greenway, “A new axis of evil has formed. America needs Nato more than ever,” *The Telegraph*, January 30, 2024, <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/a-new-axis-of-evil-has-formed-america-needs-nato-more-than-ever/ar-BB1huvhU>.

8 Thomas Stephens, “Switzerland and NATO: just flirting or the start of a wild marriage?” *SWI*, February 2, 2024, <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/switzerland-and-nato--just-flirting-or-the-start-of-a-wild-marriage-/49181146>.

# Bible Answers

with Pastor Doug Batchelor

Q

## How do I handle temptation?

A

"A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished" (Proverbs 22:3). There are many suggestions in the Bible for dealing with temptation, but the most important tip is this: *Run!* It's a sad fact that few speed records are broken when it comes to running from temptation. We often crawl away from it hoping it catches up to us. Sometimes, temptation comes through a door we deliberately leave open.

Suppose you accidentally spilled kerosene all over your clothes and somebody nearby lit a match. Where would you go? As far away as you could get, as fast as you could go! That should be the attitude of a Christian toward temptation. When Potiphar's wife made advances toward Joseph, he ran from her. (See Genesis 39:12.) The apostle Paul said, "*Flee* sexual immorality" and "*flee* from idolatry" (1 Corinthians 6:18; 10:14, emphasis added). Run away from sin—and don't leave a forwarding address.

Don't miss this: When you run from temptation, you head toward God. "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8). When you know something is

sinful, don't engage or banter with the devil, because he is the master of rationalization. After all, that's how Eve fell—and she didn't even have sinful tendencies.

It breaks my heart when Christians try to justify their sins. There is no limit to the arguments with which the devil can supply you. As soon as you know something is wrong, flee! The bravest person runs from temptation; the fool flirts with it.

The most precious reason to overcome temptation has to be because you love God. You know that sin hurts God, and when tempted, you need to say, "I can't do that because I love God." The more you love Jesus, the less the attractions of the devil will hold sway over you.

We're all tempted, but the Lord has promised that we can be overcomers through the "exceeding great and precious promises" found in Scripture. Jesus will teach us how to overcome. The devil could not make Jesus sin, nor can he make us. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57). Ask Him for the power to overcome and joyfully dive into the pages of His Word! 

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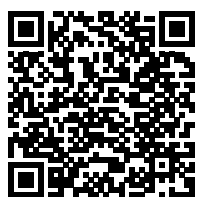
## What did Jesus mean when He said, "Do not judge"?



## Can we sin in our thoughts?

Tune in to ***Bible Answers Live***, Amazing Facts' live, nationwide call-in radio program, and listen to Pastor Doug give biblical, straightforward answers to difficult Bible questions. To get times and stations in your area or to listen to answers online, visit [amazingfacts.org](https://amazingfacts.org).

Get more answers  
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## ► Amazing Facts with Doug Batchelor

