



ISSUE SEVENTY-THREE

ETERNAL

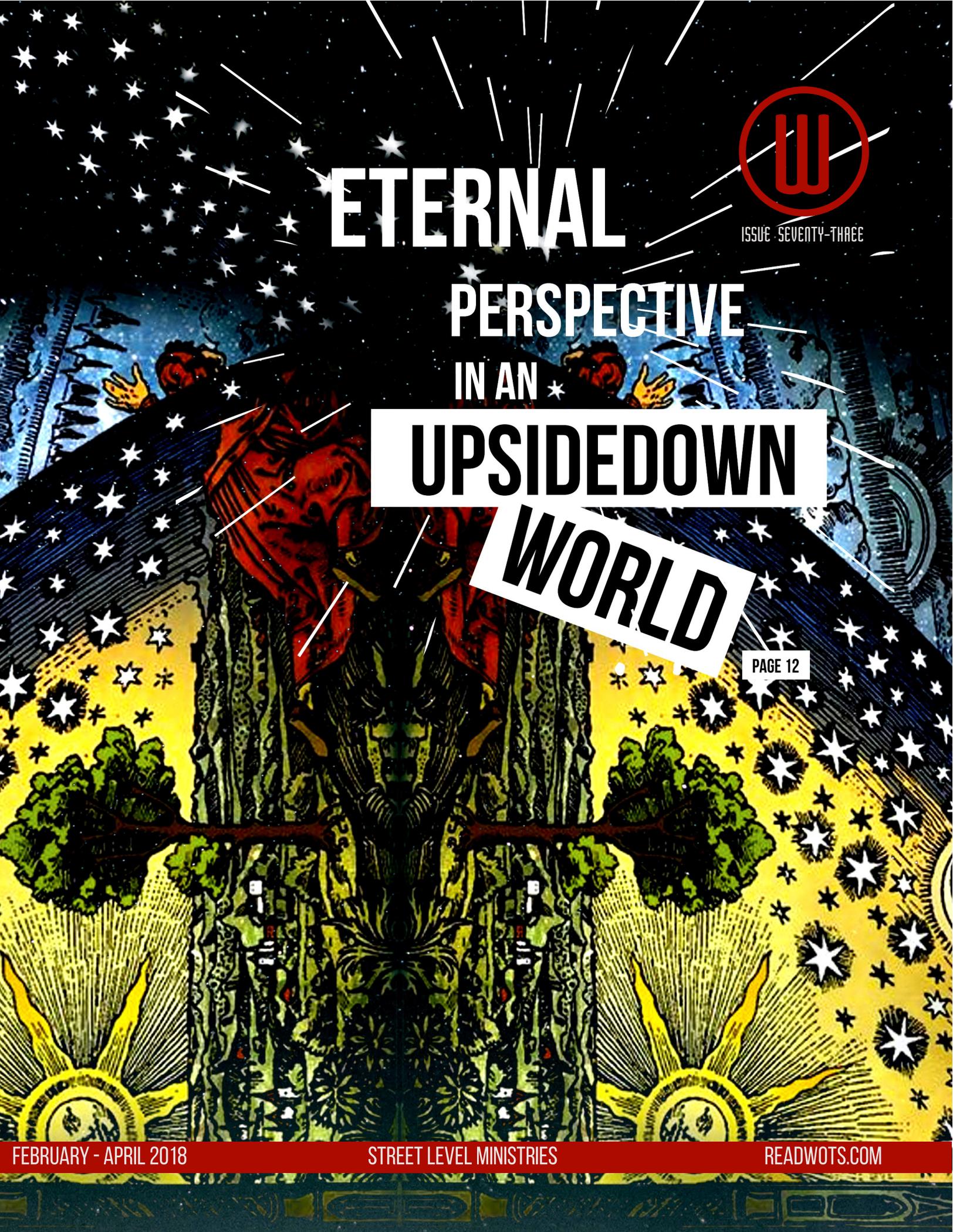
PERSPECTIVE

IN AN

UPSIDEDOWN

WORLD

PAGE 12





wotsmagazine@gmail.com

ReadWots.com

Word on the Street

is released twice per semester and has been published for 17 years. WOTS Magazine is written, laid out, and printed by members of Street Level Ministries on UW-Stout, UW-Superior and UW-River Falls campuses. We also print a version of the magazine on Cebu Island in the Philippines and we are currently expanding to other international locations. We're Christians who love Jesus and want to write about God, life and college.

Meet the WOTS Staff

Visit streetlevelministries.com for details on how you can get involved. We hope the magazine is helpful, challenging, and provocative, while encouraging you to pursue a strong relationship with Jesus.



MENOMONIE, WI



CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES

DULUTH, MN

WOTS IS PUTTING OUT
A CALL FOR...

CREATIVE SUBMISSIONS

PHOTOS...POEMS...ESSAYS...YOU KNOW, THE ARTS.

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LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR



Street Level Bible Study
Mondays
Dinner 6pm
Study 7pm
Street Level House
1009 6th St E | Menomonie, WI

JF BELIEVERS

**Jesus Fellowship
of Believers Church**
Sundays 10:30am
Wednesdays 7:00pm
621 Wilson Ave
Menomonie, WI



Real Breakfast
Saturday Mornings
9am-12pm
Lunch at 11am
Blind Munchies Coffeehouse
621 Wilson Ave
Menomonie, WI

(\$2 with Student ID,
\$3 without)

FEBRUARY

FRI 2/2 FREE CONCERT AT THE BLIND MUNCHIES COFFEEHOUSE, MENOMONIE, 7PM

SAT 2/3 SNOW BALL, MUSIC AND DANCING, DUNN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 7PM-10PM

MEN'S BASKETBALL VS UW-WHITEWATER, 3PM

MEN'S HOCKEY VS UW-RIVER FALLS, 7PM

WED 2/7 MEN'S BASKETBALL VS UW-RIVER FALLS, 7PM

FRI 2/9 MEN'S HOCKEY VS UW-STEVENS POINT, 7PM

SAT 2/10 KAB ICE SOFTBALL ON LAKE MENOMIN, 9AM-3PM

MENOMONIE POLAR PLUNGE AT WAKANDA PARK, 11AM-5PM

WOMAN'S BASKETBALL VS UW-STEVENS POINT, 3PM

WED 2/14 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS UW-LA CROSSE, 7PM

FRI 2/16 WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS VS UW-LA CROSSE, 6PM

