Tyler Reagin and his team are challenging leaders who love the Church to find the courage to embrace and radiate bold change.

8 FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EBOLA + THE BRIDGE OVER THE VIRUS
The Bible is meant to be **BREAD** for daily use, not **CAKE** for special occasions.
The 30 Day Bible Challenge

God gave us basic instructions before leaving Earth, the Bible. Join us in this 30 day challenge to walk closer with Him.

DAY 1: PSALM 1
DAY 2: ROMANS 3:21-28
DAY 3: COLOSSIANS 3:12-17
DAY 4: LAMENTATIONS 3:19-32
DAY 5: 1 JOHN 1:5-2:2
DAY 6: JOHN 15:1-8
DAY 7: JOB 38:1-11
DAY 8: MATTHEW 7:1-8
DAY 9: JAMES 1:19-27
DAY 10: ISAIAH 53:1-6
DAY 11: ISAIAH 53:7-12
DAY 12: ROMANS 5:1-11
DAY 13: PROVERBS 3:1-12
DAY 14: LUKE 15:1-10
DAY 15: GENESIS 1:1-8
DAY 16: JOHN 3:14-21
DAY 17: ACTS 20:17-28
DAY 18: PSALM 119:97-104
DAY 19: DEUTERONOMY 17:14-20
DAY 20: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21
DAY 21: REVELATIONS 5:9-14
DAY 22: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-25
DAY 23: ACTS 4: 8-13
DAY 24: LUKE 18: 1-8
DAY 25: PSALM 19:1-6
DAY 26: 1 PETER 4:10-16
DAY 27: HEBREWS 10:17-25
DAY 28: PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11
DAY 29: REVELATION 22:16-21
DAY 30: CHOOSE YOUR OWN
features
6 Crucified Life by Kory Douglas
8 Catalyst 2014: Change Makers
11 Run the Race with Robert Madu
14 My Sabbath Testimony by LaTosha Jones
17 Ebola Ready or Not
18 The Bible: The Bridge Over Ebola

B2B Tip:

As we are made new in Christ, our very natures change and we no longer want to go back to our old ways.

Welcome to the Catalyst issue! What is something you want to change? Could it be the Ebola virus that is wreaking havoc and causing fear? Or maybe it’s your day to day routine, always running here and there with no rest? We have answers for you through testimony and practical observations. Earlier this month we experienced the Catalyst event in Atlanta, GA where the theme was “Change Makers.” Our key takeaway is this is your moment to create change! Beginning in your mind, your thoughts right now are creating your future life. You cannot change anything with intention alone. It requires action on your part to rise to the challenge and you must be prepared to change.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
2 Corinthians 5:17
A Night of Love and Soul is the beginning of a movement with Back2Basics. This event will bring the content of B2B to life with featured guests from the magazine. Couples will come together to enjoy a night of great music, awesome insights and enriching interactions with others who value meaningful, Christ centered relationships. The live band will serenade the crowd with soulful music and fun!

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

02.14.15

A NIGHT OF LOVE & SOUL

DENVER
I sometimes wear this t-shirt that I made. On the chest, in brackets, is the word crucified in red lettering. It denotes that I am the one that has been crucified. Underneath it is the bible verse Galatians 2:20. The shirt is indicative of a few things. First, as I strive to live a crucified life, I wear the shirt to remind myself that that is the goal. I also wear the shirt because as a young man that tries to be fashionable, it hard to find clothing that is modest even for a guy. I mean I have to contend with low-rise jeans for men. Really? Then on top of that I find that much of the messages being printed on shirts these days are in direct opposition to what I believe. One of my favorite shirts for a long time had to be retired after I realized that it was advertising a homosexual band that was formed for the purpose of promoting the lifestyle. The shirt is also a brand, because I believe that I am the brand of Christ. So I wear the shirt for many reasons.

But the honest truth is that wearing the shirt is a lot easier than living the life. Wearing “crucified” tee is much easier than living the crucified life. And, for me there is a lot of confusion over what it means to live a crucified life. I’ve grown up in a church that is not necessarily legalistic, but have a tendency to present the gospel in a way that is legalistic. On the other hand, I read the gospel and it says that, “‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.” It also says that I am saved by grace through faith, and not of myself but that it is a gift of God. So I have to reconcile in my mind what it means to live crucified if salvation is free. Some say, “well I can live the way I want.” But, Paul says, “Never let it be so.”

