

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III John 4).

NO GREATER JOY

magazine

SEPT - OCT 2016



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USE YOUR BRAIN CELLS. GROW IN KNOWLEDGE.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. 2 Peter 3:18

Dear Mike,

Our 18-year-old son is making a living fishing for salmon this summer. He is the skiff man, which your son-in-law James can tell you about. Thought you would enjoy knowing that he took many of your teaching CDs to listen to in his off-hours. He spent many winter nights listening to your Bible teaching. It made us smile, and we thought we would share it with you. —Mom Pam

Pam,

Thank you for such an ENCOURAGING word. Hearing that young men are drinking in the Word of God is precious to us. We are smiling too.

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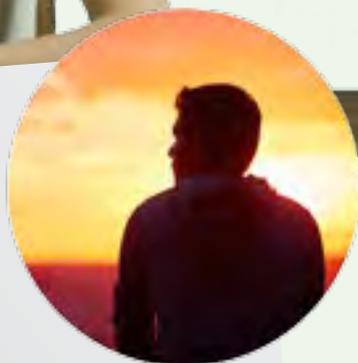
TEENAGERS ASK...

by Michael Pearl



QUESTION

My name is _____ and I am struggling with my faith. I don't understand why God takes kids and good people up to him at such a young age. I have written fellow Christians and ministries in search of guidance, but they ignore my letters. I am hungry for Jesus and would be grateful if you would help me understand this. —KVV



MICHAEL ANSWERS

You ask why “God takes” kids and good people at such a young age. Your question is based on incomplete and inaccurate assumptions.

Some of your false assumptions are:

- That everyone who dies does so because God decides to end their time here on earth
- That we are like dolls in a playhouse that God moves around at his pleasure
- That nothing happens unless it is his will

- That it is his duty to not allow anything bad to befall anyone
- That he must intervene and make only good things happen
- That staying here on earth is the best option; that it is bad to die and end up in God's presence rather than staying here on earth in all the sin, sadness, and sometimes pain

Furthermore, in expressing consternation over “bad things” happening to kids or good people, you are assuming that it is appropriate for bad things to happen to adults or bad people. In that case, you are assuming that youth or goodness merits some special favor from God, and that older adults or bad people deserve to die.

Only to provoke a point, I say you seem to know more than God does about what is best. If you were an adult I would tell you to read my book *DIVINE DESIGN*. It addresses your underlying assumptions. I do not have space to address every point, and much could be said, but I will make a quick pass at answering your question.

When Christians or children die, they pass into God's presence. Jesus said of children who die, *“That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 18:10)*. Paul said, *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8)*. He further revealed that he had *“a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Philippians 1:23)*. Paul, a “good

man” considered it better to die and be with Christ. I am sure that many people were very sad at his departing, and some might have wondered why God would take such a good and useful man from their presence, but Paul was present with the Lord and was surrounded by children beholding the face of the Father. So even if you had the power to prevent him from dying or the power to bring him back, he would have chosen to stay dead and in the presence of God. And the children now beholding the face of the Father no doubt prefer their present circumstances to what they see down here on earth where people doubt God.

GOD DOES NOT ALWAYS FORCE HIS WILL IN THE FACE OF HUMAN FREE WILL.

As to your assumption that God is the doer of all things and only his will is done, heed the passage that says God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). God does not will that any should perish, yet many perish every day. God does not always force his will in the face of human free will. He allows us to live in an environment of cause and effect, making our own choices and learning from them, suffering the consequences of violating the laws of nature.

Solomon said, *“I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding,*

nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all” (Ecclesiastes 9:11). Contrary to popular belief, one can be in the wrong place at the wrong time and by chance catch a disease or be hit by a car and die. God doesn’t make such things happen, except on special occasions when he is judging someone for a reason; they happen to us all as we take our chances in a world that is fallen and separated from its creator.

Further, death is inevitable for us all, because we inherited it from our great, great, great... grandfather Adam. *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12).*

Finally, bad things do happen in this world, so bad that there is no way

we could hold God responsible. Bad people are free to do bad things and hurt children and others. Many people have suffered unjustly, and there is no way to connect God to it. Satan is “the god of this world,” (2 Corinthians 4:4) who has blinded people and led them to do hurtful and stupid things to each other. There will be justice in the life to come, but at present there is no fairness and very little justice. Don’t blame God, blame Adam for separating us from God; and we can blame ourselves for using our free will in harmful ways.

I don’t have space to say more, but know that we have a promise from God: *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:4).*

QUESTION

Dear Mr. Pearl,
I am a 17-year-old girl who is an average, outgoing teenager, loves God, and wants to make the right choices. I am currently interested in two different guys. Both know I am interested, and one of the guys is interested in me as well, but he is quite restrained. The other guy is very friendly and fun and talks a lot, so I feel as if I get to know him better. How do I know which is right for me? How do I keep from making wrong choices? How do I learn to communicate better with the guys in my life? I pray God will give you the wisdom to answer my questions. This is private so don't print my name.



MICHAEL'S ANSWER ON THE NEXT PAGE...

MICHAEL ANSWERS

You are wise to not settle on the outgoing guy simply because he has a personality that is endearing. The reserved fellow may turn out to be pure gold. He may be more cautious and sober-minded.

