

ISSUE 37

Word on the Street





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ReadWots.com

WORD ON THE STREET MAGAZINE (WOTS) is a UW-Superior affiliated publication released twice per semester that has been around for 17 years. *WOTS* is written, laid out, and printed by members of Street Level Ministries on UW-Superior and UW-Stout campuses. We also print a version of the magazine on Cebu Island in the Philippines. We're Christians who love Jesus and want to write about life, God, and college.

The WOTS crew can be found on campus each Tuesday while college is in session at Street Level Ministries' student organization meetings. Visit streetlevelministries.com/northland for details on how you can get involved. We hope the magazine is funny, challenging, and provocative, while encouraging you to pursue a strong relationship with Jesus.

MEET THE WOTS STAFF:

from three cities and two countries

▼ Duluth, MN



Menomonie, WI ▲

Cebu, Philippines ►



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I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID THAT!

AND OTHER UNFORTUNATE
STORIES OF ACADEMIA PAST

- ⇒ Once I was walking up to my government class in Bowman Hall. It was late December, just before winter break, and the ice up Harvey Hill wasn't making kind promises to the students who needed to get to its peak. As you could have guessed, my foot slipped and I fell facedown onto the sidewalk in front of everyone. The ice was so slick that I actually slid backwards on my stomach slightly and bumped into another girl, taking her down with me. I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ I allowed a friend in my car with a box full of fireworks. We lit them all off through the sunroof while driving around for two hours looking for a place to go snow tubing. We were chased down by the cops and let go with a warning. I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ I was sitting in choir practice on the risers leaning back in my chair like a cool person does. Not caring that I was off ground level and at the edge of the risers, I kept up my edgy appearance. We can all guess what happened next. I fell about four feet and hit the concrete floor. Wanting to keep my coolness, I shrugged it off and everyone proceeded to laugh. It hurt pretty badly and I wanted to cry. I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ It was a brisk September morning in Iowa when the ladies tennis team made the trek south for a round robin tournament. My parents and older brother also made the long journey to watch me play in one of my first college matches. During introductions, my coach presented my doubles partner and moved onto my name, "Brittany, uhhh..." In front of everyone, he couldn't even remember my last name. I can't believe *he* did that...
- ⇒ Part of the requirements for a class I had in college included a lab at the Child and Family Study Center. Since I was there for lunch, I ate with the children, which included eating the fruits and veggies. One day, I was forced to eat beets, so I added some ketchup and a little boy asked, "Are they better with ketchup?" I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ One time I was walking down the hall and I saw a professor walking toward me. We had made eye contact but were too far away from each other to express a verbal greeting at that point. So I prepped in my head a response to what I assumed he was going to ask. I thought he'd say, "How's it going?" with my response being "pretty good! And you?" He in fact said "Good Morning" to which I responded, "pretty-". It was awkward. I can't believe I did that...

- ⇒ My first mistake was taking an 8am biology class in college. My second mistake was skipping breakfast. My third mistake was sitting on one of those high lab stools listening to my professor describe, in detail, the time she got a toe infection, which led to blood poisoning. Needless to say, when I found myself on the floor looking up at the ring of classmates gathered around me, I should not have been too surprised to learn that I had gracefully slid to the ground in a dead faint about a minute prior. I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ I am fairly artistic so by default complicated math is not my expertise. In one of my math classes I sat next to the cool-good looking-funny-but-not-arrogant guy that everyone adores. One day, I surprisingly had the right answer to my professor's question. I thought the guy next to me was proud of me and wanted to give me a high five so I reached up to meet his palm with a swift but expressive high five. Turns out, he was simply raising his hand to answer the question, too. I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ One morning, just like every other, I pulled my Chevy Malibu confidently into the parking lot, noting that a group of friends were standing off in the distance. Next thing I know, my car comes to a screeching halt, my sunglasses fly off, and all the contents of my backseat go flying. I had managed to hit a poorly placed concrete light pole head on. If anyone is wondering, light poles always win. Also, to everyone wondering if I saw that idiot that hit the light pole? Yes, yes I did. I can't believe I did that...
- ⇒ In my freshman year of college a group of us went down to the bottoms to swim, and a number of us thought it would be a brilliant idea to jump off the bridge. Despite my fear of falling and better judgment, I jumped. At the last minute I panicked mid-jump and ended up in a sitting position instead of a pencil...I was bruised all over for a couple of weeks at least. I can't believe I did that...



Mom Was Right

Growing up, our parents' advice went in one ear and out the other. It probably sounded similar to the adults in the old Charlie Brown cartoons, "wah waaaah wah wah." Now, we're on our own and college is a whole new territory filled with new people, new places, and new choices to make. Admit it—every now and then you hear your mom or dad's voice ringing in your mind with advice that fits the moment. So, we polled UW-Superior students and asked what kind of parental advice they were given before college that turned out to be true. If you've got your own contribution, feel free to give us a shout at streetlevel@uwsuper.edu.

"Everything matters, but nothing matters that much."

Ben L.

St. Paul, MN

"Be outgoing and keep your door open for others."

Henry S.

Stillwater, MN

"Never be in a hurry."

Tim T.

White Bear Lake, MN

"Hey, save that quarter, you could need it for laundry!"

Etta S.

Clintonville, WI

We were never meant to be the center of the universe...

JESUS AMONG THE MILLENNIALS

Visit breakawayministries.org/Resources for more

LOOKING FOR
STREET LEVEL?

Find us each Tuesday
of the month:

1ST WEEK : Bible Study in the YU

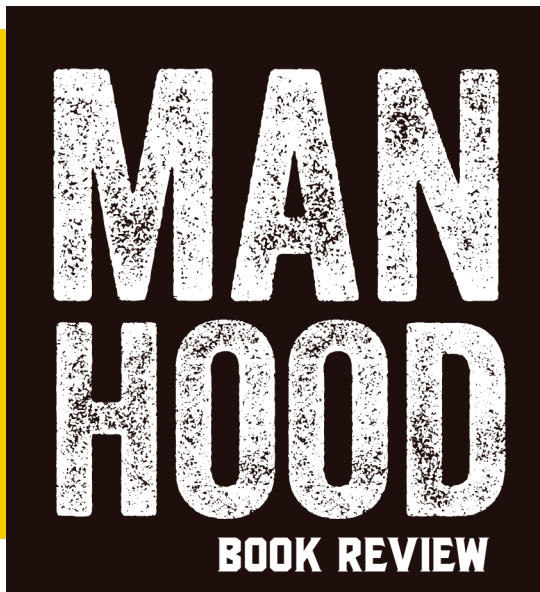
2ND WEEK : Community Meal and
Bible Study in the Dorms

3RD WEEK : Bible Study in the YU

4TH WEEK : Game Night

Find us on Facebook: Street Level Northland
for up-to-date locations and times

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You. Yes, you. Are you a man? Don't answer that because chances are, you're probably a student and are being referred to as a young man, or young adult while in reality you feel like a boy. Like a little kid who isn't quite sure how you managed to make it this far into college, maybe you're about to graduate and you don't feel qualified at anything. You might feel scared, not sure how to adult or deal with the real world without the comforts of college life. And if you're just entering college, you'll get to that point one day. Good. Then there is a book for you that may just give you a little nudge in the direction of manliness. Not what society says being a man looks like, but finding true manliness in a world of counterfeits: to be a man like Jesus Christ. If you're not a man but in fact a woman, please, by all means, continue reading. It may just help you pick through the bravado and chaff to find an authentic, biblical man. Welcome to: *The Dude's Guide to Manhood*, written by former St. Louis pastor and current chaplain, Darrin Patrick.