|                                      | SUNDAY                                    | MONDAY                                    | TUESDAY                                   | WEDNESDAY                                 | THURSDAY                                  | FRIDAY                                    | SATURDAY                 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>AFTV</b>                          | 10:30 AM PT<br>10:30 PM PT                | 3:30 PM PT                                | 8:00 AM PT<br>8:00 PM PT                  |                                           | 10:00 AM PT<br>10:00 PM PT                | 2:00 PM PT<br>6:00 PM PT                  | 8:00 AM PT<br>8:00 PM PT |
| <b>CHARGE!</b>                       | 8:00 AM ET/PT<br>7:00 AM CT<br>6:00 AM MT |                                           |                                           |                                           |                                           |                                           |                          |
| <b>DAYSTAR</b><br>TELEVISION NETWORK |                                           | 3:30 PM ET                                |                                           | 6:00 PM ET<br>(Español)                   |                                           |                                           |                          |
| <b>fetv</b>                          |                                           | 5:30 AM ET                                | 5:30 AM ET                                | 5:30 AM ET                                | 5:30 AM ET                                | 5:30 AM ET                                |                          |
| <b>Hope</b><br>CHANNEL               | 10:00 AM PT<br>7:00 PM PT                 |                                           |                                           |                                           | 6:00 AM PT                                | 12:30 PM PT                               |                          |
| <b>H</b><br>HISTORY                  |                                           | 6:00 AM ET/PT<br>5:00 AM CT<br>4:00 AM MT | 6:00 AM ET/PT<br>5:00 AM CT<br>4:00 AM MT | 6:00 AM ET/PT<br>5:00 AM CT<br>4:00 AM MT | 6:00 AM ET/PT<br>5:00 AM CT<br>4:00 AM MT | 6:00 AM ET/PT<br>5:00 AM CT<br>4:00 AM MT |                          |
| <b>TBN</b><br><i>inspire</i>         | 11:30 AM PT<br>8:30 PM PT                 | 8:30 PM PT                                | 8:30 PM PT                                | 8:30 PM PT                                | 8:30 PM PT                                | 8:30 PM PT                                | 8:30 PM PT               |
| <b>ion</b><br>TELEVISION             |                                           |                                           |                                           |                                           |                                           | 6:30 AM ET/PT<br>5:30 AM CT<br>4:30 AM MT |                          |



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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|----------|
|  lifetime                                                    | 8:00 AM<br>(All Time Zones) |            |             |            |             |            |          |
|                                                              | 10:30 AM ET                 |            |             |            |             |            |          |
|                                                              |                             |            |             |            | 10:00 PM PT |            |          |
|  3ABN<br><small>Three Angels Broadcasting Network</small>    |                             |            | 10:00 PM CT | 9:00 PM CT | 1:30 PM CT  |            |          |
|                                                              | 8:30 AM ET                  |            |             |            |             |            |          |
|                                                             | 9:30 AM CT<br>10:30 AM ET   |            |             |            |             |            |          |
|  WLNY 10 55<br><small>WLNY CHANNEL 55<br/>NEW YORK</small> | 11:00 AM ET                 |            |             |            |             |            |          |
|  WORLD HARVEST<br>TELEVISION                               |                             | 9:00 AM ET | 9:00 AM ET  | 9:00 AM ET | 9:00 AM ET  | 9:00 AM ET |          |



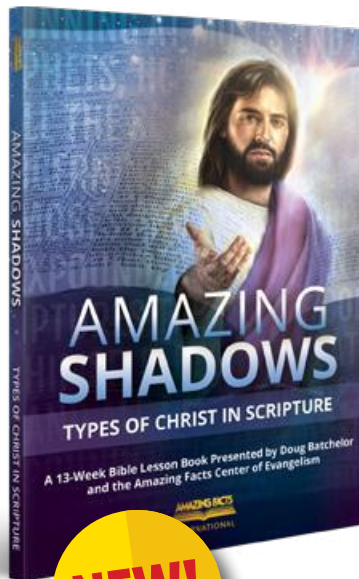
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|                                                                                                                                              | SUNDAY             | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY                  | FRIDAY     | SATURDAY   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|---------|------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|
|  AFTV                                                     | 7:00 PM PT<br>LIVE |        |         | 2:00 PM PT | 2:00 AM PT<br>11:00 AM PT | 6:00 AM PT |            |
|  3ABN<br><small>Three Angels Broadcasting Network</small> |                    |        |         |            | 7:00 PM CT                |            |            |
| <b>Sirius<br/>Family Talk<br/>Channel 131</b>                                                                                                | 7:00 PM ET         |        |         |            |                           |            | 8:00 PM ET |



# New From Amazing Facts



**NEW!**

## Amazing Shadows: Types of Christ in Scripture

*Amazing Facts.* An eye-opening, 13-week lesson book that helps you see Christ throughout all the Bible. Each lesson features a thought-provoking Bible study, Scripture to memorize, reflection and group discussion questions, and more to grow your faith!

