

April, 2016

The Torch

El Camino Baptist Church
Growing, Serving, Reaching

One Little Word that Radically Changed My Prayers

Posted on August 6, 2013 by Bronwyn Lea
From Debbie Johnson's Face Book Page



I got that lead-balloon feeling on Sunday when our pastor pointed out all the things Paul *didn't* pray for in his letters: people with cancer, busy schedules, promotions at work, successful ventures, hard pressed finances, strained relationships.... not that those things don't matter, or that we shouldn't pray for them, or that God doesn't care about the minutiae of our lives, but they weren't on the apostles regular prayer card.

It raised the old question for me again: **Why do I always find my prayer list filled with immediate needs, when I know that matters like the Kingdom come, His will be done, missions, justice, global worship, etc. are weightier and worthy of prayer?** Why is it that when I do sit down to pray (and my struggles with that are lengthy and complex) I pray for the "light and momentary afflictions," and so seldom for the eternal things?

I don't have an answer for that, but this weekend I found one little word which is helping me close the gap between the daily-needs-prayer and the weightier-matters-prayer.

Here it is: **Instead of praying, "God, make it better," I need to pray, "God, make it count."**

God, my friend is dying. Don't just make it better, make it COUNT. If she can be better, let it be so, but don't let this suffering to have been wasted. Work it for good. *Please show up and show Your grace. Make it count.*

God, I'm so busy and so tired. I so badly want to pray "Make it better! Make it stop!" but I'm going to pray, "Make it count, please," instead. Let me learn grace under fire. Let me learn to say no to the bad and even the good so that there is time enough to say yes to the best. *Show your strength in my weakness. Make it count.*

God, thanks for a lovely, sweet season in my marriage. Rather than saying "Thanks, keep it up, make it better," please Father, make it count. Help us to be thankful and still work hard at our marriage, not leaving prayer for the tough times alone. *Let this good season count.*

God, money is tight for so many dear ones. Everything in me wants to ask for more, to make it better. But please Lord, make these tight days count. Teach us to be wise stewards, teach us to give generously now while we feel hard pressed, teach us to pray for daily bread, and to learn the secret of contentment whether we have plenty or little. *Make these days of economic hardship count.*

God, I'm at my wits end with my kids. They won't eat, sleep, poop or obey as I'd hoped they would. I want it to be better, please Lord... I know you can make it better, but instead I will pray "Make it count." Help me to be patient with my slow-to-learn kids, as You are patient with slow-to-learn me. Help me to show love to them in their immaturity, as You show love to me in mine. Lord, make these trials in parenting count: let them teach me and my children what YOU are like as a parent. *Make these long days of relentless loving discipline count.*

God, now that I think about it, please don't just make it better. Not if it doesn't count. Please make it count, so that these light and momentary afflictions do the work of preparing us for a weight of glory that outweighs them all.



Library News

NON-FICTION

Hiding in the Light: Why I Risked Everything to Leave Islam and Follow Jesus by Rifqa Bary

Rifqa Bary grew up in a devout Muslim home, obediently following her parents' orders to practice the rituals of Islam. In 2009, the sixteen-year-old girl made national news when she ran away from her Ohio home, claiming that her father had abused and threatened to kill her because of her Christian faith.

Today, that girl is a young woman who is ready to tell her story, despite threats and ongoing concerns for her safety. In *Hiding in the Light*, Rifqa recounts in riveting detail the events leading up to her decision to leave home and how faith in Jesus grew in her heart, even as she kept it secret from her family. This is the story of how she ran from her father's threats to find refuge with strangers in Florida, only to face a controversial court case that reached national headlines. Most of all, it is the story of a young girl who made life-changing sacrifices to follow Jesus—and who inspires us to do the same.

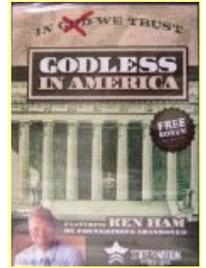


DVDS

Godless in America: Featuring Ken Ham on Foundations Abandoned (Answers in Genesis)

Although America has more Christian resources and Bible colleges than ever in its history, our nation is on a downward spiral. What has happened? Why is the church not reaching today's culture?