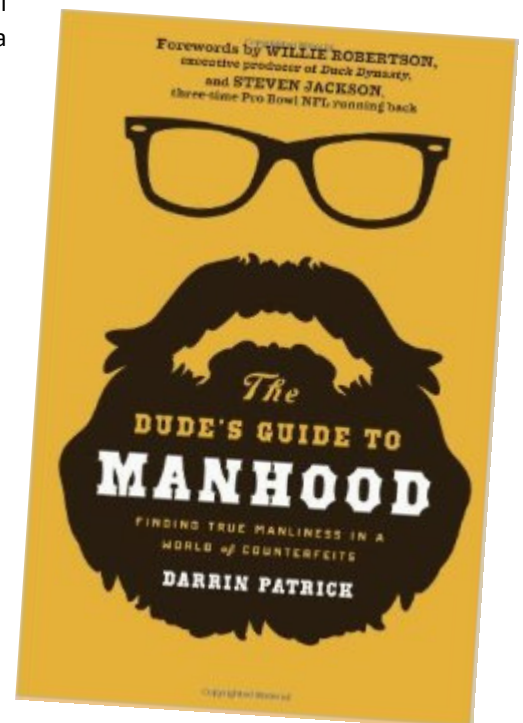
Patrick grew up possibly a lot like you, always being told to 'be a man' without fully knowing what it means to be one, not to mention not always having a man in his life to show him how it's done properly. But by reading this very simple and easy to understand book, you'll learn some very practical, almost common sense things that will help you along the journey of life. This book may just give you a kick to stop and take a look at your life and where it's headed as opposed to where you would like it to go. It just might help you find some direction. And where better to get directions than from a map: "A man without a map will be a man without a heart; he'll lack both passion and compassion. A man without a map will be a man without a spine; he'll lack both conviction and courage" (18,19).

The book starts out very practically, telling boys to stop the excuses, figure out what needs to get done, and, when life starts to get hard as it undoubtedly will, *fight* and be determined to persevere instead of hide. Seems easy enough, right? *The Dude's Guide* will take you step-by-step through the character of a man and help give you the motivation to hopefully turn you into a disciplined man. It all culminates on Jesus, the perfect man. Look to Him, follow Him, and do as Jesus did to develop the manly, get-it-done, waste-no-time, on-mission, discipline of a man, manly man. Oh man. It's not a

Change is possible...it's not easy and it won't be instantaneous. It will take a lifetime of trusting, walking with God, confessing and repenting of sin to become the sort of men God has called us to be.

difficult book to comprehend and retain, and it's a quick easy read to help you on your way to becoming more of the man God would have you be. Understand that you will need to change, and recognize that that is good. "Change is possible...it's not easy and it won't be instantaneous. It will take a lifetime of trusting, walking with God, confessing and repenting of sin to become the sort of men God has called us to be. True manhood doesn't mean being perfect ourselves; it means trusting in Christ's perfection for us" (158).

Unless you're perfect (which if, you're honest, you know you aren't), there is most likely something you can take away from this book. Read it. You could finish it in a weekend and it could give you some very practical help in becoming a more godly man.



Patrick, D. (2014). *The Dude's Guide to Manhood: Finding true manliness in a world of counterfeits*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, An Imprint of Thomas Nelson.

THE TENANT



With rotting face and twisted frame, the old house stared back at him in quiet desperation through gnarled trees. The amount of work that needed to be done threatened to crush him as he breathed out what felt like his last ounce of hope. Then she appeared in the doorway. The gray bundle of a woman was barely visible in all the rot, but she was unmistakably present. Nearly as twisted and ancient as the house itself, he almost regretted what he had to do, but knew it desperately needed to be done.

As he advanced, she disappeared frantically into the decay. Calling out her name, he proceeded to deliver the same speech that had been given to her numerous times before as

he cautiously climbed the stairs and pushed through the gaping threshold. A severely sickening stench gripped his senses once inside and he was overtaken by a fit of coughing. Every piece of wood in the house groaned pathetically as the old woman scurried towards the back door. Pursuing through what was left of the dining room and kitchen, he caught a glimpse of her robes as she fled from the house into the brisk November woods. He watched through the shards of a broken window as she ran, moving quickly for a woman of her age until she was a stone's throw away. She turned back for a moment, filthy cloak heaving with raspy breaths. He met her gaze, calmly walked to the back door, and pulled its frame shut. A growl of protest rose from deep within her and ended in a fit of wet hacking that shook her entire body. Without

making eye contact again, she disappeared into the forest leaving the landlord alone with his house.

The renovations took months and brought no sign of the old woman's return. Working nearly day and night, the landlord had effectively wrung himself dry. However, standing in the foyer surveying his reclaimed home, he marveled over his own work. What had once been the squalid hostage of an old hag now gleamed with order and care. He pulled the front door shut and locked it with satisfaction, knowing that everything inside was in its proper place. Bringing his stiff collar closely to his throat, he left to tend to his other properties.

Within a few months, the landlord returned to his grand house for a routine maintenance visit. He expected a considerable amount of dusting, perhaps some light yard work, but he very much looked forward to taking in the glory of his hard work once again. However, much to his dismay, upon returning to his achievement, he found it far worse than before. A fury boiled in his veins as he stormed the house, ran up the decaying stairway and burst through the front door. There sat the old woman surrounded by a nest of putrid blankets and other unmentionable items, cooking something over a sickly flame built right in the middle of the main room. He growled her name and began his speech as before, but this time she made no attempt to run. Her lack of fear began to weigh on him. He was cut off by a set of heavy thuds advancing steadily from behind. Before he could turn, a massive hand slammed down onto one of his shoulders. The rotting flesh smell of the creature's breath on his neck was enough to prevent the landlord from making any kind of eye contact as another figure slipped into the room from behind the woman. He was tall, thin, and menacing, with scars disfiguring his face and lips. The satisfied smile of the old woman was hideous as she reveled in the safety of her two protectors.