I look at the way that I live; trying to live up to standards, trying to look a certain way, act a certain way, and talk a certain way. Sometimes I feel like I am in bondage, I’m just gonna be real! On the other hand I meet other Christians, like a pastor that I have made really good friends with, who is not afraid to admit that every now and then a few guys from his church meet to discuss biblical manhood and then have a beer afterwards. So there is that tension of do I work, how do I live a crucified life, or do I live anyway I want to? The unfortunate thing is that the tension has driven a lot of us to live however we want to.

James says that faith without works is dead. So, I have to take on this mode of thinking that says that I don’t work to save myself. Instead what I do, I do in honor of the good work that God says he is going to do in my life. I do it in honor of the things that I know he is going to accomplish. That’s how I love a crucified life. That’s how I die trying.

www.back2basicsmag.com | 6
DYING TO SELF

Source Unknown

When you are forgotten or neglected and you don’t hurt with
the insult, but your heart is happy—that is dying to self.

When your advice is disregarded, your opinions ridiculed, and
you refuse to let anger rise in your heart, and take it all in
patient, loving silence—that is dying to self.

When you lovingly and patiently bear disorder, irregularity,
tardiness, and annoyance…and endure it as Jesus endured
it—that is dying to self.

When you never care to refer to yourself in conversation or
record your own good works, or itch for praise after an
accomplishment, when you can truly love to be unknown…
that is dying to self.

When you can see your brother or sister prosper and can
honestly rejoice with him, and feel no envy even though
your needs are greater—that is dying to self.

When you are content with any food, any offering, any raiment,
any climate, or any society—that is dying to self.

When you can take correction, when you can humbly submit
inwardly as well as outwardly, with no rebellion or
resentment rising up within your heart—that is dying to
self.
B2B attended the 2014 Catalyst Conference in Atlanta on October 2. Our take-away message for our readers from the dynamic speakers is “We are change makers.” With the opening questions of “Who are you?” and “What breaks your heart?” 10,000 Catalyst leaders were challenged to be change makers in their various communities. We sat down with Tyler Reagin, executive director of Catalyst for Q & A on change.

Tell us how you and the Catalyst team are able to absorb the content and experience Catalyst personally.

I’d say that there’s a two-fold kind of thing, maybe three, but one is as we prepare and as we connect with Andy and Christine and these folks, they craft what we want to talk about. We start already wrestling with this content; it’s so interesting for us. We get to Atlanta specifically, Atlanta is where we start a new theme for the year so it’s all new videos and stories. Over the last 6 months, we’ve already been so knee-deep in creativity around the stories so we’re already being ministered to by, just the stories of change that we’re going to share through video in the next two days. It brings tears to your eyes because these are men and women who are change makers who’ve had something happen in their life that stirred in them what we’re talking about today.

It started internally and now they’re doing something about it externally so that’s one part of it. Two is when we walk around, like I’ll be honest, I don’t get to hear a lot of the talks on these two days so we listen to them afterwards. I’ll go and after decompressing a little bit and really start listening to the content and go ‘wow.’ I’m in and out so I got to hear about 15 minutes of Christine who came and she just… I mean like what do you do with that right?!

We’re in this business to enjoy what we do and so when we get on site, we’re going to enjoy it and we’re going to have fun and we’ve done the hard decisions, we’ve made all the hard calls, we’ve done the hard work; yes there’s still things to do but if you don’t enjoy it, you’re in the wrong field because we get to experience the fruit of our labor, which it’s been a lot of labor. We have a small team, about 25 of us and you come to an event like this, you’re like how is that possible with 25 of you? It’s because we have amazing volunteers, and an amazing team around us and our team is really just today starting to go “Ahhh, we did it”, you know? we got to be a part of it.

At the end of the day, it’s not ours. It literally is, we’re just here and God goes, “I got this”, that’s where we land. So that’s a few ways that I feel like we try to wrestle it.
Does the team collective dialogue come back full circle to the Catalyst team?