In this urgent message, Ken Ham, president of Answers in Genesis and the Creation Museum, reveals the consequences of Europe's abandonment of Christian foundations. He then reveals how this same abandonment of biblical authority is spreading in the US – a trend that is causing nearly 70% of young people to walk away from church. He presents the results of landmark new research on the current spiritual state of our nation, documented in the book *Already Gone* (also available in our library), with over 200 PowerPoint illustrations and eye-opening video segments. 60 minutes, plus bonus features that include highlights from the Q & A session with researcher Britt Beemer.



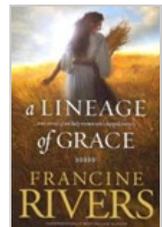
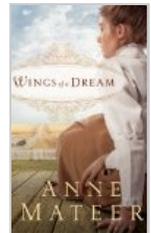
FICTION

Wings of a Dream by Anne Mateer

Rebekah Hendricks dreams of a life far beyond her family's farm in Oklahoma, and when aviator Arthur Samson promises adventure in the big city, she is quick to believe he's the man she's meant to marry. While she waits for the Great War to end and Arthur to return so they can pursue their plans, her mother's sister falls ill. Rebekah eagerly travels to Texas to care for her aunt, seeing this chance to be closer to Arthur's training camp as God's approval of her plans. But the Spanish flu epidemic changes everything.

A Lineage of Grace by Francine Rivers

In this compilation of the five books of the best-selling Lineage of Grace series by Francine Rivers, we meet the five women whom God chose--Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary. Each was faced with extraordinary--even scandalous--challenges. Each took great personal risk to fulfill her calling. Each was destined to play a key role in the lineage of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World.



REMINDER

Please remember to follow the check-out procedure when taking items from the library. We have lost track of several items lately because they were taken out without being checked out. Thanks for your help!

(Prayers-continued from page 1)

God, this is my life: in all it's gritty, knotted and messy glory.

These are my loved ones.

These are my tears.

Please, please, please... Make it count.

From Pastor Ron: This year I feel led to encourage our El Camino family to become a house of prayer. So I am doing a number of articles in upcoming Torches on prayer in order to encourage and challenge us in our prayer lives. This article was on Debbie Johnson's Facebook page. I found it profound!!!! I just had to share it with everyone.

Monday, April 4
9:00 am in D1



Thank you!

Volunteer Appreciation Dessert Night
Saturday evening, April 9
6:30 pm in the Worship Center



627 N. Swan Rd
Tucson, AZ 85711
Phone: 520-308-8990

Hours: Monday 1pm-7pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 11am-5pm

Answers for Life is definitely not only a pregnancy testing center!! God has given us a ministry that not only saves babies but is building godly families. A couple who had been living together decided it was time to marry because of the prompting of one of our counselors. So on a Sunday afternoon we were blessed to be able to attend our second wedding.

Please pray for these families that are baby Christians and that their love for the Lord will continue to grow and they will chose a church in which to be nurtured and grown.

We have started a parenting class and are blessed with eight people, two of them dads, attending regularly. It is wonderful to see our clients wanting to raise their children with godly principles. Other classes will be starting soon.

Please pray for our finances. God is always stretching us and proving He is the Great Provider. You can be a part of God's plan by getting involved, either by volunteering or becoming a Champion with your financial donations. We want our donors to know that 90% of their gift goes directly to helping those who enter our doors. We have mortgages and utilities and only one paid staff person. Otherwise, this ministry works with 30 wonderful volunteers.

In February, we had the pleasure of 154 client visits, 13 people accepted Jesus as their Savior, the Gospel was presented to 26 clients and we had 72 spiritual discussions.

Ruth Applegate

"Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." Jeremiah 33:3

**March Newsletter
Deadline:
Monday,
April 18**

The Torch is a publication for the members and friends of El Camino Baptist Church, 7777 E. Speedway, Tucson, AZ 85710. Phone: (520) 886-7770. Email: torch@elcaminochurch.org. All submissions need to be received no later than 5:00 pm on the date specified.