SAT 2/17 SAINT VALENTINES DAY HUSTLE, BIKE RACE AROUND FROZEN LAKE MENOMIN, 11AM-5PM

MEN'S BASKETBALL VS UW-OSHKOSH, 3PM

MON 2/19 MINNEAPOLIS AUTHOR COMES TO THE BLIND MUNCHIES COFFEEHOUSE TO SPEAK, MENOMONIE, 7PM

MARCH

SAT 3/10– SUN 3/18 SPRING BREAK

APRIL

TUE 4/3 BASEBALL VS UW-LA CROSSE (DH), 1PM, 4PM

FRI 4/6 FREE CONCERT AT THE BLIND MUNCHIES COFFEEHOUSE, MENOMONIE, 7PM

SAT 4/7 ROCKFEST 2018, STOUT ADVENTURES, 9AM-4:30PM

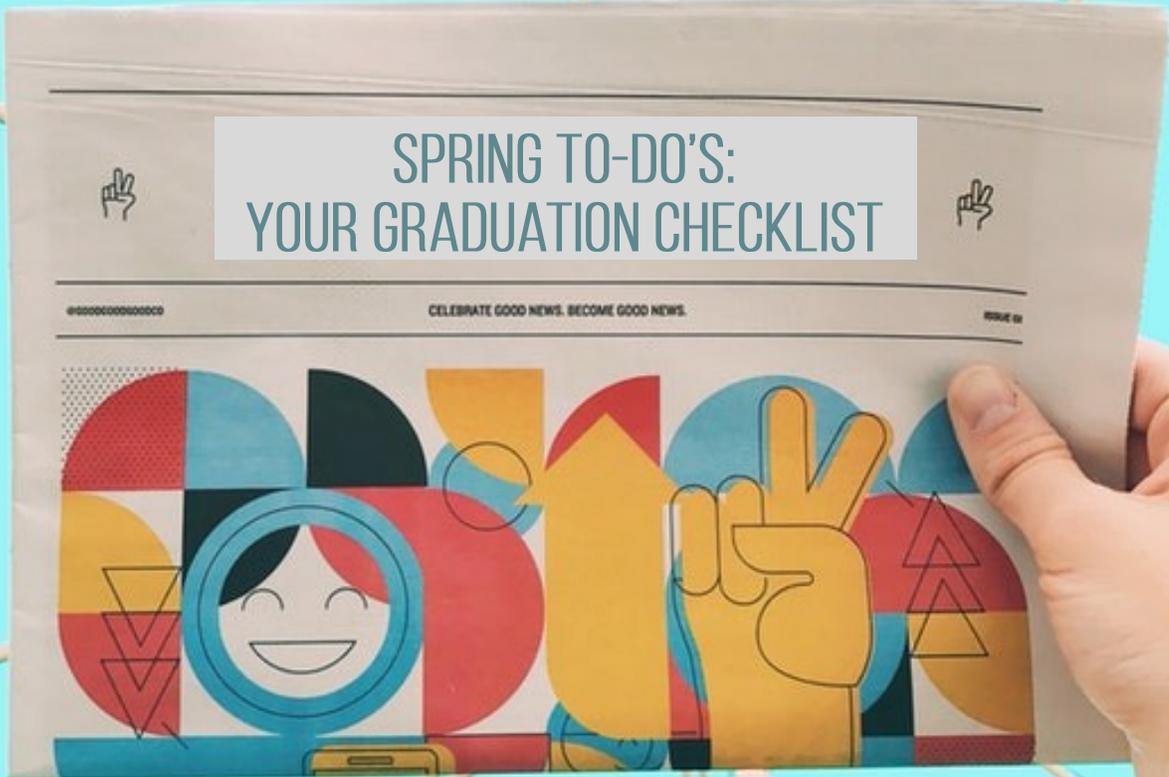
WED 4/11 BASEBALL VS UW-STEVENS POINT (DH), 1PM, 4PM

SAT 4/14 SOFTBALL VS UW-RIVER FALLS (DH), 2PM, 4PM

SUN 4/15 SOFTBALL VS BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE (DH), 1PM, 3PM

FRI 4/27 FREE CONCERT AT THE BLIND MUNCHIES COFFEEHOUSE, MENOMONIE, 7PM





SPRING TO-DO'S: YOUR GRADUATION CHECKLIST

If you're reading this, congratulations. You almost made it! Your college graduation is just around the corner. You've done enough studying for a while so we wanted to pull together the last few to-do's for you. Follow this checklist and you'll be on your merry way!

Meet with your advisor or program director –

Nothing is worse than having to tell Grandma you won't be graduating when you thought you were. Make sure you're on track by talking with your advisor about how your courses are fulfilling your degree requirements. Double check that you've got an internship covered if you need one!

Apply for graduation – March 30th is the deadline for those graduating in Spring of 2018. If you miss the application deadline, don't worry, you can still graduate. Your name just won't be printed in the Commencement program. Instructions are available in the link at the bottom.

Pay the graduation fee – Yes, it exists. We're sorry. A non-refundable \$100 fee is required of all graduates, regardless of whether you participate in the Commencement Ceremony or not.

Update your mailing address – They'll mail your diploma to whichever mailing address is active, so make sure you keep it updated on Access Stout.

Pay any outstanding fees – and remember that you'll get a new one if you don't return your textbooks!

Polish up that resume – After the last 4 (or 5, or 6...) years, hopefully a job is in your near future! Keep your resume updated to make the best impression, if you don't already have something lined up for after graduation.

Collect your Commencement Tickets – And your honors cords, if you've earned them. Don't disappoint Mom. You know she'll be ready with the camera when you walk. Keep your eyes open for the Grad Fair; that's where you'll get your tickets. Bring your student I.D. If you miss it, tickets can be picked up at the Service Center in the MSC. Be sure to purchase or borrow a cap and gown if you're walking.

Take one last campus walk – Admit it; You just might miss this place. Make a stop at all your favorite Menomonie places before you move on to whatever comes next.

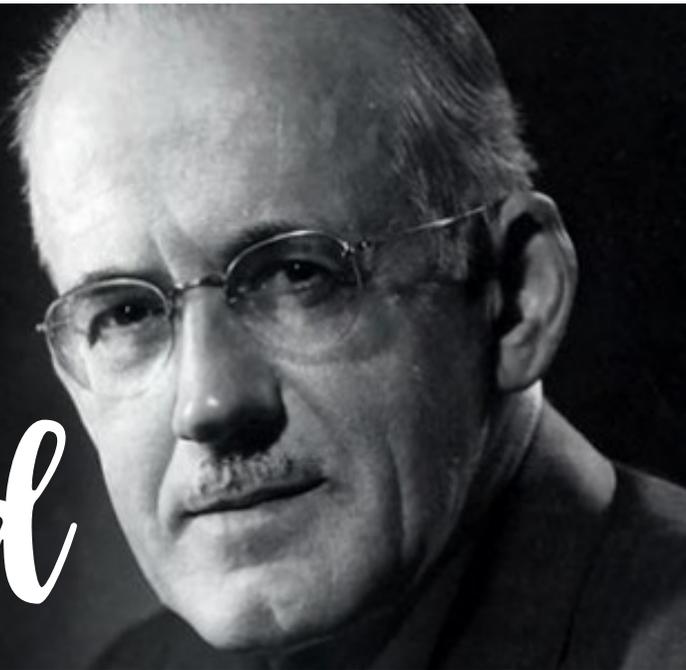
Check out Stout's Commencement FAQ page for more info:

<http://www.uwstout.edu/commencement/faq.cfm>

They've done this a time or two and won't steer you wrong. Happy Graduation!

A.W. TOZER

Practicing THE Presence OF God



In the year 1897, William McKinley became president, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* was published, Thomas Edison patented the first machine that produced moving images, John McDermott won the first ever Boston Marathon, and arguably one of the greatest theologians of the modern time was born: A.W. Tozer.

Everyone has an interesting story to tell about their first high school job and Tozer isn't an exception. His family moved to Akron, Ohio, from a farm in Pennsylvania, and shortly after he got a job at the Goodyear factory cutting up chunks of rubber by hand. Streaming music wasn't available then, so he often memorized poetry to occupy his time. One evening, on the way home from a shift at the factory, Tozer passed by a street preacher who pleaded with all who would listen, "If you don't know how to be saved, just call on God, saying 'God, be merciful to me—a sinner,' and God will hear you." Those words were a catalyst for a teenage Tozer, and his life was suddenly filled with purpose: to passionately pursue God and worship Him always.

Tozer's ministry grew steadily, decade by decade. He spent 30 years as the pastor of Southside Alliance Church in Chicago, edited a Christian publication called *Alliance Weekly* for 13 years, and wrote numerous books, all while raising seven children with his wife, Ada. He viewed all of these accomplishments simply as the results of faithfulness that any Christian ought to exhibit. Therefore, his tombstone simply reads "A.W. Tozer—a man of God."

In 1945, Tozer's most iconic book, *The Pursuit of God*, was published. In a time where authors like George Orwell and Aldous Huxley were describing fictional utopias, Tozer was pointing his readers to the truth about Jesus Christ and how our posture ought to be towards Him. Little did he know that over a million copies of this work would be in print 70 years later.

A pervasive theme throughout Tozer's work was to set aside the distractions of the culture and instead pursue the calling of God on a daily basis. In one of his editorial writings, he explained, "It will cost something to walk slowly in the parade of the ages, while excited

"It will cost something to walk slowly in the parade of the ages, while excited men of time rush about confusing motion with progress. But it will pay in the long run, and the true Christian is not much interested in anything short of that."

men of time rush about confusing motion with progress. But it will pay in the long run, and the true Christian is not much interested in anything short of that." Tozer's wisdom can be summed up in this—he encourages all of us to invest today in what will ultimately be our eternity long after we're dead. Getting distracted and following what everyone else is doing isn't inconsequential—it comes with a price much larger than we realize. We have the option to follow Christ or to follow the rules and regulations of this world, but we cannot do both.