**BK-ASC ... \$10.95**

## Pure Redeeming Love

*Ron Woolsey.* This timely and important book shares the truth about the challenging contemporary issues of gender and sexuality, but not as an accuser or judge and always with a focus on grace. It portrays God's loving plan for human sexuality with a practical appeal and guide for restoring us to His design.

**BK-PRL ... \$7.95**

**NEW!**



**NEW!**

## When You Fast

*Doug Batchelor.* When you hear your pastor preach about fasting, do you feel uneasy? Do you wonder how to do a fast that would please God? And do you even need to fast? Pastor Doug opens Scripture to discover the secrets of this neglected Christian discipline and why it's as important as ever.

**BK-WYF ... \$1.50**



**NEW!**

## How to Walk with God in a Wicked World

*Doug Batchelor.* Do you desire to be with Christ throughout eternity? Then you are to walk with Him here and now, day by day, until you reach the Promised Land. Pastor Doug uncovers what it really means to follow Jesus in these turbulent times and how you can draw closer to Him in everything you do.

**BK-WWG ... \$1.50**

Visit **AFBOOKSTORE.COM**  
or call **800-538-7275**  
to order or learn more.

**Shipping Information:** Please add **15%** of sales value or **\$5.50** (whichever is higher) for shipping & handling.

California residents, please add 7.25% sales tax. For orders shipped outside the U.S. and Canada, add 25% or \$10 (whichever is higher) for foreign postage. Some items may require additional shipping costs and delivery time due to weight.

# Bible Lessons for Deeper Study

## Revelation 14: The Pinnacle of Prophecy Bible Lesson Set

*Amazing Facts.* The book of Revelation reveals the crucial events leading up to Earth's fiery finish and how you can survive it. These eye-opening lessons use the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 as the springboard for studying every truth that will prepare you for the final test.

SG-PINP ... \$8.95

**BRAND  
NEW!**



**BRAND  
NEW!**



## Most Amazing Bible Stories (5-Volume Set)

*Amazing Facts & Remnant Publications.* This brand-new Bible story set explores the courageous heroes of faith found throughout the Word of God, plus many historical role models. Designed especially for kids ages 8 and older, and great for teens and adults too, it features hundreds of character-building Bible stories that will broaden readers' knowledge of Scripture and the plan of salvation and inspire a deeper love for our loving God. Beautifully designed and illustrated! Hardcover. More than 1,100 pages.

BK-MABS ... \$149.95

## The Ten Commandments: Laws of Love and Liberty

*Doug Batchelor.* The Ten Commandments are suffering an identity crisis—are they merely a relic of an ancient culture, or do they still have meaning, purpose, and application for us today? In this 12-hour DVD series with 125-page study book, Pastor Doug explores the amazing riches found in every commandment.

DV-TCSET ... \$29.95

DVD Only | DV-TC ... \$24.95

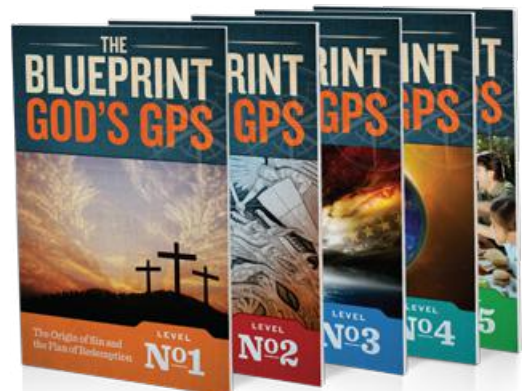
Lesson Guide Only | BK-TCSG ... \$10.95



## The Blueprint: God's GPS Lesson Set

*Ivor Myers.* The fact that a battle is raging between good and evil cannot be denied—but how did it begin, and where is it going? As you go through this unique study series, you will discover six powerful keys that unlock and solve this mystery, providing the answers you need to make sense of our world.