The truth is we could do all this stuff and not let it be us. I think that’s something we’ve been wrestling with for a while is going, “How does Catalyst become an outflow of who we are as leaders?” We can’t lead leaders and not become leaders ourselves. Back to the lead up to this event, I feel like my job is to be the vision caster of this thing and constantly going “Listen team, here’s the thing we need to wrestle with…”. On Monday, a week ago, we had some prayer time and worship time at our office and in the middle of it, there was a phrase in one of those songs we were singing about a clean and pure heart and it just hit me like a ton of bricks and I said, “Team listen, I really sense that God wants us to deal with this right now.” I think all of us need to take a moment and ask that our hearts are pure as we’re head into next week. It’s almost like how do we set ourselves up to be in posture to receive from the Lord? The truth is, you know this and I know this, when you serve leaders, when you serve anybody, God just shows up.

How do you get back to basics in your walk with Christ?

I have a couple of thoughts. Probably number one on that list is that I go home and I’m a dad and a husband. To me that’s one of the most spiritual things that I get to do. My boys will be here in a little bit and for me to be able to foster in them a life of faith and to see that it’s more than just something you read in a book and it really is something that brings life and an abundant life. We talk about this idea of life in color, and that’s what Catalyst does, it gathers this group of non-drab, non-average leaders who are going, “We’re not ok with that, we’re not ok with it just being like that”. We truly want something that creates change and so a life in color, a place of abundance for me, I want to model that for my kids. I tell my team all the time, there’s things at the office that you can do for me but there’s nothing that you can do to be the dad to my kids and a husband to my wife. That’s very basic for me.

The second piece to this is, we just talked about it a minute ago but it’s the center of my leadership is serving. One of my interns asked me yesterday, she said, “When do you get the most fulfilled?” and I said, “Watching you guys succeed.” To have them succeed means I would need to serve and so I would say that’s a very basic principle for me that keeps me very grounded and going. I’m not a big deal at all, like I’m truly not, this – what God is doing – is a really big deal but the 25 of us that pray about it and work on it every week, we’re not, because we’re about His name, we’re about Jesus being lifted above all other names. The number one thing for Catalyst is that leaders know that they’re the heroes, not the people on the stage and that we’re here to serve them so I think our team, if we do those couple things – take care of our families, we take care of ourselves and then we serve each other, it’s right for us so it kind of falls into place.

It might not be what you’re called to do, it’s who you’re called to raise. We can’t all put our family on the altar at ministry, that’s not ok. I honestly believe for us to be a true community of change, we need to be healthy.
More than 10,000 attendees packed the Gwinnett Arena for Catalyst Atlanta to learn how to be a community of change-makers. Andy Stanley, senior pastor of NorthPoint Ministries (right), opened the first session of Catalyst Atlanta by diving right in to what breaks attendees’ hearts.

Christine Caine entertains the crowd by making Tripp and Tyler participate in push-ups before speaking on how effective leaders allow God to work in and through the soul.

Paul Taylor Smith leads worship in a session at Catalyst Atlanta (left).

Participants of Catalyst Atlanta challenged leaders who love the Church to embrace and radiate bold change.

Catalyst Atlanta kicked off its 15th year on Oct. 1. This is a 3-day conference of practical and courageous teaching that evokes change among today’s society.

Photo: James Vore
“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with ENDURANCE the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:1-2
HOW DO WE RUN THE RACE?

We run the race by keeping our eyes on Jesus. Hebrews talks about stripping ourselves of the things that hinders us and to run the race. Who are you racing?

1 Samuel tells us about David and how he did what he was told to do. Not only did he do it, he did it well. There was singing that praised Saul for killing thousands but David for killing tens of thousands.

>We tend to fix our eyes on others. We look for someone to compare ourselves to. Someone we were never called or created to be.

Our issues and problems arise because we have begun to try to be who we’re not. We’re becoming inauthentic.

2 Corinthians 10:12 tells us we’re not wise to compare ourselves to others. Comparison will cloud the clarity of what Christ has called you to do. Scary stuff as we compare ourselves to others all the time.

The challenge is to run your race, stay in your lane, and to look to Jesus. When we begin to look around and see what others are doing, we set ourselves up for a big-time crash.

