



ISSUE EIGHTY

PURSuing PEACE:

HOW TO FIND REST IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD

PAGE 12

PAGE 09

JESUS
LOVES
MUSIC

PAGE 10

"CHRISTIAN
NICE"

PAGE 16

A GOD
WHO CAN
SURPRISE
YOU

NOVEMBER 2019-JANUARY 2020

WORD ON THE STREET

Street Level Ministries' Magazine

READWOTS.COM



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 Southeast Asia, Amsterdam, and the Philippines.

WOTS is Street Level Ministries' magazine. Check out how you can become a part of this global magazine by visiting streetlevelministries.com.

Word on the Street

Word on the Street (WOTS) Magazine is released twice per semester and has been published since 1999. 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.

MENOMONIE, WI

RIVER FALLS, WI

CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES



SUPERIOR, WI



PLUS...



Amsterdam



Southeast Asia



wotsmagazine



wordonthestreetmagazine

WOTS IS PUTTING OUT A CALL FOR...

CREATIVE SUBMISSIONS

GOT ILLUSTRATIONS, POEMS, LYRICS, PHOTOS, ESSAYS & MORE?
EMAIL THEM TO [WOTSMAGAZINE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:wotsmagazine@gmail.com) FOR PUBLICATION CONSIDERATION.

what's inside...

ISSUE 80 — WINTER 2019

FEATURED

12



PURSuing PEACE:
HOW TO FIND REST IN AN
UNSTABLE WORLD

06



ADVENTURE. DINE & RECLINE
PLACES YOU WANT TO TAKE
YOUR OUT OF TOWN GUESTS

10



"CHRISTIAN NICE"
THE LIE OF TOLERANT LOVE

16



**A GOD WHO CAN
SURPRISE YOU**
IS YOUR GOD A FREE-THINKING
GOD WITH HIS OWN IDEAS?

18



CHECK THIS OUT!
THE UNIQUE FINDS AND REVIEWS OF
MUSIC, BOOKS AND MORE.

05

THIS JOB ROCKS
FEATURED INTERVIEW WITH A UNIVERSITY
RECREATION CLIMBING SPECIALIST

07

ONE GUY'S TRUE STORY
WRESTLING WITH TRUTH

08

JESUS DIED FOR YOUR PORN ADDICTION
PURSUING THE POWER OF A NEW AFFECTION

09

QUARTERLY MUSIC BEAT
AN UPDATE FROM OUR FRIENDS AT
BURNING DOG RADIO

15

**THE CREEPY LURE OF THE
HORROR GENRE**
SHOULD YOU WATCH HORROR FILMS?

20

LET THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN
HOW A VARIETY OF CULTURES CELEBRATE
CHRISTMAS

21

WOTS IS 80
AN INTERVIEW FROM AN 80-SOMETHING YEAR
OLD ON BEING 80

22

VOLUNTEERING IN DUNN COUNTY
HELP OUT AT THESE
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS!



NOVEMBER

- ⇒ **FRI 11/8** WBB VS UW-SUPERIOR, 5:30PM
- ⇒ **FRI 11/8** MHOCKEY VS UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS, 7PM
- ⇒ **FRI 11/8** MBB VS ST. OLAF COLLEGE, 7:30PM
- ⇒ **SAT 11/9** MHOCKEY VS GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE, 7PM
- ⇒ **THURS 11/7** LEAD BELAY CLINIC, UW-STOUT SPORT AND FITNESS CENTER, 5PM-7PM
- ⇒ **WED 11/13** MBB VS CONCORDIA COLLEGE, 7PM
- ⇒ **THURS 11/14** SNAKES OF WISCONSIN, BEAVER CREEK RESERVE, COST: \$7, 7-8PM
- ⇒ **SAT 11/16** FILM SCREENING: THE LUMBER BARON, RASSBACH MUSEUM, 5:30PM-9:30PM
- ⇒ **MON 11/18** CLIMBING FOR BEGINNERS CLINICS, UW-STOUT SPORT AND FITNESS CENTER, 5PM-7PM
- ⇒ **TUES 11/19** WBB VS LUTHER COLLEGE, 7PM
- ⇒ **FRI 11/22** MHOCKEY VS NORTHLAND COLLEGE, 7PM
- ⇒ **SAT 11/23** WBB VS COLLEGE OF ST. SCHOLASTICA, 2:30PM
- ⇒ **SAT 11/23** MHOCKEY VS UW-EAU CLAIRE, 7PM
- ⇒ **SAT 11/30** SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW, STOUT ALE HOUSE, 9AM-4PM
- ⇒ **SAT 11/30** DURAND DAZZLE, DOWNTOWN DURAND WI, ENDS AT 6PM

DECEMBER

- ⇒ **WED 12/4** CLEAR WATER COMEDY NIGHT, ZYMURGY BREWING, 8PM-10PM
- ⇒ **SAT 12/7** SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING DAY TRIP, TROLLHAUGEN, WI, ALL DAY
- ⇒ **SAT 12/7** MHOCKEY VS UW-SUPERIOR, 7PM
- ⇒ **SAT 12/7** THEATER GUILD: THE SNOW QUEEN, 2PM
- ⇒ **THURS 12/12** WINTER DAZE PARADE & EVENT, DOWNTOWN MENOMONIE, 4PM-8PM
- ⇒ **SAT 12/14** MHOCKEY VS UW-RIVER FALLS, 7PM

A City Church in a Small Town

JFBELIEVERS CHURCH

Menomonie, Wisconsin

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

BIBLICAL • MISSIONAL • RADICAL
JFBELIEVERS.COM

- ⇒ **FRI 12/20** WBB VS UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE, 10:30AM
- ⇒ **FRI 12/20** MBB VS UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE, 12:30PM
- ⇒ **SAT 12/21** NUTCRACKER IN WONDERLAND, MABEL TANTER, 2PM

JANUARY

- ⇒ **SAT 1/4** WBB VS UW-PLATTEVILLE, 3PM
- ⇒ **SAT 1/11** MBB VS UW-OSHKOSH, 3PM
- ⇒ **SAT 1/11** MHOCKEY VS HAMLINE UNIVERSITY, 7PM
- ⇒ **TUES 1/14** MHOCKEY VS UW-RIVER FALLS, 7PM
- ⇒ **WED 1/15** WBB VS UW-RIVER FALLS, 7PM
- ⇒ **SAT 1/18** MBB VS UW-WHITEWATER, 3PM
- ⇒ **THURS 1/23** MHOCKEY VS NORTHLAND COLLEGE, 7PM
- ⇒ **SAT 1/25** WBB VS UW-STEVENS POINT, 3PM
- ⇒ **WED 1/29** WBB VS UW-EAU CLAIRE, 6PM
- ⇒ **WED 1/29** MBB VS UW-EAU CLAIRE, 8PM

FEBRUARY

- ⇒ **WED 2/5** MBB VS UW-RIVER FALLS, 7PM
- ⇒ **FRI 2/7** WGYM VS UW-LA CROSSE, 6PM
- ⇒ **FRI 2/7** MHOCKEY VS UW-STEVEN POINT, 7PM
- ⇒ **SAT 2/8** MBB VS UW-PLATTEVILLE, 3PM
- ⇒ **SAT 2/8** MHOCKEY VS UW-STEVENS POINT, 7PM
- ⇒ **THURS 2/13** MHOCKEY VS UW-SUPERIOR, 7PM

jesus loves music

burning dog radio
 WRJF-LP 101.7FM

burningdogradio.com
a branch of Street Level Ministries
 menomonie, wi



“COME CLIMB. YOU WON’T REGRET IT!”

Q: WHAT IS THE MAIN GOAL/OBJECTIVE OF THE CLIMBING WALL?

A: It varies from person to person. We strive to cultivate an encouraging community of climbers and we have quite the pool of folks from first timers to experts. We’re honestly just excited to have you here!

Q: WHAT TYPES OF TRAINING DO YOU COMPLETE TO BE CONSIDERED A CLIMBING SPECIALIST?

A: First Aid, CPR, and belay certification, which means we use a rope system and equipment to catch a climber in the event of a fall.

Q: WHO CAN CLIMB?

A: Both community members and students can climb our wall. If you don’t have your own gear, we happily rent that out. You’re also welcome to bring your own.

Q: WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

A: I enjoy the learning process – the ability to teach fellow climbers and be taught. It’s unlike any other sport – a mental puzzle and physical challenge. It’s a place where stories are shared, chalk is spilled, and victory high-fives are given after projecting that hard climb ten times over.

Q: WHAT IS IT ABOUT CLIMBING THAT YOU ENJOY SO MUCH?

A: It’s a commingling of meditation and war. Climbing is connecting with the deepest parts of yourself while simultaneously challenging your physical and mental limits. It’s a place of worship, honoring God with this body He’s given me. I’m humbled knowing there will always be something harder and larger than I can take on alone.

Q: WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE SOMEONE NEWLY INTERESTED IN CLIMBING?