SG-OBS ... \$7.95





(Continued from page 9.)

one, her accusers left. When Jesus stood up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" (John 8:10).

I believe Mary could see the genuine love and compassion in Jesus' face. She believed in His grace, and she received it when He said, "Neither do I condemn you." But lest we misunderstand the deadly nature of sin, He added, "Go and sin no more" (v. 11).

Is Jesus asking us to be sinless? Absolutely. Jesus could never ask for anything less. Why? Sin was the disease destroying Mary! What would you have Jesus say instead? "Go and sin a little less"? Or, "Go and cut back on your life of sin"? Again, Jesus did not come to save us *with* our sin but *from* our sin (Matthew 1:21)—that means from the penalty *and* from the power *and* ultimately the presence of sin in our lives.

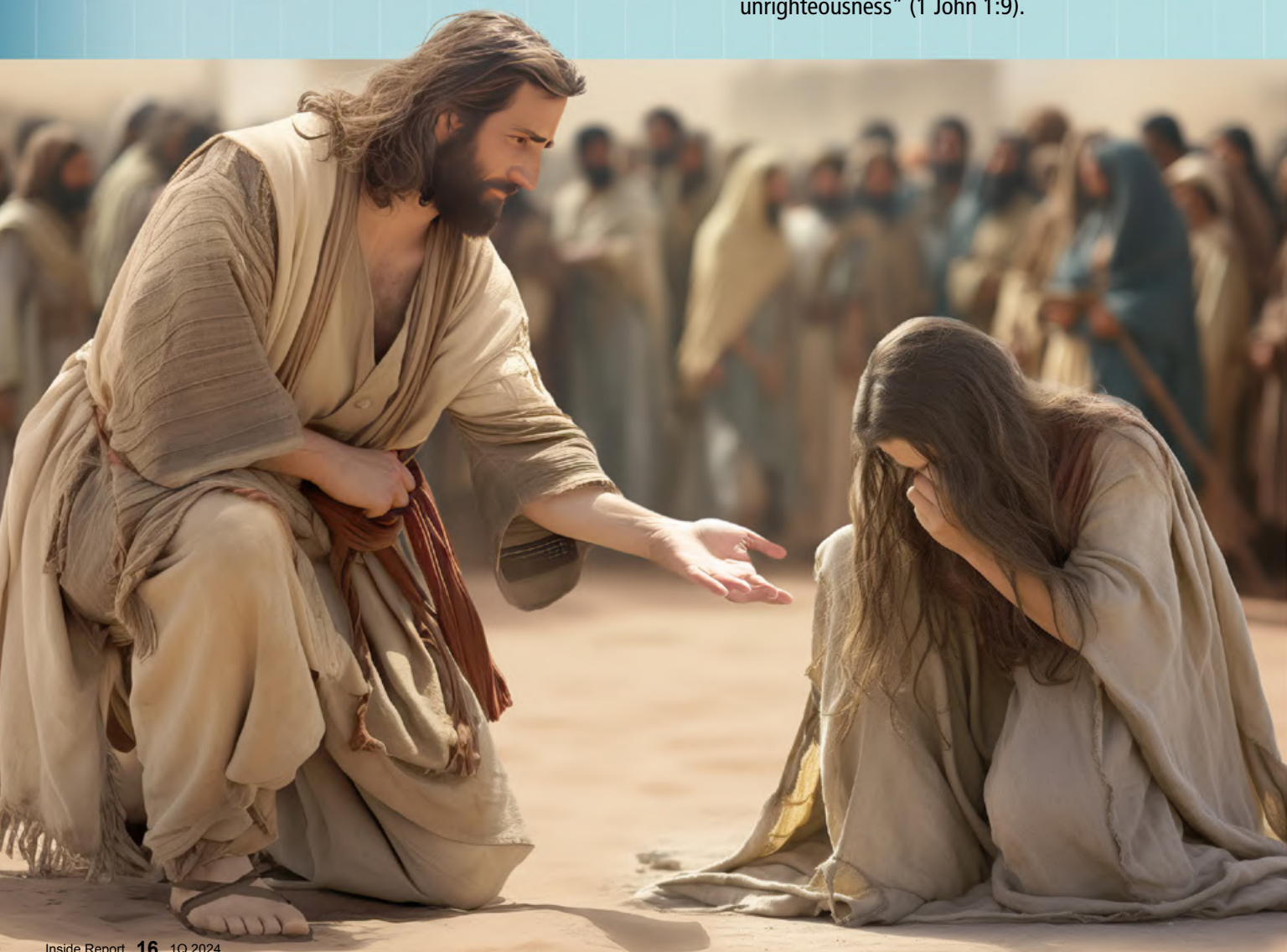
## Real Repentance

Some have suggested that when Jesus told Mary that He was not condemning her and that she was to go and sin no more, it proved that the law had been set aside.

In fact, the opposite is true! "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4 KJV). Jesus was actually telling Mary, "I will take your penalty because I love you. Sin hurts you, and sin hurts Me. I will be a sacrifice in your place—now, go and break the law no more."

In Scripture, real repentance calls for a sorrow for and a turning away from our sin as a condition for mercy.

- "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).
- "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).





A woman named Sarah was a wonderful Christian who had a rare and deep relationship with the Lord. But her brother George was the proverbial black sheep of the family, and his selfish life was the antithesis of his sister's kind and generous conduct.

George also had a severe alcohol problem. After years of abuse, his body began to rebel from his constant drinking—his kidneys were failing fast. The doctors told Sarah that George would need constant dialysis or would surely die soon without a kidney transplant, but it was doubtful that he would even qualify to be placed on the waiting list for a kidney because of his history of drinking.

Sarah asked if she could give one of her kidneys to her ailing brother. The doctors responded, "If your blood types match, you could, but this is an expensive operation, so we question the wisdom of putting your health at risk for a person with such a self-destructive habit."