Saul has become a case study of how comparison can create a downward spiral.

“But me” questions will make you stumble. They take the focus off of what’s important. The “But Me” glasses takes your eyes of off Jesus.
You’d be so much more content if you got off of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or even Ello. The social media networks has made it so much easier to play the comparison game.

Wonder what your life would look like if you decided to stay in your own lane and focus on what God has in store for you? You’re not anyone else but you. Stop comparing yourself to others. Focus on who you are and live out a life that’s tailored to you.
My Sabbath Testimony

I really don't know where to start with this story. It's so easy to say, "Well start from the beginning," but for something not so distinctly defined where exactly is the beginning? Childhood? College? Post-grad? All three stages have technically played a role in my journey. I guess I will begin with college though since after all that is the bulk of where everything occurred.

First, allow me to give a little background. Throughout college I attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). Attending this university was one of the best decisions I ever made. My UAB experience provided me the opportunity to receive a great education in nursing, make friendship bonds that I will forever cherish, and most importantly grow in my relationship with God. Being located in Birmingham also conveniently placed me in a position where I could more frequently visit extended family members that live in Birmingham and Huntsville. Huntsville was my get away spot when I couldn't travel home, and I always thoroughly enjoyed any weekend there. My cousin, Ashlyn, would say I still didn't come often enough throughout college, but hey I did the best I could around studying for intense courses that seemed to consume all of my time.

Anytime I went to Huntsville I knew I could look forward to an overall relaxing weekend. In my mind Huntsville equaled lots of focus on relaxing, fully enjoying family time and my favorite no Homework! One would have to understand that putting homework aside for a weekend was major in my book. And I honestly wouldn't have chosen to do so during my visits to Huntsville, but I desired to respect my family's religious beliefs as Seventh-Day Adventist.

There are many foundational beliefs of Seventh-Day Adventist, but one that they are widely known for is observing the Sabbath from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. In a sum, this twenty-four hour period is a time of activity cessation that allows one to focus on God as Creator and enjoy the blessings of God such as family and friends. Breaking away from studying and homework was a part of my family's activity cessation so any time I visited, I planned around the fact that I would not be doing anything school related during that time. Who would've ever known that even then God was sowing seeds that years later would aid me in understanding His Sabbath rest.

I remember reading a passage in the Bible one day about resting in God. The passage was from Hebrews chapter four and it talked about how God rested on the seventh day. Obviously with growing up in the church this was technically no new principle to me. It's a part of Genesis! I've heard it all my life! But something different about that familiar passage stood out to me that day. I questioned in my mind, "So if we believe that there are seven days of creation, and God rested on the seventh day, then that means rest is a part of creation, right? God created rest! Certainly it's important because He saw fit that it be created." This passage of scripture brought some type of renewed hope to my mind. Spiritually, mentally, and emotionally I was missing out on rest in God at this point in my life and yearned to have it back. I desired that this start with me at least dedicating Sunday to God. The thought sounded amazing, but the reality of me taking off a whole day and putting academics aside seemed impossible. How could I do that with an unending list of assignments and upcoming quizzes and test that were soon due? I talked to my father about my frustration and he said that God understood that I was in school. I don't know, maybe he was right. Nothing changed for me at the time, but that passage of scripture remained with me and deep down my desire of working towards a day of rest never ceased.

Winter of either my sophomore year or junior year of college we all had Christmas at my grandparents' house. And when I say we all, I mean all six of my grandparent's children and their families. Yes, there are A LOT of us and grandma and granddad's house is over packed when we're all there, but there is nothing better than quality family time. Grandparents, parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, and lots of cousins, I love it! Before I left that week, one of my uncles gave me a CD. By the way, this is an uncle different than the uncle and aunt I usually stay with when I'm in Huntsville. He told me that my aunt,
his wife, and her choir were on the disk and that she was leading a song. The choir was guest at another church so even if he didn't mention it I'm sure I assumed a sermon was on the disk as well. I took the disk and told him that I would have to check it out. About a year or more had passed but I did finally listen to the CD. I had not forgotten about it.