April Dates

6th, 13th, 20th and 27th
 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th
 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th
 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th
 7th and 21st
 14th
 1st and 15th

Good News Clubs
 High School Youth Group
 AWANA
 Middle School Youth Group
 {KID}hood Bible Study
 {KID}hood
 Wildside Preteen Youth Group

Are You Rewarding or Bribing Your Child?

By [Melissa Kruger](#) - Focus on the Family 2/22/2016



I can picture the scene in my mind like it was yesterday. Chubby legs kicking. Back stiffened straight. Child wailing, “No, Mommy! No get into the cart!”

Exasperated, I wondered if this trip to the grocery store was in vain. However, I needed to get food for dinner, and this was my only opportunity. Somewhere in the back of my mind I remembered that a lollipop was buried in the bottom of my purse.

Holding my daughter on my hip with one arm, I frantically searched until I found it. Then I said, “If you get in the cart, you can have this lollipop.”

Instantly she complied. I won the battle, but I knew this was a losing strategy. While rewards and bribes are sometimes seen as being interchangeable, they teach opposite lessons to our children.

What’s the difference?

A bribe is offered as a means to cajole or influence a child. Typically, it is given in the midst of a tantrum or other bad behavior. Deanna McClannahan, a licensed professional counselor at Focus on the Family, advises against doing this. “Bribing is giving a child a reward for unwanted behavior,” she warns. “In turn this teaches the child that if he screams for 20 minutes, he will get a piece of candy. Next time he wants something, you have taught him to scream.”

In contrast, a reward is something that is given in recognition of a child’s effort, service or achievement. It is parent initiated and directed, and given in recognition of a child’s effort. “Giving a child a reward for positive behavior reinforces what you want your child to do more of,” McClannahan says. She emphasizes that if a child is rewarded for positive behavior, he will be better motivated to repeat it.

As parents, we want our 2-year-old to feel a bit of our delight when she helps clean up all the toys or behaves appropriately at the store. A small, appropriate reward serves to encourage a child’s future obedience.

How to reward

Children under 3 live in the moment. McClannahan says, “Younger children do not have the ability to connect long-term rewards and consequences to current actions.” For this reason, McClannahan encourages parents of young children to reward as soon as possible. “It can be appropriate to wait until you get home,” she says, “but not OK to wait until the end of the week.”

Rather than just saying, “You did a good job,” let them know exactly what they did well: “I like how you remembered to pick up your dolls and put them in the toy box.” This type of praise reinforces the behavior you want to encourage and gives your children further instruction about your expectations.

For young children, rewards can be simple. A high-five or compliment (positive attention) is sometimes all the reward a child needs. But reading a favorite book together or giving him a small treat can also serve as a positive incentive.

A lesson learned

Two children at the grocery store may each receive a lollipop. However the method in which they were given their treat has the power to teach two vastly different lessons. If it is given as a bribe, it will encourage poor behavior. The child learns that if she fusses, screams or pouts, she will be pacified with something that brings her pleasure.

On the other hand, giving the lollipop as a reward after good behavior teaches our children the joy of doing what is right. This encourages them to continue making good decisions, which is what good parenting does — trains a child in the way he should go.

Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it.
 Proverbs 22:6 American Standard Version (ASV)

Lifestyles of Faith
Thursdays 9:00 am-11:00 am
Ellen Johnson



These ladies enjoyed writing and wanted to share with you some of the joys and blessings they've received through this class:

Lifestyles of Faith is a Bible study of men and women whose examples of faith challenge us to deeper trust in the Lord.

- Ellen Johnson

I love joining this class. I've been learning a lot from God's Word and from these wonderful ladies here!

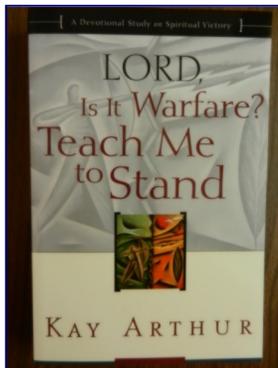
- Huyen Phan

I especially enjoy Ellen as teacher since she has such good Bible knowledge, plus all the years on the mission field.

- Jerri Beach

Small group studies are good for interaction and discussion time.

Thursday's 9:00 am-11:00 am
Marge Miller and Linda Stewart



Are you fully equipped for spiritual battle? Once you become a Christian, you enter a war zone. The problem is, you may not even realize it.