Dear Laura



Laura don't lie like that other science guy.

HOW DID WE GET HERE ANYWAY?

DEAR LAURA DON'T LIE:

I am new to this Christian thing and have a lot of questions about science and what my professors are teaching. In particular, I am wondering how did we get here? My professors have been talking a lot about the scientific answer but nothing else.

--Confused in Wisconsin

DEAR CONFUSED:

That is a great question! There will be times you will be challenged about your beliefs! Let me begin by giving you a couple of things to think about:

1. Did we appear by chance?
2. Is there another reason to explain how we got here?

"Both science and faith seem to suggest that the universe began at a precise moment in time. If this is true, something caused everything to begin—and this powerful creative force must be beyond the universe itself."¹

Do you think someone or something created all of this or did it start by

itself? If we just "appeared," how do you explain this statement by Stephen Hawking, "The odds against a universe like ours emerging out of something like the Big Bang are incredibly enormous. It would have been difficult to explain how the universe began in just this way. Except the act of God who intended to create beings like us".¹

If there is no God there is no purpose for why we are made. Are love, joy, compassion, and imagination "just" chemical reactions or are they part of God's design that can only be explained by creation?

If you are still wondering who or what may have started it all, the Bible begins in Genesis 1:1 with these four words, "In the beginning God." In Romans 1:20 we also learn God is a God of order and beauty, a God who controls powerful forces.

If you are still seeking more information about how we got here, I encourage you to look further. It is important for all of us to know WHY

we believe something, and not just WHAT we believe. With all of that said, as you consider the facts and dig further, I recommend a couple of resources to get you started: Answers in Genesis (answersingenesis.org) and the Bible (either the New Living Translation or English Standard Version will do).

--Laura

If you have a nature, science, or philosophical question for Laura Don't Lie, send them our way at wotsmagazine@gmail.com.

LAURA DON'T LIE. REAL ANSWERS FOR REAL QUESTIONS!

Laura Don't Lie has been studying and preparing Science Creation Lessons for students in Cebu City, Philippines. She recently started to take her lessons on the road sharing them with students around Cebu.

One Guy's True Story



I grew up not going to church at all except on Easter and Christmas. I had known about Jesus, and my parents had talked about Him occasionally, but that was it. No one in our household really had a relationship with God. When I would go to church, I didn't feel anything and it was like I was just going through the motions.

When I was in middle school and early high school, my life showed no acknowledgment of God. I was into things like swearing and pornography and I wasn't honoring God with anything in my life. When I was a sophomore in high school, my wood shop teacher, David Heisel, invited my brother and our family to his church in Pound, WI. It was there that I had first heard the gospel message of God coming down as a man, living a perfect God-honoring life, and dying on the cross, bearing the sins of the world so that we can be legally right in God's eyes, those who trust in Jesus. When I had heard this, I felt very convicted of my lifestyle and this was when I got saved and the Holy Spirit had opened my spiritually dead eyes and my heart of stone to see the wondrous work of God Almighty. But my first two years of college, I never got plugged into a body of believers to help grow and strengthen my faith.

The summer after my freshman year of college, my brother, Mitch, had really been pressing on me to sign up for this camp for Christian athletes through an organization called Athletes in Action. I really did not want to go but my brother kept trying and eventually I signed up. The camp was called "The Ultimate Training Camp" and was directed around how to glorify God through our sports and how to really play/run for Him. At this camp, I met so many other Christian athletes from around the country and it was so comforting knowing that others went through the same struggles I do. It was at this camp where I realized what my sins were doing to me and, more importantly, how God viewed my sins. Being in a Christian community at that camp really made me long for something like that in my life permanently.

Since that camp, my life has not been the same. I have directed my path to reading Scripture daily, having a richer prayer life, and following the path directed for me by the Holy Spirit. Being in constant communication with and meditating on Jesus gives me so much joy knowing I am in the hands of the Creator of the world, and that He can certainly handle ANYTHING that deeply troubles me!

"The Holy Spirit had opened my spiritually dead eyes and my heart of stone to see the wondrous work of God Almighty."

- Mike



This past summer I was feeling very convicted to get connected to a local church because I had not done that my first two years of college. I came across Jesus Fellowship of Believers and have been greatly blessed by everyone there. It is amazing how God has lead me to this group of people and how far He has brought me in my walk with Him. Since then, God has still been pursuing me and showing me many areas in my life that are not fully surrendered to Him. It has been an uncomfortable process, but just trusting Him is the most important thing. After graduation, I would like to stay in the Menomonie area and keep serving God through Jesus Fellowship of Believers and Street Level Ministries.

“Don’t Follow Your Heart”

a book by Minneapolis author Jon Bloom

BOOK REVIEW

“Your heart will not save you.
You need to be saved from
your heart.”



but led to drink in the good news that dying to yourself to follow the Savior is the most sane, rational thing you could ever do.

It's not hard to guess what the book "Don't Follow Your Heart" sets out to deliver. Its author, Jon Bloom, offers a microscopic view into your heart's condition in the midst of a world that chants the "follow your heart" mantra. The book is organized into 31 sections that break down the various myths you've been led to believe about yourself by using the Bible to illuminate the One you were made to follow. It's not a "how-to" manual, but rather a "collection of helps for common heart problems."

With chapter titles like, "The Insanity of Leaning on Our Own Understanding" and "Where Satan Will Attack You Today," you cannot read this book with a neutral attitude. While digesting each section, you are left reeling from the bad news of how wayward you truly are,

For example, read the following excerpt from page 103: *We often do not know what we are really building when we embark on our achievements. We often aren't aware of how deep, pervasive, and motivating our pride is. We often are blind to how much we cherish the glory of our name. But God knows. And in mercy he confounds us, impedes us, and humbles us. And it is all mercy. 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble' (1 Pet. 5:5). When it comes to his children, God gives us grace in the act of opposing our pride, because it makes us humble. For he knows that the more humble we are, the happier we are. The proud will be destroyed (Prov. 16:18), but the humble will dwell with God (Isa. 57:15).*

It doesn't matter where you are currently at with God. Whether you are a curious voyager, a seasoned Christian, or hurting

from the overload of this world, reading this book allows you to take a brutally honest look into the reason things are the way they are and offers fresh hope in the path forward.

Purchase a digital copy for \$5.99 or grab a paper copy for \$9.99. A free PDF download is also available online. Share it with friends. It's definitely a must-read for everyone.

AUTHOR TALK!

Street Level Ministries is hosting Jon Bloom as a guest speaker on **Monday, Feb. 19th.**

He is the co-founder of desiringgod.org and he will be speaking about his book, *Don't Follow Your Heart*.

He will be speaking at the Blind Munchies Coffeehouse (621 Wilson Ave, Menomonie, WI) beginning at 7pm.

Come beforehand for a free spaghetti dinner at 6pm.

LIVING ON MISSION IN AMSTERDAM



Name: Annemieke Roering
Education: International Hotel Management
Birth place: Terwolde, The Netherlands
Current city: Amsterdam, The Netherlands

WOTS: How did you come to be involved in the ministry, or ministries, that you are a part of? What is your role in it?

Annemieke: I have been working with YWAM Amsterdam since September 2004. I felt a call to reach out to the people in the Red Light District, especially those who do not know Jesus and the wonderful relationship that we can have with Him. At this moment I am co-leading the Cleft team, a ministry that focuses on evangelism among people in prostitution, the homeless, and tourists in Amsterdam.

WOTS: What is the best part of the ministry work that you do? What is the hardest part?

Annemieke: The best part is to see God at work and to get to know Him better through that. Also getting to know the ladies in the Red Light District more personally and to share life with them. The hardest part for me is to see precious men and women believing in the deception of the enemy and all the horrible consequences that come from that.

WOTS: How have you grown in your relationship with God through the ministry work you are a part of?

Annemieke: I have gotten to know God better, meeting Him in other people. Seeing the work He has done in my life and in the lives of those around me. As a missionary, I live by faith and I have really learned to trust Him more, even for my daily bread. I am much more aware of my dependence on Him than before I joined missions.

WOTS: What is the "Christian climate" like in Amsterdam? How does that affect the ministry work that you do?

Annemieke: Amsterdam has quite a few churches and Christian organizations. There is a lot of diversity in expressions of worship, but also in language, background, and nationalities.

