



February 2023

Church Press Newsletter

Dear Julie,

Welcome! Please come in. "**Philia**" is often defined as friendship and brotherly love. "**Eros**" is frequently defined as sexual love. "**Agape**" is refreshingly different. Rather than being dependent on the value of its object, it creates value in its object. God sent Jesus to the cross not because HE deserved it, but because WE did. He punished His only Son for you. He endured the agony of hell which should have been yours. That is LOVE. Now the important article below.

Visit Our Website

Loving Enough to Be Hurt

By Pastor Don Ginkel on 1 Corinthians 13:5
Includes a special responsive reading



1 Corinthians 13:5, "Love... keeps no record of wrongs." Years ago Ann Landers published a survey taken by parents of children of all ages. The question was this: "If you had to do it over again, would you have children?" 70 percent of the parents surveyed said, "No." Most of the "No" came from parents with babies and parents of teenagers.

Some of us might be shocked with that survey, and then again, if our true feelings were known, we might at times agree with the 70 percent.

Another example that some of us can identify with. Tom told his wife right after they got married that he wanted no children. At the age of three he had a dog named Murphy. He loved Murphy deeply. He and Murphy were always together. Murphy was his prized possession. When Tom was four years old, Murphy disappeared. He either ran away, was stolen, or was killed, but the fact is that Murphy never returned. [\[read more\]](#)

Stack of Stuff

Please Note

We no longer carry baptism napkins; however, you can order the same napkin at the same price by calling Tami at 602-909-8920 or emailing her Company at tjtoso@gmail.com.

Think About It - Someone Wrote::

There are one billion sheep in the world - and every single one matters to a shepherd somewhere.

3 Reasons to Encourage Teenagers to Serve in the Church by Eric Geiger

Since being a pastor, I have never liked the idea of "youth-led Sunday"—of relegating teenagers to serving just once a year. Instead I want to see teenagers serving

consistently. Here is why: (a good little article)

This Is Good

"Tell me often that you love me through your talk, your actions and your gestures. Don't assume that I know it. I may show signs of embarrassment and even deny that I need it - but don't believe it, do it anyway" (Loving Each Other, p. 69, Leo Buscaglia).

Learning to Be More Content - a Bible study by Pastor Don

A digital Student Guide and Leader's Guide. Run off as many copies as you wish. \$14.95. No shipping charges. Six lessons of *Learning to Be More Content*: Concerning My Existence. Concerning My Spirituality. Concerning My Daily Living. Concerning My Trials. Concerning My Aging. Concerning My Life in Heaven. **Ask for #167**. Also available in hard copies. Student Guide \$4.50. Leader's Guide \$4.50. **#167**.

Pastor

Do you meet regularly with your teachers for (1) training, (2) lesson planning, (3) encouragement, (4) problem solving, and (5) goal setting? Imagine what could happen if you did that. Praise God if you already do.

One of a number of things that can finally kill a church

In these churches the leaders and members were in denial. They refused to confront their reality. If they did, it was often too late.

This Is How

a congregation in Missouri consistently has large adult membership classes. There are a number of reasons for this, but one stands out. They make up their own bulletin insert on the class and place it in the bulletins on each of the last three Sundays before the class begins.

An overview of The Five Languages of Love -

- Words of affirmation or building someone up with positive words
- Acts of service or doing something to show love to a spouse or child
- Giving gifts or providing visible symbols of love
- Quality time or spending time with a loved one and focusing exclusively on him or her
- Physical touch or providing the emotional power of physical touch

Think about this as it relates

to your sermons, bulletins, newsletter, letters: "Make it simple. Make it inviting to look at. Make it fun to read." - Leo Burnett, Pioneer advertising executive

Make it a habit

to find a sacred time and place for daily reading of your Bible. Do it every day at that time.

“Expository preaching

at its core is more a philosophy than a method. Whether or not we can be called expositors starts with our purpose and with our honest answer to the question: Do you, as a preacher, endeavor to bend your thought to the Scriptures, or do you use the Scriptures to support your thought?” - Haddon Robinson

Eternity

Pastor, you've got an incredible year ahead of you. We don't know what's in store for you in 2023, but we do know that you have the most important job in the world. Presidents, celebrities, and Fortune 500 CEO's don't go to work each day with eternity hanging in the balance. Years ago Billy Graham was asked if he would like to be President of the U.S. He replied, "Why would I want a demotion?"

Special Paragraphs

Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart (This suggests dignity. Your neighbor's cat does not think about eternity, but you should, and it should please you)." C. S. Lewis once wrote: "If I find in myself a desire the world cannot fulfill, the most probable explanation is that I was made

for another world."