But that's about to change. *Lord, Is It Warfare?* Will equip you to recognize and understand that spiritual warfare is inevitable for those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. You'll learn all the battle tactics and devices of your adversary, Satan. And you'll discover scriptural ways to overcome the enemy by turning to Christ, who loves you and offers you all the strength, wisdom, and power you need for victory.

Let Kay Arthur guide you through the Scriptures every day in the comprehensive inductive study. Your time with God in His Word will minister to you and help you stand strong in the face of spiritual conflict. And these are truths you can easily share with others, individually or in small groups.

"Truth is the weapon that will fell the enemy, and truth is what Lord, Is It Warfare? Teach Me to Stand is all about. It's a comprehensive study of what our textbook for life-the Word of God-has to say on the subject"- Kay Arthur



Men's Ministry is for EVERY MAN who desires to be the man God has destined him to be. Come, join one of the groups.

Monday Nights from 6:45 pm-8:00 pm
Bible Study in the book of Matthew led by Mike Hagarty.

"A Man and His Traps" a DVD and book study, volume 3 of the 33 Series, gives men the freedom to take off their masks and move to a healthier place of honesty and growth as they learn to become more like our model, Jesus Christ. This study begins Monday, April 18 and will meet for six weeks.

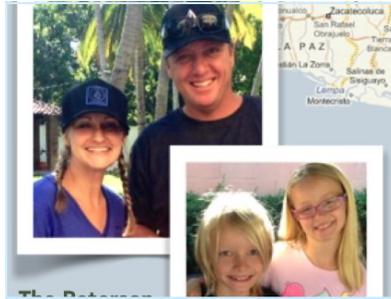
Wednesday Nights 7:00 pm-8:30 pm

Door of Freedom. The focus of this group is to grow spiritually, encourage each other, share challenges and hold one another accountable. Leaders are Brian Feather and Fred Trokey.

Arny Humble
GO Team
Chairman



***PRAYING* FOR OUR EL CAMINO MISSIONARIES**



Anybody can smile long enough for an updated newsletter photo

El Salvador Missionary Fellowship
<http://tinyurl.com/z4zedbv>

I winced as the lights suddenly cut off.

Really? Three nights in a row?" I thought to myself as my wife rounded the corner on the verge of tears.

"I can't do this...I can't do another night of no sleep!" she moaned. She was sick of the heat and the lack of air circulation every time the power cut out. In that moment, I should have hugged her but I wasn't in the mood for complaints.

I scornfully shot back, "You are lucky to have running water! Most of the people in El Salvador would love to be in the circumstances that you are complaining about!"

I knew it was wrong but I hoped she would feel guilty enough to just suck it up. As this thought crossed my mind, my daughter's voice rang out from the bathroom, "The water is out!"

Just like that, I went from being a smug jerk to choking on humble pie.

One of the things that shocked me when we began our ministry to missionaries in El Salvador was the number of missionaries struggling in their marriages. I was even more shocked when my own marriage began to suffer. Within two months, my wife and I went from having 2 to 3 big fights a year to having 2 to 3 fights a day.

Many people put missionaries up on pedestals and assume their marriages are perfect. The reality is that missionaries are just normal people like you and me. They have answered the call to leave everything to serve God. The thing is that they didn't get to leave behind their selfish desires, annoying habits, and personal struggles. Not only are these issues along for the ride, but they are in a pressure cooker. Cracks become chasms and as people begin to boil over, their spouse is bound to get burned.

What the what????!!! You are telling me missionaries struggle in their marriages?

Nobody talks about how much pressure answering the call to missions puts on a marriage and few people understand the risk of their marriage imploding because they are on the field. We have seen this play out time and time again with deep hurt and severe consequences.

What are the factors that cause marriages to fall apart and what can sending churches do about it? I have outlined some contributing factors below and usually several (or all) of these issues collide creating a perfect storm that threatens to undo the marriage.