WOTS: What is your typical day like in the ministry work?

Annemieke: Every day is different, but in general I combine worship and intercession with outreach on the streets. Sometimes we go out to the ladies who work behind the windows in the Red Light District. Other times we invite them to our home for dinner and Bible study. Since I am also co-leading the team, some of my time is also consumed with pastoral care, organizing finances, etc.

WOTS: What prayer requests do you have? Word on the Street and our readers would like to pray for you specifically.

Annemieke: Thank you for your prayers for Amsterdam. We would love to see a move from the Holy Spirit in the lives of the people we minister to. Please pray for the revelation of Jesus for the men and women in the Red Light District. That they might be able to receive the Father's love for them and get to know Him better.

european missions

WHAT'S THE CHRISTIAN CLIMATE LIKE IN EUROPE, AMERICA'S PREDECESSOR?



"This trend predicts Christianity will lose over 100 million people in the coming decades since almost 25% of Europeans are projected to claim 'no religious affiliation' by the year 2050."

What comes to mind when you think of the word "missions?" Does your brain think of a developing country somewhere far away that is in desperate need of aid, reconstruction, or direction? Perhaps you think of any people group that doesn't know God and are lost because they don't have Jesus. The word "missions" has certainly taken on a life of its own, but the Bible simply states in Matthew 28:16 to, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." Therefore, any group of people, or any individual, that doesn't know Christ is someone to be reached "on mission." This is regardless of the individual's socio-economic situation, their family name, or their nation's standing within the global economy. Certainly many people are in need in regards to food, water, shelter, and infrastructure, but spiritually, everyone is in need of Jesus Christ. It is a myth to equate missions work with digging wells and building orphanages. Missions work, no matter where it takes place, is speaking the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ to people who are lost and dying.

Studies show that various Christian denominations are still the most prevalent religion that people subscribe to in Europe, but just a fraction of that percentage, 2.5%, describe themselves as followers of authentic, biblical Christianity.¹ A study conducted by the Pew Research Center says, "While Christians remain the largest religious group in Europe, they are projected to drop from three-quarters of the population to less than two-thirds."² This trend predicts Christianity will lose over 100 million people in the coming decades since almost 25% of Europeans are projected to claim 'no religious affiliation' by the year 2050.²

In places where wealth is prevalent, what does helping people know God look like? How does "missions" work in areas where people are successful, well-fed, well-educated, seemingly happy, and yet

spiritually dead? In countries where many people do not perceive a need for God, how are Christians in 2018 going forth to fulfill the Great Commission given to them in Matthew 28? In the context of Europe, it is seen by Christians that people, who have rejected the living hope of God and replaced it with the illusion of something else, are often very lonely. Acts 29 is one organization dedicated to planting and growing churches across the globe, including Europe, and it is done one person at a time. Each church plant is begun and sustained by forming relationships with people and demonstrating the real love of Jesus. Where appeals to logic and reason may fail, the living, breathing truth of Jesus evidenced in the life of a person reaching out to another in relationship *wins*. It outperforms the shortcomings of everything this world has to offer.

If you would like to be a part of the missions work of Jesus without leaving your hometown, you can. Ask God to give the mission workers in Europe wisdom in starting and leading a new church, clarity as they hear from God, unity amongst those involved, and endurance to continue the work when it gets difficult. Also, you can pray for the people of Europe (and anywhere else!), that they may no longer live in distracted darkness. Pray for them to have God wake them up and come alive to the realities of Jesus Christ, and to know the truth of the Bible. Not only can you start by praying for those small church plants and their leaders across Europe, but more importantly you can rise to the challenge of being a missionary right where you are, too. America, and every place else in the world, is also full of people that have either rejected God or may never have heard of Him, and you can be sure that your classmate, co-worker, friend, or neighbor may be one of them.

¹www.acts29.com/network.europe/

²<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/europe-s-christian-population-falls-amid-rise-of-atheists-and-muslims-1.3039114>

ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE IN AN UPSIDEDOWN WORLD

There is something very, very wrong with this world. Don't you feel it? Yet somehow, there are vast segments of beauty within it that echo something larger than our present dilemma. It's a perplexing situation to navigate as human beings. On one hand, we are confined to eke out our daily food, shelter, and clothing. On the other hand, we are driven by an insatiable need for belonging, purpose, and community. The famed theologian, C.S. Lewis, says it well in his book *Mere Christianity*: "If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."

In the Netflix series, *Stranger Things*, the characters experience another world called the Upside Down. It was portrayed as a present, sinister reality that no one could see except for those cursed enough to fall into it. It lurked just beneath the surface and it had the power to destroy the living. This analogy is not as far removed from reality as you might think. Lewis described our world as "upside down." He likened it to a "valley of tears, cursed with labour, hemmed round with necessities, tripped up with frustrations, doomed to perpetual plannings, puzzlings, and anxieties."¹

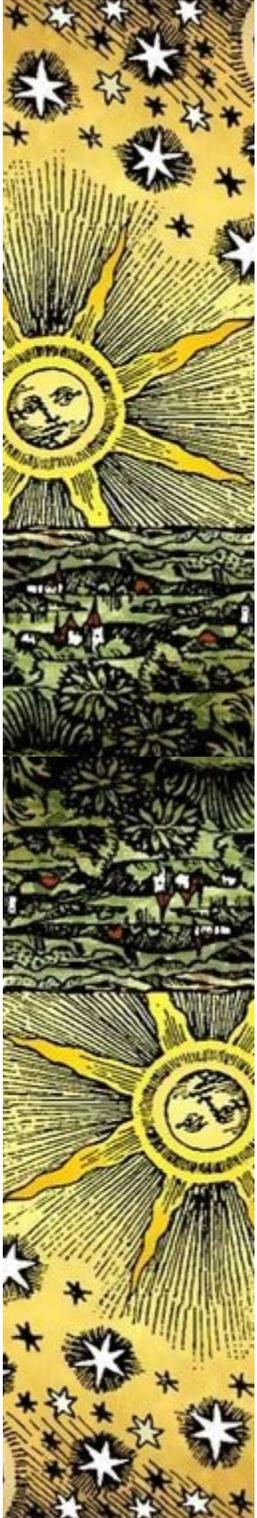
When I was in college and in my early twenties, I often wondered what the future held in store for me. I tried to find a sense of fulfillment for my life, but I completely failed to do so as I struggled through classes and spent days on end feeling incredibly empty. I always thought there must be something more to this

life, but it remained unattainable until Jesus destroyed my false belief that I could somehow fashion my own reality. Until I traded in my limited worldview, I was blind to the awesome truth that eternity is not a theory; it's a reality, and God has made us eternal creatures.

ETERNAL REALITY

A standard dictionary defines "eternity" as *infinite or unending time*. Ecclesiastes 3:11 states, "He [God] has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end." God is not on our timeline. Imagine you are standing in a crowd of people watching a parade. You can see each float pass by one at a time but you can never predict which float will come next. God, however, is like an aircraft in the sky. He sees the entire parade at once and knows the exact order of the parade, all of the spectators, and how it's all going to end. That analogy helps us understand the difference between our perspective of time versus God's, doesn't it?

We don't remember being born and we cannot predict how we're going to die, but God knows that information in exact detail. This also means that God knows how the world is going to end because He's the one that set it all in motion at the start. With this in mind, take heed to the warning He has given us. In the book of 2 Peter, it states, "*But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day*



"Here's what the Bible teaches about eternity and your stance in it: everlasting life is a present-tense possession."

is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment."

What are your thoughts right now after reading that? Is it just crazy nonsense and/or old-fashioned hysteria? Or, is it reality? It has to be one of those; there is no in between! Many people explain away Jesus as a crutch that was developed through the centuries to deal with the painful reality of death, and they attribute eternal damnation to the same ludicrous category. It's up to you to decide what you're going to believe, but if Jesus is true, then your eternity hinges on what you believe about Him.