Dipping underneath the large man's thick arm and darting from the house, a sizable knot began to churn in the landlord's stomach. Then, the anxious flurry of thoughts was interrupted by a low, calm voice. Lifting his eyes, he saw a man walking towards him from among the trees. He looked ordinary enough, nothing on his person telling of any wealth or position, but his speech was saturated with an unmistakable royal dignity. The man greeted the landlord and offered to take up residence in the house. The landlord scoffed. This man obviously had no idea what he was asking. But the landlord was desperate. Without explaining the situation in great detail, he burrowed into his pockets and held out the key. The mysterious man met him with a condition.

"You must agree to give me full rights to do whatever I wish to this house," said the man. The landlord met his stare with a sharp pang of resistance. He was attached to the grand old house, even in its current state. The thought of allowing another full rights to the entire property brought on a wave of anxiety. However, he was desperate. He pressed the key into the mysterious man's large hand and brushed passed him into the night.

Returning weeks later, the landlord fully expected to either find the mysterious man dead or absent altogether with his house still in rotting shambles. But he did not.

What he did find, he had not anticipated. A large peculiar structure stood where his grand house had once been. With half-built spires and bare-wood frames jutting off the sides, the structure was obviously still a work in progress, but very beautiful. The landlord was sincerely perplexed. Could this be his house? After careful observation, a sort of cold panic began to rise up in him and take hold as he realized it most certainly was. He rushed the front steps once more to find the mysterious man in what had been the main room, wiping his coarse hands on a small scrap of rough fabric. His body showed obvious marks of sweat and hard work, while maintaining a dignity that almost had a physical weight to it. Anticipating the protest from the landlord, the tenant spoke first.

"My good man, you promised me rights to do as I wished to your grand house," the man said with a warm chuckle. "I supposed you expected I would be fixing it to a decent little home, but I am doing something quite different." It was then that the landlord detected something on the man's hand that he had not noticed before. The golden sparkle of a signet ring glittered on his work-worn finger. Raising his own limp finger to point at the man's ring, the landlord tried to form words, but found it altogether impossible. He knew the answer to his question before he could utter a sound. The tenant held out his regal hand for further inspection, fully comprehending the discovery processing through the landlord's mind. Stumbling a step forward, the landlord grasped at the hand as his eyes saw what he had suspected: the

"MY GOOD MAN, YOU PROMISED ME RIGHTS TO DO AS I WISHED TO YOUR GRAND HOUSE." THE MAN SAID WITH A WARM CHUCKLE. "I SUPPOSED YOU EXPECTED I WOULD BE FIXING IT TO A DECENT LITTLE HOME, BUT I AM DOING SOMETHING QUITE DIFFERENT."

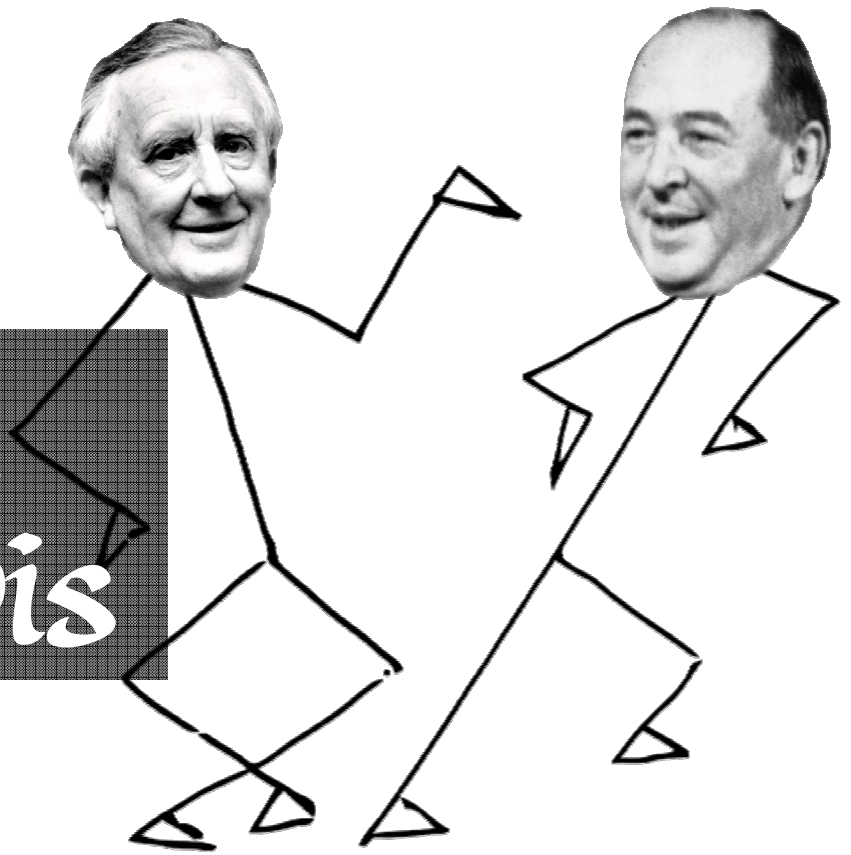
crest of the kingdom's royal family. There, on his property in his house, sweating and filthy like a common man, was the landlord's very own King.

The landlord immediately released the King's hand and dropped to his knees, filled with a mix of wonder and terror. He had never been in the company of a royal before! However, he was very aware of his irreverent display of disrespectful questioning. A severe punishment was inevitable. Beads of sweat gathered on his forehead as he tried to find the words for an apology. However, before a word could be spoken in the landlord's defense, he felt a great hand settle on his shoulder. He held his breath and awaited his doom.

"You may raise your eyes, dear landlord," said the mighty voice warmly, much to the landlord's surprise. He hesitantly lifted his face, and to his astonishment, found the King smiling at him. "I am creating a palace, and I intend to come live in it myself. Would you like to help me?"

The King offered him a hammer and a small sack of carpenter's nails. Sputtering through his utter disbelief, the landlord reached out, grasped the King's gifts, and rose valiantly to serve his great

Tolkien's BEST FRIEND Lewis



Clive Staples Lewis and John Ronald Reuel Tolkien will go down in history as being two of the most creative minds to ever walk this earth. Better known as C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, these best of friends brought life to what we all know as *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Chronicles of Narnia* storylines. Lewis was from Belfast, Ireland and Tolkien was from Bloemfontein, South Africa. Both men experienced heart-piercing tragedy at a young age. Tolkien was four when his father died from complications of rheumatic fever and 12 when his mother died. Lewis was ten when his mother died. Both men ended up in England and found their way to the service in World War I. One was sent home with an injury and the other because of illness. Both becoming professors at Oxford, Tolkien started a writing group called “The Inklings” where he officially met Lewis. Lewis’ fellowship with his friends from “The Inklings” stirred his heart back to Christianity.