YOU ARE YET QUITE YOUNG TO BE MAKING UP YOUR MIND.

Apparently you are seeing the two guys at the same time, in a group setting, in the presence of others—as it should be. And you are yet quite young to be making up your mind. Girls mature faster than boys. You are a young woman at 18. Guys don't usually start being men until they are about 22. I assume these two guys are close to your age. If so, they are

too young to be seriously considering marriage, other than as a fantasy.

So don't get in a hurry; you have plenty of time. The reserved guy will feel the pull of matrimony and become bolder in time.

But if you are spending time with the outgoing fellow, you are sending a signal that you are taken, and you will discourage other guys from butting in. If you want to get to know Mr. Reserved, arrange situations where you can be around him and not in the presence of the other guy. Your parents could invite him on a family outing, or a third party could arrange a small group event that will not include Mr. Outgoing. Be sure to read Debi's book *Preparing to Be a Help Meet*.

Happy hunting,
Mike

I enjoyed reading *Preparing to be a Help Meet*. It is one of the best books I have read in my entire adult life. It is factual, spiritual, classical and practical. It is the best gift for young people in a turbulent time as we face in the world today. May married and unmarried people come to find the Lord's wisdom as regards the beauty and sacredness of marriage and wait and wait for the right person without falling into sin with its attendant baggage of condemnation, shame, guilt and bitterness. ~A.M. from Nigeria



LEARNING GOD CARES

ABOUT *LITTLE* THINGS

by Shoshanna Easling



I remember the first time I asked for details in a prayer and God knocked me off my feet in surprise. He cared even about the little things. I was 17 and I wanted a car. Not just any car. I had been saving up my money and had about \$3,000 I could spend. I knew there would be a few fees on top of getting it set up, so I wanted to try to get one under \$3,000.

I remember thinking that God had so many things to do, but it doesn't hurt to ask. I knew that I was God's child and figured that meant God probably had a soft spot for His children, just like my dad had for me. So I asked God to give me a sparkly, dark green Volkswagen Jetta, '96 or '97 model, for \$2,500 to \$3,000. I felt almost comical asking for such detail but I thought, "It could work on my dad!"

A short time later I was in Nashville with my brother Gabe. We were at Bass Pro standing by the fish tanks. Gabe knew I wanted a good deal on a car, but that was it. His phone rang. He talked a minute and then got off. He looked at me and said, "Just got you a car."

"What? Really? How?" I felt shocked.

"My friend found a car for a good deal and I told him we want it," he said calmly.

"What kind?" I asked.

"Volkswagen Jetta," he said.

"Really? What year?"

"I'm not sure; I think he said '97."

"How much?" I gasped.

"\$2,700."

"REALLY!? What color?" I looked at him like, "Did God answer that too?"

He looked back like, "Who cares, it's a great deal," but then he said, "I don't know."

I told Gabe my prayer, trying not to explode with joy. The excitement I felt was not because of my car, but because God answered those details just because. I felt so loved all over again! I got home and there it was—a sparkly, dark green Volkswagen Jetta, '97 model, for \$2,700. My God answered. My God cares. He has a soft spot for his children! ■

AMAZING GOOD AND EVIL TESTIMONY!



We never cease to be amazed at the global outreach that Good and Evil is having. That God would take our dream of a picture Bible and use it in all parts of the world continues to humble and amaze us! In the next several issues of the magazine, we want to share with you some of the testimonies we have been receiving on the impact of Good and Evil, whether from Syrian refugee camps in Germany, behind prison bars in Arizona, soccer teams in Byelorussia, or this Buddhist temple in Puerto Rico! Truly we serve an amazing God!

Ten days before Christmas 2015, my wife and I took 40 Bible Sticks from Faith Comes By Hearing to give to blind veterans in the San Juan Veterans Hospital. A missionary friend in Texas had given us one copy of El Bien y El Mal (Good and Evil) to take along “just in case we needed it.” We had never seen it before and left it in our B&B room one day while we were out. While cleaning the room, the owner and her helper saw it and asked us if we would let them look at it that night. Of course we said yes!

The next day both ladies were ecstatic and wanted more for themselves

and their friends. One of the ladies was the wife of the police commissioner of Humacao. He requested copies to put in their local jails. Long story short, we called our missionary friend in Texas and asked him to send two cases to the B&B, which he did.

They arrived after we left, and the B&B owner (an American lady who speaks no Spanish) was so enthralled by the book that she took a copy with her everywhere she went. When people would ask about it she would go to her car and get a copy to give them. One of those copies went to the pastor of a large evangelical church who asked her for more. She gladly

gave him the four she had with her. Those four formed the groundwork for his desire to introduce El Bien y El Mal to an island-wide coalition of 2,000 evangelical churches of various denominations, of which he is one of the leaders.

Several more cases have been sent and we are just beginning to see the introduction of El Bien (as we have come to call it) to 50–60 more churches in that group.

The lady with the B&B property lives far up in the rain forests and she seldom gets to San Juan, but one day she had a dental appointment and went, El Bien in hand, and laid it on the table beside her in the waiting room. She noticed a dignified but strangely dressed man in the room staring at her and was a bit nervous until he stepped over and asked her

about El Bien! She told him it was a Bible and offered to let him look at it. About that time, she was called for her appointment so she left it with him. When she returned he was waiting for her. He thanked her profusely for sharing it with him and asked where he could buy five or six more for a bookstore in a new Buddhist temple/meditation center that was being opened in San Juan, where he was to be the “spiritual director.”

