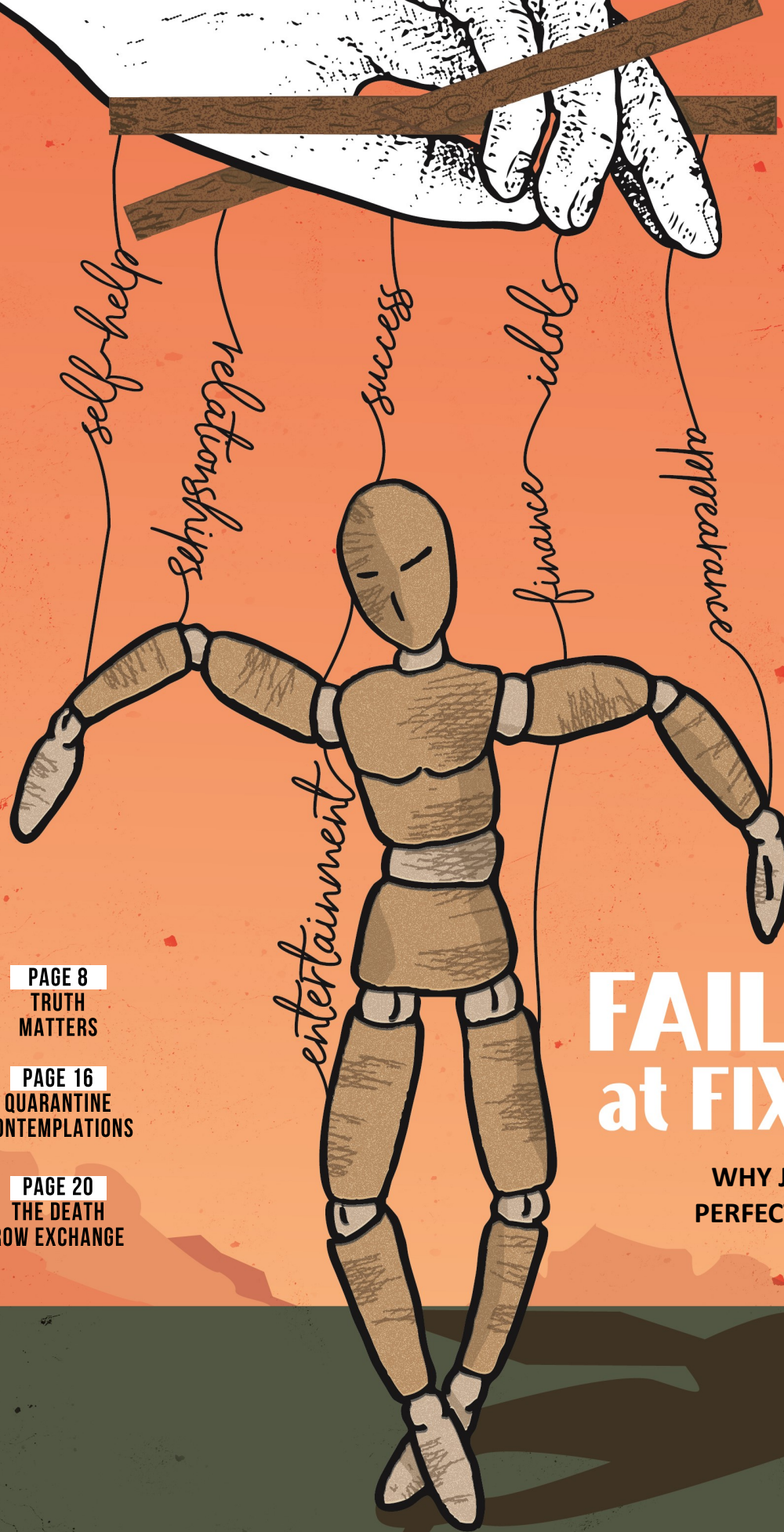




ISSUE EIGHTY-THREE



PAGE 8
TRUTH
MATTERS

PAGE 16
QUARANTINE
CONTEMPLATIONS

PAGE 20
THE DEATH
ROW EXCHANGE

PAGE 12

FAILURES at FIXING it

WHY JESUS IS THE
PERFECT CARPENTER



Word on the Street

readwots.com

WOTS is available in the USA on the UW-Stout, UW-Superior, and UW-River Falls campuses. We're a global magazine with versions published in South Asia, Amsterdam, and the Philippines.

As a publication of Street Level Ministries, check out how you can become a part of it by visiting streetlevelministries.com.

Word on the Street (WOTS) Magazine is written, laid out, and printed by young adults who love Jesus and want to write about God, life, and college. We hope this magazine is helpful, challenging, and thought-provoking as it encourages you to pursue a strong relationship with Jesus.

MAGAZINE LOCATIONS:



Upper Midwest
USA



Cebu City
PHILIPPINES



Amsterdam
NETHERLANDS



South Asia

**WANT
TO
SHARE
YOUR
IDEAS?**

**WRITE.
SKETCH.
CREATE.**

ENGAGE YOUR MIND.
ENGAGE YOUR WORLD.



Submit your writings, photos, poetry, illustrations, etc. for publication consideration.

**EMAIL
WOTSMAGAZINE@GMAIL.COM
WITH YOUR CREATIVE WORKS!**

CHECK US OUT ON



wotsmagazine



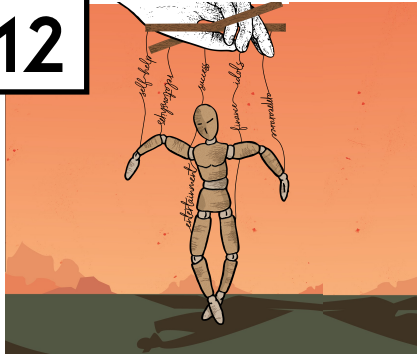
wordonthestreetmagazine

what's inside...

ISSUE 83

FEATURED

12



FAILURES AT FIXING IT
WHY JESUS IS THE
PERFECT CARPENTER

04



FOLLOW JESUS IN COLLEGE
HOW JOINING A CAMPUS MINISTRY LIKE
STREET LEVEL COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING

08



TRUTH MATTERS
NOTHING GOOD COMES
FROM BELIEVING A LIE

16



**QUARANTINE
CONTEMPLATIONS**
5 THINGS I LEARNED WHILE LIVING
THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

20



THE DEATH ROW EXCHANGE
ONE SON SETTING THE CAPTIVES FREE

05

ONE GIRL'S TRUE STORY

ASKING GOD TO TRADE YOUR "WHY ME'S" FOR "USE ME'S"

06

COOK WITH ME

A TASTE OF THE PHILIPPINES

07

5 THINGS NOT TO DO ON A ZOOM CALL

MANNERS STILL MATTER

09

QUARTERLY MUSIC BEAT

AN UPDATE FROM OUR FRIENDS AT BURNING DOG RADIO

10

LETTER TO A JUNIOR TEMPTER

THE DISTURBING PERSPECTIVE OF DEMONS

15

COFFEE & ITS HISTORY

A RAMBLING ON GOD'S CREATION

17

UNFORGETTABLE JESUS IN REVELATION 1

IT'S NOT THE END, IT TIES IT ALL TOGETHER

18

BOOK REVIEW

*WHY DOES GOD CARE WHO I SLEEP WITH? AND
7 MYTHS ABOUT SINGLENESS*

22

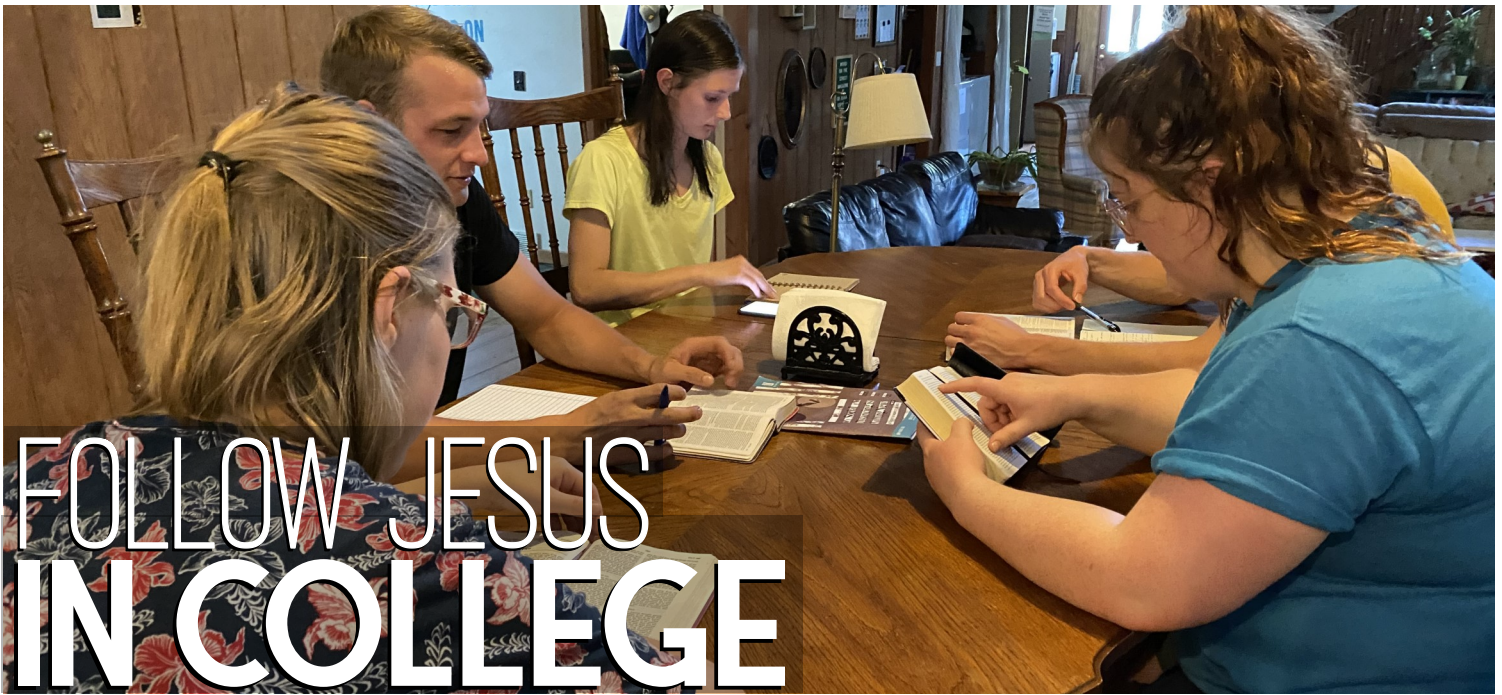
DONUTS WITH A PURPOSE

AN INTERVIEW WITH DONUT SAM'S, MENOMONIE'S
NEWEST DONUT SHOP

23

NICK THE HICK

ANOTHER RANT FROM YOUR FAVORITE REDNECK



HOW JOINING A CAMPUS MINISTRY LIKE STREET LEVEL *COULD* CHANGE EVERYTHING

College is a weird place. It reaches beyond the smallness of the hometowns we grew up in and offers a playground that sets us free from the jurisdiction of parents. It's a realm where anything is possible, and even probable, which means self-discovery is a frequent occurrence here. In no other place will we ever again change into the people we are becoming as much as in this place.