My aunt was indeed leading a song, but the sermon is what really got my attention. I laughed to myself when I heard the preacher announce his topic, “The Sabbath.” As an individual who was raised in a Sunday Baptist church, you can probably imagine my response, but I was willing to listen all the way through and hear what the preacher had to present. Plus it gave me an opportunity to find out more of what my Adventist family believed because growing up I just accepted the fact that they did some things differently.

Spring semester of 2013 I started attending a non-denominational church in Birmingham called Church of the Highlands. At that time Pastor Chris was going through a series on his book “Fresh Air.” One particular Sunday he preached a sermon that incorporated the importance of rest. Pastor Chris talked about how God created rest and how we should set aside a Sabbath day some time throughout the week. As Christians, he explained how we can get so caught up in the fast pace society that we fail to spend quality time with our Creator and unknowingly make a habit of ignoring the natural signs God has given to tell us we're tired and need rest. He didn't believe in the Sabbath only applying to Saturday; however, the information he provided was interesting and re-challenged me to work towards a true day of rest to dedicate to God.

That spring was also my last semester of college. One can only imagine how excited I was to almost be done with nursing school, but leaving college meant more than being done with school. I would also be departing from having the opportunity to frequently see people I had developed good relationships with, and I would be leaving an on-campus ministry, called The Impact Movement (Impact), that I was extremely active in and had grown to love. Because I had currently held a leadership position in Impact it was my job to help mentor and train potential new leaders. The individual I mentored, Sheree, quickly became like a little sister to me. We would strive to meet at least once a week over a meal and discuss the Word, what was going on in our life and areas where we needed prayer. It was awesome!

One day after we were done meeting, we somehow got on the topic of church. I can't exactly remember what our conversation was about, but Sheree mentioned that she attended church on Saturday. Of course with me having a lot of family who are Adventist I said, “Oh you must be Adventist” but she wasn't. She told me that she was non-denominational. This was new to me. I had never met anyone who wasn't Adventist and honored the Sabbath so I wasn't sure what to think. In just a few months I had been convicted by Pastor Chris sermon on taking a Sabbath and I met two people who honored the Sabbath but considered themselves non-denominational. The other person was one of Sheree's cousins, Brandon, who I had also met through Impact and who later became my best friend's boyfriend. My mind began to wonder. Could there be something more to this Sabbath thing? This thought really REALLY intrigued me, so I began my search. If the Sabbath was real and still applicable today I asked God to show me Himself that it was so. I didn't want to talk to my Adventist family about it, nor at this time Sheree or Brandon. I didn't want any outside influences. If I became convicted on the Sabbath it was only going to be because God convicted me Himself.

It seemed like my search went on forever. On and off it was a total of five months. I would find myself reading something in the Word about the Sabbath, come to the conclusion that whatever passage I was reading was only related to the Old Testament or think that Sabbatarians didn't interpret the context correctly, then I would draw away from my study thinking I internally proved my point and there was nothing left to study. Five months is a long time to be studying one topic in the Word. I was ready to move on to something else, but apparently that wasn't God's will.

Sometime during fall of 2013 I had come to the conclusion that there truly was nothing left for me to study about the Sabbath. I had looked up every passage of scripture in my Greek and Hebrew concordance that contained the word Sabbath and read it, I read different versions of the Bible to compare context, and I read different commentaries. By this point there was a lot that I had learned, but still a lot that I didn't understand. I would think, “Wow this really makes sense, but what about this part that still doesn't make any sense to me?” I was honestly at the point where I needed to talk to someone, but I was still adamant about not receiving outside influences throughout my search. I wasn't trying to be convinced, have
debate nor an “I’m right, you’re wrong” conversation. I just wanted to talk biblical facts. I needed to verbally talk through all the thoughts and questions that floated through my mind. Eventually I became content with the thought of talking with Brandon, but it was awhile before our conversation occurred so I stood at standstill with my studies.