REDIRECTING FOCUS

Here's what the Bible teaches about eternity and your stance in it: everlasting life is a present-tense possession. It is not something that begins if you get to heaven. Eternity is real and we *will* experience it after this lifetime. Think on this: Will you be conscious in 1,000 years? The Bible says yes. Everyone will. If all you do is ask Jesus to forgive your sins in fear so you don't perish in hell, you're still missing out on eternal life. John 3:16 says,

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Jesus defined this eternal life for us in John 17:3 where He says, "And this is the way to have eternal life – to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth." So, in a nutshell, eternal life is knowing God.

Are you disappointed with that definition? If you are, the problem is that you only think you know God, which means of course you aren't satisfied with this succinct little answer. There has to be something more, right? Well, what does it mean to know someone? In this passage, the Bible was speaking about so much more than just an intellectual ascent. For example, just because you "know of" Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt, doesn't mean you "know" them. You only really "know" the people that you are closest to, like your family and friends. In the same way, when Jesus said eternal life is knowing God, He was speaking of that type of knowing. God, the Creator of the Universe, desires an intimate, close, off-the-charts love story type-of-knowing relationship. That is the key to eternal life, and why Christians walk around so often with a stupid grin on their face. We're not just looking forward to our future home in Heaven with Jesus; we're actually experiencing it right now, at least as much as this lifetime allows us to comprehend of it.

INTERFERENCES

Without God, the Bible counts you as blind person. As a spiritually blind person, you have the full authority to interpret the upside down world around you in any way you want. Without the responsibility of an eternal perspective, your goal is likely to obtain all that you can see and touch in this life. When you have a lot of things, life is good. When you are deprived and desolate, life stinks. When someone else has what you want, you go after it. Since you see that a successful career, relationships, status, money and high-end possessions are what everyone is forming their lives around, you do too. You only have today, right?

In reality, every day you have here is another gracious opportunity given by God for you to





know Him (remember, eternal life?). He has given you time here to choose Him or not, to believe Him or not, to accept the reality of eternity or not. Up until now, it's been too easy to miss out on the grandness of this life God designed you for because you haven't understood, or wanted to understand, the full weight of the reality of eternity. As human spectators of the parade passing before us, we tend to forget about tomorrow, let alone eternity. Each day is filled with the urgent demands of everyday living.

FOREVER TODAY

But once you believe that your spirit will endure forever, things change. Once you, like a blind person, ask for sight, Jesus works through His spirit to give you eternal perspective, and in the same breath, He gives you the realization of your utter dependence on Him to walk through this world in the meantime. You thought you were in control, but it was only because in your blindness you thought you understood the world. You didn't think you were actually in the Upside Down because it was all you had ever known. Being a Christian is a transformation, but you have to take that first step to actually receive what Jesus is offering: an eternal perspective based on knowing the Eternal One. Accepting the truth that this present world is not all there is, ushers in a sharpened perspective of the purpose for our lives while we're here. If your eyes are open, you no longer have to operate like the rest of the world, drifting along, caught up by the passing swells. You get to have your sight set on what actually matters in the long run. When life "goes bad," you can remember that Jesus is making sure you realize true reality is knowing Him, not groping about in the dark on your own terms.

There are many passages in the Bible that describe the future God has planned for those who believe in Him and know Him. 1 Corinthians says, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined...God has prepared for those who love Him." Not only can we not imagine it, but we cannot measure it. Ephesians 2:7 says, "In the coming ages He [will] show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." The thing is, while we can never know it fully until we pass away into His Kingdom,

"Accepting the truth that this present world is not all there is, ushers in a sharpened perspective of the purpose for our lives while we're here."

in His mercy and grace and kindness, He has already given us glimpses and moments of this eternal glory. You've experienced it since you were a kid, in those elated moments of carefree activity, in the awesome beauty of the summer sky lit up with a thousand stars, and in the timeless treasure of enjoying a holiday with family. You understand without a doubt that you were made for something so much larger. Just like you could never imagine fitting the ocean into a cup, you cannot fully comprehend the reality of eternity, but you know it's there. Eternal perspective means having your eyes wide open to the source of Who created this earth. That is why Jesus commands us to seek His Kingdom and not the short term, fading glory of this world. In regards to this quest, He promised us, "My God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

We humans have a real obsession with knowing what our purpose is. God says that you were made for eternity. Since having an eternal perspective means knowing God, you cannot separate the two. Each one of us was made to enjoy the riches of the glory of God, which can only be lived out by knowing Him. An eternal perspective means that going to work is no longer about how much pleasure you can squeeze out of it, but because your true treasure is in Jesus, you go to work with the perspective that you're there for others. It's amazing how the anxieties we have about figuring-it-all-out so you can be as comfortable as possible are eliminated when you stop living for the here and now, and start living for the Eternal God. He will change everything. Life cannot possibly be all about getting the career, the spouse and the house, so why are you living that way? God has offered the impossible. He is poised to put eternity in your heart (Ecclesiastes 3:11). But, do you want Him to, or is this just nonsense?

¹C.S. Lewis, Letters to Malcolm, ch. 17



To: *Past Me*
From: *Current Me*

Hello, self.

You look sad. You look like you've had a rough night, but I know you can give me an excuse for it. That you didn't deserve it. I'm the queen of excuses, and so are you. I know it's hard for you to see, as your eyesight is a lot less keen than it is now; how much the air in front of your lips is worth. You didn't pay for it, but someone did. I know it's easy to take for granted, but you'll get it, eventually. You'll understand that our parents are not superheroes, but just people following in the footsteps of creation and the fall. They can't fix you.

They can't save you. Superheroes belong in comic books. They don't exist in the flesh, and even though that's what we hope for, what we expect when we're in distress, and what we look forward to in a spouse, or a friend, you need to remember that you cannot be saved by the souls sitting at your dining room table or sitting across from you at a coffee shop. You may build an addition on the house of your heart for someone you think is the north star of your world, but they will never find the key to unlock it. Every time you hand it off, it'll slip right through their fingers. And I get why you've stopped trying to give yourself away. Your selfish pursuits of relationships will never work. If you would just unclench your fists and notice the raised key sewn under the skin of your palm. You've sewn it neatly under your skin for safety. You think you're in control by not telling anyone what's going on in your head and heart. You think that will make you seem confident in your depression. You think it will give you control. I know it's hard to understand. Someday, you will. Fire from heaven will rain down on you and refine you. It will burn up all of your demons. It will turn your chains into dust, and it will set you free from your lust.

I know you feel lonely. It will pass. People will always disappoint us, and even now, people still disappoint us. We have accepted it. I realize that you are ungrateful for every sunrise because it reminds you that you're still alive. I know you feel like you're just an accidental scribble that should be erased because it's a bother. You're not a bother. You are a gemstone, kept safely in the owner's chest pocket, close to the warmth of a beating heart. You may think that you're walking on quicksand, and any day now, you may take a step in the wrong direction or lean a certain way, and the earth will swallow you like a pill. It won't.

You can laugh as loud as you want and be as secretive as you want, but you must understand you are a walking paradox. You believe you can have meaningful relationships, but you refuse to share your whole self. There will come a time when you will break like a glass vase. Shattering is part of the process. We will be put back together again. Our cracks will be filled with gold. Keep going, self. We're not done.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die."
Ecc. 3:1-2

"I know you feel like you're just an accidental scribble that should be erased because it's a bother. You're not a bother. You are a gemstone, kept safely in the owner's chest pocket, close to the warmth of a beating heart."

LIFE on Mission

7
tips

for sharing
your faith
in college



It was just before my sophomore year of college that I first came to believe that Jesus was the only thing that could make me stand perfect before a Holy God. I remember wanting to bring up Jesus in every conversation. It didn't even really take that much effort. The good news that I had made a new best friend (One that was never going to leave my side) filled up most of the space in my heart and mind. It was readily on the tip of my tongue.

Four and a half years later, I admittedly find myself waiting for "the right time" to openly share about my faith with my coworkers, family, and definitely with people I've just met. I sometimes feel awkward knowing how to bring up God into everyday conversations even though I understand with my head what the Bible talks about in 2 Corinthians 5:10 when it says, "For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body." If we, as Christians, truly believe in the power Jesus has to save us from sin and give us eternal life with Him, why do we shy away from speaking openly about this Good News worth sharing? Just as desperately as I do, the people around me need to know the salvation of Christ. I have experienced the joy and inexpressible peace that come from an intimate relationship with a relational God. If I want that for others, I will speak, and I'm guessing if you're reading this, you feel the same way. Below are seven approaches I've pulled together from my own experiences as a disciple of Jesus during and after college. I hope they encourage you as you share your faith with those God has specifically placed in your life.