A: Come climb. You won’t regret it!

THIS JOB ROCKS

INTERVIEW WITH A
UNIVERSITY RECREATION
CLIMBING SPECIALIST

During the semester, the climbing wall is open every day at 2:00 p.m. except for Saturdays when it opens at 12:00 p.m. Check out uwstout.edu/life-stout/recreation/about-us/hours for up-to-date hours of availability.

Climbing Wall Membership

UW-Stout Affiliation Rates:

- Day pass: \$5
- 1 month: \$12
- 1 Academic Year (Sept - May): \$60
- Annual Year (Sept - Aug): \$85

Community:

- Day pass: \$5
- 1 month: \$20
- 1 year: \$110

Family:

- 1 month: \$30
- 1 year: \$210

ADVENTURE DINE & RECLINE

PLACES YOU'LL WANT TO TAKE YOUR OUT-OF-TOWN GUESTS

C

College can be a great place to meet new people and experience a new environment. You'll have fun and be busy studying almost every night, but you may get homesick every once and awhile. If you are feeling homesick, avoid the urge to go home, and instead, invite some out-of-town family and friends to come visit you to see what Menomonie and UW-Stout are all about. This smallish town surprisingly has a lot to offer in terms of adventure, eateries, and recreation.

ADVENTURE

THE HOMETOWN HERO:

DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL

This is a classic reservoir just a couple miles out of Menomonie that changes with each season. Come by in the fall to experience exquisite colors or come by in the winter to see vivid icicles. Whenever you go, this location will not disappoint.

THE TRAIL JUNKIE:

HOFFMAN HILLS

This park, located about 8 miles east of Menomonie, features one of the highest lookout points in the county. Filled with many miles of beautiful hiking trails and scenery, this spot will take your breath away (literally).



DINE

CLASSIC:

LOG JAM

Ask 10 students where you should take your out-of-town guests to eat and 7 out of 10 will tell you to go to Log Jam. This unique bar and grill is a block away from campus and serves up some of the best food around. If you're around on a Wednesday night, you could even stick around for some karaoke.

THE TWO FOR ONE:

STOUT ALE HOUSE

A fun and exciting atmosphere filled with booths, a bar, an arcade, and a bowling alley. Come for some quality burgers and hit the lanes with your group for a unique evening.



RECLINE

THE OLD TIMER:

TOWN AND COUNTRY ANTIQUES

Take your guests to browse the wide variety of antique items that this place has to offer. Filled with two stories of history, you can find anything from WWII memorabilia to kitchenware. They always have some free cookies sitting out, too.

THE LOCAL:

FARMER'S MARKET

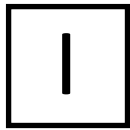
It's winter now, but every Saturday morning throughout the warmer months, the farmer's market is in full swing at Wilson Park. Nowadays you can find it at the Raw Deal. You'll find bread, flowers, fresh vegetables, eggrolls, music, and more! Stop by for a relaxing morning while you contribute to local farmers and business owners.

With these six suggestions, you'll be able to give your guests a well-rounded look at Menomonie after you show them around campus and your dorm. Ah, Menomonie is a little impressive after all...

ONE GUY'S

TRIP STORY

WRESTLING WITH TRUTH



I grew up in a very small town in Wisconsin with two loving parents who raised me alongside my seven other siblings. My parents decided that they wanted to be a part of a church, so the year I was born they found Believers City Church in Menomonie, which is the church I still attend to this day. Being raised in what can only be described as a nothing-held-back, truth-telling church, there was no hiding from the fact that I needed Jesus, but as a punk 10-year-old kid I didn't know what that meant. So, I just did what I thought that meant. I behaved like a good little boy. That's what it means to be a Christian, right? Wrong! Oh boy, did that hit me like a truck.

It all started to become very clear to me the summer before



I started high school. I was about to be in the older kid's youth group, and I was going to be on the high school wrestling team. That was a big thing for me because I had been in wrestling since I was in kindergarten. My parents believed that sports could teach you valuable life lessons, but they weren't ones to really push a sport on you. They let you choose, and I chose wrestling. I was so serious about it that, going into my freshman year, I decided I was going to make the varsity team.

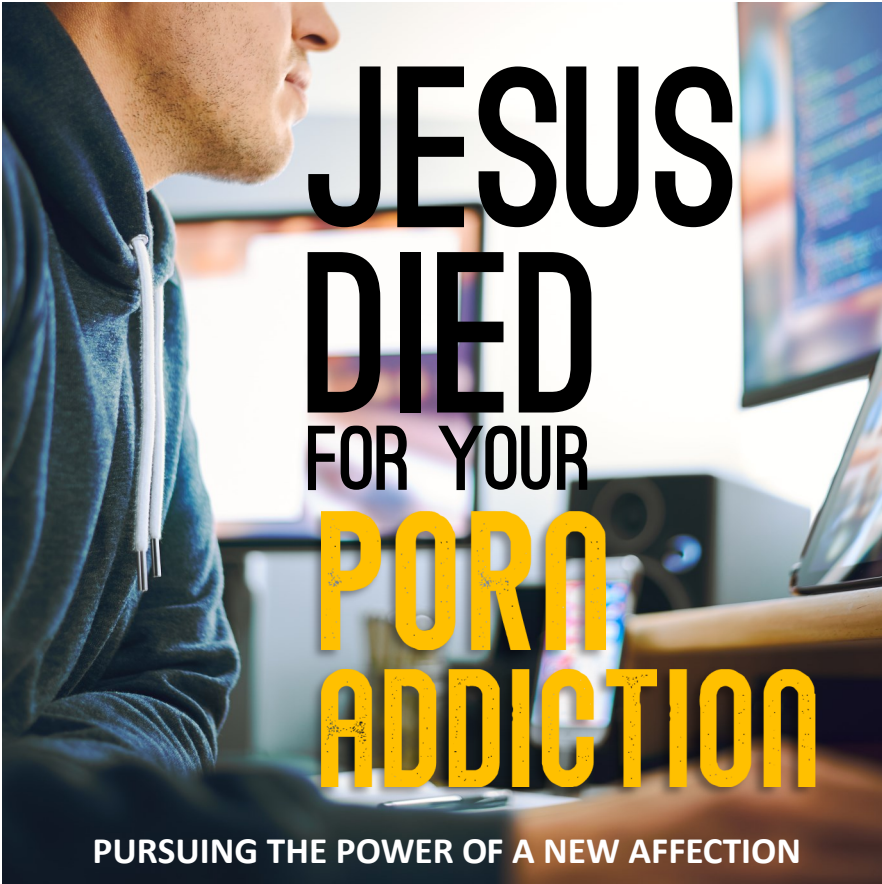
At the same time, God was using my youth leaders, Andy and Laura, to tell me what it meant to be a Christian. It wasn't just about behaving like a good kid or even that I needed to do certain things; it meant that I needed to have a heart change. It also meant that I needed to stand up for the things that matter to God, like telling other people about Him and how much He loves them. Another thing it meant was telling the truth even when it was hard, and by hard, I mean super hard. In late February of my freshman year, our wrestling team was looking pretty good despite being plagued by one teammate who didn't seem to want to get his act together. We were still ranked second in our division and the postseason was coming up fast. Exciting stuff for the wide-eyed freshman I was. But then God decided it was time for me to choose Him or the world. For those that have come to this crossroads, it can be a painful experience, but it isn't something I would change for the world. The Tuesday before the regional tournament, I walked in on three of my teammates beating up the former teammate who had been giving us grief all season. The worst thing about it was that they were upperclassmen, and so I walked out as if nothing happened. That didn't last long,

though, because an hour later I was sitting in the principal's office, and he was demanding that I tell him what I saw. I asked him if I could be left alone to make a phone call, and I managed to get ahold of my mom. After I told her what was going on, she very simply and calmly told me that if I wanted to follow God this was the kind of truth I needed to get used to telling. On one hand were all the dreams I thought I wanted from the world: a chance at a team state championship and more. And on the other hand: God's plan for my life. That day, in that office, I surrendered my life to God and said, "Ok, here's my life and my plans. Do with it what you will." Then I told the truth.

Since that day it has been what can only be described as a roller coaster of a ride. God has shown me things I never thought a kid from a small town in Wisconsin would see. I got the chance to be on my church's first youth team to the Philippines. I even got to experience things that I didn't think God wanted me to have! I ended up making it to the state tournament as an individual.

After graduating high school, I chose to go straight into the workforce. Through that, God has shown me what it means to work in everyday life to build relationships that will have lasting effects on the lives of those I come into contact with. He has shown me time and time again that if I trust Him with my plans and my hopes, He will show me even better plans and better dreams. Through all of this, some of the biggest things that God has taught me are that He loves to give good gifts to His kids, and He is willing to take us as far as we are willing to go. I'm very excited to see what God has for me next.