People say that you have to be careful what you ask God for because you just may get it. The morning of my undeniable moment I had gotten up early to wash dishes. To further entertain myself I decided to listen to music as I washed so I proceeded to turn on the television and play Pandora off of my best friend's blue ray. Before I could even get to Pandora something stopped me in my tracks and caught my attention, and yes it was about the Sabbath. The television was already on Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) from when I had previously watched a sermon by T.D. Jakes the night before. That morning a preacher by the name of Doug Batchelor with Amazing Facts was speaking on the Sabbath. Unfortunately, Pastor Batchelor was nearing the end of his sermon so I didn't catch much of what he was saying; however, I immediately began to research this guy on the internet to see what more I could find out about him. I started with looking up sermons by Pastor Batchelor on youtube and found out that he preached on a variety of topics. Then I began looking for his sermons on the Sabbath. Of course youtube gives you a list of video options to click on so I scrolled through the list until I found what I was looking for. There were some interesting titles that I came across that had nothing to do with Pastor Batchelor but sounded interesting. One was titled "Baptist Preacher Believes Sabbath" The video was only ten minutes or so long. I was very tempted to stop and watch it that moment but didn't want to get distracted from what I was really looking for. After I found the sermons on the Sabbath by Pastor Batchelor, I went back and watched the video on the Baptist preacher.

There in the video stood this preacher in a pulpit, who was Caucasian, with a choir stand full of black people behind him. I thought it was a little awkward, but assumed that he must have been a guest at this church. He went through his story of how he was a principle at a school and was a Sunday Baptist preacher in Huntsville with a good size and stable congregation. He later became convicted on the Sabbath and in order to pursue what he felt like God was calling him to do, this preacher had to tell his whole congregation that the church would no longer be having services on Sunday but would begin having it on Friday night. Talk about a calling from God! His breaking point came when a friend of his gave him a book called “The Ten Commandments Twice Removed” and told him to read it. When he revealed the name of the friend, I froze. I knew I couldn't have heard the name correctly. There had to be some mistake. Maybe there were two people by this name who lived in Huntsville, but who was I kidding. The person who gave him the book was my uncle, the same one who had previously given me the CD during Christmas at my grandparents'. I was stunned and as tears began to fill my eyes I couldn't really say too much more than “Wow! Oh my goodness! God are you so serious?” Why would God allow me to randomly run across a YouTube video that I didn't even know existed, and one where my uncle's name was mentioned in it? I don't believe things like that just happen by chance, especially when I had been seeking God and His Word for months on the topic. I could no longer question why I had continuously been brought back to studying the Sabbath more. It was all a part of God's will.

Over the next couple of months I spent time watching Pastor Batchelor’s videos, doing more research and I ordered the book, “The Ten Commandments Twice Removed” online. Pastor Batchelor's sermons on the Sabbath still contained a lot of information that I didn't understand, but he approached the topic so lovingly. Despite certain apprehensions, I realized that I was to only do what I felt God was leading me to do contrary to other's opinions and beliefs. It's so awesome how God comforts His children through His Word.

It's been a little over a year now since I had that conversation with Sheree and initially began my search. Do I have all the answers now? Nope, and I'm probably not even close, but I can say things have gotten a lot better. God is still teaching and leading me. I marvel at His works and how he has placed people in my path who have made my transition a little easier and more enjoyable. And although all of my family in Huntsville still doesn't know my story, God has allowed me to see them and spend Sabbath with them this year more frequently than I ever have before. That is my testimony and that is how I was brought into revelation of God's Sabbath rest. To God be the glory for what He has done, and what He will do in the future. Amen.

www.back2basicsmag.com | 16
The nation has been self-absorbed and riveted with the notion of possibly contracting the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) to the point of complete hysteria. As evidenced by the response in towns like Solon, Ohio near Akron such that two schools (Solon Middle School and Parkside Elementary School) in Summit County were closed based on an e-mail report sent to the parents by the school district. It stated that a school staff member may have traveled aboard the same airplane, though not on the same flight, as Dallas nurse Amber Joy Vinson who contracted Ebola after caring for Thomas Eric Duncan, the first fatality from EVD in the U.S. [1][2]. Was this action warranted? Was readiness being enacted?