She only had one El Bien left, which she kept, but gave him her phone number to call, explaining she would get more soon. We sent two more cases to her since then, and at this time I don’t know if he has gotten his copies or not. If he hasn’t, the next time I am there I am going to do my best to get them to him (for free!).

– Walt

PRAY WITH US!

Will you join us in praying for these Buddhists in Puerto Rico who would not normally open a Bible, but will now have the chance to read about God from the Spanish Good and Evil?

Pray that their hearts will be soft and their eyes opened, and that they will come to know Jesus as their Savior and Lord!

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

MERCY IS MAKING A DECISION BASED ON GOD’S HEART.
PAGE 27



Seven Pearls:

FOR FINDING A HAPPY MARRIAGE

by Mike and Debi Pearl

Our 45th wedding anniversary is upon us. That's a lot of wonderful years together. We were sitting at the table this morning discussing what the magic bullet was that makes some marriages really fruitful and happy, and other marriages miserable and failing. After all these years of reading letters from thousands upon thousands of wives and husbands, I know

there is no such magic bullet; nor is there a lethal bullet that kills marriages. Good marriages are like good health: if you eat correctly, exercise regularly, don't live in stress or bitterness, and don't have accidents that strain the body; then with careful attention you may just avoid cancer or heart disease and die a natural death in your old age.

Bad marriages are like bad health: if you eat toxic food, sit around and get fat, live in constant bitterness and anger, and have one mishap after another, then chances are you will probably develop cancer, heart disease, or poor joints and weak bones, and/or damage your brain, limbs, or organs due to avoidable accidents. Consequently, you will die younger than necessary. That pattern is seen so regularly it is almost a physical law just like the law of good marriage versus bad marriage.

After 45 years of happy marriage and over 50 years of ministry, we have seen some very strong indicators of what makes a relationship work and what kills it. Here is a short seven-point review of our conversation concerning the amazing blessings we have enjoyed.



1- SHARE

Share everything in life. The more your lives and work intertwine, the stronger the bond. Share common goals, great visions, and daily chores; work together in business, make decisions together on how to invest, and, when possible, share hobbies or sports. When you can't do something your spouse is doing, at least be sure to take a strong interest in it.



2- SEEK

From the beginning seek ways to bless your spouse. People are different. Gifts are nice, but not necessary for me, whereas time spent together working and playing is essential.





to bring death. The constant drippings might take years, but they drain a relationship of all joy and peace.

Resentment breeds contempt, whether the resentment springs from hurtful words, deeds undone, acts of selfishness, gross indiscretion, or any number of human failures. The key to remember is this: human failures are found in every marriage every single day. Even those who deem themselves the most perfect spouse are still given to human failures.

But human failures are not the poison that brings slow death to marriages; it is resentment leading to contempt that is the ultimate destroyer. Often it is the “good” spouse that kills the marriage with cool, reserved contempt. This is a truth that SCREAMS out to every counselor and therapist who deals with troubled marriages. It is the hardest thing to convey to the “goodly wife.” As a young unmarried person, if you see any of this in your attitude toward your parents or others in authority, you will be bringing disease to your marriage. Get it straight while still single, or simply don’t ever marry. As parents, when you speak of others in authority with contempt, whether it be a spouse or the preacher (constant drippings), you are instilling in your children a spirit that will be more destructive to their happiness than arsenic would be to their bodies.

Men like encouragement and praise. Ladies need to feel your devotion. Note what your spouse finds rewarding and look daily for ways to please them, even when you are not in the mood. You are building a successful marriage and that takes diligence, discipline, and commitment. You can’t be self-centered when you are living to please another.



3- DESTROY CONTEMPT

Contempt toward your spouse is deadly. It takes the form of silence—withdrawal, bitterness, or negative remarks. It is what the Bible calls “constant drippings.” Wives are more likely to be guilty of expressing contempt, although some husbands develop and even perfect the art to their own unhappy demise. No marriage can undergo a regular dose of contempt and survive. Contempt is like arsenic: it is toxic and guaranteed



4- FORGIVE

Learn to forgive, and learn to apologize. Holding on to “stuff” even



for a few hours is destructive. It is like having poison in your system for just a short time; you think you are teaching your spouse a lesson, but, in truth, you are weakening the soul of your marriage. Just forgive and move on. For many, saying I'm sorry is difficult. Just get over it and say the words and say them in a meaningful way. You ARE sorry when you hurt your wife, and you ARE sorry if it destroys something and will bring a lot of grief. So just practice the habit of saying, "I am so sorry. I was such a jerk. Please forgive me. I'll try to do better." While you are learning to say that, you need to also learn to say thank you. Develop a habit of thanking your spouse for all the many things they do each day. Simple things like fixing a meal, working a job, giving a smile, or just loving you. Your spouse needs these

words, and you are building a better marriage every time you offer this tribute to them.