All the while, the question of, "What to do about God?" lies dormant under the surface. Some of us have had the advantage of hearing the truth about God from a young age. In church or youth group we heard that He loves us, wants to know us, and gives us an opportunity to entrust our lives to Jesus, His only Son, who died for us.¹ Those with such privilege already know the answer: "Come, follow Me."² The choice, then, is to allow or not allow God complete access to shape our future hopes and dreams, as well as our present day-to-day decisions.

Others of us did not have such an advantage. God was not part of our upbringing. And yet, the question remains the same: "What to do about God?" There is no shaking it. God promises such. He made us, and He put the idea of "eternity" into our hearts.³ The way we respond to this question will change everything.

Street Level Ministries is made up of people who are responding to this question. We are a campus ministry for college students, recent graduates from UW-Stout, and other college campuses across the globe. Our goal is to provide opportunities to learn about God and grow closer to Him alongside other Christians. We seek to learn what it's like to have God change us, instead of lazily

accepting the conventional wisdom of the day.⁴ We set out to allow the Bible to inform and guide our thoughts about life, love, and the world at large. Otherwise, the subtle pressure to achieve a passing grade or conform to the majority opinion will always subtly eat away at our ability to think for ourselves. So, are you ready to stop being told what to think, and instead learn how to think?

Through this ministry, be prepared to be challenged and pushed. It's not youth group anymore where you sing a few songs and listen to a pleasant talk for an hour a week. We build each other up to be Jesus followers who radically oppose societal pressures to act a certain way. We exist to live out our lives and commitments together by doing tangible things that grow our faith and make a direct impact on the kingdom of God. So, rather than just talking *about* Jesus, we *serve* Him with our hands and feet. We have opportunities like writing for this magazine, being a DJ for our college radio station, Burning Dog Radio, handing out a latte at our coffeehouse, the Blind Munchies, and designing

projects through our creative team. In addition, we go on mission trips together, camp together, and dream about life beyond college together.

Anyone can join us for our weekly meetings on Monday nights at 6 pm for a free dinner and Bible discussion. Located at the Blind Munchies Coffeehouse, it's intended to provide time to get to know God, ask questions, and learn how to follow Him. Take a chance and come meet us. It just might change your life.

For more information, visit streetlevelministries.com

**“ARE YOU READY
TO STOP BEING
TOLD WHAT TO
THINK, AND
INSTEAD LEARN
HOW TO THINK?”**



One girl's
TRUE STORY

**Asking God to Trade Your
“Why Me’s” for “Use Me’s”**

*This testimony is from Lita, a member of Street Level Ministries
Twin Ports (Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin)*

Do you ever feel guilty for asking God, “Why me?” Have you ever wished you were dealt the cards of a more happy-go-lucky life? I know I have. As someone who grew up with an alcoholic father, I spent much of my childhood years stuck in a whirlwind of sadness, confusion, and bitterness.

To say that it was hard or sad to have a front row seat in witnessing my gentle, loving father succumb to the addictive grip of alcohol would be a gross understatement. The guilty acknowledgement that consumed me when I began to dislike being in the same room as the man who used to pray at my bedside every night was unbearable. Gradually, his nighttime prayers were traded for nighttime drunkenness, and my family was never the same.

When my parents divorced and my father’s alcoholism raged on, I was forced to accept the horrific reality that I had no control over the situation. At a loss, I combatted the

discomfort of my helpless state the only way I knew how: with food. For much of elementary and middle school, my eating habits were ridiculously unhealthy. As young as six years old, I hated what I saw in the mirror.

I battled my self-loathing with a profound devotion to reading, TV shows, and music, all of which helped me to escape my bleak reality. Meanwhile, deep down nestled an insatiable and ashamed desire to be “good enough” in all that I did, and according to my standards, I always fell short. I wondered why God made me this way and allowed my circumstances to be so grim.

But little by little, I made some positive changes. When I began high school, I became physically active, adopted healthier eating habits, and further developed my love for music and Jesus. For the first time ever, everything seemed to be going my way. Everything except the reality of my father’s declining health.

“I DWELLED A LOT ON MY REGRETS, BUT I FINALLY CAME TO ACCEPT THE TRUTH: GOD IS NOT ABUSIVE. HE TOOK NO PLEASURE IN MY PAIN.”

I don’t clearly recall a lot from the last few times I spent with him, but then came the night that I learned he was found dead and alone in his home, and I won’t soon forget that. I thought I knew regret before that November evening in 2015. “Why had I pushed him away?” “Why hadn’t I been more loving and understanding throughout his addiction?” “Why me?”

I dwelled a lot on my regrets, but I finally came to accept the truth: God is not abusive. He took no pleasure in my pain; instead, He was patiently waiting for me to come running into His arms, much like how a daughter comes to her father!

It was in my anger that I began to lean on the truth that God sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for someone as broken as me, so that my sins may be forgiven. Forgiveness isn’t usually easy, but that’s why God says we can ask Him for the strength to forgive. After surrendering my grudges to the Lord, I can finally say that, almost five years after my father’s death, I decided to visit his grave and say aloud, “I forgive you.”

I spent so many years asking God, “Why me?” that I never took the time to thank Him for using my circumstances as a way to bring me closer to Him. Now, I long to help others who are experiencing trials like the ones I have been through. That is why I have been asking God to help trade my “why me’s” for “use me’s.”

—Lita

COOK WITH ME — A TASTE OF THE PHILIPPINES

The following recipes were submitted by student volunteers of *Word on the Street Magazine* in Cebu City, Philippines. You're invited to learn six surprisingly simple, yet affordable Filipino dishes. Next time you're stumped on what to make with your roommates, try one. These one-of-a-kind meals are sure to delight.

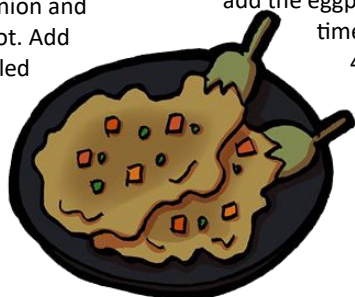
1. FRIED RICE

Ingredients

Leftover white rice
 ½ lb. precooked meat such as ham or hot dog
 2 eggs
 Pinch of salt
 ½ sliced onion
 2 cloves of garlic, sliced
 4 tablespoons cooking oil

Instructions

1. Chop the meat, onion, and garlic into small pieces.
2. Crack eggs into a bowl and add the salt. Beat until smooth.
3. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in pan. Pour in the egg mixture and scramble until cooked. Push to one side of the pan.
4. Pour remaining oil in the same pot and add the meat. Cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute.
5. Next, sauté the onion and garlic in the same pot. Add the rice and scrambled eggs. Toss until well blended. Continue to cook for 3 minutes.
6. Share and enjoy!



2. ADOBONG KANGONG

Ingredients

2 tablespoons cooking oil
 1 onion, sliced
 3 cloves garlic, sliced
 ½ cup water
 4 tablespoons soy sauce
 3 tablespoons white vinegar
 1 teaspoon sugar
 4 cups chopped kangkong (water spinach—may substitute fresh spinach)
 salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Heat oil in a frying pan and sauté onion and garlic until golden brown.
2. Pour in water, soy sauce, and vinegar. Add sugar. Boil.
3. Add spinach. Cover and cook for 2 minutes. Add salt and pepper. Stir.
4. Share and enjoy!



3. TORTANG TALONG

Ingredients

4 pieces eggplant
 2 eggs
 1 teaspoon salt
 4 tablespoon cooking oil

Instructions

1. Grill the eggplant until the color of the skin turns almost black.
2. Let the eggplant cool, then peel off the skin.
3. Beat the eggs until smooth and add salt.
4. Flatten the eggplant with a fork and dip in the egg mixture.
5. Heat cooking oil in a pan and add the eggplant in. Frying time will take 3 to 4 minutes per side on medium heat.
6. Serve with rice.

4. LUMPIANG SHANGHAI

Ingredients

2 cups cooking oil
 ½ onion, minced
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 1 lb. ground pork
 2 carrots, minced
 2 potatoes, minced
 1 bell pepper, minced
 1½ tablespoons soy sauce
 1½ teaspoons salt
 50 pieces lumpia wrapper (or spring roll wrapper)



Instructions

1. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a pan. Sauté onion and garlic. Add ground pork. Cook. Stir in soy sauce and salt.
2. Add carrots. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Add potatoes. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Add bell peppers. Mix until well blended.
3. Scoop a tablespoon of the mixture onto a lumpia wrapper. Roll up and use water to seal.
4. Heat remaining oil in a deep pot or deep fryer. Deep fry the lumpia for 12 minutes using medium heat (320F). Lumpia should become golden brown.
5. Pair with your favorite dip such as sweet chili sauce!

5. CALAMANSI JUICE

Ingredients

1 cup calamansi juice (or key lime)
 3 cups water
 1 cup sugar
 Ice, to serve

Instructions

1. Combine calamansi juice, water, and sugar in a pitcher. Chill in the fridge.
2. Stir and add water to your liking. Serve with ice and enjoy!



6. TURON

Ingredients

6 bananas or plantains, cut in half (lengthwise)
 1½ cups sugar
 1 cup ripe jackfruit, sliced
 12 pieces lumpia wrapper (or spring roll wrapper)
 2 cups cooking oil

Instructions

1. Roll a banana in the sugar until coated. Pair it with some jackfruit in a lumpia wrapper. Fold and seal using water.
2. In a pan, heat oil and add some sugar. Wait until the sugar floats. Put in your sealed wrapper and fry until golden brown and the sugar sticks to it.
3. Remove from oil; let excess oil drip off. Serve hot as a dessert or snack (pairs nicely with caramel sauce).

DID YOU KNOW THAT A FILIPINO MEAL CAN'T BE CALLED A MEAL WITHOUT RICE?

Filipinos love rice so much—whether it's traditionally cooked white rice (kanin), fried rice (sinangag), burnt rice (tutong), or left-over rice (bahaw)—that they would eat whatever is served with it.