C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien found a way to present the gospel to the world through “true myth” stories that entertained secular readers who were unlikely to hear the gospel in traditional ways; through this, they developed a deep friendship. Inspired by ancient European mythology, Tolkien fronted the work that would become *The Lord of the Rings* series. Tolkien released part one of the series, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, in 1954; *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* followed in 1955, which finished up the trilogy. The books gave readers “a rich literary trove populated by elves, goblins, talking trees and all manner of fantastic creatures, including characters like the wizard Gandalf and the

dwarf Gimli.”¹ Critics were in abundance after the release of these books, and yet they became bestsellers throughout the world.

Lewis was busy publishing 30 years prior to the 1950s, but it wasn’t until then that Lewis started to publish the seven books that would comprise *The Chronicles of Narnia* children’s series, with *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950) being the

first release. The story focused on four siblings during wartime that walked through an armoire to enter the magical world of Narnia, which was “a land resplendent with mythical creatures and talking animals.”² Readers loved the stories despite some negative reviews.

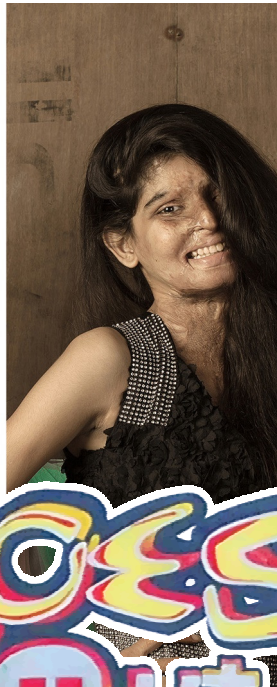
“THROUGHOUT THEIR WRITING CAREERS, THESE TWO MEN EXPLORED CREATIVE WAYS TO TAKE THEIR LOVE FOR LITERATURE AND THEIR BOND AS CHRIST FOLLOWERS TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTIANITY.”

Throughout their writing careers, these two men explored creative ways to take their love for literature and their bond as Christ followers to spread the message of Christianity. They creatively explored ways to open the valve to the mind of the skeptic and “free thinker.” It was this avenue that brought truth through imagination. Keep your eyes open for *Tolkien and Lewis*, a film about the authors that is still in production.

¹www.biography.com/people/jrr-tolkien-9508428#career-as-a-scholar-and-writer

²www.biography.com/people/cs-lewis-9380969#teaching-career-and-wartime-broadcasts

**“THEY RUINED
OUR APPEARANCE,
BUT OUR INNER
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WITH US.”**



SHEROES!

Hangout

MORE THAN THEIR SCARS

On May 26, 2012, I was preparing to graduate from high school. I was most likely helping my dad clean out the garage as we got ready to host the herd of family and friends who would come to help me celebrate by looking at my baby pictures and eating pulled pork sandwiches. On May 26, 2012, Ritu Saini, a 17-year-old girl in Haryana, India, was attacked by three men who poured acid on her. The attack was arranged by her aunt's son, from whom Ritu had turned down a marriage proposal. Her cousin paid the attackers 125,000 rupees, which equaled somewhere around \$1,827. On December 23, 2012, those three attackers were sentenced to life imprisonment for this terrible crime against Ritu Saini.

Acid attacks are a heart-wrenching reality for thousands of young women each year, and nearly all of the attacks result in brutal disfigurement. In most cases, a woman is chased, cornered, or surprised by an attack. Acid is thrown onto the woman's face, chest, or anything else the attacker can reach. Why would anyone do such a thing? The most common reason is unrequited love. Acid attacks commonly happen when a man proposes to a woman and she declines, which fuels an "if you can't be mine, you won't be anyone's" mentality.

Tucked into the town of Agra, India, near the Taj Mahal, is Sheroes Hangout. The small

café was opened by Alok Dixit who founded the nonprofit organization Stop Acid Attacks. Dixit was already involved with campaigns to stop acid attacks in India when he met Laxmi, a survivor of an attack at only 15-years old. Dixit and Laxmi fell in love and now run their own campaign out of their office in Delhi. Sheroes is one of their projects in this campaign. Not only does the café provide jobs for victims of acid attacks, but its main mission is to bring awareness to society that these attacks happen, starting with the faces of the victims themselves. The women serve as waitresses, designers, artists, singers, cooks, and more. Soniya Chaundhary, who was attacked after she rejected a man who fell in love with her, runs a beauty parlor, does hair, make-up, and nails, and makes dresses for Sheroes. Soniyas' motto is, "They ruined our appearance, but our inner beauty stays with us."

Neetu Mahor was just 30-months old when she was attacked by her own father, Indrajeet. Geeta, Neetu's mother, had an even younger daughter who died two months after the attack. Indrajeet says he was very drunk during the attack and woke up terrified. His uncles had drugged him and suggested he kill his wife and daughters in order to settle a property dispute. Indrajeet sheepishly now says, "What's done is done," but has asked for forgiveness from his daughter and now strives each day to care for his family. Neetu finds it hard to process

that her dad was the one to scar her because she knows the man he is now, and she was so young when it happened. While Geeta is apprehensive and claims Indrajeet still drinks, Neetu boldly says, "I love him and never think about what happened."

In a world that demands beauty of us to be worth something, Sheroes Hangout is a place where the acid attackers are forgotten and the survivors refuse to let their faces dictate their futures. Now *that's* a world I want to live in. One that seeks justice. I can't be a part of that by living quietly in my own little world. What about you?



blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2015/06/03/the-cafe-run-by-acid-attack-survivors/
youtube.com/watch?v=u16JlIBuCGY

THE RESET

WHY GIVING UP IS THE SOLUTION TO TOTAL SYSTEM FAILURE.

Beth, a 20-year-old college sophomore, works endlessly to attain perfection in her academic life. She stays up late and gets up early to study and work on homework. She used to help with her church's children's program, and she intends to get back to that once she graduates with her four-year degree, or maybe after she completes her Master's, you know, once life slows down. Fred, a 19-year-old college freshman, fully enjoys all the social benefits living on campus has to offer. He is involved in a few campus organizations, competes in intramurals, and has thus far had three semi-serious relationships. He knows he should go to church, but with weekends like he has, who has time for that?

Is that you? You once were delighted to be at church, to find friendship with other Christians, to learn more about God and deepen your relationship with Him, but now things are cold and stale at best. When you allow yourself to stop for a minute and think, you know life shouldn't be this chaotic and empty all at once. Where did you go wrong? Can this be fixed?