5- DON'T DAYDREAM

Don't live in a daydream of thinking you could do better with a different spouse. Many simply believe a lie, and their thought life slowly erodes their real life. It is time to be honest with yourself. You are not a wonderful, beautiful, craved-after world-changer married to a deadbeat. Rather your daydreams are just silly, embarrassing sin. It is Satan's ludicrous implant to make you believe you have missed the life you were meant to have. Such an imagination breeds discontent. Get control of what



you think about. STOP daydreaming and start thinking constructive, practical, wholesome, creative, and godly things. **Your thoughts are the seeds of tomorrow's harvest.** Your spouse is not holding you back from being all that you were meant to be. Your own foolish thought life is what holds you in bondage, and the devil sees, laughs, mocks, and continues to feed your foolish ideas. Get honest and your marriage will prosper. **Know this: soul mates (people who seem to mesh, create, thrive, and grow) are not born, they are crafted.** They become what they are together by choosing to focus on making each other happy and successful.



6- MAKE TIME

Making time for the private moments brings joy as well as good health to your body and relationship. Marriage means that you are sexual

partners. It is God's design, his plan, and his will. Unless a marriage is consummated (i.e., perfected, completed), it is not a marriage, and this means regularly. Studies show the couples who set a time to consummate their marriage at least once a week when the kids (as well as any other distractions) are out of the way are happier and healthier and have a much greater chance of staying married.



7- PRACTICE

Practice, practice, practice. Practice makes perfect. Practice forgiving. Practice getting control of your thought life. Practice being interested in and a part of your spouse's work or hobbies. Practice laying down your resentment. Practice being thankful and full of joy. Practice loving your marriage. Practice making your marriage successful and it will be successful.



Why make the effort? According to hard statistics, reasons abound: your good health and longevity, your children's health, emotional stability, and hope for a brighter future, plus the good influence on those you love, and, of course, because it brings glory and honor to God, the creator of marriage.

God created marriage for many very good reasons. God hates divorce for many

ugly reasons. God set rules that will enable us to avoid a lousy marriage. Research has proven that couples who have stayed married for a lifetime say marriage is hard, many sacrifices are made, and there were times they wanted to quit; but they all say marriage is the single most rewarding thing in their lives. We concur. ❤️

**A GOOD MAN
LOVES MERCY.
PAGE 26**

I {STILL} DO Marriage Resources SAVE OVER 50%



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- 4140- 75 Marriage God's Way (2 DVDs).....**Now only \$9.95**

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Discounts, specials, and coupons cannot be combined.



GOOD AND EVIL

Dear [REDACTED]

June 26, 2016

I also received the picture Bible from No Greater Joy Ministries. Thank you so much for them requesting you to send it!!! It's very well put together, and there is already a long waiting list to read it here in my dorm.

Grace be with you and God bless us all. Everyone.

Warm regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Good and Evil International
1000 Pearl Road
Pleasantville, TN 37033

June 16, 2016

Dear Friends of Jesus,

THANK YOU! We recently received the first shipment of graphic novels entitled Good and Evil. Many men have already read it while others are enjoying one story at a time. Some men who do not routinely read the Bible are reading Good and Evil. Other men have been told to be patient until the rest of the books come in.

Again, THANK YOU for helping us proclaim the Word of God with this unique and effective genre. It is appreciated.

Living in His Freedom,

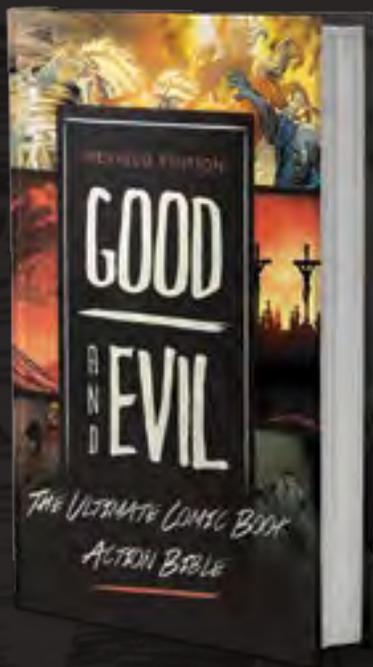
The Church Stewards

Richard Biske
[Signature]
Joseph Petillo
Dave S. Foster
[Signature]
Tom [Signature]

Dear No Greater Joy Ministries:
I'm writing in regards to the Good and Evil book by Michael Pearl. Great book. I loved it, it made me apply more effort in gaining knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I find myself reading the Bible and actually coming to the Lord in prayer (building that relationship) daily, even several times a day.
Inmate #2783448

GOOD AND EVIL HAS A NEW LOOK

A re-designed cover to appeal to the younger generation and a slightly smaller, more convenient size makes the revised edition of English Good and Evil a powerful witnessing tool! We have also included a new ending to Chapter 13 which is a great wrap-up!



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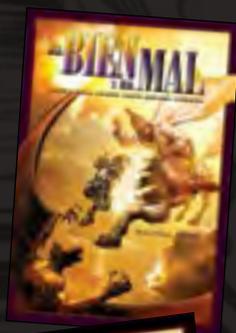
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JOIN US AND PRAY

**FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD THAT CAN NOW
READ THE GOOD AND EVIL BOOK IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE!**

Every Sunday look at the calendar and see which country/language for which we are specifically praying that week!