-Jon



JESUS DIED FOR YOUR PORN ADDICTION

PURSuing THE POWER OF A NEW AFFECTION

intense war going on inside of you that is still tempted to sin and stay in control, but also desires the things of God. Sexual immorality is one of those sins, and so are lying, covetousness, laziness, and gluttony. And like lying, covetousness, laziness, and gluttony, your sin affects everyone around you, and it brings death to everything it touches. That young person on your screen is someone's daughter or son. Your purchase of that video supports that entire industry and keeps the cycle going, so your sin will always affect someone else. Jesus, on the other hand, brings light and life. John 10:10 says, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (ESV). Jesus never asks us to flip a switch and just get over it, but He does ask us to come to Him because He's got everything we need. Believing that, learning that, and understanding that is a lifelong pursuit, but you have to respond to what He's offering in the first place, which takes some action on your part.

Confess

There's really no other way around it but to just "puke it out" and confess to a friend you trust (especially a friend who has *been there*). God will work with you to move on from the porn urge you have the very second you decide you want to change for real. This is not a one-and-done thing, but you also can't excuse yourself by thinking, "Well, this is just my sin." Getting over porn will be a temptation that may span the rest of your life, but as a Christian, you've been given everything you

need to stay away: Jesus Himself.

Run

Next, you must get away from your places of addiction. Is it your phone? Install accountability software like Covenant Eyes⁴ on all your devices. It will track your online usage and email an accountability partner when you've viewed something questionable. This accountability partner should be someone you trust to actually call you out for viewing porn if you end up slipping back into old habits. You should consider someone who is more spiritually mature than you are, and not just a friend who will give you a wink and a smile. Installing something like Covenant Eyes and choosing someone you're not merely chummy with will indicate whether you're serious about fighting this sin for real. Are you just sorrowful about your addiction to porn, or are you running and fighting to overcome it?

Getting around others who will be hardcore about helping you kill the sin and heal is key, but falling in love with Jesus is the only way to make it last. When you start recognizing His grand design for your life, your body, your relationships, and your world, something like porn will just pale in comparison because it's a cheap substitute for the real thing. Porn is satisfying for the moment, but God alone is satisfying for eternity.

*"YOU MAKE KNOWN TO ME THE
PATH OF LIFE;
IN YOUR PRESENCE THERE IS
FULLNESS OF JOY; AT YOUR RIGHT
HAND ARE PLEASURES
FOREVERMORE."*

PSALM 16:11, ESV

Helpful Links

- desiringgod.org/interviews/how-can-we-serve-one-another-in-battling-lust
- desiringgod.org/articles/seven-things-to-do-after-you-look-at-pornography
- desiringgod.org/articles/advice-for-students-who-are-porn-addicts

S Sixty-four percent of young people ages 13 to 24 actively seek out pornography at least weekly, and porn sites receive more traffic than Netflix, Amazon, and Twitter combined each month.¹ It has a role and influence in the trafficking of children, rape, failed relationships, and marriages. It has taken leaders down, soured reputations, and tricked many into believing it's normal, acceptable, and healthy. It's hardly debated anymore whether porn wrecks lives (ever hear of someone say that porn has enriched their life and relationships?), but that hasn't changed the intense demand for it.

If just bringing up this subject is making you feel ashamed, know that you're not the first person drawn to porn, nor will you be the last. You're also not the first person who wants to live right but stays crushed under the guilt of it instead. You're also not the first person who wants help on one hand, but is also hoping for a soft, easy, justified answer on the other.

The truth is, God made you to be a sexual being, and it's what He designed only marriage to fulfill. Using porn as a sexual outlet defiles your very being. The Bible defined this phenomenon in 1 Corinthians 6:18 where it says, "Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body" (ESV). When someone views porn, powerful hormones called oxytocin and vasopressin flood the system, which play a role in human bonding and pain regulation. When released for the wrong reason, the body is fundamentally rewired to respond to a fake sexual experience, rather than to a real human interaction.² John Mayer, the artist who wrote, "Your Body is a Wonderland," said, "I now am so addicted to pornography that I prefer pornography to a relationship with a woman...Internet pornography has absolutely changed my generation's expectations."³

The word Christian literally means "little Christ". If you say you're a Christian, you are born again and have the desire to imitate Jesus in every way. So, while your identity is no longer "sinner", there is an

¹ fightthenewdrug.org/10-porn-stats-that-will-blow-your-mind/
² conquerseries.com/why-sexual-sin-against-your-body/
³ markdriscoll.org/sermons/the-porn-path

⁴ covenanteyes.com



TUNE INTO 101.7 FM
IN MENOMONIE

QUARTERLY MUSIC BEAT

AN UPDATE FROM OUR FRIENDS AT BURNING DOG RADIO



know either, but it's something to think about.

Writers of the Bible have written about how music is used to praise and worship God, celebrate good things, give thanks, compose and play when you're happy, share with other Christians, pray to God, hear God speak to you, and heal people of harmful spirits. No wonder our culture is so obsessed with music! It was and is meant to do and be so much more, on much deeper levels. Enter in an underground, low-power radio station in western Wisconsin.

Burning Dog Radio is a group of Jesus-loving and music-loving people. We range in age, cultural upbringings, musical preferences, college degrees, and a lot more. What brought us together? Jesus and music. Frankly, we don't deserve either. We are plebes; we deserve nothing. Music brings us so much joy, and it brings us closer to God, even when listening to non-Christian music. A good composition, like a summer sunset, can reveal to us the beauty and grace of our forgiving and generous Jesus. It can be heard anywhere.

We want you to know that Jesus loves music. God gave it to us as a dynamic gift to be enjoyed by all cultures to communicate, celebrate, mourn, praise, and create. Many indigenous tribes that have had very little to no outside contact with the outside world have been reported to have songs and chants of their own flavor. Making music is bearing God's image as a human. How magical. He delights when we reflect His goodness by creating music, especially when it worships Him. Who wouldn't love hearing a song of adoration about them?

Burning Dog Radio exists to worship God, but also to share in the goodness of His creation of music. We invite you to do the same. Get to know us at www.burningdogradio.com or by tuning in at 101.7 FM in Menomonie.

"SHOUT TO THE LORD, ALL THE EARTH;
BREAK OUT IN PRAISE AND SING FOR JOY!"
PSALM 98:4, NLT

I grew up listening to my dad practice the trumpet every single day. I never became annoyed with it. The sounds of scales and other warm ups made me feel safe, and they welcomed me home after school every day of kindergarten through high school. Music welcomed me home. At family reunions, my dad, his cousins, my cousins, and my grandpa would talk music shop, make music jokes, and tell tales from "the pit." I was practically raised by music. Everywhere I go, I hear nature's melodies in the blowing of the wind, the chirps of the birds, and the murmurs of car tires on cement.

This isn't by accident. This is by design. God made music, and He made it so people could worship Him with it. So, how in the world did God let Weird Al Yankovic create all of his silly parody songs if music was meant to be worshipful? Well, how do we know that Weird Al wasn't using his God-given talents to create a piece of music to make someone smile? I don't

“CHRISTIAN NICE”

THE LIE OF TOLERANT LOVE

A

A number of things might come to your mind when you read the word “Christian.” Maybe when you see the word, you think *hypocrite*. You’ve seen too many people standing on the street corner with a megaphone handing out anti-abortion pamphlets or protesting something else they don’t agree with. You know enough to understand that Christians are supposed to be “nice people”, and you’re understandably shocked and/or offended when someone who claims to be a Christian does something contrary to their beliefs. To you, Christians are not nice people.

To many others, Christians are viewed as “good people.” They go to church on Sundays and don’t smoke, drink, or sleep around. They’re the kind of people you want as neighbors because they won’t cause too much trouble or make too much noise. They’re the Christians: good, old-fashioned, moral people. Somewhere along the way, the world developed the idea that if you’re a Christian, you’re supposed to be nice.

WAS JESUS A “NICE” GUY?

It depends on your definition of nice. A simple Google search explains “nice” as “pleasant, agreeable, and satisfactory.” Jesus was “nice” in the way He approached the untouchables of His time. He sought out those the world felt were reasonable to overlook. During this time in history, Jewish people did not associate with Samaritans, and in John 4 we see Jesus, a Jew, ask for water from a Samaritan woman, and an adulterous woman at that. In Luke 19, we read of Jesus seeking out Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, picking him out of a crowd of people to stay at his house, even though everyone around him probably despised Zacchaeus for being the man who took their money. Jesus healed sicknesses, cured blindness, and made the lame to walk. His miracles were nice. And His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead? *Very nice* - the best news for sinners like me and you.