1. Spiritual Warfare

Most Christians pay lip service to the fact that Satan comes against us, but on the mission field it is in your face all day long everyday. Satan has come up with a great plan to destroy a ministry, the employees of the ministry, and the missionary family all with one blow. It is easy. All Satan needs to do is infiltrate and destroy one relationship...the marriage of a missionary couple. If the marriage fails, the family splits. If the family splits, they leave the field. National Christians, supporters, fellow

Con't on page 7

missionaries, and especially their children are left with a shaken faith as they struggle to pick up the pieces.

What can you do?

The marriages of missionaries are in Satan's crosshairs. As we outline some of these other factors you will see some of his strategies. They are targeted everyday. Pray for your missionaries, and then pray for them some more.

2. Stress

Most of us are guilty of letting a bad day affect how we interact with our spouse. On the mission field everyday is circumstantially a "bad day." You know how your day goes if your power goes out, or your car won't start. You know how much it impacts your mood if you spend fruitless hours at the DMV, or if you are getting over a stomach bug and have to plan your day around toilet locations. You know the frustration of planning an event for weeks only to have no one show up. Any of these things alone can ruin your day. For a missionary, experiencing all of these situations over the course of just a few hours can mean it's just another Wednesday. Add having to do all of these things in your second language while constantly looking over your shoulder to make sure you won't get mugged while driving on sub-standard roads with major traffic, and well, you get the picture. Don't you think you'd be pretty stressed out and cranky by the end of the day?

What can you do?

Make sure that your missionaries can mitigate as many issues as possible. Make sure they have a car that won't break down and that they live in a secure home where things function more often than not. Make sure husbands and wives both have cell phones to deal with issues that arise. Give them ample time for language learning on the front end, and provide financial flexibility to fix things when they break. Find out what they need and send it to them if you can.

3. Long Hours and Large Workloads

The work is never done for missionaries who are passionate about what they do. Many deal with life or death issues, and all deal with people making choices with eternal implications. Many are burned out and exhausted by the poverty, abuse, and brokenness that they see everyday and they are always on call. Some live on their ministry sites and can't separate home and work even if they wanted to. Missionaries burn out, give beyond what is healthy and come home with nothing left. Their spouse is neglected and distant especially if they are in a different role such as caring for young kids.

What can you do?

Help your missionaries come up with healthy limits on their involvement and put parameters on the hours they keep. Do not encourage a hero complex or give them the unhealthy view that everything depends on them. Make sure they have time to spend with God themselves, and time to invest in their spouse and kids.

4. Temptation

"The grass is always greener" even on the mission field and there is temptation as missionaries interact daily with people of the opposite sex. A man is often idolized by the women he works with or serves, while his wife knows him and all of his shortcomings. She knows things aren't as great as the newsletters portray. She knows their financial struggles, she knows he's not perfect and she is often the one personally impacted when he falls short. She knows his actions don't match his words and even though she loves him he seems to love his ministry far more than he loves her. She starts to think she's not as lucky as everyone says and those thoughts come out in the form of nagging and criticism. Soon he becomes vulnerable to women who are amazed that he takes the time to talk to them and to serve them and he prefers their company to that of his wife. Meanwhile, the wife may feel neglected as she struggles to manage the household and kids in a land where simple things are a battle. At the end of the day she goes to bed alone as her husband works late yet again to serve the ministry. He doesn't know what she is going through, and one day an old friend reaches out through social media and he seems to care for her far more than her husband does. She begins to find value in a relationship outside of her marriage.

What can you do?

These vulnerable situations can begin innocently and grow into something that completely devastates a marriage and ministry. Make sure your missionaries have trusted people in place who will be able to detect when things are off balance. Ask what their boundaries are and hold them accountable to keeping them.

5. Guilt

Missionaries feel guilty for taking time out with their spouse. They know their supporters are sacrificing for them to be there and they feel they will be judged for using resources for a date night or vacation. Because of a lack of opportunity to enjoy each other their marriages become stale and business-like as they struggle to survive another day.

What can you do?

You can make sure that the missionaries you support take time to invest in their marriage. They both need permission to take the time and resources needed to make this happen. Send them some extra money with the stipulation that they have to use it in the next month to take a weekend away together. Require them to have regular date nights as a condition of your support. When your team comes to volunteer, offer to watch their kids one night so that they can out together. This allows them to do what they need to

keep their marriage healthy without feeling guilty about it.