September 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Pray that God will raise up laborers, open doors, and provide airwaves or books to a lost and dying world. So many still have never heard the gospel!	1	2	3
4	 EGYPT Arabic language	6	7	8	9	10
11	 CHINA Chinese language	13	14	15	16	17
18	 PAPUA NEW GUINEA Tok Pisin Language	20	21	22	23	24
25	 CZECH REPUBLIC Czech language	27	28	29	30	



Autumn MASON JAR CANDLE HOLDERS

You will need:

Mason jars (any size)

Mod Podge® (we used matte)

Real or artificial leaves

Rubber bands

Raffia

Brush the jar with a thin coating of Mod Podge. When it becomes sticky to the touch, begin laying leaves on in a single layer. If the leaves don't stay put, you can use rubber bands around the jar to keep them in place. Brush the top of the leaves with a thin coating of Mod Podge. When dry, remove the rubber bands, and tie a raffia bow around the rim of the jar. Place a votive candle inside.

NGJ is not responsible for any damage, injury, or loss of any kind regarding the Mason Jar Candle Holders project on page 20. PARENTS, please closely supervise your children at all times for this craft.

October 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
<p>To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted. Ecclesiastes 3:1,2</p>						
2	 PHILIPPINES Cebuano language	4	5	6	7	8
9	 PAKISTAN Punjabi language	11	12	13	14	15
16	 MONGOLIA Mongolian Language	18	19	20	21	22
23	 VIETNAM Vietnamese language	25	26	27	28	29
30	 ROMANIA Romanian language	31				

DEATH.

by Cameron Taylor

Death. What a dark word—a scary word that brings fear into the hearts of many.

But what is death? Is it just the stopping of one's heart? Is it just someone's life coming to an end or does it have a purpose? What happens afterward?

For many, death is fearsome, something that hangs over them, inevitable, inescapable, looming. What can we do to escape it? What can we do to prolong life so that death doesn't come so suddenly? Nothing. There's one guarantee in life and that is death. Yes, you're scared now. What happens when you die? Even if you're young, your tomorrow isn't promised.

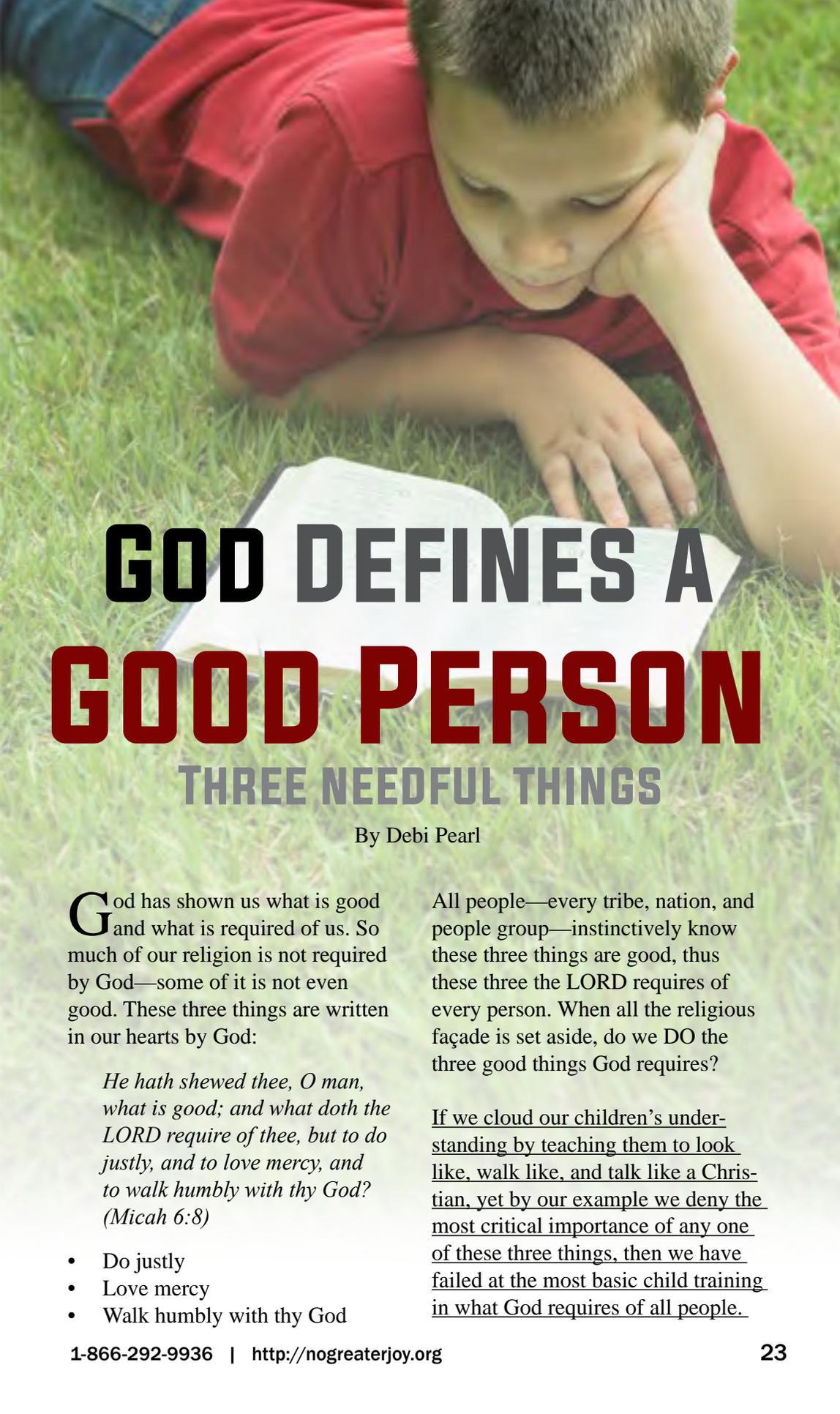
BUT . . . there IS a way out of the fear you feel in the pit of your stomach. You CAN escape the dark hole of death. Want to know what it is? Aha! I'll tell you, dear one.