At the same time, if we look at the way Jesus interacted with people during His time on earth, we see many different behaviors and reactions from Jesus, some of which are evidently the opposite of agreeable. Jesus was always truthful and always right (the Bible tells us He was without sin¹), but His actions to stand up for those truths were sometimes, well, *unpleasant* to those being accused or watching from nearby. When Jesus found people selling oxen and sheep in the temple, He took the time to physically make a whip of cords to drive out the money-changers, not to mention flipping their tables over.² It appears that acting justly is not always going to be viewed as acting “nice.” In Matthew 12, we read about a conversation between the Pharisees (the religious elite of Jesus’ day) and Jesus where He actually says, “You brood of vipers!” Just a few verses before, He says, “Anyone who isn’t with me opposes me, and anyone who isn’t working with me is actually working against me” (Matthew 12:30, NLT).

If we’re not convinced that Jesus didn’t come to be Mr. Nice Guy, we can look to Luke 12:51 (NLT) where He explicitly says, “Do you think that I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I have come to divide people against each other!” I’d encourage you to read more into the chapter to find what Jesus means by this. Jesus wasn’t concerned about what people thought of Him, and He didn’t come to compromise. He was about His Father’s business.³

THE LIE OF TOLERANT LOVE

In a society where absolute truth has become debatable to some, it’s not hard to come across sensitive political topics. Some Christians will not state their opinion about a current social movement in order to play it safe, fearing they’ll hurt or offend someone. They shy away from the truth of God to protect their reputation. When asked, or confronted, they answer lightly or incompletely. In response to their silence, the world can be as loud as it wants in promoting its own truth. On the other end of the Christian response, are those labeled as bigots because they’re intolerant of people with differing opinions.

Society’s version of love preaches “tolerant” behavior. It claims that love offers complete acceptance of and agreement with anyone’s lifestyle and beliefs. It says that if my viewpoint differs from yours, I am unloving to tell you that you are wrong, but this is contrary to *real* love. Why? Because if I’m doing something to hurt myself, I’d hope the people around me tell me so. True friends see our blind spots, and call us on them.

If we, as Christians, are to reach the world with the honest, loving truths of God, we must find a middle ground between

these two stereotypes. So, how would God have us tackle these difficult conversations where a biblical truth differs from the opinion of the world? Can we share in a way that is both loving and truthful?

“ACTING JUSTLY IS NOT ALWAYS GOING TO BE VIEWED AS ACTING ‘NICE.’”

TRUTH IN LOVE

Like anything else, we need to look to Jesus as our example, including the way He approached societal issues and people. Jesus spoke the truth in love, utilizing the power of one-on-one discipleship. There were times when He addressed the masses, but there were also times where Jesus spoke directly to one person. Jesus also didn’t force truth on those who didn’t ask. He answered those who addressed Him directly. We can avoid unnecessary conflict when we are honest with those who are seeking an answer, not by confronting individuals out of nowhere.

The way we live our lives as Christians says something about the God we follow. To misrepresent Him is to show people an inaccurate view of who He is. When we attempt to be “nice” and say nothing when God has asked us to speak up and declare His truths to the world, we are not showing the world who God really is. Addressing difficult topics will require intentional biblical study on our part so we know what God loves and what He doesn’t, what He commands and what He forbids. It will require reliance on the Holy Spirit to give us the words we need for the moment, as He promises He will in Luke 12:12. Having these difficult conversations will take discernment and trust in God to come through.

Desiring God author Jon Bloom says that humble people are “disagreeable when truth must be valued over relational harmony.”⁴ When we are tempted to shy away from conflict, we should consider the words of the Bible when it says, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend”⁵ and “Let a righteous man strike me – it is a kindness.”⁶ It is a kindness to speak up when God prompts you to be brave and stand up for something in the moment. When we live bold, obedient lives (resulting in joy now and eternal), we show the world that God is good and worthy of following. Trust God to help you share His truths with others. We can trust that God is glorified when we clarify to the world what He is like.

¹Hebrews 4, 2 Corinthians 5:21

²John 2:14-15

³Luke 2:49, NKJV

⁴desiringgod.org/articles/humility-is-not-always-nice

⁵Proverbs 27:6, NKJV

⁶Psalms 141:5

PURSuing PEACE:

HOW TO FIND REST IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD



F

From the depths of a frigid sea beckons the challenge of a lifetime. If he succeeds, his name will be world-renowned as a Guinness record holder. However, anything short of a perfect dive could mean drowning in the dark abyss. On March 27, 2019, Anthony Williams crossed the frozen Norwegian sea by snowmobile to the location where his fate would be decided.

His friends cut an opening in the ice, creating the doorway to Williams' dream. Taking a large breath, he plunged into the darkness. Alone. If at any point fear or panic distracted him, the result would be disastrous. Holding his breath was just as important as keeping his mind focused. There was no room for entertaining the "what-ifs". He descended until he reached 230 feet below the surface and then turned back to the surface, claiming the world-record time of two minutes and twenty-nine seconds.

While you and I may not be record-breaking free divers like Williams, we each have a dark abyss of our minds where fear and anxiety lurk. Just like diving into the sea, the deeper we go into the recesses of our mind, the more the immense pressure pulls us further and further into its depths.

So, what do we do when we find ourselves in the shadowy cold, anxious and alone? How do we resurface with hope instead of giving in to greater despair? To answer this, we must uncover common sources of anxiety, realize the dangerous effects it has on us, and understand where we can find authentic rest.

INHALING ANXIETY

Anxiety, or worry, is the great equalizer because it's a condition that touches each human heart no matter what country or culture you live in.

Whether it appears as a minor affliction or wages war as a paralyzing enemy, it lives in us all because of our sinful nature. In Genesis chapter three, Adam and Eve disobeyed God, allowing

sin to corrupt the perfect relationship they had. Because they were the parents of the human race, they passed down sins like distrust, panic, fear, guilt, shame, and the need for control. These sins would reside in the hearts of each person that would ever be born. Thousands of years later, the effects of the fall can be seen when we stress out about being on time, worry about the last \$10 in our bank account, or lose sleep over relationships. Sources of anxiety are all around us.

“CHRIST DESIRES FOR ALL TO BE CONFIDENT IN HIM.”

The first, and perhaps most prevalent, source of anxiety is technology. Have you ever scrolled through Netflix only to waste time making sure you pick the very best option? If you're like me, you worry that you've wasted too much time searching or that whatever you do pick won't be the consensus of the group you're watching with. This is a petty example, but a more severe one is the life we portray on social media. When we don't get enough likes on Facebook or enough hearts double-tapped on Instagram, we start to doubt if people even like us anymore. We spend hours curating the perfect post, read into comments (or the lack thereof), and crumble when we haven't garnered the desired outcome.

Another source of anxiety is striving. We strive for the best test scores so we can get into the best schools. We strive to get our degree so we can get the best

job (immediately). We strive to find our spouse, our house, and so on and so forth, until we die. Jonathan Parnell, an author on DesiringGod.org, explains it like this: "...simultaneous to the endless churning and mulling and doing to be bigger, better, and more popular, is the insatiable buying and earning and trading to get bigger, better, and more popular things. The result is restlessness."¹ Regardless of what stage of life you're at, striving for what's next never goes away. If you're not careful, the restlessness Parnell speaks of will follow you into each passing decade.

Next, a popular misconception about Christianity is that once you begin a relationship with God, you're supposed to trust Christ perfectly and never doubt Him. In reality, Christians are not immune from navigating the treacherous waters of anxiety. If you are a Christian struggling with anxiety, take a hard look at your relationship with Christ to find the source. Are you spending time reading the Bible and in prayer to maintain a healthy relationship with Him? Are you part of a local church or are you trying to do this Christian thing on your own? Is there any disobedience to repent of? Though troubles like these will arise from time to time, it is no place to be content. Christ desires for all of us to be confident in Him, and this type of confidence and anxiety cannot coexist.

Finally, the fear of missing out (FOMO) is a heart condition that we often relinquish control to. It occurs when we feel excluded from social gatherings, desire to have what our friends do, or

make life decisions based on incorrect perceptions of others. This type of social anxiety leads to insecurity in who we are and what we have been given. Svend Brinkmann, professor of psychology at the University of Aalborg in Denmark agrees with the futility of FOMO: "We cannot possibly satisfy an endless craving for more and more, or say that enough is ever enough."² Our problem lies in the dissatisfaction with what we have and a gross misunderstanding of what would satiate our desires. When we chase the fear of missing out to its fullest extent, it leaves us burnt out and breathless yet convinced that we must keep going.

RUNNING OUT OF BREATH

Once we recognize what makes us anxious, we need to admit how dangerous it is. Because it's such a widespread phenomenon, we rationalize by saying, "I worry, but it's not that bad." If we're not debilitated in a psychiatric ward, we think we're doing alright. However, Pastor John Piper warns us of the path anxiety can take:

"Think about how many other sins are connected to the root sin of anxiety. Anxiety about money will cause you to hoard or steal. Anxiety about succeeding will make you irritable and impatient with those around you. Anxiety about relationships will make you withdrawn or indifferent toward other people. Anxiety about what others think about you will make you lie or stretch the truth. If anxiety could be conquered, a mortal blow would be struck to many other sins".³

¹ Parnell, J. Rest Because You Can, www.DesiringGod.com

² Brinkmann, S. Quit Indulging Your FOMO, and Embrace the Joy of Missing Out. www.nbcnews.com

³ Gear, J.D. Smoke From a Fire, www.summitchurch.com

⁴ Bloom, J. Talk to God About Your Anxiety. www.desiringgod.com

“ANXIETY DOESN'T JUST GO AWAY. WE MUST GIVE IT TO HIM.”