1 INVEST IN YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

An empty cup has nothing to pour out. Our own fellowship with God should be the first thing we assess. Go to God and repent of any sin you currently recognize in your life. Spend time with other Christians. Develop habits in yourself of daily Bible reading and prayer. You'll develop a knowledge of Scripture you can use to encourage others. It's easy for us to talk about the latest movie or T.V. show we've been into. Sharing the Bible can, and should, be just as natural. The times when I'm meditating on the Word of God more frequently, I naturally talk about it more often because it's on the surface of my mind. When you're in love with God, you'll talk about Him. You won't be able to help it. The joy that comes from a deep love for God isn't something that can be faked, and it definitely will catch the world's eye to see someone have hope in something bigger than ourselves.

2 EXPLORE WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK

If you notice yourself holding back from talking openly about your faith, ask yourself why. Ask God why. Maybe it's a self-centeredness issue and you're just too busy with your own day-to-day happenings. Maybe you're concerned about ruining a reputation you think you have. It could be a fear of rejection or fear of someone thinking you're ignorant for believing in God. Maybe it's straight up apathy in which case

"The joy that comes from a deep love for God isn't something that can be faked, and it definitely will catch the world's eye to see someone have hope in something bigger than ourselves."

you're lacking the sense of urgency we can gather from numerous places throughout Scripture.¹

3 BE HOSPITABLE

If you are a born-again believer, chances are there were certain individuals, other Christians in your life, that spent time with you and got to know you. Over time, you built a relationship with them and you trusted them enough to talk about real life. How can you share the Gospel if you have no one to tell it to? Being hospitable is one way those relationships can start. Some simple ways to start are to ask if a classmate wants to go to dinner, invite people over no matter how small your dorm room is (it'll make good memories anyway), or keep your dorm door open when you're there (it invites people walking by to peek their heads in).

4 BE AVAILABLE

Don't always wear headphones when walking to class. See who you run into. Sit by someone new in class and introduce yourself. They might be surprised – good! It'll make them wonder. Study in a lounge on your floor or in other open spaces when you're not crunched for a deadline. Yes, your homework is important, but our first priority as Christians is our relationship with God and others. Think about your ultimate purpose here on Earth. Is it to get your degree and live a good life? No? Then do something different with your time: Live your life openly for other people to enter into it and see what this Jesus thing is really all about.

5 ASK QUESTIONS AND SHOW AN INTEREST IN OTHERS

When I first started visiting a campus ministry, people would ask me all the time about what I believed. "Did you grow up going to a church?" "Why do you think God allowed situation XYZ to happen in your life?" "Do you believe that God is always good?" I could tell these people cared about me and wanted to hear what I thought, so I answered honestly. They listened to my ideas instead of waiting to say what they wanted to. They were eager to hear what my life was like and what my dreams were for the future. Not only that, but their questions inevitably made me think more deeply about what I believed to be true. It prompted those "lying awake at night" kind of moments... You know the feel.

6 LISTEN FOR HURT AND HEARTACHE

Any amount of hurt that someone is willing to share with you is an opportunity to share the story of a Creator God who made the world and doesn't want to see it suffer. Listen to what's bothering that person. Realize how much they must trust you by them opening up to you. Be sensitive for an opportunity to tell of the God who loves them without wavering and is active in our world today, whether it feels like He is or not. Consider being honest about a time you were distant from God and what you (or He) did about it.

7 BE WILLING TO TAKE A RISK

Boldly sharing your faith requires a willingness to be embarrassed or feel

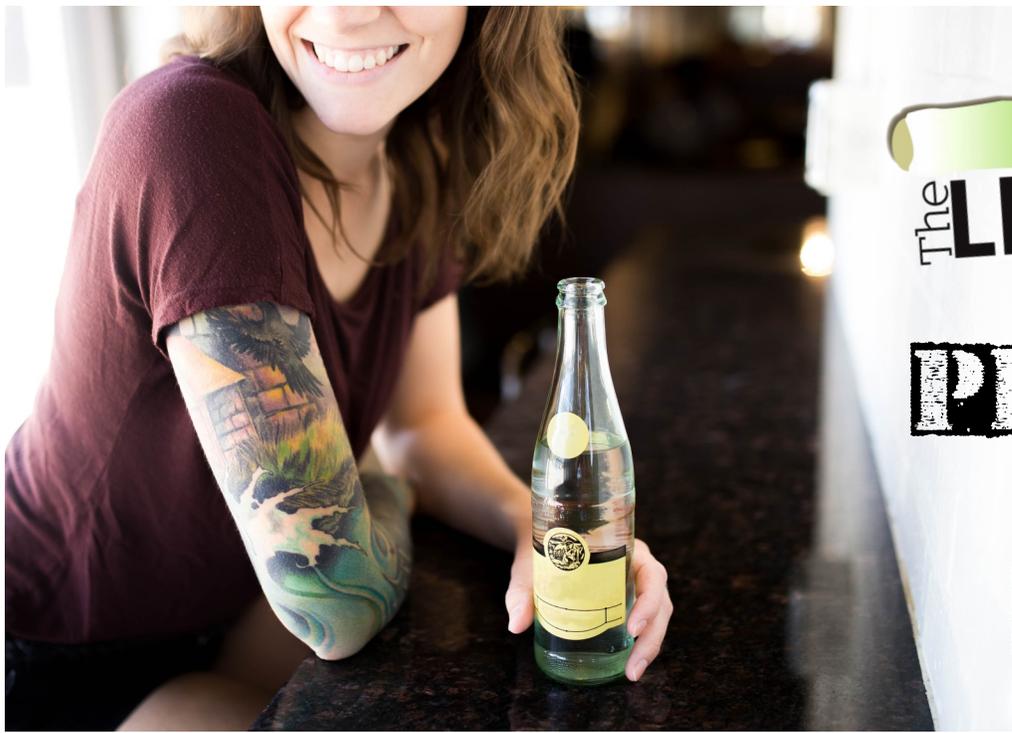
a little awkward at times. It requires a certain level of courage and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Sharing your faith does not require advanced faith, the perfect words, or the right feeling or timing. If you wait on those factors, it may never happen. Ultimately, God does the saving. You can't talk anyone into salvation so don't put that heavy weight on yourself. There's a verse in Romans 2 that tells us that it's God's kindness that leads us to repentance.² Your job is to be obedient to God, share what you know, and trust Him for how that person will respond. God used many people with less than ideal abilities all throughout the Bible, and luckily for us, His strength is made perfect in weakness.³ Do you trust God? Do you have a neighborly love for the person sitting next to you? Then forget what it might cost you to tell them about the Man who died for them.

If you really believe the truth of the Gospel, that a perfect God man would come to earth just to be murdered for your sake and for your sin, you're going to want to tell other people about this, aren't you? You won't care about the opinions other people might come up with in their minds about you because you know that their opinions don't affect your eternity. You still will have assurance that you get to be with your Father one day, face-to-face. Ask God for the Holy Spirit and pray for opportunities to talk openly about what it means to live as a Christian – then be on alert for them. You just might be surprised at how quickly God answers that prayer.

¹Matthew 3:2, Romans 13:11, Revelation 22:20, Mark 1:15, to name a few

²Romans 2:4

³2 Corinthians 12: 8-10



PICK UP DATE NIGHT

In the eve of last Thirsty Thursday, self-proclaimed Jesus Freak Johnny set out to make a dating game plan. He skipped church the night before to get his homework done so he could hit the bar scene the following night to see if God would lead him to a "spirit-filled" woman. Johnny didn't know exactly what he was looking for but figured, "What the heck, bar chicks need Jesus too." Unfamiliar with the party scene, John slicked his hair back, put his cross necklace on, and headed downtown. He made small talk with a girl named Kate.

"Kate, the Bible says to think about whatever is pure and lovely, so I've been thinking of you all day," John confidently shared. In reply, Kate puked all over her French fries.