6. Financial Struggles

Men have the need to provide for their family, and women have a need to feel secure. The unrealistic budgets that many missionaries survive on means that neither of these needs are being met. On the mission field it's not as simple as picking up a side job because of ministry demands and visa restrictions. For women, the pressure may be compounded if she feels her children are unsafe or are receiving a sub-standard education. All of this adds up to huge marital strain.

What can you do?

Make sure your missionaries are supported financially. Put yourself in their place...would you want your wife driving your kids through dangerous areas in an unreliable car? Would you want your kids to fall behind their U.S. peers academically and ruin their chances at college? Missionaries generally will not advocate for themselves, so you need to advocate for them. Understand the true costs and help your missionary to budget for plenty of cushion including things like health insurance and retirement. Keep in mind that life overseas is almost always more expensive than life in the U.S. and their budget should reflect that.

7. Missionary Kid Issues

Missionary kids face unique struggles that impact marriages. When your kids are homesick or depressed everyone suffers. Nothing is more troubling for a woman than to hear her kids accuse her of ruining their lives by bringing them to the mission field. Men are frustrated when their children are always the ones acting out. Some kids withdraw and rebel or become suicidal, others are always in trouble. Some families may be homeschooling; others may be battling the local school system trying to find something that works. Everyone is drained as the wife focuses her energy and time on the children, and the husband blames his wife for the kids' unhappiness and bad behavior leaving her exhausted and unappreciated.

What can you do?

Encourage your missionaries, and make sure the whole family is prepared before they go and supported while they are there. Find out special things to do for the kids, and cut everyone some slack when they are home on furlough. Kids may be jet-lagged, and out of the environment that they are used to. Let missionaries know it's normal, and that you care about their whole family.

8. Too Much Family Time

While some missionaries don't get enough time with their family, some are in the opposite situation where they do everything together, everyday, all the time. Couples used to having separate jobs and routines clash as they adjust to the constant togetherness. Women lose their independence, especially if the family only budgeted for one car or it's too dangerous to drive on her own. A man may see his family as a burden, and something keeping him from doing ministry. We struggled with this ourselves when we arrived on the mission field. El Salvador has the highest murder rate in the world, and we live an hour from the city. If my wife wanted to do something in town, I had to drive her there and occupy the kids just so she could attend a Bible study or go shopping. One trip could waste half my day and I become frustrated with the inefficiency. Meanwhile all four of us were sleeping in one room. This made intimacy in our marriage a challenge...and not just in the most obvious way! We no longer had our own space to share our joys and struggles with listening ears lying just feet away. When we finally got another car and reconfigured our home it was amazing to see how much healthier our marriage felt.

What can you do?

Think through transportation and housing needs and how they affect the family. Make sure the wife has independence if she desires, and that they have adequate living space for healthy family relationships. Give them permission to wrestle through the changed family dynamics and remind them that it's normal to struggle when family routines change.

9. Destructive Coping Mechanisms

Missionaries are regular people, and sometimes they cope with stress in sinful, destructive ways. The difference for missionaries is that chronic stress, a foreign language, an ever-changing set of rules, and danger and corruption all add up to push them quickly to the breaking point. Some days missionaries are genuinely surprised that they made it through the day without some kind of crisis. They feel stressed and overwhelmed. They often feel like they can't be honest about how drained they feel, or how traumatized they may be by the brokenness and loss they see around them everyday. With no good outlet to process and debrief, they may turn to destructive coping mechanisms. Drug use, alcohol abuse, pornography, stress eating, and self-pity are very real on the mission field with constant triggers surrounding the missionary every day. Marriage issues caused by all the above factors may push missionaries farther down this destructive path and drive a greater wedge in their marriage.

What can you do?

Make sure that your missionaries have people they can reach out to without feeling judged. Missionaries may find it hard to seek help for the issues that they face. Many times their close friends and home church are also their financial supporters. They are afraid to share transparently for fear of losing their financial support and finding themselves in a worse situation. It is vital that missionaries are provided with a support team, as well as a mentor or counselor that they can reach out to in times of need.

In closing, pray for your missionaries, care for them, support them, and love them. You can do some of the practical things mentioned above to make sure the missionaries you are supporting remain strong.