Plan a new group by the end of summer

Too many groups don't reproduce themselves by planning another group. New groups tend to grow faster than established ones, and they have more intense focus on people who are not connected to a group (or the church). On average, one new group will reach a total of 10 new people, creating energy in a church's group ministry. Healthy things grow and growing things change. Groups can evolve and change by planting new ones. - Ken Braddy

Four sermon books with a Lenten Series by Dr. Arthur Graf (LCMS)

- **The Apostles Creed.** 14 sermons on Apostles Creed and 7 Lenten sermons on "Figures About the Cross." #182 \$9.95
- **Bought With A Price.** 10 occasional sermons plus 7 sermons on the last words of Christ on the cross. #183 \$9.95
- **No Other Name.** 19 sermons. Series I: Lenten sermons on Symbols. Series II. The Ten Commandments. #157 \$9.95.
- **Joybells of Life.** 24 sermons from Advent to Easter plus a Lenten series on Favorite Hymns. #185 \$10.95.

To order click [email](#). Include name and address.

Can Cancer Be God's Servant? What I Saw in My Wife's Last Four Years

By Randy Alcorn

In March, my beloved wife, Nanci, lost her four-year battle with colon cancer. All 54 years I've known her, Nanci loved Jesus. But from a front-row seat, I watched a wonderful—and supernatural—change in those last four years.



In 2019, Nanci wrote to a friend and fellow cancer sufferer, "The cancer battle has been tough. However, my time with the Ancient of Days (one of my favorite names for God) has been epic! He has met me in ways I never knew were possible. I have experienced His sovereignty, mercy, and steadfast love in tangible ways. I now trust Him at a level I never knew I could."

I saw Nanci meditate on Scripture daily, read great books about God, and journal—writing out verses, powerful quotations from Spurgeon and many others, and personal reflections. One unforgettable morning, after meditating on Psalm 119:91, "All things are your servants," she shared with me what she'd just written:

"My cancer is God's servant in my life. He is using it in ways He has revealed to me and in many more I have yet to understand. I can rest knowing my cancer is under the control of a sovereign God who is good and does good."

Nine months later, at Nanci's request and on short notice, our daughters and their families gathered to hear her speak final words of overflowing love for us and unswerving trust in her sovereign King. [\[read more\]](#)

FEBRUARY 50% DISCOUNTS ON THREE POPULAR BOOKS

THE BEST OF THE BEST in Contemporary Christian Music

253 Songs compiled and edited by Rev. Mike Zehnder. Song texts are rich in the theology of Jesus and the cross. Songs for communion, baptism, weddings, funerals, anniversaries, installations, and ordination.

Lead Line Edition, spiral bound, melody line, text, and chords, 480 pages. Lays flat. 6" x 9", **#602 \$15.95 now \$7.98**

Pew Edition, same as Lead Line except that it has perfect binding. \$601 \$13.95 now \$6.98.

COMEBACK CHURCHES

Over time most churches plateau and then eventually decline. They start strong and experience a period of growth, then stagnate and lose members. Leading missiologists Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson surveyed more than 300 formerly declining congregations across ten different denominations which are now growing. They share how God is now using these churches to impact their communities with the Gospel. Hard cover. 226 pages. **#305 \$17.95 now \$8.97**

**To order these specials just click [email](#).
Include name, address, and zip.
Will send Media Mail to save on shipping.**

Couple of Practical Ideas for Pastors (and others)

By Pastor Don

Idea # 1: At the end of each Adult Membership Class, bring your Class to your home. 1. Have a brief review of the course. 2. Pair up the Class members with mature members of your church. In this small group have members lead a brief discussion on what the study course meant to them, how they found Jesus as their Savior, and members giving their personal testimony on their walk with the Lord and how they are serving Him in your church. All come together for prayer, singing of a hymn, and then some light refreshments. This experience will be a blessing to everyone.

Idea # 2: Celebrate the victories in your church, the big ones and the small ones when you preach, teach, and in your bulletins and newsletters. Mention peoples names whenever you can.

This Is Priceless

60th High School Reunion. He was a widower and she a widow. They had known each other for a number of years being high school classmates and having attended class reunions in the past. This 60th anniversary of their class, the widower and the widow made a foursome with two other singles.



They had a wonderful evening. Their spirits high. The widower throwing admiring glances across the table. The widow smiling coyly back at him. Finally, he picked up courage to ask her, "Will you marry me?" After about six seconds of careful consideration, she answered, "Yes,... yes I will!"

The evening ended on a happy note for the widower. But the next morning he was troubled. Did she say "yes" or did she say "no?" He couldn't remember. Try as he would, he just could not recall. He went over the previous evening, but his mind was blank.

He remembered asking the question but for the life of him could not recall her response. With fear and trepidation he picked up the phone and called her. First, he explained that he couldn't remember as well as he used to. Then he reviewed the past evening. As he gained a little more courage he then inquired of her. "When I asked if you would marry me,

did you say 'yes' or did you say 'no?'"

"Why you silly man, I said, 'Yes. Yes I will.' And I meant it with all my heart." The widower was delighted. He felt his heart skip a beat. Then she continued. "And I am so glad you called because I couldn't remember who asked me!"

From Jesus' Side

By Jennie Riddle, Matt Boswell & Matt Page

Born of wounds from Jesus' side; saints of God and heirs with Christ.
The veil was torn; creation cried. The Bride was born from Jesus' side.

Man as fashioned from the dust, molded by the hands of One
Who breathed to life an earthly son, made for fellowship with God.