Learn more about WOTS Cebu and read the Filipino version online at readwots.com/philippines



Dear Laura

DEAR LAURA,

A lot of people think that miracles are just fiction and not compatible with a scientific viewpoint. Do you think miracles are real and why? – Wondering in Cebu

DEAR WONDERING IN CEBU:

First off, let me start by defining the word miracle as an intervention of God into the natural order.¹ Since miracles are a sign of God's power, it is not surprising that doubts about them prevail since it directly relates to believing God exists. In the 1700's, systematic mistrust of the Bible began with the entitlement belief that miracles cannot coexist with a modern, rational view of the world.

From Old Testament verses that speak about the creation of the world in six days and the global flood, to New Testament verses describing the conception of Jesus Christ with the Virgin Mary and the multiplying of food, there are ample descriptions of the miraculous in the Bible. Matthew 28:17 says, "When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted." This means some of Jesus' own disciples did not believe in the miracle of the resurrection, which sounds like many people today.

Science by its nature cannot discern or test for supernatural cause. It is not able to explain *why* a grubby caterpillar morphs into a stew before transforming into a beautiful, delicate butterfly. John Macquarries, a Scottish-born theologian, philosopher, and priest argued that, "Science proceeds on the assumption that whatever events occur in the world can be accounted for in terms of other events that also belong within the world."³ Because God is not confined to this world, science does not have a category for the concept of miracles.

Timothy Keller summed it up well in his book *The Reason for God*, and I agree with him: "If He created everything out of nothing, it would hardly be a problem for him to rearrange parts of it as and when He wishes. To be sure that miracles cannot occur you would have to be sure beyond a doubt that God didn't exist, and that is an article of faith."⁴ - Laura



Ever find yourself being forced to interact with people who aren't even there? Let's say some global incident requires you to isolate yourself away from people (like that could ever happen) yet you still have work to do, classes to attend, and people to speak with; what are you to do? Video calls to the rescue! The great thing about them is they perfectly imitate a real in-person conversation. This means good manners and social cues are still a thing, so listen up:

- 1 Don't be that person who leaves their microphone on **CONSTANTLY**. Even if you can tune out the train depot, highway, or jet engine repair shop you live 14 feet from, your microphone is sure great at picking it up! It's also great at sharing your deep breathing and twitchy fingers with everyone. Please, stay muted until you have something to say.
- 2 Don't eat. If it's a professional call, just wait to snack. If it's a personal call, still don't eat, unless you're sharing a virtual meal. Then just remember to chew with your mouth closed.
- 3 Please remember that your camera is not a mirror. Staring at yourself instead of paying attention to the call is bad manners. Everyone can see you fixing your hair and picking your teeth.
- 4 Mind your distance. Social distancing is smart, right? Well, virtually it's a thing too. No need to zoom in on your face so much that we can see you sweat. Sit at a comfortable distance away from the camera, please, for all of us.
- 5 Lastly, mind your volume and don't dominate the conversation. It's easy to cut others off. There's no reason to lean forward into the computer and shout every 2.4 seconds with another quippy update on how neat this video conferencing stuff is.

There you have it: Video Chat Etiquette 101. Be sure to follow this handy guide, and you'll easily be remembered as a well-mannered, proper, and outstanding 2020 citizen.

Laura teaches creation science in the Philippines. If you have a scientific or philosophical question for her, send it to wotsmagazine@gmail.com.

¹ Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God*. P. 88

² Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God*. P. 88

³ Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God*. P. 89

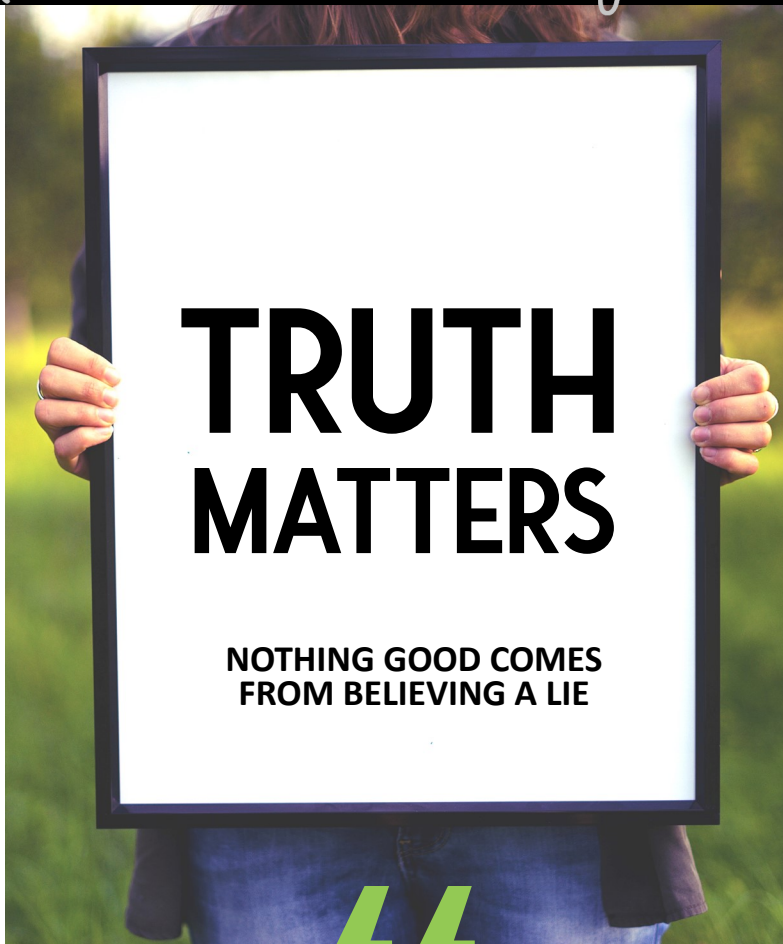
⁴ Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God*. Keller, Timothy. P. 89-90

You probably think you want to hear the truth. You likely assume that you despise being deceived. No doubt you are quick to get angry at misrepresentations of facts. We live in an age wary of “fake news.” You know the value of candor, honesty, and accuracy and the danger of falling for lies, propaganda, and misinformation. But is any of that actually true?

DECODING WISFUL THINKING

It is easy to love the truth when it perfectly aligns with predetermined beliefs and opinions. The truth is readily accepted when it fits current lifestyle and morals. But what are you going to do when confronted with a truth that contradicts and counteracts what is long ingrained in our minds? The fact is, many times people would rather believe the veracity of a lie than have their illusions destroyed. People claim to desire truth, but the reality is, only the truths that are easy to get behind, or that position us in a favorable light, are readily accepted.

There is a reason the saying, “The truth hurts” exists. Actual truth will at some point irritate, outrage, and hurt you. We do not enjoy things that threaten our self-esteem, shatter our pre-existing beliefs, make our life difficult,



“TRUTH IS SELF-SUSTAINING, INDEPENDENT OF ITS ACCEPTANCE.”

or diminish our status. It would be tempting to close our eyes to such realities, but doing so won't drive them away. Admitting our faults and weaknesses is never easy. When the truth hurts us, we want to protect ourselves by shutting it out, refusing to listen, and resisting it even at the cost of willfully believing a lie. We want to discredit those we don't agree with or that threaten the way we view the world. It seems that truth isn't what we want. Instead, we want our lifestyle, beliefs, and opinions presented uncritically.

SEEING CLEARLY

Truth is not dependent on whether or not we believe it, however. Heart desire, staunch rejection, or actively ignoring the

facts doesn't change their validity. The truth is the truth and facts are facts whether we accept them or not. Truth is self-sustaining, independent of its acceptance. In John 14:6, Jesus says that He is the truth. Psalm 119:160 says that all of the Bible is truth and that it will last forever.

These are truths that are going to confront our lifestyle. Jesus and scripture will question how we live, the decisions we make, and even the thoughts that we have. They will entirely shatter our self-esteem by informing us of our despicable nature, which is that we are desperately wicked and broken. That truth tells us that there is nothing that we can do about it on our own.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

I'd rather not believe that. I'd like to close my eyes to its existence, but that won't make it go away. It's only when I believe that reality that I can possibly have hope. Jesus says He is truth. He also says the truth will set us free (John 8:32, ESV). The truth of Jesus brings the promise of hope and the possibility of redemption and salvation. Choosing to believe a lie can at best give false, brief comfort, but it ultimately leads only to disaster and destruction.

We know that simple belief in a lie neither makes it true nor eliminates the consequences of accepting the falsehood. Yet we are prone to do it. Instead, we should painstakingly seek the truth because in doing so, there is safety and life.



QUARTERLY MUSIC BEAT

TUNE INTO 101.7 FM

AN UPDATE FROM OUR FRIENDS AT BURNING DOG RADIO

IN MENOMONIE

THE STORY BEHIND THE STATION

BURNING DOG RADIO IS MENOMONIE'S ONLY COLLEGE RADIO STATION

Greetings! We are Burning Dog Radio. For those of you reading who are new to UW-Stout or Menomonie, welcome to the community! We hope you can call it home like we do.

We are a small station catering to college students like you. We've been around since the late 1990s with a few

name changes. We started off as SLAM Radio (Street Level AM) and then switched to FM with the name Jesus Rock Radio. Nowadays, we are Burning Dog Radio 101.7 FM.

We exist for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus. We're a branch of Street Level Ministries, a Christian community and UW-Stout organization. Our goal as a station is to

spread the Gospel through our programming and service at the station.


We play a variety of music and impactful Bible teachings to share the hope of Jesus with the UW-Stout and Menomonie community. Our song selection is made with the intention that it'll help you find artists that write songs with real depth and meaning that points to the goodness of God. We also play the kind of good secular music that won't upset your

mom if you blast it in the car. God made music to give Him glory, so we serve God and our community by playing great music.


Many young adults serve (or volunteer) at the station. This is a way for young Christians to learn how to serve God in a practical setting while in college or working. This could look like setting up a live broadcast outside the Memorial Student Center at UW-Stout and interviewing students about their life. It could also look like recording a voiceover and producing a radio ad for Word on the Street Magazine to be put on the air and heard by thousands. It can look a lot of different ways, but in the end, the goal is to learn how to love others while working alongside them with patience and humility as we serve Jesus together.

You can tune in anywhere in Menomonie to 101.7 FM to hear us. You can also follow us on social media and Spotify. Just search Burning Dog Radio. Anyone can get involved in the station. If you're interested, check out streetlevelministries.com. Have a great school year!