It’s amazing what fear can elicit in us emotionally, ranging from paralysis to panic. Jesus lets us know that perfect love cast out fear (1John 4:18). The saga of the EVD outbreak is just scratching the surface a mere snapshot, just a glance to events that our forthcoming. Revealing that the signs of Christ soon return will be very intense. How should the future be approached? Throughout the world’s history there have been plagues and pestilences supported by Jesus’ warnings in Matthew 24. The word of God explains we should be anxious for nothing and not to worry about tomorrow in Philippians 4:6 and Matthew 6:34 respectively. The EVD epidemic is an opportunity and warning to keep are lamps trimmed and burning (Matthew 25:1-10) such that we will not be caught unprepared for Christ’s return. Knowledge is power; readiness is founded on being prepared which first begins with being informed. It would be unwise to die for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6) either earthly or worst eternally. When it comes to EVD first get the facts:

- It is lethal but the likelihood of mortality from contracting the common seasonal flu from the influenza virus is higher than Ebola (from 1976 to 2007, between 3,000 and 49,000 Americans per year died from flu-related causes, according to the CDC) and vaccination is recommended. [3]

- Symptoms of Ebola include: Fever (greater than 38.6°C or 101.5°F), Severe headache, Muscle pain, Weakness, Diarrhea, Vomiting, Abdominal (stomach) pain, Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising). On average, the symptoms average between 8 to 10 days but may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola. [4]

- There is no FDA-approved vaccine or medicine (e.g., antiviral drug) available for Ebola. [4] But a vaccine is under development with an anticipated availability early to mid 2015.

- There have been 4 confirmed Ebola cases in the United States, resulting in one death. [4]

- Once someone recovers from Ebola, they can no longer spread the virus. But, it stays in the semen for up to 3 months. [4] Ebola can be transmitted via bodily fluids even after death has occurred.

- People who recover from Ebola infection develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years. (The antibodies in blood plasma possibly used as a treatment modality)

- Typically can’t get Ebola through air, water or food. [4]

Preventive measures:

- Avoid travel to Ebola suspected areas if possible:
- Practice careful hygiene. For example, wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and avoid contact with blood and body fluids.
- Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person’s blood or body fluids (such as clothes, bedding, needles, and medical equipment).
- Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling the body of someone who has died from Ebola.
- Avoid contact with bats and nonhuman primates or blood, fluids, and raw meat prepared from these animals.
- Avoid institutions where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. embassy or consulate and CDC are often able to provide advice on facilities.
- Monitor your health for 21 days and seek medical care immediately if demonstrating signs and symptoms of EVD.

EVD should be a wake up a call to draw close to Jesus. Let us not take for granted or ignore warnings like the antediluvians during the “days of Noah “where signs of the predicted flood were noted but the call to action was transient with reversion back to laxity and supposition. We have been promised deliverance from the noisome pestilence for those that dwell in the secret place of the most High an abide under the Shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1-3) To be Ready or Not for Ebola or any other calamity is dependent upon a relationship with Christ based on sound scriptural guidance by the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Rodney McKeever serves as Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine at the USC Keck School of Medicine

THE BIBLE: The Bridge Over Ebola

It may not be in your neighborhood, but it does not stop your concern. The steadily creeping Ebola has captured the daily headlines. Dallas, Cleveland, a cruise ship, the quarantine in Connecticut, the physician in New York and the nurse in New Jersey, are too close to our families and our health for comfort. Ebola is the unseen menace to society and life.

Africa seemed far away until Eric Duncan died in Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital, in Dallas; October 8 at 7:51 a.m. He was from Liberia, a nation ravaged by Ebola. Whether he was in the United States escaping the rapidly spreading virus, or trying to get back to the woman he loved, is speculation. Death came quickly to a man that was – anybody’s husband, brother, or son. Dr. Gary Weinstein shared Duncan’s human side. “Duncan was a thoughtful, intelligent, kind man.” [1] Good values could not save him. Now, he’s a statistic, the first death in the U.S., and part of a staggering international body count.

It is difficult for us to wrap our minds around the unending death toll, the scenes of people lying in the streets in excruciating pain, and nameless individuals dying at doorsteps of medical treatment facilities. It is all too much. People want it explained. Others want national borders closed.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has tried to assist in giving the origin of Ebola. They state: “Ebola virus disease (EVD) first appeared in 1976 in 2 simultaneous outbreaks, one in Nzara, Sudan, and the other in Yambuku, Democratic Republic of Congo. The latter occurred in a village near the Ebola River, from which the disease takes its name.” Fruit bats are natural carriers of this deadly virus.

www.back2basicsmag.com | 18
Ebola is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected animals such as chimpanzees, gorillas, fruit bats, monkeys, forest antelope and porcupines found ill or dead or in the rainforest.” [2]

While we look for God to intervene in global epidemics, and atrocities, God takes a proactive view. Raising a standard in a society driven by subjective values is not popular. God has a unique approach to human life and the dynamics of our existence. God is ahead of the crisis.