SYSTEM FAILURE

BROWSING

It all begins with browsing, doesn't it? When you sit down at a computer to figure things out, you inevitably will press a few keys and surf a few sites



until you gain enough confidence and knowledge to know what you're looking for. So too with the college experience. Uneasy at first, you move in, make a few friends, and experience new things. Pretty soon you're going places and doing things you've never done before. Some of them are things to be proud of, while others are quite shameful. If that's you and you're concerned about what God thinks of you nowadays, it can be easy to convince yourself that it's okay that things have changed. After all, you've grown up a lot, and the real world has no place for naivety. College is meant for experiencing and experimenting. It's the chance to try on some new identities and figure out what fits. There are so many different options to choose from. You may have given yourself entirely over to your studies, or you may have

“When you allow yourself to stop for a minute and think, you know life shouldn't be this chaotic and empty all at once.”

made your way into the party scene. You could be dating as many people as possible, or at least dabbling with a few. You've made your choices. And that is where the danger is. Pursuing normal things like education, a career and a relationship, is faulty at best when it's done apart from God.

Quite simply, you're restless, and you don't understand why you are when you have things you only dreamed about as a kid. This aching for something that seems forever elusive is because God created you and knows you better than you know yourself. Following your own nose because you “got this,” will never satisfy what you're longing for. Following Him is actually the sanest thing you could ever do.

DOWNLOADS

When you download something from an email attachment or a font on a free site somewhere, you are committing to it. In order to hit the download button, you have had to make the decision to trust its source before you really know what you're getting. The hazy space between “trying things out” and “just doing my Saturday thing” is eerily similar. Usually this process begins slowly, but now that you're already into the second semester of school, you can't say for certain that you're the same person you used to be. Going to your first party, compromising long-held relational guidelines, and joining yet another student organization has seemed more like college benchmarks

than *your* idea, really. Whether consciously or not, you have begun to push God out of the picture. You have already decided *you* know best when it comes to life direction, not God. You've stopped reading your Bible; all the warnings in it obviously don't apply to you. All the advice it offers, you're already too wise to follow. To make a long story short, your relationship with God has grown cold and stale. The truth is, you can serve God, or whatever else it is that you're distracted with, but not both. “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

VIRUS

Sometimes, despite the best intentions and research you do before downloading something, you can end up downloading a spammy, virus-y item anyway. That's how “good” or “temporary” experiences can end so badly. Whatever it is that you have downloaded can gain complete control over your life and cause total spiritual deprivation. All decisions required of you are built around whatever it is you have given yourself to. You do not have any option anymore. Maybe you are still tricking yourself into thinking that you do, and that you just always choose this thing because you like it. But in reality, whatever it is that you've pursued and thought would bring you fulfillment and a sense of purpose is actually sucking the life out of you. You're feeling emptier than ever when your whole goal was to find fulfillment and your place in this world. It's ironic that what started out as a journey to enjoy the freedom of finding yourself has led to total captivity and a deeper disquiet than ever before.

DIAGNOSIS

Have you ever been startled awake from a dead sleep? You are so shaken up it takes you a few minutes to get your bearings. That is kind of what it is like when God grabs ahold of us. He shakes us awake to realize what a mess we have gotten ourselves into. Now, if God has ever brought you to this point, even if it is a painful and humiliating experience, it's something to be forever thankful for. Without God allowing you to come to this realization, you would be stuck on this wandering road for the rest of your life, not knowing there is something different for you. The temporary pain of realization is much better than the eternal pain of regret. It's not just about knowing your current situation is terrible, or being discontent with your circumstances; it is a realization that God is right and you are wrong. It becomes more than book knowledge or a distant childhood memory when you finally realize, for yourself, that God is infinitely good, and you are incredibly bad. This change of mindset means

looking at God and yourself differently. If this change of mind is sincere, it will naturally lead to a reset.

HOW TO...

Just like resetting a computer, there are a few steps necessary for coming back into a full relationship with God. First, you must realize that God *does* want you back. Jesus once said, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." If you are coming back to Him humbled and sincerely sorry, He is not standing with arms folded across His chest, tapping His foot in anger, waiting for an explanation from you. If you sincerely believe you are in the wrong, confessing that to God and asking for His forgiveness will come naturally. He will hear you. This is more than just saying "sorry." This is a kind of sorry that is felt deep in your soul and will cause permanent change. A second part of this is to make things right with friends, family, and whoever else was hurt because of your wayward straying. This is not as easy sometimes as asking for forgiveness from God because now your mistakes are public, which is a humiliating thought since we as humans are all too concerned with what people will think of us. But God tells us to do this in the Bible, and rather than beating down that wide path again to follow your own nose, decide to obey His command even though it's hard and uncomfortable. Make things right with the people around you, no matter how foolish you think it will make you look.

"Quite simply, you're restless, and you don't understand why you are when you have things you only dreamed about as a kid."

FACTORY SETTINGS

If you've ever tried to reset a computer, it will ask if you'd like to keep some of your old stuff - documents, pictures, personal items on the computer, or do a complete clean sweep and return to factory settings. When it comes to God, it's no different, but if you choose to keep your old stuff with you, like your old ways of thinking, desires and habits, you will eventually wind up right back where you started. So, take a deep breath and do the complete clean sweep. By totally giving up all of your own ideas, thoughts, and desires in order to be filled with His ideas, thoughts, and desires, you will be able to fully enjoy what God has for you. This is what it means to be filled with His Holy Spirit. Instead of having a strained and distant relationship with God, you can now experience knowing Him as a Father, Lord, Savior and friend. Your actions, that are now contrary to your individual desires, won't be forced; they will have naturally changed because of His Spirit within you. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."⁴

As you hear from God by reading His Word and prayer, your actions will begin to reflect those of Christ's. Finding a church, a community of believers, where you can involve yourself and be challenged and encouraged by other Christians is vital in this process as well. Undergoing a life reset through belief in the truth of Jesus will never equate to ease and comfort, but it is guaranteed to bring you untold purpose now that your eyes have literally been opened to the truth God has always longed for you to see.