We are looking for student DJ's!



message us on FB if you're interested in volunteering

 101.7 FM WRJF-LP College Radio Menomonie WI

LISTEN ON  Spotify®

Letter to a Junior Tempter

THE DISTURBING PERSPECTIVE OF DEMONS

Recently, there was a breach in Demon Intelligence. From what we can tell, the following correspondence comes from a Senior Devil named Slipnoose to his nephew, a Junior Tempter called Mugwort. Proceed with caution, reader, as demons are not particularly cordial folk, and it's easy to lose your bearings in their warped perspective. To them, right is wrong, good is bad, and God is the Enemy. However, we hope that this letter may provide insight into the forces at work in your own life and ultimately help you overcome them.

My Dear Mugwort,

So, your boy is going to university. You do right to worry. It seems that up until now you've been successful in keeping him loosely involved with the Enemy's pathetic followers in a way that quells his conscience without making any real impact on him. Good show, young devil, but your true work as a Tempter actually begins now.

We have lost many a soul during these precarious years. They're pushed right out from the wonderfully dulling influence of their parents, forced to think for themselves, and before we've even had a proper chance to lead them astray, *He's* made Himself known to them. And I will tell you this, which I'm sure you remember from your time at the Tempters' Training College: Once the Enemy lays His clutches on one of their filthy little hearts, He doesn't let go, no matter our best efforts to rip them away. Heed my words, nephew. You must act wisely now or you will have much to answer for and much to suffer if you do not succeed.

However, before you lose your courage altogether, let me also remind you that this is an absolutely opportune time to largely win over this pitiful creature to our side. While you can never be truly sure about your boy until he expires and passes into our realm, there is much you can do now to bind him on a trajectory that leads him right to us, where he belongs -- in Hell. So, I am happy to share with you my wisdom on the methods that can best secure his hopeful damnation.

First and foremost, I advise that you keep him *away* from the Enemy's motley crew of misfits, the Christians, at all costs. You know the sort I mean. Particularly the unimpressive weak ones who put no stock in their own ability. The Enemy just adores their idiotic reliance on His incessant help, which makes them nearly impenetrable to us. This lot understands reality as it actually is, and the last thing you

want is for your boy to catch on. He cannot know about our kind. He cannot realize the danger he's in. Let him believe in some vague thought of what the Enemy is like, a passive jolly old man in the sky, that's all well and good, but do not let him find out what's truly at stake here. Those who belong to the Enemy snooping about in his affairs put our entire operation in jeopardy. Do whatever it takes to keep them away.

Instead, might I suggest luring him towards those embracing their newfound "freedom?" Find others about his age who've thrown their parents' secondhand morality to the wind and entice him to join in. In the current age, it's quite vogue for humans to believe that the absence of self-control will make them happy. Silly to you and I, yes. For them, we know that pursuing freedom from all restraint can be as much of a trap as tight-fisted rule-following. I've led many down this road, to "follow their hearts." And then I've relished the clown show that followed as they flopped about in life like gasping trout removed from their water. But your boy doesn't know that this will happen. Play on his naiveté.

While I must nearly stifle a yawn due to the lack of creativity in my next piece of advice, it is a tried and true tactic for most of his age. Lure him with alcohol. If you can lead him to the right group, you won't even have to lift a finger to ensure his inevitable addiction to the stuff. Many humans don't even know how to enjoy themselves without it. These are the "friends" you should be sure to put in his path. If there's any sense in him and he resists, play on his horror of being inferior in the eyes of his peers. Make life outside of what they call the "party scene" seem as tedious and gray as possible. If you're lucky, you may even be able to trap him in a lovely cycle of binge-drinking, self-disgust, and then more drinking that can last for years and years of misery to come.

Speaking of peers, keep your eyes peeled for a decently immoral female that you can torment him with. Let him think that having her will cure all his woes. This is a particularly fun game since no amount of sex or attention from another human being can ever fill the void in the them that exists by His design. The Enemy intends for them to share in a grotesquely intimate connection with Him, and they can't truly be settled by anything less. Best your boy never finds that out. Convince him that a woman will satisfy his deepest longings. When she doesn't, lead him onto the next one.

If your man isn't the "sex, drugs and rock and roll" type, that's just fine. Get him to devote himself to something

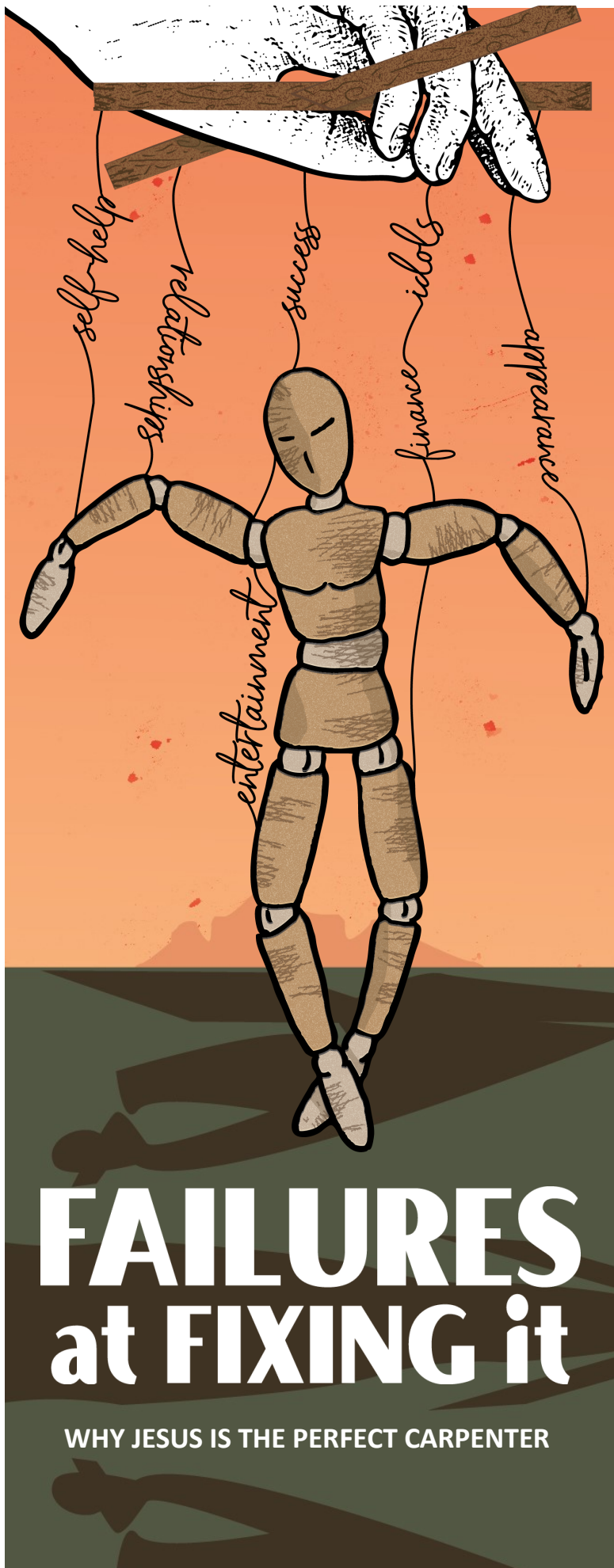
he thinks is particularly noble instead. This can be an excellent way to increase his smugness. The most obvious pursuit would be his schoolwork. A sport could be another avenue if he's not the studious type. Whatever it is, paint a glorious future that he thinks he could achieve if he does well enough at that thing. After that, his self-righteousness and anxiety will practically do your job for you in tormenting him.

I will offer you this one last warning, as well: Keep him from hitting rock bottom. We can't have him start identifying himself as a complete and utter failure. When people get to that spot they are at the greatest risk of admitting their need for help and, therefore, of being helped by Him. His bleeding heart for the weak and needy is unbearably nauseating. The game is to make your boy think he could get himself out of whatever mess he's in if he just tried a little harder. This shouldn't be too difficult a task. Humans deplore admitting failure because it exposes the reality of their total inability. What they do not realize is that some of the most miserable failures in the human realm have gone on to become some of the greatest and most honored in the Enemy's forces. We can't have this happen with your man. Prepare yourself for what's ahead and keep your wits about you, Mugwort. I'd hate to see what would happen to you if we lose another one.

*Your affectionate uncle,
Slipnoose*



This piece was inspired by C.S. Lewis' book *The Screwtape Letters*. This book features a collection of satirical letters from a Senior Demon named Screwtape to his nephew and Junior Tempter, Wormwood. Read it online here: bit.ly/2MufQBR



FAILURES at FIXING it

WHY JESUS IS THE PERFECT CARPENTER

A dear friend recently confided in me: “I’m really happy with the weight I’ve lost on this diet over the last year. But, it’s really hard for my mind to catch up with the changes on the outside. I still see myself as the same person I always was. Sure, I get told I look great, but what people don’t know is that the problems I’ve struggled with on the inside have not gone away.”

My friend isn’t alone. We *all* are guilty of thinking that behavior modification—if I start doing this or stop doing that—will fix the turmoil at the center of our soul. We may find temporary relief from time to time, but isn’t it true that the restlessness eventually comes back?

BROKEN TOOLS

Life is really hard, really messy, and quite unpredictable. It seems like once we overcome one obstacle, it’s not long before we trip over another. Though our problems may differ from person to person, we all struggle with something. Hardships, issues, tough times—whatever you want to call them—are innumerable, but the biggest categories include: relationships, finances, planning for the future, regretting the past, our appearance, our character, our secrets, and more. Some of our problems are small and annoying like a fly buzzing around our ear. Others are massive, like a heavy weight slowly pulling us down as we struggle through life. Whatever the case may be, we look to many things to alleviate the discomfort.

The first and ever-present source of relief we turn to is our phone. According to an article published by *The Guardian*, we pick up our phones 58 times per day on average.¹ Popular apps like Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube, and TikTok are addicting because they have infinite scrolling and refresh with new content instantly. It’s not uncommon to open an app only to find that 15, 30, or even 60 minutes have flown by. Going to our phones for comfort temporarily distracts us from our problems, allows us to dream and scheme about a better life than the one we’re living, and provides mind-numbing entertainment day or night.

Next, we assume that success will solve our problems. We buy the lie that attending a particular school, making a certain salary, and/or marrying the perfect spouse will make trouble less likely to knock at our door. Writer Marshall Segal puts it like this:

Success promises to fill holes in our hearts. If you could only ascend this high or accumulate this much, your fears and insecurities will be resolved once for all. Success promises the love of those around us. They will finally give you the respect and affection you crave. Success says it can cover everything wrong about us. It offers esteem, control, and security — everything we surrendered in our sin. It wears the savior’s costume and presents itself the strong, charming, and trustworthy hero.²

“WHO COULD POSSIBLY FIX, LET ALONE LOVE, PEOPLE LIKE US?”