Not deterred, Johnny then went for a lighter atmosphere in a quiet coffeehouse. After ordering his hot chocolate, John couldn't help but notice the cutie in the kitchen. His manly instincts kicked in and he complimented her on how well she

looked in an apron. He said, "I was going to read Proverbs 31, but then I realized I could just study you instead." Unimpressed, the woman dropkicked Johnny right in the mouth and went back to her work. John was confused and figured it was time to up his game.

That's when he remembered there was a weekly late-night Bible study. Surely, John thought, there will be a Bible thumper there who would go out with him. John came in late, sat down, and stared intently at the brunette across the room from him. When the brunette closed her eyes as if to be quietly praying, Johnny walked over and said, "Hey girl, I put the STUD in Bible study." That's when the bulky guy towards the back swiftly ushered Johnny-Not-So-Lucky right on out. Johnny decided he had over extended his luck for one day. Fortunately, he was encouraged on the way home, thinking about the medium pizza at Domino's for \$4.44. In an instant, life was good again.



WHAT'S TRENDING?



FREE SPEECH

Thank you, Star Tribune, for permission to reprint.

Free speech is a hot topic right now in our aggressively opposed country. It dominates conversations surrounding every viewpoint, whether it's the spotlight on the #metoo movement, or the ideologies behind the legalization of marijuana, same-sex marriage, and abortion. Because university campuses tend to be ground zero for what will win over the hearts of the next generation and set the course for what stays and what goes, a recent event at the University of Minnesota highlights the absurd level this threat to free speech has risen.

"The barricades were in place outside Anderson Hall, and a half-dozen police officers stood guard inside long before the guest speaker arrived. Charlie Kirk, a 24-year-old conservative firebrand, was bringing his pro-capitalism, small-government message to the University of Minnesota on Dec. 5. And he clearly was expecting some blowback... 'Protests expected from the intolerant campus left. Will be fun!' As it turned out, the protests — on one of the most frigid nights of the season — never materialized. But to Kirk's

*fans, it's a sign of the times that, in 2017, they could need police protection to bring a conservative speaker to campus."*¹

Protesters have a right to protest, but when their right to protest overshadows the right of the speaker to speak, that's a problem. There were numerous incidences in 2017 across the U.S. when speakers were forced to end their speech because protesters drowned them out like a kid on the playground, sticking their fingers in their ears, squeezing their eyes shut, and shouting, "La la la la la!" at the top of their lungs. It should never be okay to decide that your right to disagree is more important than someone else's right to simply express their views. Additionally, it prohibits the ability for a discussion on the subject to even be held, which means that assumptions about the opposed viewpoints become even more misconstrued. It's very dangerous to lump groups all together since it's because of assumptions that Christians are assumed to hate gays, Muslims are assumed to be terrorists, and white men are assumed to be sexual deviants. If people can't have the chance to speak out, then we're already over the cliff

of the end of free speech and there's no going back.

"In many ways, college campuses are turning more hostile than ever to conservative views, said Madison Faupel, president of Minnesota College Republicans. Faupel, a 22-year-old U student from Rochester, said she and others have been threatened with violence and trashed on social media for going against the prevailing political winds on campus. She argues that opponents are using fear and intimidation to silence views they don't agree with. 'Free speech is being shut down on college campuses around the country,' she said. 'There's no doubt about that.' (Read the full article by Maura Lerner of the Minneapolis Star Tribune online.)¹

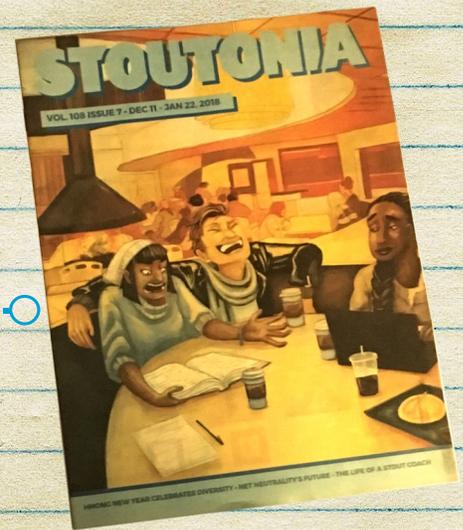
It's hopefully safe to say that 9.99 out of 10 Americans at least value the idea of free speech, but its true meaning is fast going the way of the dusty and forgotten VHS tape in the basement. Will you determine that anyone who opposes your views can't speak because you find it offensive? Or, will you listen to the individual and not your assumptions?

¹Lerner, Maura. "University of Minnesota conservatives welcome protesters at events but feel under attack." *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 10 Dec. 2017, www.startribune.com/campus-conservatives-say-they-feel-under-attack/463282883/.

UW-STOUT'S PAPER TRAIL

GOOD READS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

UW-Stout publications contain a diverse number of topics and art where you can see what other students are doing on campus and in the community. We pulled some together for you to read about; be sure to check these publications out for yourself!



STOUTONIA

Stoutonia started back in 1915 as a classroom project and is still a student-run organization. The publication is made by Stout students. They seek to provide “reliable information to the University of Wisconsin - Stout students, faculty and staff as well as the community of Menomonie.” This publication is released on a bi-weekly basis in print. However, it is published online weekly at stoutonia.com. Pick up a paper copy at one of their racks on campus.

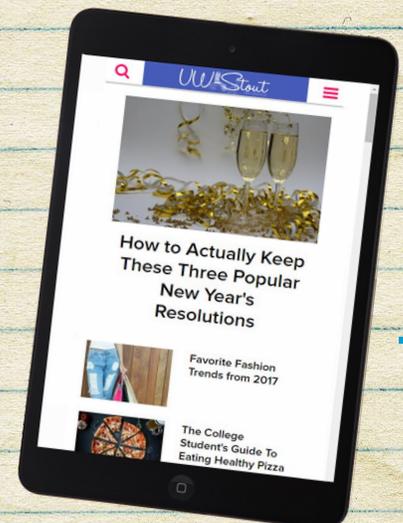
HER CAMPUS

Her Campus online magazine is a branch of HerCampus.com. This publication covers topics specific to college women including news, student profiles, style, blogging, events, and interactive polls. Nationally, they cover things like style, beauty, health, love, life, career, entertainment, news, DIY, LGBTQ+, high school and after college life. You can check out the magazine on their website at www.hercampus.com/school/uw-stout for articles and to sign up for an email newsletter. You can get involved and/or submit ideas by emailing them at uw-stout@hercampus.com.



HOOPLAH

Founded by Stout students in 2015, Hooplah has a mission to create a platform where other students can share their work. Their mission is to “incorporate people from every corner of our creative community, from designers to poets, illustrators to photographers.”² The magazine is released on a monthly basis by the Hooplah Zine Club. They have an issue release party at the Raw Deal in Menomonie. You can locate copies of Hooplah at the Raw Deal, as well as on the Stout campus in the Applied Arts Building. If you wish to contribute something to the magazine, visit their Facebook page at facebook.com/HooplahZine and fill out their form.