Well, it turned out that their blood types did match, but George had no insurance, so Sarah mortgaged her home and promised that she would pay the bill. With some persistent urging, she finally persuaded the hospital to perform the surgery.

The transplant surgery went fine for George, but there were some tragic complications for Sarah. She had a severe allergic reaction to the anesthetic and was paralyzed from the waist down. Still, Sarah was able to bravely bear the tragic news a little better when she was told that George was doing well. She said, "If I am able to buy my brother a few

more years of life to find the Savior, then it was worth it even if I can never walk again."

Here is the point of the story: How do you think Sarah felt when her brother never stopped by her hospital room to thank her for her costly sacrifice? And how do you think Sarah felt when she learned that the first thing her brother did after leaving the hospital was to go celebrate at a nearby bar?

Most of the world eagerly takes the blessings of God and then selfishly squanders them like the prodigal son. But how do you think Jesus feels when a professed Christian walks away from Calvary, where they have just seen Him hanging, beaten and bloodied, on a cross for their sin? Through His mercy, He purchased eternal life for them. But then they take the gift and turn back to the very thing that cost Him such suffering. You would think that when we truly see and understand something of how much our sins have cost Jesus, we would no longer want to embrace the monster that ravaged our Lord.

Jesus did not come and die in order to purchase us a license to sin. He came to save us from our self-destructive sins. That love is the power that enables us to turn from sin. "Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (Romans 2:4). 📖

*"Should Christians Be Perfect? Part 2" will be available in the next Inside Report later this year.*







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# Amazing Facts News to Note



## Where in the World Is Pastor Doug?

These are tumultuous times, which is why Pastor Doug is committed to sharing the Word of God around the world for such a time as this. Check out his schedule and let your friends know!