In addition, we turn to makeshift scholars to tell us how to solve our problems by subscribing to the latest podcast or YouTube channel for advice. It doesn't take much perceived expertise for us to treat someone else's word as truth. We place people on pedestals if they have a degree (or two or three). While these individuals deserve respect because of their knowledge, there remains a disconnect: they don't know us. They offer helpful tips and tricks but leave us to make applications on our own. This is like going in for surgery and the doctor leaving you with the medicine, instruments, and sterile gloves for you to perform it on yourself.

On the surface, all of these things look like tools we can use to fix ourselves. They are tools, yes, but broken ones. If they gave us long term results, why do we have to try one after the other? Why do we need one more self-help book, one more diet guru, one more glance at our phones? It's because the last one wasn't enough.

MAKING THE PROBLEM WORSE

Have you ever attempted to fix something only to further ruin it beyond repair? If you've ever had a stain on your shirt, you know that rubbing it harshly without soap and water only makes it permanent. So too with our lives. When we perpetually seek after things that won't fix us, our problems grow deeper and deeper. The restlessness in our hearts only becomes more permanent. For example, if we think a romantic relationship will save us, the more we set ourselves up for heartbreak as we get more attached to that person. If we think getting

the perfect college degree will save us, we will be sorely disappointed when we don't land our dream job immediately after graduation.

The Bible has a term for this idea of going to something or someone other than Jesus to save us. It calls this idolatry.

We may have a stereotypical image in our head when we hear that word. "Isn't worshipping idols what the ancients did way back when?" "Doesn't it involve statues of gods people bowed down to?" Yes, that was part of it, but idolatry is something we all are guilty of, even today. Author and Pastor Tim Keller helps explain: "What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give."³ We go to idols instead of Jesus to fix our problems because they are easy, convenient, normal, logical, and indulgent.⁴ They provide instant gratification.

While the immediate relief idols offer us seems okay in the moment, the Bible warns us that, in the long run, they only lead to destruction. Not only that, but we are too naïve to grasp the full extent of their consequences. Proverbs 14:12 puts it plainly: "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death" (NLT). If we insist on being seduced by our idols, scripture says that we will be eternally separated from Christ (Revelation 22:15). In light of this serious reality, let's call our idols what they are and run.

THE CARPENTER

Our problems in life and the reasons we turn to idols for help are a direct result of sin. Every single one of us is a sinner who has rejected God.⁵ Throughout the Bible, our natural condition is described as poor, naked, blind, unthankful, foolish, wicked, immoral, proud, undiscerning, and unmerciful. Looking deeply at our inner selves, at the things no one else knows, we see why this is true. Who could possibly fix, let alone love, people like us?

Thankfully, God was well aware of our ugly condition since the moment sin entered the world in the third chapter of Genesis. From that point on, the entire Bible details His plan to rescue us. The Old Testament predicts and anticipates a coming Savior who, in spite of our constant rejection of Him, would descend from His high place of honor to come and live among us. Then, the New Testament details the miracle of Jesus's birth, His life and ministry, and ultimately His death and resurrection. All of these events had to take place so that His perfect life could be a sacrifice and substitution for our broken ones. Romans 5:8 makes it clear that Jesus didn't wait for us to clean up our act before saving us, but rather, "When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners" (NLT).

What a wonderful God that He would look at our wretched condition with mercy. Author Dane Ortlund writes, "The evidence of Christ's mercy toward you is not your life. The evidence of his mercy toward you is His [life]—mistreated, misunderstood, betrayed,

abandoned. Eternally. In your place. If God sent His own Son to walk through the valley of condemnation, rejection, and hell, you can trust Him as you walk through your own valleys on your way to heaven.”⁶ That’s just it. If Christ went to such lengths to repair and rebuild our relationship with Him, we can trust that He is good and He wants good for us.

“WE GO TO IDOLS INSTEAD OF JESUS TO FIX OUR PROBLEMS BECAUSE THEY ARE EASY, CONVENIENT, NORMAL, LOGICAL, AND INDULGENT. THEY PROVIDE INSTANT GRATIFICATION.”

When we abandon our best efforts to fix things and run to Christ as the only One who can truly save us, life as we know it begins to change. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “How differently we know him now! This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” (NLT). We are no longer left to fend for

ourselves, trying to salvage what meager life we once had. Christ gives us brand new life. That is really good news!

At this point, it’s important to address a common misconception: accepting Christ’s offer of a new life does not mean we are exempt from experiencing anymore problems. Because this world is fallen and sinful, we will continue to see sin rise up in ourselves and others. The difference is, Christ will be with us in our trials, and He will use them for our good. The things we go through in life are no longer arbitrary and pointless: they can be used to build our character, and with a renewed perspective, we might even be thankful for them. Ultimately, Christ enables us to look beyond our current circumstances and realize that they are only temporary compared to the eternity we’ll get to spend with Him.

Jesus lived on this earth for 33 years. Of all the professions He could have chosen, He was a carpenter. For many years before His ministry even began, He spent His time building and fixing things. Today, He is still the perfect craftsman.

So, dear friend, have hope that He can and He will give you new life, from the inside out.

¹theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/aug/21/cellphone-screen-time-average-habits

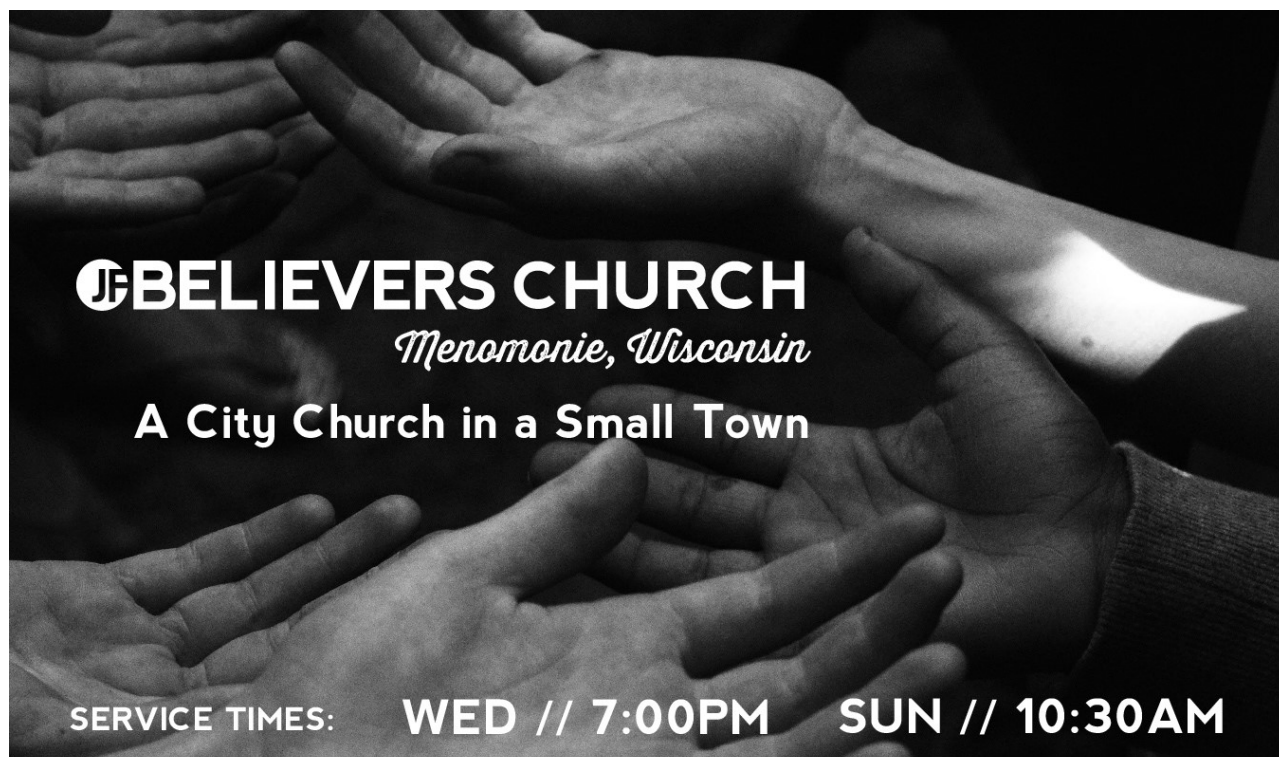
²desiringgod.org/articles/the-lethal-drug-in-your-dream-job

³Keller, Tim. *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters.*

⁴thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/the-attraction-of-idolatry/

⁵Romans 3:23

⁶Ortlund, Dane. *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers.*



BELIEVERS CHURCH
Menomonie, Wisconsin
A City Church in a Small Town

SERVICE TIMES: WED // 7:00PM SUN // 10:30AM

Watch our services streaming online: believerstogether.com.

For everyone’s safety, those attending in person will practice social distancing and wear masks.

A Rambling on One of God's Creations

People need to get stuff done. Whether they enjoy being productive or not, it's inarguable that there is work to be done all over the world. But how can one individual accomplish all that there is to be done? By getting enough sleep each night? Nonsense! Who has time for that? By use of performance-enhancing drugs? Likely not. Drugs are illegal for good reason. Enter coffee: God's gift to humans to help them get tasks finished while simultaneously tasting great. Ah, caffeine: the magic inside coffee that makes your brain think it's wide awake regardless of the amount of sleep you've had.

This dark, rich nectar has a very bold, interesting, and storied history. It predates humans by three days. Let that sink in once. Speculative assumption could argue that Adam consumed coffee whilst in the garden with Eve. I can't prove it, but how else could you stay focused on naming all those animals? This begs the question: would you even need coffee in a sinless environment? Probably not, but hey, God had it on Earth pre-fall so what does that tell you? That no matter what the scientists decide next, coffee is GOOD FOR YOU.

The earliest recorded discovery of the uses of coffee stems from Kaldi, a 9th century Ethiopian goat herder. Kaldi grew curious about the plant after noticing how jittery and excitable his goats got post-grazing. Jittery goats? Glorious caffeine was to

blame! Was coffee used historically before Kaldi's discovery? Almost definitely, but as you know, all good things take time.

Once the 15th century hit, people experimented with eating coffee berries (the forerunner to chocolate-covered espresso beans in my opinion) but that proved too bitter for their palates. To combat the bitterness and improve flavor, they tried roasting them before consumption. This too was ineffective. Naturally, to soften the beans after such a roasting, they soaked them in water, only to find that the water changed to a dirty brown color. How appetizing! Curiosity won out, though, and sure enough, the stewed bean water was tasted for the first time. Imagine consuming coffee after years of no caffeine in your life. As your pupils dilate, time slows down and speeds up simultaneously, and you're suddenly struck with the urge to focus and get to it! It had to be wonderful!