LIFETIME GUARANTEE

So where are you? Browsing for downloads that will lead to eventual system failure? Or by God's grace are you sitting there reading this knowing you desperately need a reset? No matter where you are, there is hope. Simply seek God. Now, do not take God flippantly and think that no matter what you've done He will take you back so you might as well do whatever you want. This is urgent; it's literally a matter of life and death. He might not give you another chance; we are not guaranteed another day. Don't delay. There will be much rejoicing in heaven, and in your own life also. In the words of Jesus, "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance."⁵

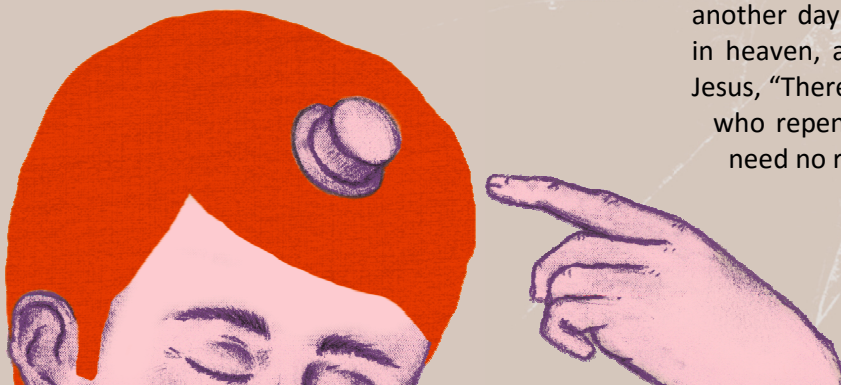
¹ Luke 16:13

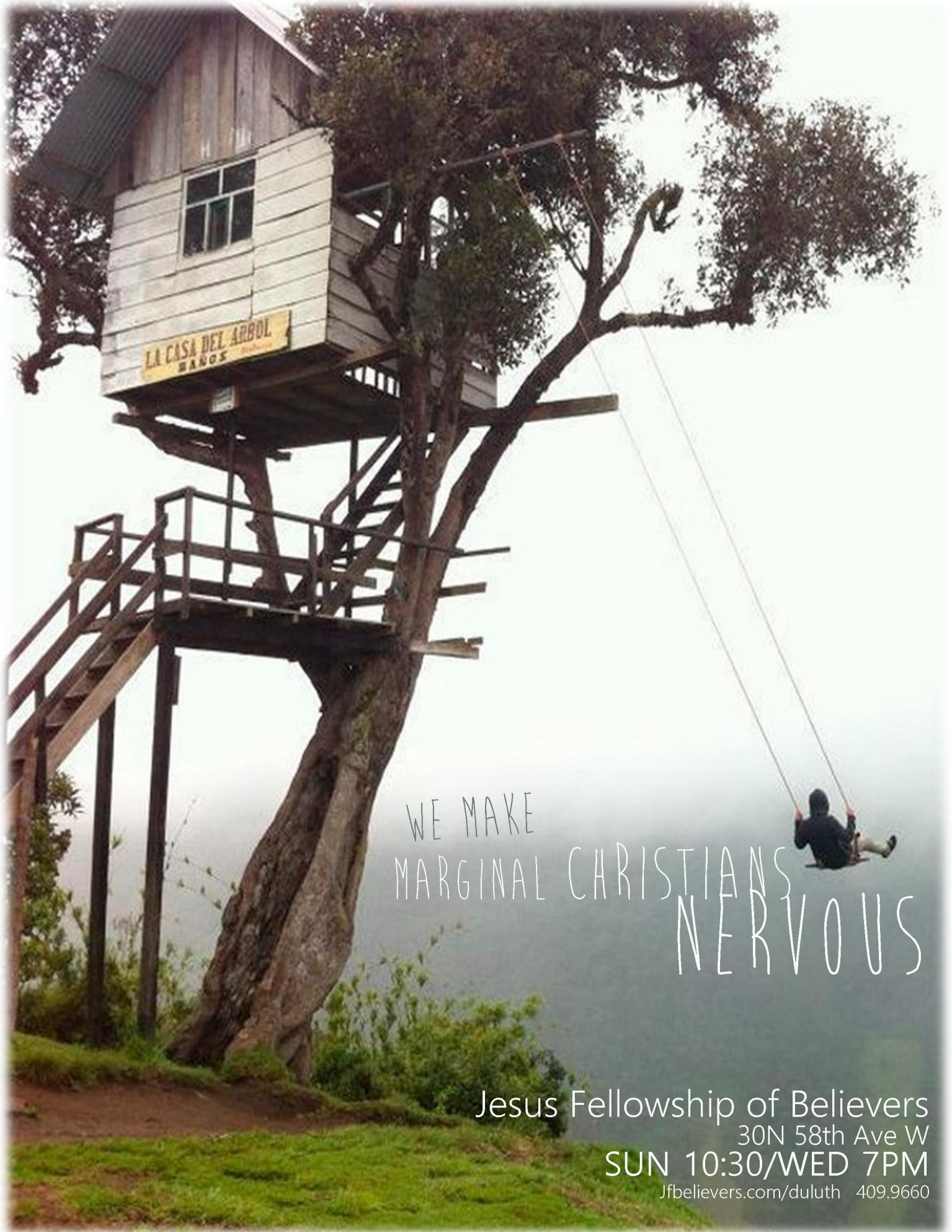
² Luke 15:10

³ James 5:16

⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:17

⁵ Luke 15:7





WE MAKE
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NERVOUS

Jesus Fellowship of Believers
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SUN 10:30/WED 7PM
Jfbelievers.com/duluth 409.9660



STOP THE TRAFFIC

IJM

**INTERNATIONAL
JUSTICE
MISSION**

do justice

love mercy

walk humbly

micah 6:8

Human trafficking is an epidemic in society that has existed for a long time. It has to do with the abuse of people's rights to be treated as human beings. Mostly, women and children are sold in the market or they trade themselves over for sexual favors in exchange for money. An alarming percentage of rescued victims are minors, which usually range from ages 2-16 years old. However, the youngest rescued victim earlier this year had been a 3-month old baby. Yes, you heard it right. According to statistics from IJM, 84% of the victims are minors, with 81% female and 19% male. The victims have been said to be 73% siblings, and 82% of suspects are parents and close family members, mostly mothers.

International Justice Missions (IJM) is a global non-profit organization that protects the poor from violence in the developing world. Our team includes more than 750 lawyers, investigators, social workers, community activists, and other professionals at work through 17 field offices. We bring criminals to justice, restore survivors, help strengthen the justice system and rescue victims.

We are currently facing a huge, ugly monster called the Online Sexual Exploitation Cases (OSEC), which is becoming a challenge for us to fight. Before, suspects were easier to locate at brothels, bars and other places like the streets. Now, any place with an Internet connection is a potential hotspot for this, with suspects that hide under fake names and profiles online. Additionally, 87% of OSEC victims are minors and 57% are pre-teens.

Many don't understand the impact on the victims and that images online can never be totally destroyed and removed. These victims have difficulty regulating their emotions. They have mental, psychological, and behavioral difficulties and they begin to have a confusion between right and wrong. Dreams are wrecked and everything seems like a dead end. However, there is hope.

Clearly, human sex trafficking has to do with an even deeper issue than immorality and need. It has to do with sin and how distorted we can become because of lust and perversion. James 1:14-15 shows what the root of this problem is. It says, "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed." 1 John 2:16 says, "For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world." This is how extensive our sin is and it all starts within our own hearts and minds.