**March 16:** Miami Springs Church

**March 17–24:** Panama Mission Trip (Rally on 23rd)

**April 14–May 6:** Southeast Asia (Multiple Nations)

**May 16–18:** Denver ASI

**June 7, 8:** 3ABN Spring Camp meeting

**June 21, 22:** Lillooet, BC – Fountainview Graduation

**July 31–August 3:** Orlando ASI

**September 20–October 5:** Prophecy Odyssey, NYC

See more Amazing Facts speakers by visiting [prophecyseminars.com](http://prophecyseminars.com)!

## Amazing Facts Youth Conference Begins June 12



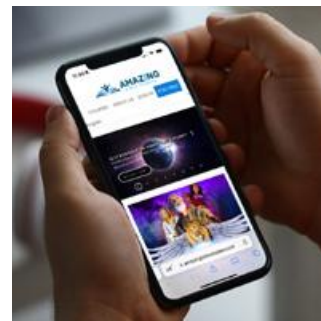
Let your youth know about the next Amazing Facts Youth Conference—*Stand: Unshakeable Faith*. Based on 1 Corinthians 16:13, it will be a powerful weekend revival experience for young people facing an unprecedented assault on truth. Learn more at [www.afyouth.com](http://www.afyouth.com).

## Bible Studies for Busy People!

Even in our fast-paced world, we still need to eat to survive. And what's true physically is also true spiritually! "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

There's no question that if we want to have eternal life, we need to study the Word of God. But many of our friends and family have no idea where to begin. For the busy people in your life, Amazing Facts has the answer! We know seekers are looking for a simple, convenient way to get into God's Word, so we're bringing the Word of God to them online.

Amazing Facts offers FREE online Bible courses for busy people who want to complete studies in their own time. It's easy to sign up, and they can even use their favorite smart device. Thousands have already found our online courses to be the answer in their



search for Bible truth. Nancy says, "I wept as I read these lessons because so much was explained and so many questions I had were answered. The course has blessed my life beyond words! I have a deeper friendship with my Jesus as a result of this course." Why not encourage your busy friends and family to join Nancy and many others who have found peace in God's Word and sign up for our online Bible courses today?

They even have two great options to choose from: *Storacles of Prophecy* (24 lessons) or *Amazing Facts Study Guides* (27 lessons). Each series features additional free resources to enhance understanding—books, videos, and audio materials become available as the lessons are completed.

Don't let your loved ones miss out on these free online Bible studies! Help them partake of the Word of Life today. Point them to [amazingbiblestudies.com](http://amazingbiblestudies.com)!



# Volunteer

## Spotlight

### 15 Years of Service ... and Counting!

By Shenalyn Page

Eura has spent the past 15 years faithfully donating her time to the Amazing Facts Bible School. Each month, she works 40 to 100 hours enrolling students, grading lessons, and helping however else is needed. It isn't time she begrudges.

"I thank God for this work," she says with a characteristic smile. "When people retire, they sometimes don't have anything to do, so they die sooner. Volunteering at Amazing Facts is a lifesaver for me." Eura began volunteering at Amazing Facts while she was still working for a medical company. Since her retirement, she has donated even more time to help finish the Lord's work.

**"Volunteering at Amazing Facts is a lifesaver for me."**

Eura's volunteering with the Bible School is also a lifesaver for those she serves. Each week, she comes to the Amazing Facts office to pick up a new box of enrollment requests that have arrived in our mailbox. She then takes them home, sorts them, and inputs each student into the Bible School database. "I pray for every name in that box," she says. "I pray that they will be saved and meet the Lord."

Many of the seekers who request Bible studies are prisoners. Eura focuses on praying for each prisoner and their salvation, and she often sees answers to her prayers. "It's really exciting when they start studying and then request Bible studies for their family and friends who aren't in prison."

At 78 years old, Eura knows she is getting older, but that doesn't concern her. "I love aging



Photography by Alden Ho

because the Lord is keeping my health together so that I can keep working for Him. I want to see the Lord's work finished," she says. "That's the main thing for me. It's time for us all to go home!"