Coffee quickly spread from the Middle East and Africa around the world as other cultures began experimenting with the delicious nectar. The Austrians were the first to add milk and sugar to coffee in the

late 1680s. In the 1800s, the percolator was invented to create a continuous cycle of boiling water pumped through a tube around the grounds. Brewing methods

haven't changed much since the 15th century. However, it wasn't until the 1970s that coffee as we know it today began. The auto-drip coffee maker in many ways perfected the efficiency of consuming the bean because it quickly boiled water and slowly dripped it through cheap, ground coffee contained in disposable paper, the American way.

Many will argue pour over tastes better; some think espresso in all its concentrated glory is best. It doesn't matter your preference, all coffee brewing methods are beautiful. Jot that down. The inevitable creation of flavored coffee has birthed a great divide amongst humans who have asked, "Should pumpkin spice lattes be available year-round?" That is a question for another article (but the answer is yes, they should).

The bottom line is that coffee is delicious and widely consumed. Is it as popular and storied as tea? No, but that's okay. It's not a competition. Coffee is a wonderful and tasty way to wake up. Remember to thank God for His delicious creation!

QUARANTINE

contemplations

5 THINGS I LEARNED WHILE LIVING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

In the beginning, I remember it feeling like being aboard a slowly sinking ship. Days turned to weeks, and weeks turned into months. Months of discouraging news headlines. Months of waiting to hear what new guidelines and laws were in place. Initially, I felt paralyzed by feelings of helplessness and anxiety while waiting for everything to go back to normal. But God was quick to remind me that there is no need to stay afraid because He, unlike me, is sovereign. He's been reminding me of truths like this lately, and perhaps you will find they resonate in your life too, so, here they are.

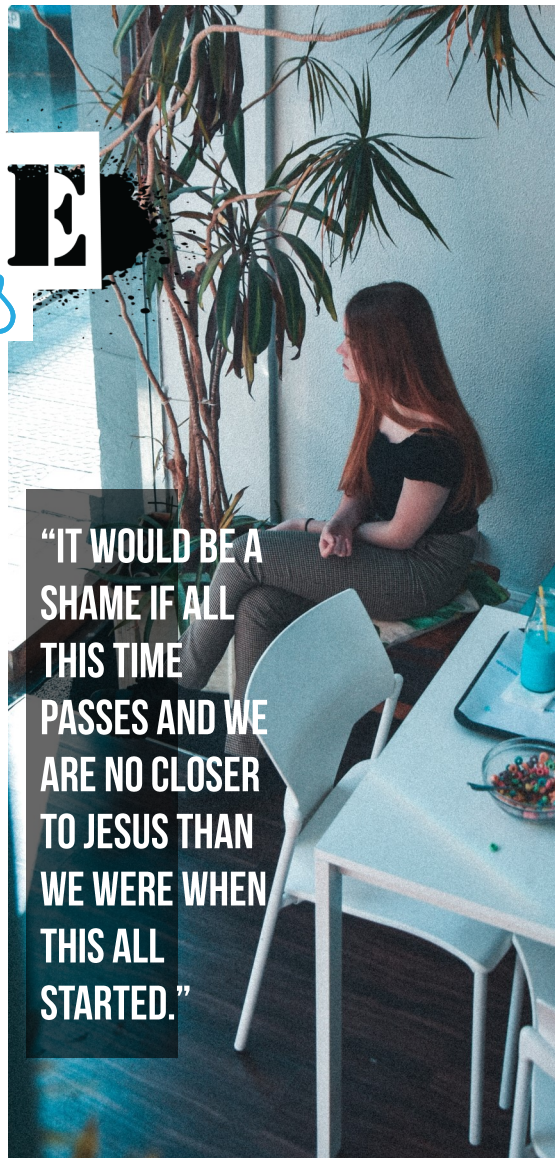
1. I DON'T NEED TO KNOW THE EXACT DETAILS OF THE FUTURE. I have always tricked myself into thinking that it is possible to plan for what is going to happen. But the truth is, we never have that absolute certainty. Who am I to say if I will even wake up in the morning? I've been finding myself frustrated and worried because I don't know what my church, school, work, and social life will look like day-to-day, but I'm learning I don't need exact details. I just need to be faithful to whatever God has for me right now.

2. IT'S OKAY, HEALTHY EVEN, TO SLOW DOWN. Before the pandemic halted everything in my life, I was probably the busiest I had ever been. Going from a full schedule to almost nothing was a shock. I have heard many others voice similar experiences, often sharing that God must be wanting them to rest and take a break or something, and I admit, I felt the same way. But as I thought about it

more, I realized that God commands us to rest in Him all the time, not just during a pandemic. There is a difference between laziness and resting, however. God is displeased by one but commands the other (Exodus 20:8-10). When I get busy running around, it is easier to excuse laziness in my spiritual life because I'm worn out and think I deserve a break. But idleness in this area is not true rest. True rest comes when time with Him is our first priority. God alone says He can give us rest (Exodus 33:14). Lots of other people and things say it, but they cannot fulfill it.

3. FOCUSING MORE ON WHO I AM, NOT WHAT I DO, IS KEY. It is easy to make Christianity a set of actions that include Bible reading, going to church, attending weekly Bible studies, and telling people about Jesus. When I had to stay at home during the worst of the pandemic, I found that I was unable to prop up my relationship with God through church attendance and other godly activities. When we lose sight of *why* we do what we do, we fail to see the immense grace that God has given us. Behavior modification falls so far short of allowing God to transform our minds and hearts.

4. THE BATTLE DOESN'T STOP. I have often blamed circumstances when I have a sinful heart and attitude. Isn't it easy to excuse being short with someone when you're just so busy, or to ignore someone when you're simply tired? I have realized that all the junk in my heart is still there, regardless of circumstances. I still need Jesus to pay for my sin. I still



"IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF ALL THIS TIME PASSES AND WE ARE NO CLOSER TO JESUS THAN WE WERE WHEN THIS ALL STARTED."

need God's grace and mercy when my schedule is empty and I don't interact with anything but my thoughts.

5. GOD'S WORK ISN'T ON PAUSE. Hibernating until this is all over sure would be comfortable, but God is still working, and He desires us to have a role in it. What a privilege it is to join Him! It might look drastically different now, but the heart of it is still the same: loving and serving God and those around us.

A lot of time has already passed between the beginning of the global crisis and now. Perhaps you took the time to learn a new skill or work on a hobby, but hopefully, you've also taken the time to know God better and know His Word. It would be a shame if all this time passes and we are no closer to Jesus than we were when this all started.

UNFORGETTABLE JESUS

IT'S NOT THE END - IT TIES IT ALL TOGETHER

IN REVELATION 1

If you're not familiar with Jesus or Christianity, you've still more than likely at least heard of the book of Revelation in the Bible. It's the 66th book, the last one, and one of the most misunderstood. If you are a Christian, it tends to be either the book we just don't talk about, or there's an odd infatuation with it where you trade out much of the true meaning for weird prophecies that only serve to strike fear in people. Then there is option C: taking Jesus for who He is. Everyone is at a different stage in their beliefs, but take some time now to see what Jesus has to say about Himself in this last book. Let's read two paragraphs from the first chapter of Revelation.

REVELATION 1:7-8 NLT *Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see Him—even those who pierced Him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for Him. Yes! Amen! 'I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,' says the Lord God. 'I am the One who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One.*

REVELATION 1:12-18 NLT *When I [Apostle John] turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lamp stands. And standing in the middle of the lamp stands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across His chest. His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And His eyes were like flames of fire. His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and His voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in His right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from His mouth. And His face was like the sun in all its brilliance. When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if I were dead. But He laid His right hand on me and said, 'Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. I am the living One. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.*

Who can fully explain and describe the awe of these verses? John, one of Jesus' disciples, wrote the words we just read. John knew Jesus, he walked with Jesus, and he talked face to face with Jesus. And still, when Jesus appeared to him here, he was so floored that he passed out. What was different about this Jesus compared to the Jesus he walked with before on planet Earth? John had known Him as meek and mild, but here He was described as having eyes "like a flame of fire." Jesus is so awesome, He is not capable of being put in a box and completely described and confined. How great and scary is this? Think of the grace and promises He makes. They are the best gifts able to be given, but they are not something to take lightly as

He paid a high price for us to have them. Jesus offers us His gift, but it's up to us to embrace it. What good are grace and mercy if there is no consequence for rejecting Him? Some say that's not fair, but the reality is we have no right to decide what directives are fair and which are not when they come from the Creator of the universe. If anything, it's unfair that He chose to redeem humans who previously rejected Him.

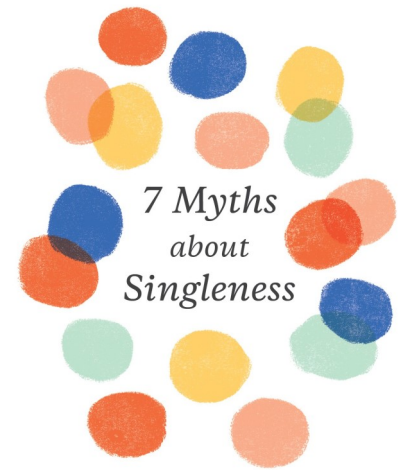
We must realize how desperate we are, or are not, for Him. It's so much more than intellectual understanding and "making sense" of these things. Read the verses above again and ask God to reveal to you what He's saying here. This isn't the end—it's what ties it all together.

REVIEWED

THESE BOOKS WON'T LIE TO YOU ABOUT
SINGLENES AND SEX.

In a recent conversation, I realized I've been single for eight years—the entirety of my twenties, in fact. As the words came out of my mouth, I was startled. *Has it really been that long?* Yeah, it has been. There have been seasons where I've enjoyed and embraced it, then there have been times where I've been left asking, "What's wrong with me?" In those seasons it has been vital to clean off my dusty glasses and gain a clear perspective.

Two books that have been incredibly helpful are *7 Myths about Singleness* and *Why Does God Care Who I Sleep With?* Both are written by Sam Allberry, a pastor, speaker, and writer. As a man who has been single for a number of years, I found him to be relatable, reliable, and witty. These are not like other books on singleness that tend to make marriage—or at least becoming someone marriable—the point. Allberry writes honestly, creatively weaving biblical truth with his own life experiences.



Sam Allberry

7 MYTHS ABOUT SINGLENES

Allberry wastes no time or space confronting common misconceptions that circulate through Christian circles regarding singleness: (1) it is too hard, (2) requires a special calling, (3) means no intimacy, (4) means no family, (5) hinders ministry, (6) wastes your sexuality, and (7) is easy. Each chapter confronts the myth from the roots to the branches, carefully combining personal experiences, popular examples, pastoral insights, and scripture throughout.