Our team includes more than 750 lawyers, investigators, social workers, community activists, and other professionals at work through 17 field offices. We bring criminals to justice, restore survivors, help strengthen the justice system and rescue victims.

Justice is our middle name, and we believe that justice for the powerless is possible. Hand-in-hand, we can make a difference starting with you. How can you help? Spread awareness, be a safe person victims can talk to, educate others, be vigilant using the Internet and if you know of someone who needs help, contact your local police or email us through www.ijm.org.

TRUE STORY: IRISH

My name is Irish. I was born blind. When I was young, I thought that my disability was normal and that people around me could not see either, like me. I wondered why other people would laugh at something I wasn't aware of. That's when my parents told me that I was blind. Elementary school was difficult because the teachers were not supportive of my disability, and so I spent a lot of time at home. When I was in grade four my mother died. It was devastating because my parents were my best friends. When my father and I heard about the SPED center where blind students could learn brail, orientation, and mobility, I enrolled there to continue my studies.

Once I reached high school, however, I had to enter mainstream classes because that's what the law required. In the regular classes, I experienced a lot of bullying and discrimination. They treated me as abnormal. Some of my teachers did not even accept me. Because I wanted to go to college eventually, I enrolled with the deaf mute school my second year of high school just so I could continue my studies. Since they were mute and I was blind, we could not communicate with each other. That was funny and challenging.

Throughout it all, I learned to endure because I refused to let my disability become an excuse or a hindrance to stay in the house for the rest of my life. I made myself learn how to walk along the busy streets because I didn't want to become dependent on other people. In 2010, my father died. That was when I asked if there was a God. If there was, why did he take away the people who loved me? I was active in Catholicism, but my heart was full of hatred and sadness. In my third year of high school, there was a program at Mandaue City Central

DURING MY ENTRY INTERVIEW, THEY ASKED HOW I WOULD DO MY STUDIES SINCE I WAS BLIND. I UNDERSTOOD THE QUESTION BECAUSE IT'S NORMAL FOR PEOPLE TO WONDER. I REPLIED, "YOU MAY DOUBT MY DISABILITY, BUT BELIEVE IN GOD'S ABILITY."

School that had a Bible study for the blind so I got involved. Someone there shared the gospel with me. He told me Bible verses about faith and the requirements of salvation. He gave me the verses Romans 1:16-17. The verse that crushed my heart stated that the righteous shall live by faith. I sang songs at the mass, I memorized Bible verses – but I realized then and there that it was all useless! I had thought religion could save me, but it could not.

So, on January 1, 2012, I realized that no one could save me except Christ. He had died on the cross for me, and He had risen again for me. That day I declared that only Jesus is my Savior and Lord. After that I found a church where I could grow spiritually, and by God's grace, I learned about the Christian life.

I graduated from deaf mute high school in Mandaue SPED school. Days after that, I asked my pastor about Baptist Theological College (BTC) and enrolled in 2014. During my entry interview they asked how I would do my studies since I was blind. I understood the question because it's normal for people to wonder. I replied, "You may doubt my disability, but believe in God's ability." I reminded them that education is for all. I am now in my third year at BTC. I've gone through a lot of difficulties, but by God's grace, I continue.

I have actually thanked God for people who have hurt me because my experience with them has led me to what

God is calling me to. If I had the choice to live another life, I would choose this life again because God will be glorified through my witness.

What's your advice for students who doubt their abilities?

For all students who doubt their disability or who are experiencing financial problems, it's not impossible to continue because it's not about you. It's about God. Make sure your purpose to study is to glorify God. It's okay to feel pressure because of worry, but remember that God does not like us to remain down with our feelings. Depend on God. Do your best and God will do the rest. Allow God to demonstrate His glory by your witness.