Does she have any plans to quit her volunteer work? Absolutely not! "God is first in my life," Eura states emphatically. "I will do this for as long as my brain works. Every day, I ask God to keep my brain working so that I can keep volunteering at Amazing Facts."

Do you need a sense of purpose in your life? If so, we invite you to consider donating your time to the Lord's work at Amazing Facts. Even if you are getting along in years, the donation of your time and talents can make an eternal difference in the lives of searching souls.

It might just be a lifesaver for you! 

# New Opportunities to Spread God's Word

## Share Your Retirement Rollover

By Will Froelich, Director of Estate and Gift Planning



Did you know that new laws in 2024 can maximize your tax benefits and help you do even more to bring lost, hurting people into God's eternal kingdom?

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 (Act), signed into law in December 2022, offers those with individual retirement accounts (IRAs) new opportunities to contribute to their favorite charitable organizations, including Amazing Facts International.

Part of Act includes SECURE Act 2.0, which addresses many issues related to retirement planning. For example, starting in 2023, the age for required minimum distributions (RMDs) was raised to 73 for those born between 1951 and 1959 and to 75 for those born in 1960 or later. Act also creates new charitable opportunities:

- Increases the yearly limit for qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), also known as IRA charitable rollovers. A QCD is a tax-free transfer from an IRA to a qualified charitable organization, such as Amazing Facts.
- A QCD avoids income-tax liability on the transfer, but it does not qualify for a charitable deduction.
- In 2024, the QCD limit increased to account for inflation. The max annual QCD limit for 2024 is \$105,000, a \$5,000 increase from 2023.
- The law also includes an allowance for a one-time distribution from an IRA to a life-income plan, such as a charitable gift annuity (CGA) or charitable remainder trust (CRT), which Amazing Facts offers. For 2024, the limit is \$53,000.
- Please note that a QCD must be transferred directly from the IRA to the charitable organization or life-income plan. It is not valid if it goes to another account first.

The truly wonderful part about CGAs and CRTs is that they give you an income stream while also enabling you to provide a substantial, soul-winning gift to your favorite ministry!

You may also want to consider utilizing your IRA to blend a more significant gift. For instance, you could use up to \$53,000 for a CGA and another portion, up to \$52,000, for an outright gift so that you can see real results in ministry this very year! Just think how your gifts will impact the world when given for *Prophecy Odyssey*, for example, as it will not only impact souls in New York City but also around the world as God's Word is translated and broadcast internationally.

So, this is your special opportunity to support the Lord's work through Amazing Facts and save on taxes. For more information, please contact our Office of Estate and Gift Planning and ask to speak with an advisor. Reach out to us at 800-436-2695 or [mylegacy@amazingfacts.org](mailto:mylegacy@amazingfacts.org).

800-436-2695  
[mylegacy@amazingfacts.org](mailto:mylegacy@amazingfacts.org)



# Kids' Corner

## THE PERFECT PLAN, PART 1

BY LAURIE LYON

**ONE DAY**, two brothers had an idea for getting free horse rides. Going to their neighbor's corral, they sat on the fence until two friendly looking horses came near. Then, on a signal, each boy jumped onto the back of a horse. They thought it was the perfect plan.

But the horses had an even more perfect plan. Racing to the other side of the corral, they came to a sudden stop by the fence and tossed their uninvited riders off their backs and into thorn-covered orange trees and a patch of prickly sandspurs. Ouch!

In a sense, when we try to do what's right without asking God for help, we're just as silly as those horse-hopping brothers. Our plan is doomed to fail!

Here's a question: Do you know anyone who *always* does what's right and *never* does anything wrong? Before you answer, let's look at what the Bible says about us humans. Use the code below to read the Bible verses.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15  
A D E F G H I L N O R S T U V

" 13 6 3 11 3 7 12 9 10 9 3 11 7 5 6 13 3 10 14 12 9 10 9 10 13 10 9 3 "

(Romans 3:10).