Within the first chapter, Allberry reminds us that Jesus was single, and He doesn't call others to a standard that He didn't embrace Himself. He confronts the misconception that marriage will complete us, since "He [Jesus] is the most complete and fully human person that ever lived... the moment we claim a life of celibacy to be dehumanizing, we are implying that Jesus himself is only subhuman" (p. 25).

The reader is continually reminded of the sufficiency of Christ and that "the key to contentment as a single person is not trying to make singleness into something that will satisfy us; it is to find contentment in Christ as a single person" (p. 142). The

author reminds his readers that most married people will one day be single again (p. 14) and puts a spotlight on the biblical truth that marriage is for this life only, not for eternity (p. 119). The final chapter points out that we all live with uncertainty: “It’s not a problem of singleness; it’s a problem of life. The only guarantee is that Christ will never leave us or forsake us” (p. 140).

Although he highlights many benefits of singleness, Allberry does not gloss over the difficulties. In fact, he was brutally honest about his own anxieties and takes no comfort in the struggles of marriage. He stated, “I would choose the lows of singleness over the lows of marriage any day of the week. I think being unhappily married must be so much harder than being unhappily single” (p. 30).

Allberry ends the book with an appendix that offers practical guidance to avoid sexual sin, as well as hope for those who have given in to sexual temptation. It is the bridge that connects this book to his most recent work, *Why Does God Care Who I Sleep With?*

Why does God care who I sleep with?

SAM ALLBERRY

WHY DOES GOD CARE WHO I SLEEP WITH?

For many, the Christian views on sex— and specifically what the Bible teaches about it— seem outdated at best and legalistic at

worst. In his newest book, Allberry seeks to address the issues of sexuality from a biblical standpoint, helping readers— Christian or not— understand God’s design for sexual union.

Far from writing a book that’s out of touch with today’s world, Allberry instead addresses many modern-day issues that revolve around sexuality. He doesn’t shy

“**God cares who we sleep with because he cares deeply about the people who are doing the sleeping.**”

away from addressing hard topics such as abuse, consent, and homosexuality. In addressing such, he proves that sexuality matters to us all. “If #MeToo has shown us anything, it is that our sexuality matters profoundly. Its violation leads to the deepest emotional and psychological damage, quite apart from the physical scars it leaves” (loc. 90) and “...the pain of sexual assault is not the pain of a grazed knee but the trauma of holy space being desecrated. Maybe our bodies are less like playthings and more like temples.” (loc. 319).

Critics may chastise Christians for being too restrictive about sexual morals, but Allberry points out that all people—including critics—place restrictions on sexual behavior. He says, “What is distinctive about the Christian understanding of sexual ethics, then, is not the presence of boundaries but where those boundaries are located and for what reason” (loc. 286). For the Christian, the boundaries are coherent and unchanging, whereas the boundaries of our cultural code are constantly changing.

The heart of the book explains what sex is for. More than just a mere “passage of fluids,” it is a deeply sacred and unifying act (which, by the way, was God’s idea, not ours). Allberry writes, “Sex is God’s appointed way for two people to reciprocally say to one another, ‘I belong completely, permanently, and exclusively to you’” (loc. 522). He goes on to explain, “sex is fundamentally about giving, and about giving our whole self to someone” (loc. 615).

The Bible’s design for sex is not at all prudish. For the Christian, it is deeply sacred, and therefore highly honored.

The final two chapters tie it all together with an explanation of the bigger and better story behind our sexuality, further explaining why sex is so sacred for the Christian. “God has given us this whole dimension in life— making us sexual beings and giving us this instinct towards lifelong partnership—precisely to point us to the deeper and greater reality of his covenant love for us in Christ” (loc. 1700).

Allberry carefully walks the reader through the grand story of the Bible—that God has

prepared His people, the Church, as a bride for their bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Marriage and romantic fulfillment are just shadows of this greater reality. “We sense there is something profound and meaningful that is meant to be discovered...but rather than seeing it as a sign of something greater, we mistake it for the reality itself” (loc. 1706).

Ultimately, the pulse that runs through the veins of the entire book is this: “God cares who we sleep with because he cares deeply about the people who are doing the sleeping” (loc. 51).

[7 Myths About Singleness is available for purchase from Crossway \(visit \[crossway.org\]\(http://crossway.org\)\).](#)

[Why Does God Care Who I Sleep With? can be purchased from The Good Book Company \(visit \[thegoodbook.com\]\(http://thegoodbook.com\)\).](#)
[Both books are available in print or digital formats.](#)

THE DEATH ROW

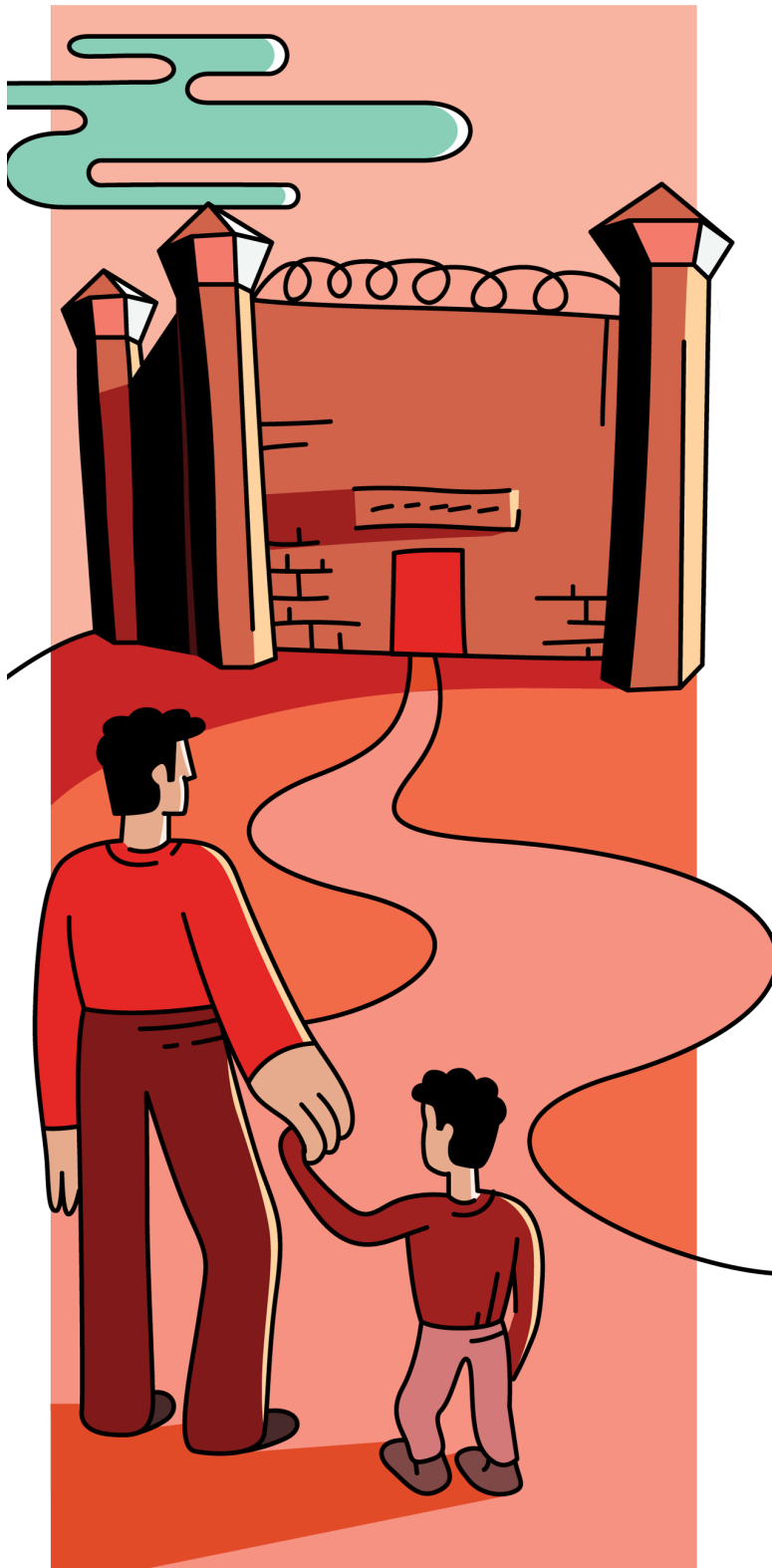
Exchange

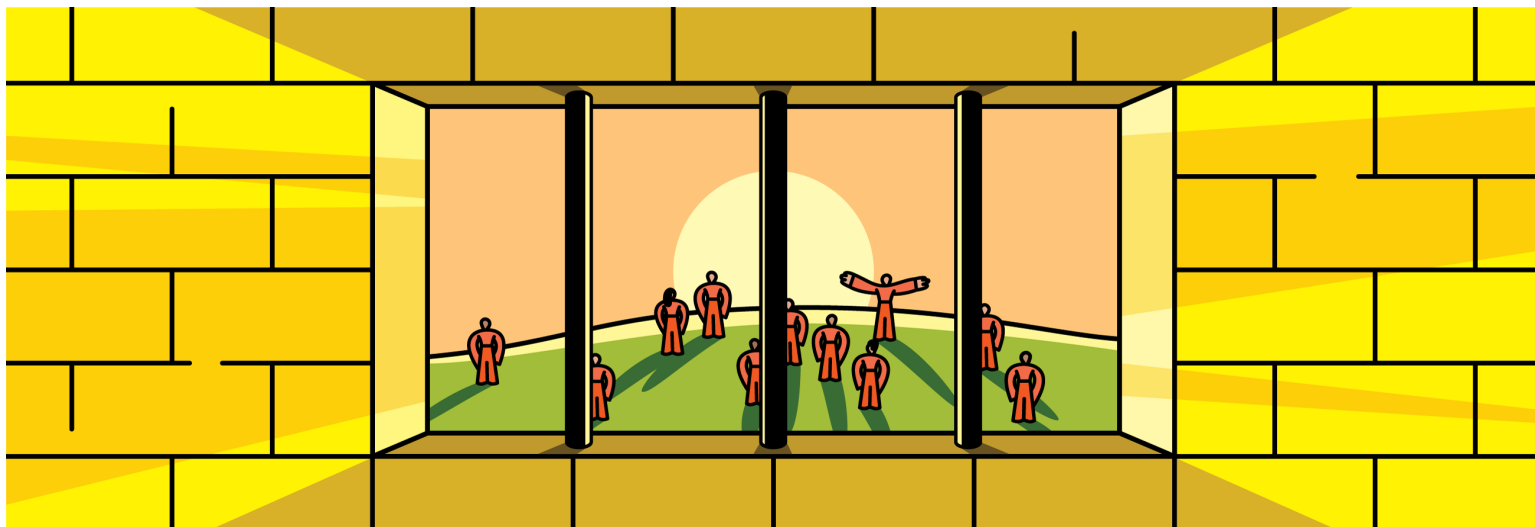
ONE SON SETTING THE CAPTIVES FREE

The wind sent a chill down the neck of the father's spine as he helped his son out of the car. He never meant for this trip to be necessary and yet here they were, outside the front doors of the state penitentiary. The boy had been quiet for most of the drive, knowing full well the plan for the day only had one outcome.