Because anxiety begins in our mind, we can let our emotions and imagination get out of control. Have you ever had an imaginary conversation with someone in your mind? Has it ever been so realistic you must pause to wonder if it actually happened? Author Jon Bloom describes the disastrous consequences: “Before we know it, we have engaged in a lengthy argument in our heads that arouses all kinds of sinful emotions and leads us to think and feel uncharitably toward the real person. But we haven’t talked to them at all. We’ve talked to our anxiety — we’ve talked to ourselves and sinned not only in indulging faithless anxiety, but in failing to love that person.”⁴ If we’re not careful, our anxiety will bleed onto the ones we love and we’ll damage our relationships.

Jesus Himself frequently addressed the topic of worry and anxiety in the New Testament. He takes a very logical approach to its futility when He says, “Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?” (Matthew 6:27, NLT). When we’re in the midst of our anxiety, we assume that focusing on the issue to find a resolution is the best thing to do. But, if our solution doesn’t come, it only produces more worry. Jesus has to point out to us that worrying is not productive. We will not come to our solution faster or easier by doing so. Ironically, anxiety only breeds more anxiety. So, how do we stop the cycle? How do we successfully rise above the battle that rages in our mind?

COMING TO THE SURFACE

Many attempts are made to eliminate our anxiety. We numb it with entertainment, alcohol, and “trying harder.” We go from friend to friend to friend oversharing our problems, seeking a resolution from another sinful human. We get prescriptions to make it go away without facing the root cause. These methods are like trying to put a bandage over a bullet wound. How does Jesus tell us to deal with it? He says, “give it to me.”

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28, NIV).

Simply put, if we are the source of anxiety, we cannot possibly be the remedy. Jesus knew from the time Adam and Eve disobeyed that we needed a Rescuer. The events of the Old and New Testaments detail the course He took to come to earth, face undeserved crucifixion, and beat the power of death through resurrection all so that we would be spared the death we deserve. Because of His great love for us, Jesus *wants* to give us His rest and take on our anxiety. Again, even in this scenario, our

anxiety doesn’t just go away. We must give it to Him.

Paul, an apostle and writer of most of the New Testament, reiterates how we are to give our worries to God, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7, ESV). If we pray our anxieties to Him, thank Him for who He is and what He’s done, He says He’ll give us “*peace which surpasses all understanding.*” That is peace the world does not offer.

Peace and rest are things we must fight for. They do not come naturally because of our sinful nature, and we also have an enemy who seeks to destroy us.⁵ Therefore, when anxiety fills your mind, be on the offensive with prayer and petition, like Paul said. Also, keep perspective on the future. The battles we face now are momentary and not worth compromising our eternity over. Finally, when you are in a season of peace, *savor it* because more battles are coming. Log it in your mind for the future and the next time you are anxious remember how good God has been to you.

Because of Christ, we have hope to rise to the surface when we’ve sunk to the bottom of the deep dark sea. The pressure of our fear and anxiety cannot keep us down when we have the resolve in our minds and hearts to follow Him. When Jesus tells us not to worry, we shouldn’t brush it off as an impossible feat. Anything, in Christ, is possible.⁶ Jon Bloom puts it like this:

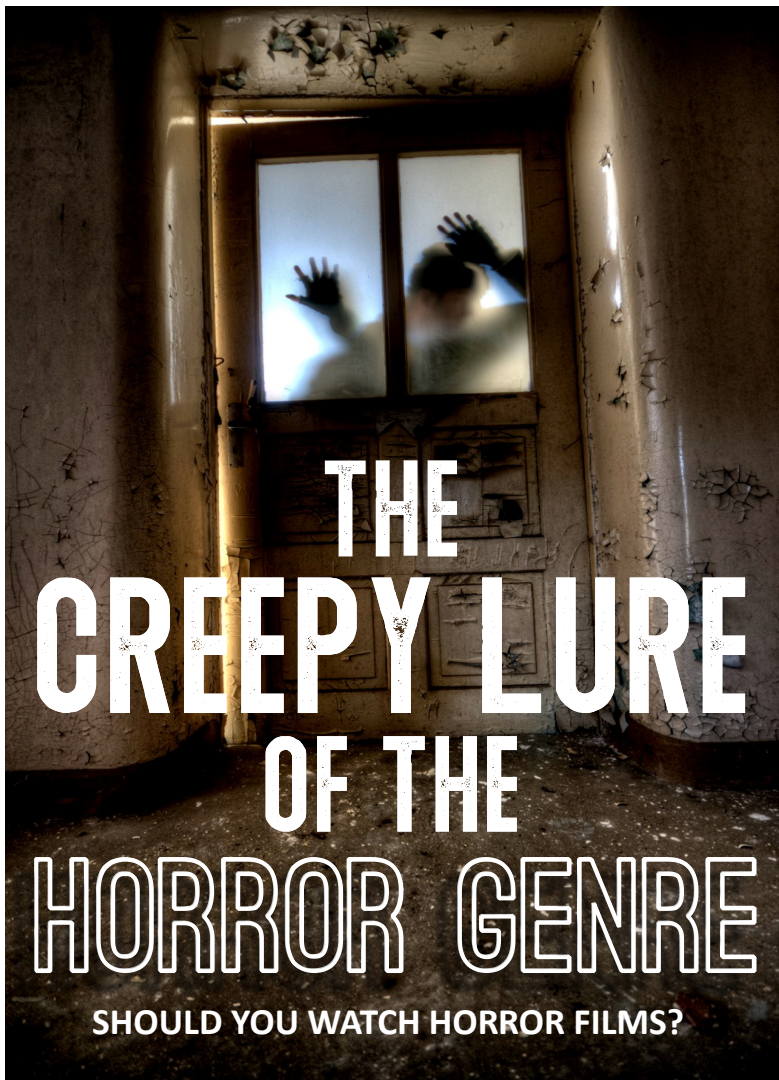
“In Christ, everything is going to be ultimately, gloriously, eternally, inexpressibly, wonderfully okay. Therefore, Jesus says to you and me, right now, right where we’re at, “Do not be anxious.” He says this knowing our past, our temperament, the seriousness of our current crises, and how intense we fear the possible dread may become reality.”⁷

Despite the dark, cold, isolation that surrounded diver Anthony Williams, he refused to give in to the panic that threatened his very life. However, he only needed to endure for a few minutes. Our anxieties can linger for a week, stick around for a month, or devastate us for a year, and sometimes longer. When we are in too deep to come up on our own, Jesus is our only hope to return to the surface. Cry out into the dark abyss; He’s closer than you think.

⁵1 Peter 5:8, NIV

⁶Matthew 19:26, NIV

⁷Bloom, J. Talk to God About Your Anxiety. www.desiringgod.com



“FEAR IS TERRIFYING, BUT WHEN IT COMES TO WATCHING A HORROR FILM, SOMETHING SHIFTS AND IT BECOMES A FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT INSTEAD.”

commentary by reflecting the reality of our world. So, what does the Bible say about it? While there is no such command as, “thou shalt not watcheth scary movies”, Psalm 119:37, however, says to “turn my eyes from worthless things.” This raises another question about what “worthless things” means.

Horror movies have difficult, shocking, imagery in them, but that doesn’t deem them worthless right away. The Bible uses unsettling and difficult imagery to convey God’s messages, moral themes, truth, and the spiritual state of humans too, but there is a difference. From the plagues in Exodus, living creatures in Ezekiel, to the demon-possessed man in Mark, and onto the prophetic imagery of Revelation, God does not sugarcoat the reality of how things are right now or will be in the future. Often the deeper moral meaning the horror filmmakers were going for is lost or outright absent in the violence, unlike the Bible. The Bible is the inspired Word of God, and “All scripture is profitable for instruction” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God’s Word depicts these things to teach and guide while horror films often, but not always, use it to simply shock us and gross us out. It can be tricky, but how do you tell the good films from the bad films biblically or morally without fully exposing yourself to the film first?