Here is where the linkage to the Ebola virus gets up close? According to numerous news sources reporting on the epidemic, the inhabitants of the region consume fruit bats and monkeys. They are part of their diet. There are too many food aficionados to leave this revelation dangling. To some it is a delicacy. To others, it is repulsive. Unfortunately, to the Congolese and Liberians it has proven deadly.

The epidemic of Ebola did not have to be. Here’s why. God’s Word, the Bible, provides a bridge over Ebola. Taken in its original context, the Bible provides preventive measures for a proven problem.

God’s Word teaches prevention. God instructed those who believe in Him to a defined lifestyle with a defined diet (Leviticus 11). Viruses are not culturally designated, nor racially defined. If humanity did not consume bats or monkey’s bitten by the bats, viral exposure would be greatly reduced. God provided disease avoidance for those who complied with the regulatory outline. It is a benefit from cooperation (Exodus 15:26). God is preventive.

God’s Word can be trusted. God knew what each mammal, fowl, and aquatic species was created for. Everything walking, crawling, creeping, flying, or swimming, was not supposed to end up on a plate or pallet. Knowing we would get carried away in our curiosity for culinary novelties, God planned ahead of our crisis.

God is the Divine Designer. Once you settle into the reality that not everything goes into the mouth; once you accept you don’t have to try it to know it will not like you; once you submit, to a Knowledge that supersedes yours, then embracing the idea of intelligent design is not so far-fetched after all. Who knows the composition of each life more than the designer?

God Cares. Now, that you have plowed through the first three, this final point is obvious. For all those who question why God permits these issues, let me suggest a better question. If God didn’t care, why would he put a warning label on the package?

Ebola is here and possibly here to stay. The question is still worth posing. What would our world look like if we had stopped, read the Bible, and obeyed the warning label?

God’s Word provides more than a guidebook about Jesus; it is a book to be trusted. It is worth reading. Its instruction is worth adhering. It can save your life. The Bible is THE BRIDGE over Ebola.

Samuel Thomas, Jr. is a Consultant in Christian Leadership Values and serves on the Board of Directors for Back2Basics Magazine

You are invited to participate in the inSpire 2014 Writing Contest. We want to shine the light on creative writing that has inspirational value and can turn readers’ hearts to God, reminding them of what an awesome God we serve. We know there are a lot of great writers out there and we're eager to read what you have to say. So check out the guidelines below and have fun!

This event is sponsored by Pacific Union Conference Creative Ministries, but is open to Seventh-day Adventist church members throughout the North American Division.*

Prizes to be Awarded:

First Place - iPad Mini
Second Place - $200
Third Place - $100

Winners will be selected by a panel of professional and amateur writers who have a passion for encouraging quality writing within the Adventist community.

CONTEST RULES Essays may be submitted in three categories:

Devotional - Thoughts that inspire and spiritually motivate
Stories - Stories that describe God's deliverance, blessing or guidance
Missional - Essays or stories that focus on serving others

NOTE: By submitting your material you are consenting for other people to see it and for us (inSpire) to feature it on our website. However, you will still own first rights to your material. We understand that by submitting your work to inSpire you are NOT giving over your ownership rights.

So fire up your computer or iPad and write that winning article that's been kicking around in your head. It's time to grace the world with your best thoughts!

Submission Details:


2. There is NO FEE, and you are entitled to submit ONE essay for each category.

3. Essays should be between 500-800 words

4. Entrants must be 15 years or older, and be Seventh-day Adventist members who live within the territory of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists.*

Do not submit material that you have not written. If you feature another person(s) in an article, make sure you run it by them, or don’t use their name(s). Content should be in harmony with Christian principles, and be in general agreement with mainstream Adventist beliefs. Judges reserve the right to exclude essays that do not fit these parameters or that use profanity, slander, or other offensive references.