Let me introduce you to my best friend—his name is Jesus Christ. He is life itself. Not the air you breathe, no, but he allows you to breathe it and he is THE life (John 14:6). Without him you are already dead—in sin, in life, in death. You're doomed to an

eternal place of torment where there is nothing but screams of torture and eternal death. That place is where I was headed five years ago until I met Jesus. He gave me life—ETERNAL life! With him, you can live forever, and physical death can no longer scare you because you KNOW you really ARE going to a better place. Death has no more hold on you because you've been set free from it, because Christ conquered death: once and FOR ALL!

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.”
(1 Corinthians 15:54–56) ■

Cameron Taylor was homeschooled and now works on a farm, raising and working sheep and cattle in middle Tennessee. After being born again at the age of sixteen, she felt God calling her to be a missionary in Asia, and is studying midwifery in preparation for that calling.



GOD DEFINES A GOOD PERSON

THREE NEEDFUL THINGS

By Debi Pearl

God has shown us what is good and what is required of us. So much of our religion is not required by God—some of it is not even good. These three things are written in our hearts by God:

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (Micah 6:8)

- Do justly
- Love mercy
- Walk humbly with thy God

All people—every tribe, nation, and people group—instinctively know these three things are good, thus these three the LORD requires of every person. When all the religious façade is set aside, do we DO the three good things God requires?

If we cloud our children's understanding by teaching them to look like, walk like, and talk like a Christian, yet by our example we deny the most critical importance of any one of these three things, then we have failed at the most basic child training in what God requires of all people.



This is why some lost families do better at raising children than some religious families do.

DO JUSTLY

God requires us to “do justly.” This is a major theme of the Bible as seen by a simple word search of the words just, justly, judgment, and justice. Judgment is the outworking of “doing justly,” and is often used synonymously with justice. A good man is to be honest, open, and straightforward in his dealings with others. A good man would never make a deal that conceals information pertinent to the buyer. My husband, Mike, has a difficult time selling a used car because he tells the buyer everything that is wrong with it and anything he thinks could go wrong in the future. Prospective buyers have actually said, “Are you trying to talk me out of buying it?” He says that he sells a

car to strangers like he would sell it to his family members. That is doing justly. Children are keen to perceive justice or the lack thereof in their parents.

I grew up watching my dad purchase hay for his cows. It was always interesting to note how some people would go out of their way to make sure they offered good-quality hay, while others would consistently try to pawn off the lesser-quality hay as top grade. Dad knew the difference. It both irritated and amused him, but it also kept him from ever trusting or commending the man who did not do justly. I suppose both hay sellers had a clear conscience. The poor-quality hay seller was doubtlessly pleased with himself for being a good businessman, but he failed to do the good thing God requires. If you fail at what God requires, you are a loser.

My dad was an eminently just and



“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

— Matthew 7:12

generous man and he prospered because of it, having a good name everywhere. He would rather have taken a loss than to have been unjust.

Many fine, religious people live by the letter of the law as they seek their own in a competitive world but do not have the heart of a just man.

**A GOOD MAN
WILL ALWAYS
DO JUSTLY.**

Jesus confronted the hypocrisy of letter religion.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (Matthew 23:23)

Jesus is referencing this very passage in Micah. He interprets “do justly” as judgment, and “walk humbly with thy God” as “faith,” providing us with an expanded view of the subject.

Judgment is not the act of judging others. It is a heart that sees the truth and weighs everything with mercy and humility. It is easy to make judgments about others (without mercy or humility), but it is quite another thing to make judgments that require us to commit to the good of others.

LOVE MERCY

To love mercy is to find it delightful to extend compassion where religion would judge and walk on by. Mercy sees the need for patience, for sympathy, for longsuffering, for suspension of retaliation and rejection. Mercy is putting others before your repulsion and disgust. Mercy is having pity, compassion, and un-

derstanding. Mercy is a willingness to lay down your life for another. Mercy is responding in a positive manner first, and then, if you have to judge, doing so with humility. Mercy is seeing each person as a soul destined for eternity. It is caring deeply enough to pray, and looking for any way possible to lead them to the right path. Mercy is sadness when you see the judgment of God come down on someone even when you know they deserved God's hand of wrath. Mercy is also calling for the judgment of God when you see the need. God says a good person will do more than show mercy; he will "love mercy."

I am not preaching to others. We had an incident in our own office this week that exposed our lack of mercy. A man called and said he had just gotten out of prison, but while there he had requested a Good and Evil book. The book didn't arrive before he was set free, so he wanted the office to send him a free book. It is our policy and habit to send books to those incarcerated free of charge. But we expect those who can to pay for them. Upon being informed of our policy and hearing a suggestion that he was now able to buy his own, he became rude, indignant, and demanding. The staff was following protocol, but they were faced with the options of following the letter of the law or making a judgment and showing mercy.