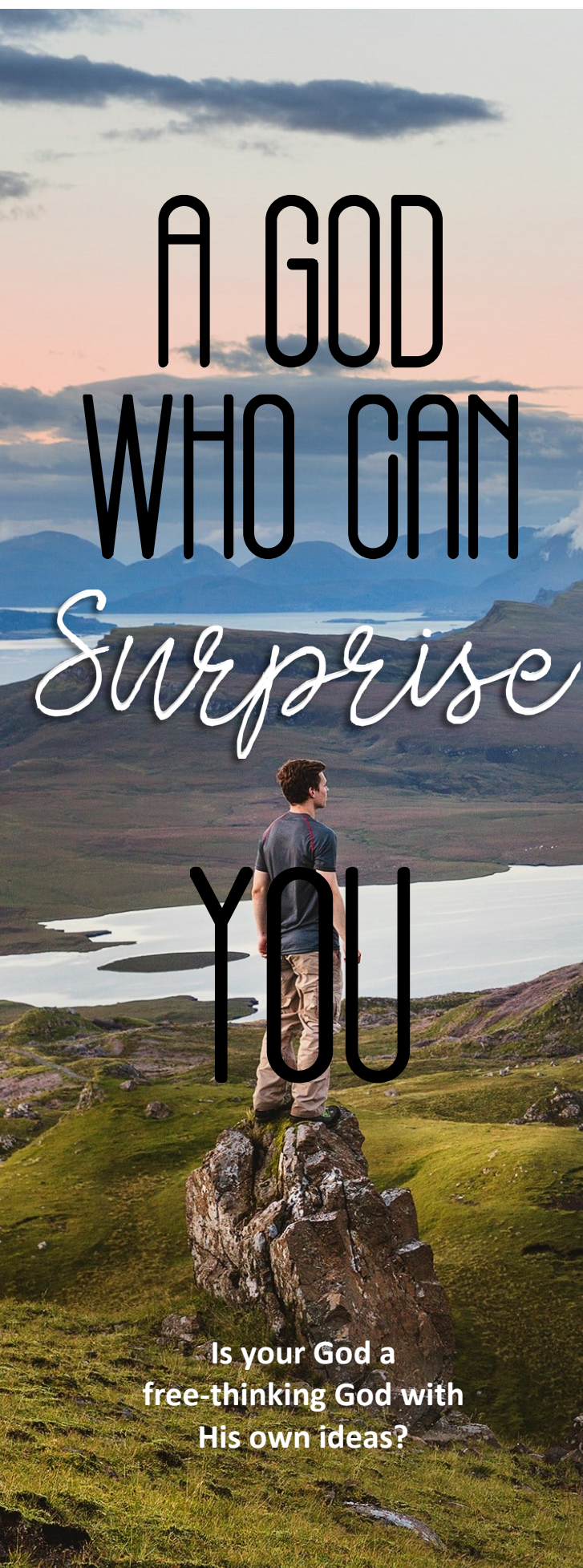
If you’re not convicted by these films upfront before seeing them, which is fine, check a few reviews (spoiler-free of course) to discern if it’s a gratuitous bloodbath or, if you’re lucky, something with a little more substance to it. Next, ask yourself why you want to watch these movies. Don’t be fooled, not all horror stories serve a moral purpose. Some do, and some are truly garbage cinema that not even pretentious film snobs would enjoy critiquing. Answering if you should watch these movies ultimately comes down to your conscience. The Bible calls us to be wise as serpents, to be in the world but not of the world, and to not love the things of the world. Listen to your conscience and think. For one individual, watching a horror film may very well be the wrong thing to do, but not for another.

Do you watch horror films? Why or why not?

Send your comments our way at wotsmagazine@gmail.com

A Adrenaline spikes. Blood pounds through your veins. Your heart beats wildly in your chest. What could be lurking behind you? Do you run? Do you hide? Is someone there? Fear is terrifying, but when it comes to watching a horror film, something shifts and it becomes a form of entertainment instead. Horror films like *It* (2017), *Jaws* (1975), *Halloween* (1978), *Scream* (1996), and the 1980’s Freddy & Jason juggernauts have found massive financial success and have revolutionized film. Modern horror stories like *Stranger Things* (2016) and beloved films with horror elements like *Jurassic Park* and *Jurassic World* (1993, 2015) have a huge influence in pop culture. However, many people avoid the horror genre because it’s too uncomfortable for them. Others, intrigued, aren’t sure if it’s the right thing to do, and still others genuinely enjoy them. Are any one of these approaches correct for a Christian?

At the basic level, a horror movie is a story pitting evil against good, their relationship to one another, and survival. The horror genre relies on fear, unsettling circumstances, and often supernatural elements and themes to deliver that message. It is meant to entertain, but many also try to provide social



A GOD WHO CAN *Surprise* YOU

Is your God a
free-thinking God with
His own ideas?

M

Many different ideas about God exist. Many religions. Many philosophies. Many opinions.

In your hands you are holding a Christian publication. You should not be surprised to learn that the writer of this article and his friends take their views about God from the Bible. It may seem old-fashioned that anyone still does... But there are lots of us - tons - almost 2.5 billion, in fact.

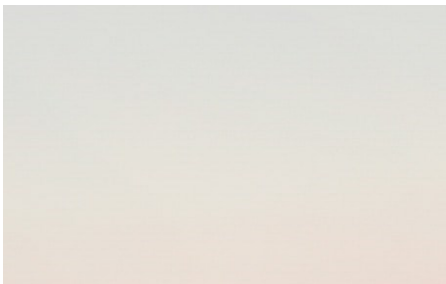
This fact was a surprise to me ten years ago. I had a stunted understanding of the world (read: “shallow”, “naive”, “highly judgmental”). It’s not that I didn’t know facts about people, places, and religions. It’s just that my over-confidence in what I believed completely eradicated any and all value of their traditions, character, and intelligence. They were stupid. I didn’t agree with them... so they were stupid. Including Christians. I wasn’t one at the time, and didn’t know any, but I knew that they were wrong and I was right (but I digress...).

Within this near-majority of the world’s population that identifies as “Christian”, you will find a variety of ideas about God.

Some take their scriptures literally and believe Him to be exactly as He is described in the Bible. The good stuff (“God so loved the world”), the bad stuff (the Wrath...), the confusing stuff (God is three people?), and the uncomfortable stuff (God does whatever He wants to do...). Even when God proves to be so complex of a character that it is confusing or uncomfortable - these people accept that God as their God.

Some will pick and choose which parts to believe based on what makes the most sense to them, what appeals to them the most, etc. Often times this is a good place to start. But do you see the error in this? They are choosing their own designer god.

Imagine that your romantic pursuits followed the same process: you have an idea of who/what you would like for a partner to be, you meet a nice girl or guy, and a lot of who they agree with you, but not all of it. There are things that you don’t like about them. So what do you do? Be honest. Many of us will try to change them.



Movies have been made about this. Re-makes starring Nicole Kidman have been made about this. Have you seen *The Stepford Wives*? The men of a small town in America had grown tired of their wives having contradictory views to theirs, so they turned their wives into robots who serve them and never disagree with anything the husbands say, do, or think, giving them the “perfect relationship”.

But that’s not romance; it’s not even a relationship. It will never take their breath away or sweep them off their feet. Nothing their robot wife says or does will ever surprise them after being programmed to be the spouse their husband wanted them to be.

Imagine if this is how you chose friends. They always agree with you, never challenge you, and always support your decisions. How would you grow as a human being? You wouldn’t. You couldn’t. You don’t...

Remember when I said the version of myself ten years ago was a stunted, judgmental, know-it-all? Yeah, that guy didn’t have any friends. The people he knew had to agree with him AND be as up-to-speed as he was on how the world worked to deserve his time. So he gradually spent more and more of it alone. He didn’t learn anything new, or have his worldview stretched to new heights. He wasn’t surprised by anything because he already knew it all.

Now, imagine if you did this to the form of god you believe in. You have ideas about who God is and how He is supposed to operate. You pick a religion that agrees with your existing viewpoints. Or, you pick out some facts and characteristics about this god that agree with you, and reject the ones that don’t. But nevertheless you decide on who you want God to be.

I assume that if you are choosing to have “any” God there is a spiritual factor of life that you

are attempting to experience. It’s not wrong to have expectations of how it might go. But I don’t believe that your choosing who God “is” will ever take you to the place you’re seeking.

Will this god—your created god—open your eyes to new truths about the world? Not if you choose your god based on your existing beliefs about the world.

Will this god make you into a better person: more forgiving, more generous, more loving? Not if your definition of love determines whether the god you choose is loving enough, or loving at all.

Will this god ever surprise you? No, and he will be a boring god to follow...

Many people languish in their faith as they attempt to follow a god. And I know many who currently are... This is not a deep truth or a gem of wisdom through analysis of their lives, but here is my assessment: they seem bored. God is not exciting to them. He never surprises them. He doesn’t captivate their imagination or satisfy their desire for adventure.

I don’t have an exact answer for any of them.

But I am one of the people who believe the Bible literally. And my experience learning to know that God—the one, true God—has been anything but boring. He surprises me often. He constantly challenges my views on life, who I should be, and what I should be doing.

And this does not make me insecure in my convictions. It hasn’t changed me into a drone of a person. It has actually unlocked for me the entire purpose of life and set me onto an adventure far beyond my dreaming.

Oftentimes I get in the way of this process, like a stubborn house cat ignoring her owners’ calls. But my God surprises me as often as I let Him. Does yours?



Check THIS OUT!