"Do we really have to do this, Dad?" the boy stopped to ask. "Isn't there another way?"

The father could do nothing but kneel down and embrace his son. *If only*, he thought. Tears filled his eyes as he felt his father shake his head. This was the only way. Though he didn't understand fully in that moment,





the strength of his dad’s arms around him assured the boy that somehow, some way, everything really would be alright. The father grabbed his boy’s hand and up the steps they went to the red door that waited at the top.

The guard inside led them down a maze of narrow halls, slowing down once they reached a hallway that felt heavier than all the rest. A harsh fluorescent light rested above each green door with a small window. The father looked into the windows of the cells as they walked. He saw men and women sitting alone. Some were quiet and some were talking aloud. Some came up to their windows, making a scene as they passed by. Some, it seemed, couldn’t find it in themselves to lift their eyes. Most had been there months, others years, even decades. All were awaiting execution.

The farther they walked, the deeper the father’s heart sank. Cell after cell, the father locked eyes with the people behind the bars. These inmates were the reason he had come, and nothing would change his mind. Despite what they’d done, he didn’t see criminals. He saw individuals in need of freedom. Holding tight to his son, he knew it was time.

The guard opened the door to a cell at the end of the hall, and the boy stepped inside. His father let go of his hand and looked away without a word. The cell door clanked shut, then, *silence*.

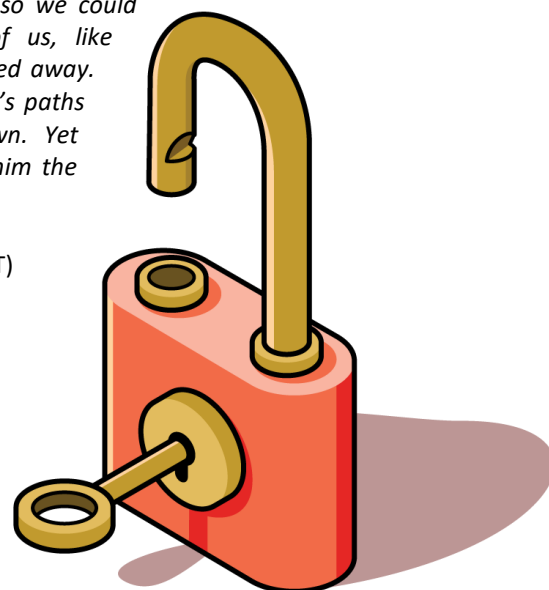
One by one, the guard unlocked the doors down the hall, and, one by one, the inmates stepped into the corridor. The reactions varied as the father turned to face them.

“Father,” one woman cried, as she fell down before him. His hands met her face as he helped her to her feet.

An older man one cell down hovered at his door, unsure about what lay ahead. He had grown quite comfortable in his little concrete house. The father stepped toward him and led the way down the maze in reverse. All eyes were open wide as they walked further than they were used to after living their solitary lives. The first of the prisoners made their way to the red front door, hands reaching up to shield their eyes. The sunlight streamed through the windows, casting shadows around their feet. It had been too long since they’d seen the light. The father watched as one man closed his eyes, holding his arms out to welcome the warmth at the top of the steps. Streams of orange and gray flooded the steps as the prisoners arrived at the street below, and the father knew it was finally finished.

Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.

ISAIAH 53:4-6 (NLT)



DONUTS with a PURPOSE



AN INTERVIEW WITH DONUT SAM'S, MENOMONIE'S NEWEST DONUT SHOP

Donut Sam's sprang open last March right in the heart of downtown Menomonie. This beautiful little shop is operated by Tanya and Michael Husby who are passionate about serving the local community some fresh donuts and coffee. *Word on the Street* (WOTS) got the chance this summer to hang out with the Husbys and learn more about their mission to infuse the downtown Menomonie scene with college-friendly breakfast bites, all while transforming the world of work for kids with disabilities.

WOTS: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START A DONUT SHOP?

Tanya and Michael (T & M): We lived in the suburbs of Chicago, which was fun when you don't have kids but decided after having a kid that it wasn't the best place to raise him. So, we quit our jobs and moved up to Menomonie because we had some family in the area. When we got here we began to wonder why there wasn't a donut shop in Menomonie. This town has great lunches, but when you think of breakfast, the options narrow. We wanted to create a space where people can meet for a quick bite and coffee in downtown Menomonie. Now a Stout student can come in here with \$3 and leave with a good cup of coffee (or tea) and a couple of donuts.

WOTS: WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND YOUR MISSION STATEMENT, "BE INSPIRED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE ONE DONUT AT A TIME"?

T & M: We wanted to create an "UpSkill" program for kids with special needs as a stepping stone between their school and an actual employer. It is where they would be able to make mistakes in a safe environment and learn from them. It would also allow us the opportunity to teach them in-depth life skills like cleaning and serving others. In the future we would also love to collaborate with the local downtown to see if we could help create part-time jobs.

WOTS: HOW DOES YOUR SON SAM INSPIRE THE DONUT FLAVORS?

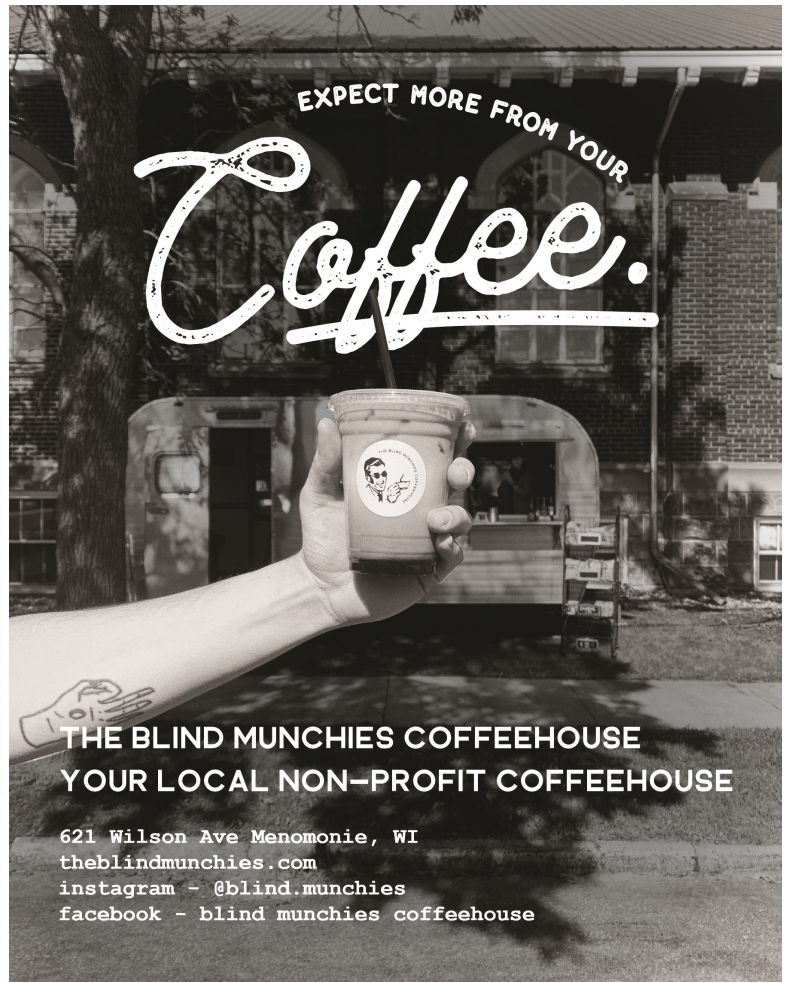
T & M: It is a family thing. For example, Preston, our middle kiddo nicknamed "Pudge," likes fruity cereal with vanilla, so he inspired the donut named "Pudge". The "Big Papi" is a donut for Dad who is a big Red Socks fan, and the kids are too. It has maple, bacon, and chocolate on it. We like to have fun with different names like that. We do experiment with a lot of different combinations, and Sam gets to taste them all.

WOTS: WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO STOP IN FOR A DONUT?

T & M: We are open every day (except Sundays and Wednesdays) from 7 to 11 am. We will see how it goes and add onto it from there. It would be great to get a feel for what else is going on downtown and to see how we could collaborate with other businesses to see where we could lift one another up.



Besides at the shop (521 2nd Street E), their donuts can be found at Bob and Steve's Amoco gas station and Cut Rite Meat Shoppe in Menomonie, as well as at Woodman's in Altoona.



NICK THE HICK

Another rant from your favorite redneck

BEHIND EVERY GOOD MASK IS A MAN



Masks are here like it 'er not. Personally I'm in the mostly *not* category. I don't find them stylish, cute, and I don't find myself desiring my neighbor's mask. But there have been a few positives. Like how us men, in the plus size category, discriminated against for years, have found value in finally being able to successfully model a Hanes product. It's a win for diversity and such. Positivity also shows up for those who spit a lot when they talk. I've had friends admit it's nice to stand 6ft away from me for a different reason for a change. Some challenges are obvious, glasses fogging up, face sweats, inability to mouth words to certain people. Some challenges may be more people specific. Like, "freshening" up that yapper cover

with some "essential oils" (obviously not supplied by yourself but your significant other) which works for a little while 'til your eyes start burning. Along with realizing you are a nose picker when you embarrassingly poking that mask right up the nostrils. Then there's the times you forget what you're even doing with the masks on and you lift 'er right up when you pass someone and start talking. Depending how long this situation lasts I've thought about going full tactical helmet, space helmet, or my favorite yet, making a hat out of a muscle car air filter. Just run a few tubes down where the mouth and nose pieces should meet and it works like a snorkel. But in all seriousness, hang in there crew, it's for the better, we'll get through this.

THINK FOR YOURSELF

CHRISTIANITY IS MORE
THAN A CLUB.

STREET LEVEL MINISTRIES

MONDAYS

DINNER 6PM // BIBLE & DISCUSSION 7PM

@ THE BLIND MUNCHIES COFFEEHOUSE // 621 WILSON AVE

An Official UW-Stout Organization // streetlevelministries.com // streetlevel@uwstout.edu