Clearly the man was desperate for a book that contains the gospel, but he was unthankful and hostile. The unfortunate personnel on the phone

felt the sting of it. Before it was over, several office personnel had to deal with the angry man as his irritation escalated.

It is easy for me to make a judgment concerning the issue because I was not shouted at, cursed, or threatened in such a manner that would make most people want to refuse life support to the guy if he were dying. But removed from the passion, it is clear that the man needed MERCY. I know from years of ministry with inmates that when a man gets out of prison he is scared, without funds or hope of a job, and often in desperate need of showing those he loves that he is or has something of value. I can just see this man in prison hoping the book comes before he gets out, but it doesn't show up. He has most likely told his kids how cool the book is and how he can get them one. His need is greater than his wisdom. He needed mercy. He didn't deserve mercy, but he needed mercy. I am sad as I write this because we here at No Greater Joy failed to give him mercy. I have prayed for him, but it is not the same as giving him mercy. Mercy is something we need to cultivate in ourselves as well as in our children. We can model mercy, and we can teach mercy as we "walk by the way" with our children. Occasions will arise among the children when they are faced with choosing the letter of the law or showing mercy. Home life is a classroom of mercy.

I have one daughter who is kinder than most anyone I know. Although she relates to people in mercy, her

kindness is not always a fruit of the Spirit; it is her natural personality to not judge, for she is naturally sensitive to the feelings of others. Would that more of us were so naturally blessed. We must remember that mercy does not stand alone; it is in the company of justice and judgment. Where there is a lack of judgment, the expression of mercy can be a fault, for it is devoid of wisdom and ceases to be constructive, being received as normalizing the faults in others rather than showing wise judgment with mercy.

Mercy is a making a decision based on God's heart. It is seeing the eternal picture and responding to that end. To LOVE mercy is greatly to be desired. God says a good person will “love mercy.” We need to pray that God teaches us to love mercy, we need to practice loving mercy, and we need to repent when we fail.

WALK HUMBLY WITH THY GOD

Remember, Jesus expanded the meaning of “walking humbly with thy God” as having faith in God. It is generally believed that biblical humility is a personal demeanor in regard to our fellow man. This is false. You will notice God said, “walk humbly with thy God.” It is about a walk with God—a walk of faith, as Jesus noted. Some people are just naturally self-effacing and reticent to step forward. If such a person is also gifted and accomplished, we think of them as humble. They are indeed humble before men, but that has nothing to do with biblical humility in regard to God. Walking humbly is not a cloak we wear or a personality style we perfect. It is really quite the opposite.





Walking humbly is being completely aware of God, his righteousness, his glory, his judgments, his loves, his desires, and his will; it is also honoring his WORD. He did say he put his Word above his name. Walking humbly before God is living like—and totally believing—that there is no righteousness outside the shed blood of Jesus. Your testimony is that you are not any better than any other, and never will be. Your only hope is in forgiveness.

HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO CHILD TRAINING? MORE IS CAUGHT THAN TAUGHT

Walking humbly before God is a walk of productivity in serving God and doing his will over one's own. Such a one will value what and whom God values. Walking humbly is believing and appreciating what God says in his written Word and acting on it. Walking humbly before God doesn't

exclude or dismiss others who are not in one's circle or class.

How does this relate to child training? More is caught than taught. A mother who dishonors her husband will be dishonored. A father who treats his wife without charity will be scorned. A man who is not just in his dealings will raise sons and daughters who live a life of dishonesty. A mother who is kind to all in her circle of friends but twists the truth concerning others will raise children who come to disdain her. And parents who count what others think of them as more important than walking in truth before God will surely hate their just due.

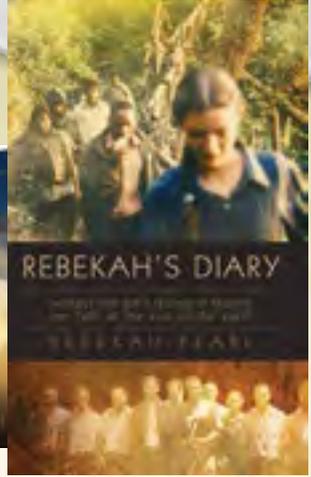
God did not create a religious road and say that anyone who steps off the road gets persecuted. He planted these three things deep in our hearts because being and doing these will bring good. He said, "do justly," as it will bring greater good to all; he said, "love mercy," because it will bring help to all in need; and he said, "walk humbly with thy God," because to do so is wise. These three things God requires. ■

Excerpt from Rebekah's Diary, entry on March 27, 1997

...Well, in keeping with past tradition, I wrote a poem on this, my birthday. Actually, I wrote three, two songs and one poem... This last one is a song and it seems special to me. I think if I ever have twins, a boy and a girl, I'll name them Justice and Grace.

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“One of my very favorite songs was written by my own daughter, and it's called *Justice Met Grace*. Many trios, bands and groups have performed this song, and some of them have recorded it as well. When I was reading through Micah and stumbled across this verse, it brought the memory of this beautiful song. If you haven't gotten her beautiful CD, you need to!” -Debi

BONUS MATERIALS!