THE UNIQUE FINDS AND REVIEWS OF MUSIC, BOOKS, AND MORE.

THE GOOD CHRISTIAN MUSIC BLOG

T

The Good Christian Music Blog (GCMB) is a website and Spotify account run by one full time employee, Stephen Bradley, who created the website back in 2012 while he was still in college. His goal is to support artists and music fans by developing relationships through music, and getting listeners in touch with the most underground, exciting Christian music out there. Music hosted on the site includes genres like hip-hop, rock, indie, pop, electronic, instrumental, R&B, folk, blues, jazz, bluegrass, and so many more subgenres and categories.

Our Top 4 Recommended Playlists:

1. IN THE QUIET

Restful and worshipful music put together for quiet and peaceful moments.

2. CHRISTIAN DANCE PARTY

It's the groove you never knew you needed.

3. THE GOOD CHRISTIAN MUSIC BLOG

Uniquely pieced together and updated weekly for your interest.

4. GOD GRIND

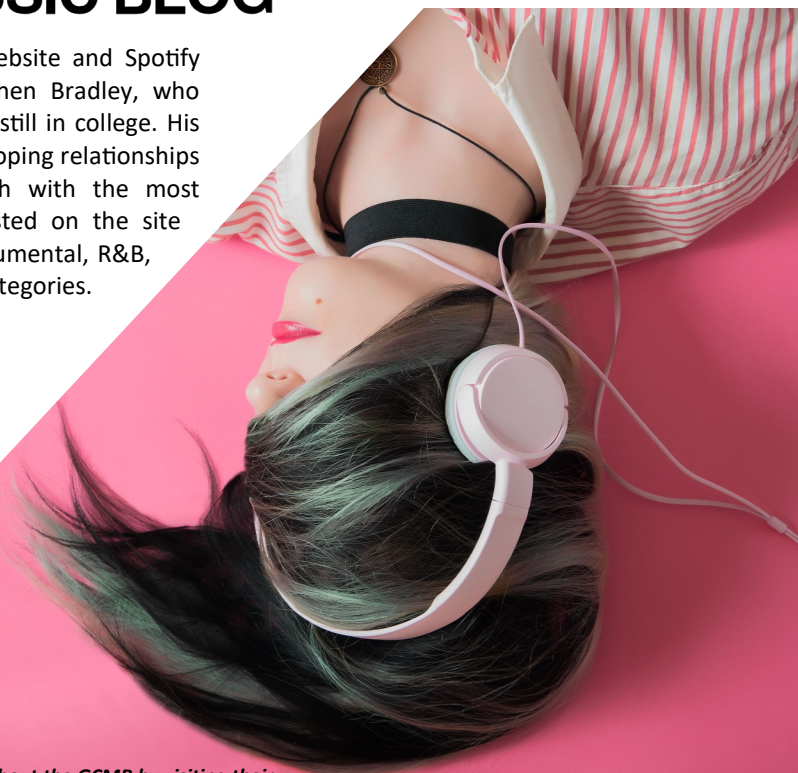
The fire you need to get you going in the morning or during a workout.

You can find out more info about the GCMB by visiting their:

Website: thegoodchristianmusicblog.com/

YouTube Channel: [youtube.com/user/TheGCMBlog](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheGCMBlog)

Spotify Account: [thegoodchristianmusicblog](https://open.spotify.com/user/thegoodchristianmusicblog)



T

This group of Christians writes theatrical and tasteful worship music based solely upon Scripture. It's music that simply proclaims the gospel. They've composed musical commentary to Hebrews and Romans as well as their newest addition, Jude. It's beautiful and edifying to hear Scripture in such a well-composed way. Psallos sticks to their Greek name origin of "making a melody to the Lord," creating a dynamic way listeners can join in worshipping God. You can find them all over the Internet, including Spotify, YouTube, their website (psallos.com), iTunes and more.



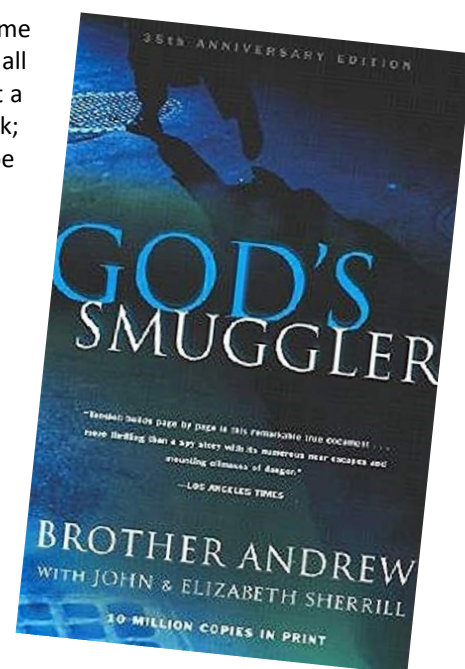
GOD'S SMUGGLER

BY BROTHER ANDREW

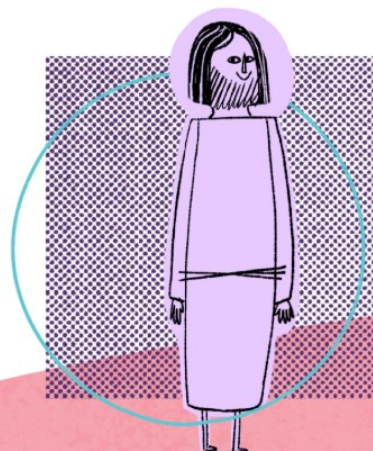
God's Smuggler, a true-life thriller, will take you on a wild journey. The book follows a young boy who pranked Nazi generals who later became a man smuggling Bibles beyond the "Iron Curtain" at the height of the Cold War. Before he was known as Brother Andrew, he was simply Andy: a young, scrappy guy. He wore a straw hat into battle, he owned a pet monkey, did odd factory jobs, searched for love, and most importantly, came to know and trust in God. This resulted in oppression from family and friends who thought he was crazy for being a "non-traditional" Christian. Then there was, of course, the smuggling! "Lord in my luggage I have Scripture I want to take to your children. When you were on earth, You made blind eyes see. Now, I pray, make seeing eyes blind. Do not let the guards see those things you do not want them to see." You'll read about the miracle car, which against all odds kept running despite being in no working condition. Brother Andrew was not alone through it all.

He meets his love and some friends along the way who all labor together. There is not a dull moment in this book; you will not be disappointed!

"Whenever, wherever, however You want me, I'll go. And I'll begin this very minute. Lord, as I stand up from this place, and as I take my first step forward, will You consider this is a step toward complete obedience to You? I'll call it the step of yes."
- Brother Andrew

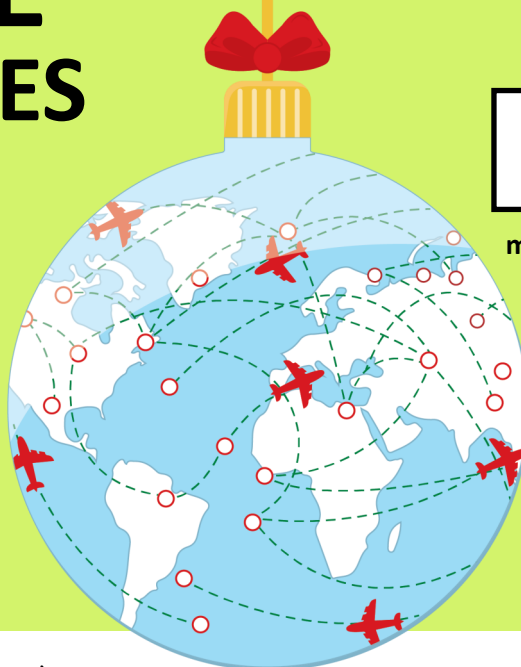


Have you ever wondered what angels really look like or what sin is? From word studies to deeper insights into the Old and New Testaments, The Bible Project provides free materials to aid the Bible reader. Don't know how to read the Bible? There is material for that, too. They have an app if you don't know where to start (find it in the Play Store titled 'Read Scripture' by Crazy Love Ministries). Could it get more awesome? Yes, it could. The Bible Project is available in many other languages including Spanish, German, Hindi, French, Russian, Polish, Mandarin, Hungarian, Vietnamese, Cantonese and more. It's available on iTunes, Google Podcasts, Spotify, and their website at thebibleproject.com.



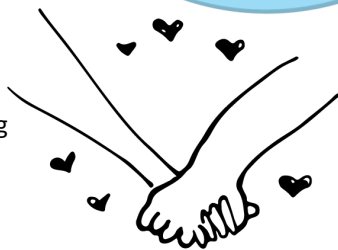
LET THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN!