Born of wounds from Adam's side; given to the man a bride.
They made a tryst* with sin and died, and birthed the fall of all mankind.

Now born again and clothed in white; crowned with glory, justified.
A child of wrath is brought to life. I was born from Jesus' side.

Hallelujah! I am born again. He's alive now; I'm alive in Him.

*A "tryst" is a secret pact between lovers.

Valentine Thoughts for You

A miracle of the Lord can save my life, but the Word of the Lord can save my soul.
A miracle of the Lord can give me health, but the Word of the Lord can promise me
paradise. '

I hold before you a key. If I really love Jesus I will unlock the door to my heart and
let my Redeemer in, not only when the thunders are thundering, but also when the
sun is shining.

I hold before you a cross. If I really love Jesus I will allow Him to work for me,
basing my salvation not on what I have done for Him, but on what He has done for
me.

I hold before you a Bible. If I really love Jesus I will allow Him to speak to me every
day - for His words are wonders and His messages are miracles.

I hold before you some valentines. Jesus has two of them for me - His Word and His
cross. I have one valentine for Jesus - my heart.

When He gives me His valentines, His Word and His cross, He has given me what I
need. When I give Him my valentine, my heart, I have given Him what He wants.

More and more may every day be a Valentine's Day for you!

3 Things to Remember When People Leave Your Church

By Rob Hurtgen

Few things are as emotionally draining, hurtful, and discouraging as when a church
member tells you they're going to attend another fellowship. This is especially the case
when it comes from people you've poured your life into—people you've discipled, gone on
mission trips with, and shared time and meals.

Sometimes, these members have legitimate reasons to leave. Perhaps they're relocating because of a new job. Or maybe they're marrying someone who attends another church. Then there are the other reasons. Someone may come to you saying, "I'm not being fed in our Sunday School anymore. My kids need different programs than this church offers. Pastor, it's not you; it's me, but my family and I are leaving."

Whatever the reason, an emotional vacuum often forms when people leave. Whether you ignore that emotional wake or elevate it to a position where it doesn't belong, it can wreak havoc on your life. But there are other ways to respond when someone leaves your church. Here are three ways to address disappointments, heartbreaks, and breakups in the pastorate. [\[read more\]](#)

The 10 Most Important Things You Can Say to a Catholic

By Ron Rhodes

Learn how to talk effectively with Catholics on these Important subjects:

- The Apocryphal Books Are Helpful Historically, But They Do Not Belong in the Bible.
- The Bible Alone is Authoritative, Not Tradition
- Peter Was a Great Apostle, But He Was Not the First Pope
- The Pope, the Bishops, and the Magisterium Are Fallible
- Mary Was the Mother of Jesus, Nothing More
- Justification Is Instantaneous, Once-for-All, and Entirely by Grace
- The Sacrament of the Mass Does No Appease God
- The Sacrament of Penance Does Not Absolve Sins
- There Is No Purgatory, Nor Is It Needed
- Jesus Has Changed My Life Forever

Discover the tools you'll need to effectively talk to a Catholic about their faith and guide them to the good news of God's free grace through Jesus Christ. **128 pages #314 \$9.99.** Click [Catholic](#) to order. - By Don Rhodes

Comfort for Troubling Times

By Martin Luther (Faith Alone - 365 Devotional Readings)



*Don't be troubled. Believe in God, and believe in Me.
John 14:1*

Whenever we feel distressed and anxious, let us believe Christ and strengthen ourselves with his words. We should receive the comfort Christ offers in this passage. It's as if Christ were saying to us, "What are you doing? Why are you cringing? Are you scared to death? Be encouraged and take heart. All is not lost, even if the devil, the world, or your conscience plagues and terrifies you. You're not ruined if you don't feel my

presence. Don't you remember that I told you about this long ago and left these comforting words to strengthen and preserve you?"

From these and other words of Christ, we should begin to know the Lord Christ in the right way. We should develop a more loving confidence in him. And we should pay more attention to his Word than to anything that may come before our eyes, ears, and senses. For if we are Christians and stay close to him, we know that he speaks to us. We learn in this passage and elsewhere that he wants to comfort us with his words. Everything that he says or does is nothing but friendly and comforting words and actions.

We can be sure of this: A sorrowful, timid, and frightened heart doesn't come from Christ. Christ doesn't frighten our hearts or make them depressed. He came to this earth, did everything, and ascended into heaven to take away sorrow and fearfulness from our hearts and replace them with a cheerful heart, conscience, and mind. That's why he

promised to send the Holy Spirit to his followers after he left. Whoever can trust in what Christ says in this passage will be in good shape and will have won more than half the battle.

"I love you!" Profound words. Even more profound and inexhaustible is this: "God is love!"

Here Is Love, Vast as the Ocean

More than 100 years ago a great renewal of genuine Christianity swept through Wales. Church buildings overflowed; thousands of new converts were made. It is known as the Welsh Revival of 1904. Welsh Christian William Rees wrote "Here Is Love, Vast As the Ocean." It became known as the love song of the Welsh Revival. **View the video**, listen to or sing the words of this stirring hymn.



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