" 1 8 8 6 1 15 3 12 7 9 9 3 2 "

(Romans 3:23).

But wait! Jesus said, "You shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Did Jesus mean that if we give our heart to Him, we will never make a mistake? No!

When you choose Jesus as your Savior and ask Him to forgive all the wrong things you've done, He will do it right then—you can count on that! Your heart is clean, but you still have flaws or bad habits that sometimes cause you to do wrong. That can make you feel sad and guilty, and God loves you too much to leave you that way. He wants to wipe all sin from our lives because it hurts us and others. Thankfully, Jesus came to save us from our sins—and He has a perfect plan that really works!

As long as you read the Bible, pray, and let Him guide your life, Jesus will keep working in your heart and give you His power to resist temptations. Every day, He will change you to be more loving like Him. This doesn't happen in a few days or weeks. It happens over your whole life!

But what if you're doing all those things, getting to know Jesus better, and you still make a mistake and do something wrong? It's simple: Start over! God wants us to *never give up*! The Bible promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). That means any time we're sorry for doing wrong and ask God to forgive us, He will do it.

You can trust His perfect plan! 





By Laurie Lyon

**It's true:** Some of us have heard about dietary fiber so often that we've simply tuned it out as a humdrum element of our food. But there's peril in our indifference. Indeed, most Americans consume only *half* the recommended amount of fiber per day. That's a big mistake!

Fiber in its various forms—soluble and insoluble—is found in plant foods including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and legumes. Animal products, on the other hand, contain no fiber at all.

Most people know fiber as something that keeps you regular, but outside of that, fiber packs a boatload of other health benefits. Let's look at some of them:

1. Soluble fiber regulates how your body processes blood sugar—in a good way! This is one of fiber's most winning characteristics, and it can be a tremendous help for those with diabetes and prediabetes—in other words, most Americans—to manage their glycemic challenges by preventing or minimizing blood sugar spikes.<sup>1</sup> To maximize this benefit, include rich sources of soluble fiber such as beans, peas, flax seeds, apples, avocados, barley, oats, Brussels sprouts, citrus fruit, carrots, and berries in your regular diet.
2. Higher fiber intake appears to provide, at least for some, a measure of defense against Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.<sup>2</sup> Since dementia is often related to insulin resistance (to which blood sugar spikes contribute), it makes sense that adequate fiber can add a level of protection.

3. Fiber feeds and supercharges your gut microbiome, which results in a boost to your immune system. Fiber is transformed by some microbes into short-chain fatty acids; research has shown these can, in turn, activate immune cells that aid in warding off a wide variety of diseases.<sup>3</sup>

4. Regular use of whole cereal grains reduces inflammation in the body, which helps you avoid chronic diseases that are fueled by inflammation, such as some cancers and cardiovascular disease.<sup>4</sup>

5. The soluble form of fiber is adept at lowering cholesterol. You can even target LDL, the "bad" form of cholesterol that clogs arteries, by consuming oatmeal. Oats contain beta-glucan, which

is especially effective at

disposing LDL, thereby lowering your risk of heart attack and stroke. Barley, yeast, and even mushrooms are additional sources of beta-glucan.



While supplements containing fiber extracted from plant foods can sometimes help with particular needs, it's generally best to obtain your fiber directly from whole-plant foods. That way, you get not only the fiber but also the antioxidants and other plant components that benefit you most as they work in unison.

In His wisdom, God provided humans with an original diet rich in fiber. "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food" (Genesis 1:29). Let's take advantage of the bountiful, health-promoting—and delicious—fiber sources He has graciously given us! 🌿

1 <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/features/role-of-fiber.html>

2 <https://www.alzinfo.org/articles/prevention/fiber-as-brain-food/>

3 <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/nutrition-and-immunity>

4 <https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/news/not-all-dietary-fiber-created-equal-cereal-fiber-linked-lower-inflammation>





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—Pastor Doug Batchelor

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