HOW A VARIETY OF CULTURES CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

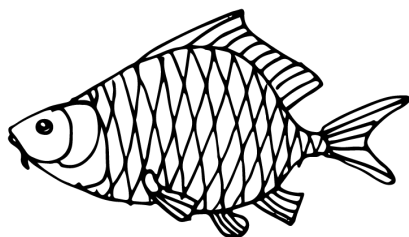


The birth of Jesus is celebrated every year by millions of people, and depending on where you are, what that means exactly varies greatly. Do you celebrate Christmas by yourself or with family? Do you explore villages or take a stroll through lights? Or, do you just hang out on the beach with some BBQ? Read on to discover some of the traditions from around the world, from the expected to the “they do what?” moments.

JAPAN In Japan, Christmas is considered a romantic day for couples, so the day is spent treating themselves on dates.



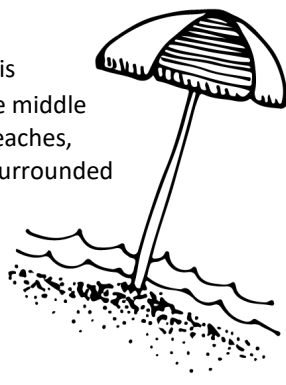
PHILIPPINES You might hear Christmas carols as early as September! Actual festivities begin around December 16th with extravagant light displays.



POLAND They serve carp on Christmas because the scales of the fish symbolize good luck to whoever serves Christmas dinner.

MEXICO Here they celebrate Three King's Day, which celebrates the wise men's arrival to see baby Jesus.

AUSTRALIA Christmas is celebrated by cooling off in the middle of their summer by going to beaches, having barbeques, and being surrounded by friends and family.

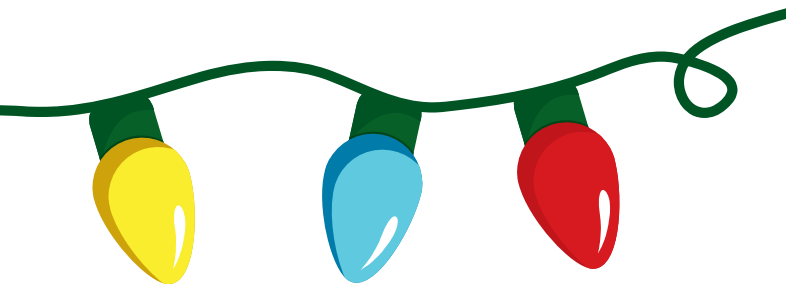


EL SALVADOR Christmas is celebrated by writing letters to Jesus instead of Santa Claus and lighting off firecrackers and other fireworks.



NIGERIA Christmas celebrations last all day on Christmas Eve with food, family, and friends.

GHANA Father Christmas, or rather Papa Bronya, is someone who wears sandals and a beautiful red robe trimmed in golden fabric. He gives out delicious things to eat instead of toys.



UNITED STATES Americans leave milk and cookies out for Santa to snack on between houses while delivering gifts. They also consume eggnog (a one-of-a-kind drink you'll either hate or love) around Christmas dinner.

UKRAINE & ETHIOPIA

Ukrainians and Ethiopians follow the Julian calendar, so they celebrate Christmas on January 7th. Traditionally people fast and on Christmas day they celebrate with a feast.



INDIA Christmas is considered a minor holiday, but decorations include large, colorful paper lanterns.

BRAZIL Brazilians celebrate Christmas by having decoration contests in their neighborhoods followed by a late evening (think 10 p.m. or 11 p.m.) Christmas Eve dinner.

NETHERLANDS One of the largest Christmas trees you could ever hope to see is lit up in the middle of Dam Square in downtown Amsterdam. It towers over 20 meters tall and has four kilometers of energy-saving fairy lights wrapped around it.



UNITED KINGDOM They hang stockings at the foot of their beds to receive presents in them.



A

A WOTS writer recently had lunch with an 84-year-old man. Since we are onto our 80th issue, it sparked a thought to find out more about this man and his journeys.

Q: WHAT WAS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY FROM CHILDHOOD?

A: Sitting with my family in the living room as it came across the radio that we had victory in WWII and the war was over.

Q: WHAT COLLEGE DID YOU ATTEND?

A: I received my Bachelor's at UW- Stevens Point and a Master's from UW- Madison. I don't remember how much my tuition was, but I could pay it all just by working during the summers.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY FROM COLLEGE?

A: Taking ecology as a sophomore in a class that was only reserved for Juniors and Seniors. I might've pulled some strings.

Q: WHAT WAS YOUR PROFESSION?

A: I was a biology teacher because I've always had a care for conservation and the environment. I also loved coaching track and one year we even took second at the state track meet.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE OUT THERE?

A: Learn to talk to people face to face! Don't hide behind your phone and social media.

Q: WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING 80-SOMETHING?

A: I feel very blessed and fortunate to be around yet. Many of my friends and peers are either in the nursing home or have passed on. I have found the biggest blessing in finding God and a good church. Certainly there are some regrets; God was missing from my life for many years. But there is still life to live. I'd like to do or accomplish more but there is joy in what I am doing.

VOLUNTEERING IN DUNN COUNTY

HELP OUT AT THESE
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS!

D

Dunn County has several places where you can volunteer to fight against homelessness, hunger, and poverty. You can even work with animals! Whether you're looking for volunteer hours for a class or just looking to make a difference Dunn County has something for you.



Located just about a mile east of campus, Stepping Stones is a local food pantry that provides groceries to low-income families and even college students. Their aim is to prevent hunger, homelessness, and isolation. Within the winter months, there is housing available for the homeless through a program called Winter Haven.

So, how can you help? You can fill out a volunteer application and be able to work food shelter shifts or overnight shifts when the Winter Haven program starts. For more information you can contact the volunteering director at: communityconnect@steppingstonesdc.org or visit their website www.steppingstonesdc.org



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Wisconsin is part of a national organization dedicated to impacting the lives of children who are facing adversity in their young lives, such as experiencing poverty or coping with an incarcerated parent. Volunteers ("bigs") are asked to commit to one year of hanging out with their assigned child ("little") for at least an hour once a week. Hangout time could include going for a walk, painting your nails together, going to a ball game, watching a movie or just spending time together swapping stories! The biggest need is for male volunteers. Two out of three "littles" who are waiting for a "big" are boys, but only one out of three volunteer applicants are men.

If you're interested in becoming a big brother or big sister, email info@bbbsnw.org or call 800-648-1696 to receive more information and an application.



Have pets back home and miss them? Check out the humane society to be able to help some furry friends! Serving homeless animals since 1993, this organization located just a mile west of campus has many opportunities to serve these animals.

For \$20 (\$15 for students in Dunn County) you have the opportunity to go through a volunteer class to learn how to properly handle and care for the animals at the shelter. You also receive a t-shirt upon completion of the class. The class will enable you to help socialize, brush, and walk the animals at the shelter.

To find out more info about volunteering or to browse the adoptable pets, visit their website: dunncountyhumanesociety.org

FUEL UP FOR THE WEEKEND

\$2 Student Breakfast

Saturdays 9am-12pm

w/student ID

Breakfasts Rotate Each Week




THE BLIND MUNCHIES COFFEEHOUSE
 YOUR LOCAL NON-PROFIT COFFEEHOUSE
621 WILSON AVE, MENOMONIE
 THEBLINDMUNCHIES.COM A BRANCH OF STREET LEVEL MINISTRIES

STREET LEVEL

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXCHANGE



Street Level International Community
 text 715-307-1500 for more information



NICK THE HICK

Another rant from your favorite redneck



THE GREAT STATE OF...

Wisconsin is the greatest state in the USA. Sorry Texas, endure a winter and we'll talk. Since you live in the greatest state you could benefit from a little lesson on the proper speech and tongue for this land you currently call home. Memorize the following terms and gain notoriety with the locals, and get that look from your friends. Start by addressing a group of people as "yous guys," right from the get go you have established that you really mean buisness. What sounds more clear, confident, and to the point? "Have you guys seen my Frisbee"? or "Yous guys seen my Frisbee?" Clearly the second. When your in a pickle and need to think on your feet use "Ya Know" as a filler phrase. Ya know I really couldn't get my assignment done because of the gosh darn neighbors loud music ya know. Using Ya know twice in one sentence emphasizes the fact you have some passion about what you're talking about. Try "come here once" or "let me see dat one time"? It's about sounding less aggressive or like you're not demanding too much. It's yet another way we get the friendly vote. Ask a favor and then add "real quick" or "really quick" to the end of it, we aren't talking about speed. We're simply trying to make it seem like the favor is no big deal. For instance, someone might ask, "Can you stop at da store real quick before you come home? I got a meatloaf in da oven." These are all a sure way to spice up your speech. Give er a shot.



Street Level Ministries

A UW-STOUT ORGANIZATION

DO SOMETHING GREAT.

UW-STOUT // MONDAYS

DINNER 6PM // BIBLE STUDY 7PM

STREET LEVEL HOUSE // 1009 6TH ST E MENOMONIE

STREETLEVELMINISTRIES.COM // STREETLEVEL@UWSTOUT.EDU // 715.235.4977