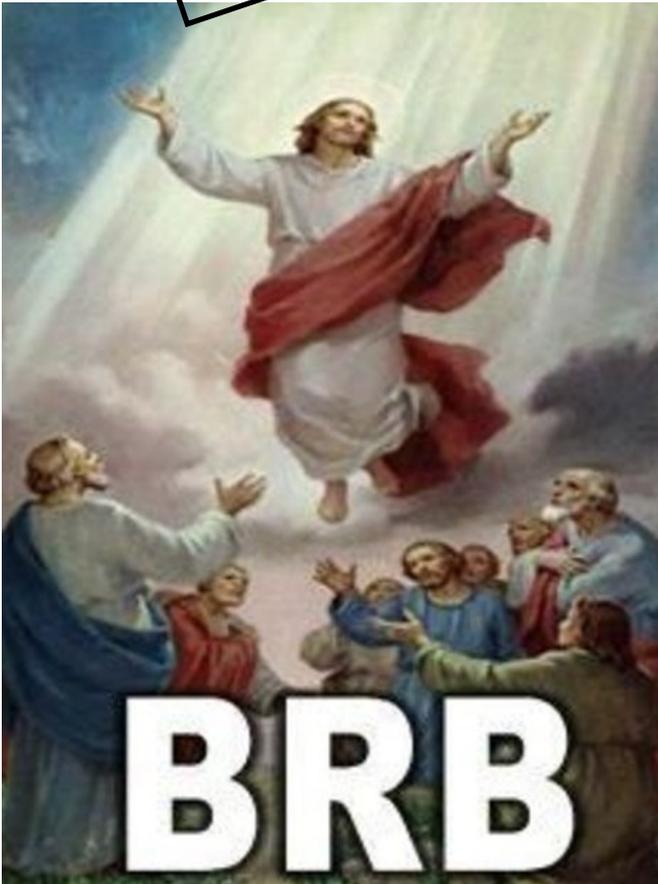


PEPPER MAGAZINE

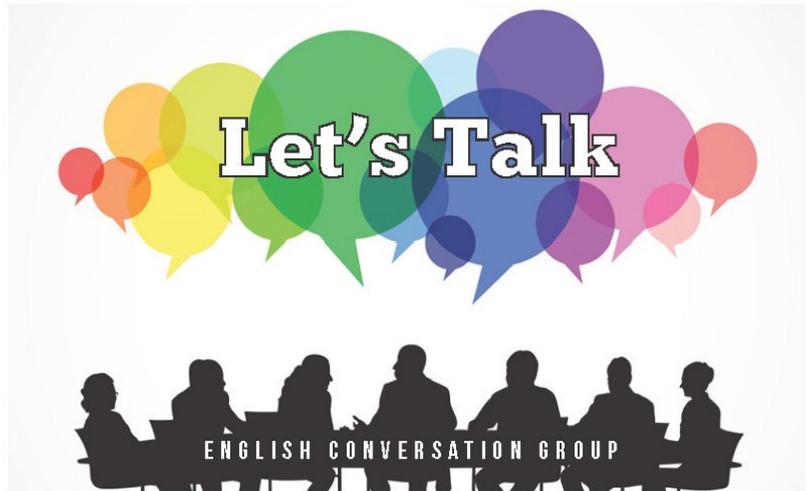
Founded in June of 2010, Pepper Magazine seeks to “spread awareness of the arts and culture around the UW-Stout campus and Menomonie community.”¹ They are a student-run magazine that wants to get readers involved in creating. They don’t cover current events or news, but strive more to cover ideas of culture, society, and the arts. If you wish to get involved in the organization, email whereispepper@uwstout.edu. The Pepper is published on a biannually basis in paper. Pick up an issue on a campus rack.

¹ facebook.comwhereispepper

Because
why
not.



BRB



ENGLISH CONVERSATION GROUP

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a branch of...
STREET LEVEL MINISTRIES

NIGHT *on the* TOWN

Your friendly WOTS
guide to local deals.

MONDAY

Two for one burgers or
wraps at **the Stout
Ale House**

Go sledding at
the Menomonie Rec Park

Who doesn't love spending a night out with friends? During the winter when options seem limited, those times can get expensive. The WOTS crew looked around town for some local deals to turn an-okay-time into a great time without breaking the bank. Check out some of our favorites.

TUESDAY

Two entrees for \$20
specials at **Applebees**

\$5 movie - any movie any
time - at the **Menomonie
Movie Theater**

WEDNESDAY

\$12 all-you-can-eat wings
at **The Great Escape**

Enjoy the scenery
at **The Devil's Punchbowl**

THURSDAY

Half off apps at **Log Jam**
from 8pm-10pm

Winter hike at
The Red Cedar Trail

FRIDAY

Grab a classic fish fry at
The Waterfront

\$12 Unlimited Cosmic
Bowling at **Broadway Bowl**,
7pm-1am

SATURDAY

\$2 breakfast at **The Blind
Munchies** with a student I.D.

Large 2-topping pizza for
\$13.95 at **Ted's Pizza**
Visit the Farmers' Market at
The Raw Deal, 9am-1pm

SUNDAY

\$2 pints
at **Culver's**

Swim for \$5
at the **Super 8 Motel**

SATURDAY PLANS? \$2 BREAKFAST

WITH STUDENT ID | \$3 WITHOUT
LOCALLY ROASTED COFFEE | BAKERY
FREE MEETING SPACE WITH RESERVATION

Served 9am - Noon



*Extreme
Scrambled
Eggs*

*Pancakes &
Bacon*

*French Toast
& Fruit*

*Breakfasts
rotate weekly!*

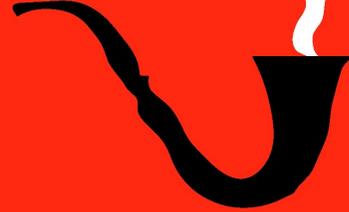
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NICK THE HICK

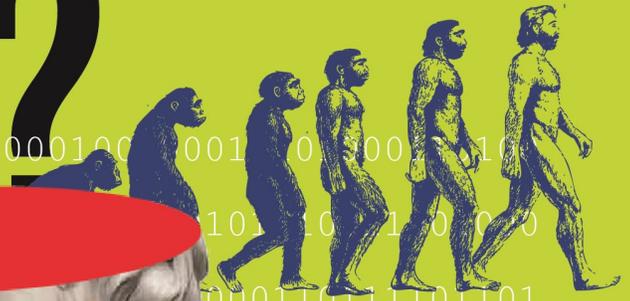
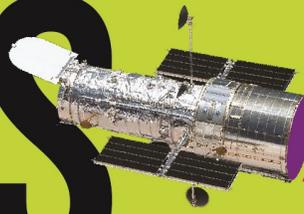
Another redneck rant from your favorite guy



TRENDSETTERS

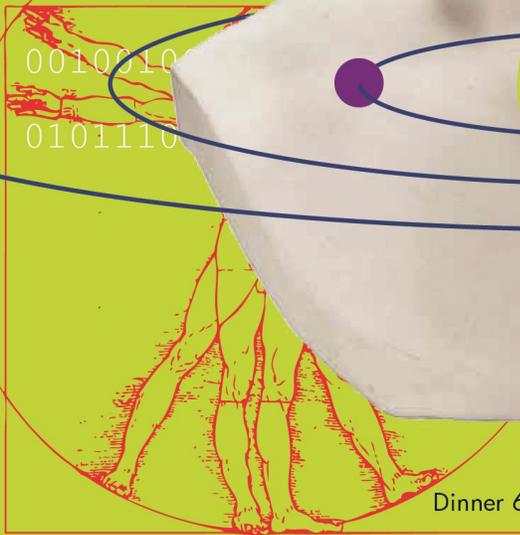
All-Day nap bars, foldable kayaks, and dictionary stress balls are only 3 of the top projected trends coming in 20-18. I don't formally workout but I do get quite a bit of movement in my day, sort of have pep in my step you may say. For you gymsters out there you can expect to see advancement in home gym equipment. Cosmetically appealing pull up bars right behind the couch. Because nothing say's honey I'm home from pushing papers like a sweaty hug after 4 and a quarter pull ups. Foldable smart phones are on the horizon. For heaven's sake don't call it a flip phone or we'll be having folks passing out from unrelenting shame and dishonor. Veganism is set to top the upcoming culinary trends. Heck I love vegetables. One of my favorite meals is lettuce based. Throw in a crunchy shell bowl and a pound of taco flavored hamburger and I'd eat the heck out of that salad, all 1200 calories of it. Your ear bling got you feeling down? Larger than life earrings will be in. I say latch a few care beans on your lobes and carry your extra grocery bags to the car. No more looking for the cart corral for you. If none of that makes you more modernized you can fit in by getting a tiny tat. Forget go big or go home with tats, play it safe and start out small. Maybe get an emoji on your forearm, or tattoo your internet passwords on your palm. A sort of modern action with a practical twist. Sure is amazin all that can happen in a year. Peace Out.

WHAT IS TRUTH?



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STREET LEVEL MINISTRIES



UW-STOUT // MONDAYS

Dinner 6:00pm // Bible Study 7:00pm // STREET LEVEL HOUSE // 1009 6TH ST E
streetlevelministries.com // streetlevel@uwstout.edu // 715.235.4977

UW-RIVERFALLS // TUESDAYS

Dinner 6:30pm // Bible Study 7:00pm // 115 W CASCADE AVE RIVER FALLS
streetlevelministries.com/riverfalls // riverfalls@jfbelievers.com // 612.405.9033