We get the most requests for chord charts for *Justice Met Grace*. So we've made the sheet music available to you here as a PDF:

<http://ngj.me/gracechords>

Jared, Rebecca and Rachel performed a beautiful arrangement of *Justice Met Grace* at the 2014 Smoky Mountain Shindig! You can watch it at this link:

<http://ngj.me/gracemusic>

STAND IN THE GAP

by Debi Pearl

“I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land...” Ezekiel 22:30

The Light Bearers ministry has been such a blessing! The light of Jesus Christ is being mailed into the darkest recesses of our society by these folks who have stepped forward to ship out Good and Evil books. Each week we send our Light Bearers the request letters from prisoners and pre-printed mailing labels. Light Bearers keep a supply of Good and Evil books on hand that they buy at a super-discounted price. When they get the mailing labels, they put the books in shipping envelopes and mail them to the inmates.

The thing about being a Light Bearer is that sometimes you need a break, you get sick, you need to travel, or any number of human things. In times like these we need people who can step forward to take the place of a Light Bearer. You might only want to do it for one week or maybe for one month, which would give the

Light Bearer the necessary time off. We need people who are willing to STAND in the GAP for these faithful laborers. You might not be able to be a weekly Light Bearer, but maybe you could buy four boxes of books and have them ready so that once every few months when we email you and ask, “Could you stand in the gap this week by filling 50 requests?” you will be ready for action. We will keep your limit on file so we know how many you can handle, and we will not ask you to do more than you have signed up for. If a regular Light Bearer grows weary, gets sick, needs to travel, or just needs a break, the work will go forward because you are willing to STAND in the GAP. If you are ready to commit to this ministry, please email Thea at: prisonministry@nogreaterjoy.org and we will give you the details on how to get started. ■

Note: Special prices listed in this issue are valid thru October 31, 2016.

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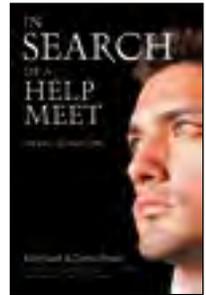
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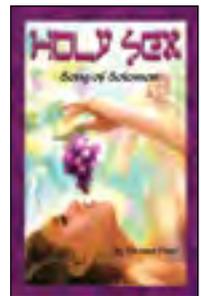
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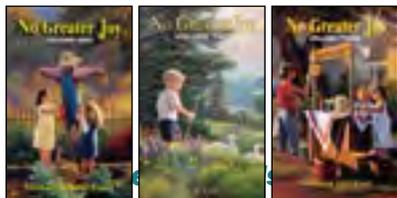
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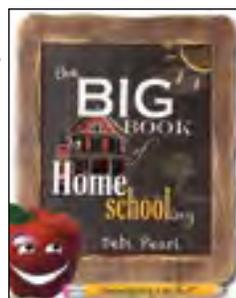
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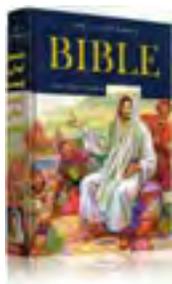
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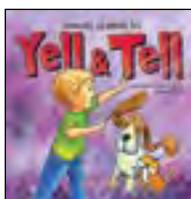
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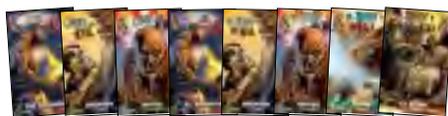
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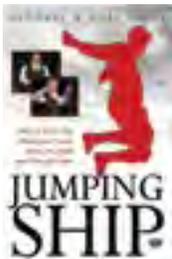
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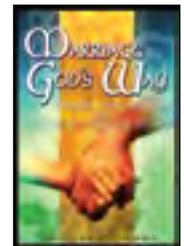
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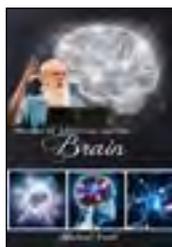
Michael encourages parents to train their children to be tomorrow's movers and shakers. Teach them to become leaders, entrepreneurs, statesmen—framers of tomorrow. 50 min.



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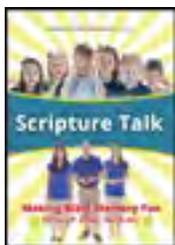
Addiction is the state of being enslaved to a substance or habit. At the 2014 Smoky Mountains Shindig, Michael delivered five packed messages supported by 185 animated PowerPoint™ slides on this subject.



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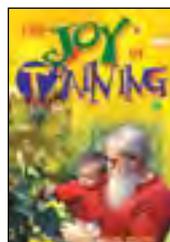
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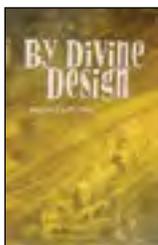
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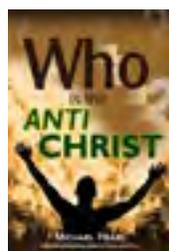
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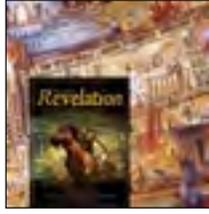


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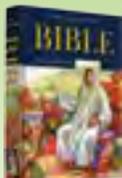


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