NICK THE HICK

Another redneck rant from your favorite guy

Redneck Dictionary



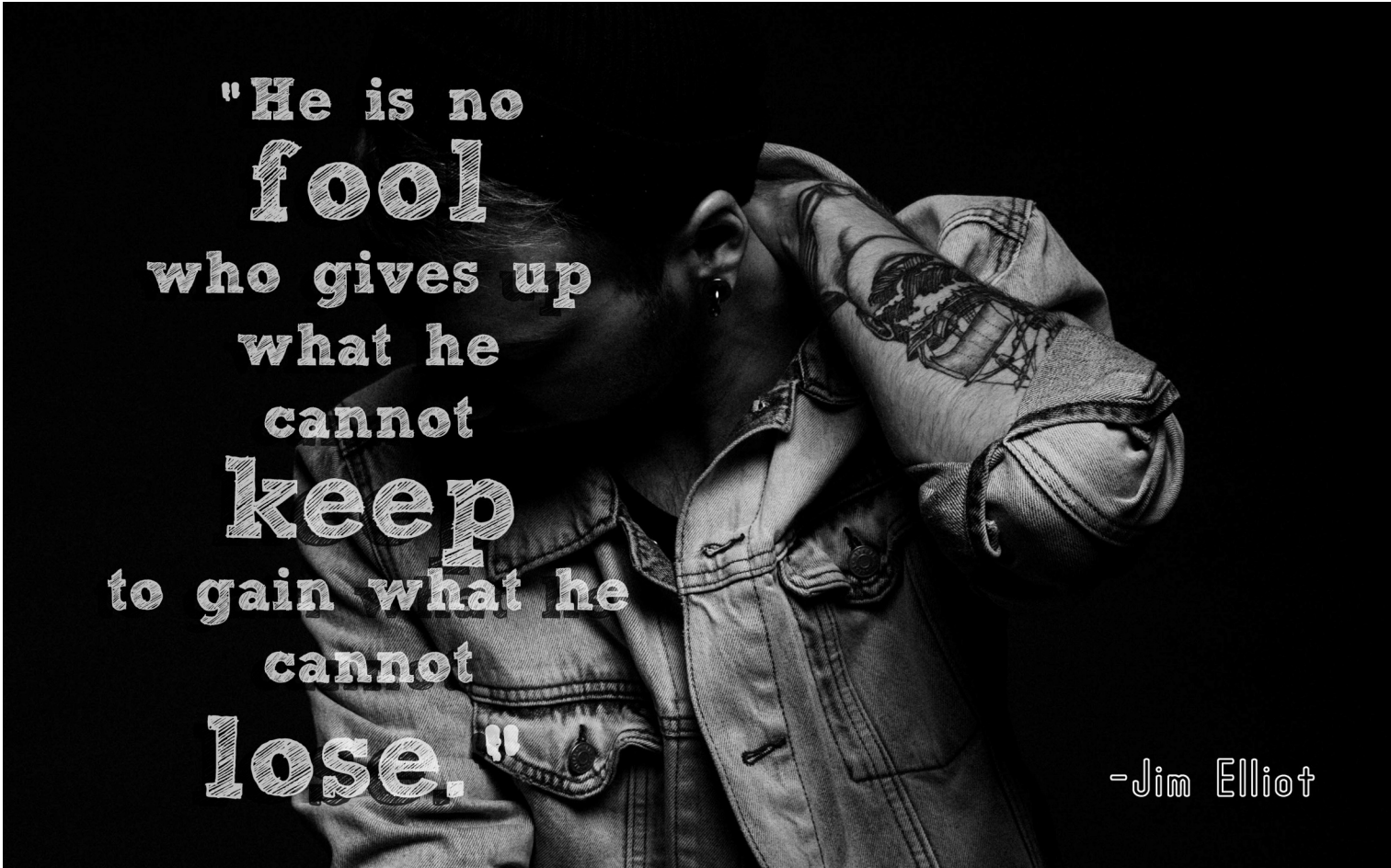
UNDERSTANDING THE REDNECK LANGUAGE

There's many a language used in this great country of ours. That's one thing that makes it a special place. With all those languages came great wholesome food. Tacos, Spagetti, General TSO's Chicken, Pizza, Steaks, and Dumplings with Sauerkraut. Now that my bellys growling lets go over some key redneck vocabulary words that are sure to enhance your speech.

- When referencing certain driving situations use words like TAR: He got him a flat tar!
- After a healthy sneeze implement the word CLINICS. You got any clinics so I can wipe my nose?
- When talking about your elected officials us GUBMINT: Casey dun got a gubmint job.
- Telling others about your citizenship? Consider using the word UHMURKIN: We's uhmurkin, born and raised in the United States of Uhmurka!
- Speaking about something you believe belongs to you. Use the word RATS: They was fat'n for they rats in the war.
- Talking about the temperature? PHRAISIN: It's phraisin up in here!
- Try PASTEURIZE. You know your hairs to long cuz its pasteurize.

There you go. You officially know more about the culture then you did yesterday.

<http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/word-lists/redneck-vocabulary-words.html>



"He is no
fool
who gives up
what he
cannot
keep
to gain what he
cannot
lose."

-Jim Elliot



LIFE HACKS: Winter Edition

No. 425



Park facing east and let the sun clear snow off of your car for you.

No. 489

Stuff wet boots with newspaper to soak up moisture quickly.



No. 67



Fill up a water bottle with hot water and place between your sheets 10 minutes before bed.

No. 188

Calm static hair by wiping a new dryer sheet over your head.



No. 209



Add a tablespoon of Nutella to your hot chocolate.

No. 55

Add traction to your bike by adding zip ties at intervals around the whole tire (be sure to clip the ends!).



No. 54



Put socks over your wiper blades before a storm to prevent ice build up.

No. 97

Rub hard, clear wax over canvas shoes before blow drying to make them water proof.



THE ILLUSION OF BALANCE

THE HARD TRUTH ABOUT WHY WE'RE NEVER SATISFIED

Stand up and put one foot in front of the other by touching your Achilles tendon to the front of your toes. Now, stretch your arms out and look straight ahead. Next, look to your left, then to your right, and finally look up and down. How was your balance? Did you shake a little or totter a bit? Now imagine trying to do this little exercise in an airplane aisle cruising at an altitude of 36,000 feet. You might get away with it for a bit, but eventually one of two things happen to knock you off course. First, the plane may hit some turbulence and you find yourself getting thrown forward despite how good your initial equilibrium was. And even if it's smooth sailing, inevitably someone else will need to get by you so you end up getting politely tapped on the shoulder to move, or less politely, moved aside if you don't exit the aisle fast enough. This is a bit how life works. As a college student, you have a lot of responsibilities, and while you may have the good fortune of sustaining the load for a while on your own, eventually something or someone ends up shoving you off course anyway.

Being busy is something the American culture esteems highly. We are trained and encouraged from a young age to "do it all." The more you do, see, taste, feel, experience, express, perform, give, take, etc., the more valuable you are. It is very tempting to cram a lot of things into our schedules because the rewards can be great: fame and success, experiences and possessions, travel and relationships. It's funny that what would have been unheard of 100 years ago is now the bare minimum, unspoken requirement of today. Back then if your daddy was a shoe cobbler, you grew up to be a cobbler. In 2017, if you want to be a marine biologist, you can move from the Midwest to the west coast to study the ocean. You'll pay off

the loans later, singing at local jazz clubs for a weekend job and selling crafts on Pinterest for a little extra income. After all, you have to pay for the apartment you share with someone you found through Craigslist, but it's not the greatest because school is so expensive and you never have time to enjoy time at home anyway.

While it can be a crushing weight to try and do so much, the alternative is to be a nameless nobody. Nobody wants to be a nobody, so we *try* all we can to *be* all we can. The problem with this, though, is that the drive to "do something with your life" is insatiable. It never ends. You're never "there." Take a moment to examine your life right now. How much of what you're doing is fueled by the

"NOBODY WANTS TO BE A NOBODY, SO WE *TRY* ALL WE CAN TO *BE* ALL WE CAN. THE PROBLEM WITH THIS, THOUGH, IS THAT THE DRIVE TO 'DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR LIFE' IS INSATIABLE. IT NEVER ENDS. YOU'RE NEVER 'THERE.'"

desire to have something you don't yet have? Even when we get the job, girl and house, we're not satisfied until we have the higher paycheck and published book. This societal pattern is broken because the very things we're chasing after will never satisfy us. Once we get what we want, we are left wanting more. Eventually, we will be rendered powerless to keep up the balancing act either by our own doing or by something outside of our control.

God is ultimately sovereign over our lives (Ephesians 1:9). He is in control. God and God alone is omniscient. He is the one that possess all knowledge over everything and everyone (Isaiah 40:28, 1 John 3:20). Endlessly trying to balance all of the things we think we need to do in order to have a happy, fulfilling life ultimately comes down to a trust issue. We simply don't trust that God knows what's best for our lives. We're driven to try and do it ourselves. It's easy to be driven to worry about everything and to feeling like there is no escape from it. We have to remember that we worry because we forget who God is. Verses in the Bible that mention anxiety are often followed by reminders to pray (Philippians 4:6-7). God and God alone can satisfy our hearts. Everything else turns to ashes.

"We are not to choose jobs and conduct our work to fulfill ourselves and accrue power, for being called by God to do something is empowering enough. We are to see work as a way of service to God and our neighbor, and so we should both choose and conduct our work in accordance with that purpose."² How, then, do we change our expectations and priorities to align with God? When we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, then He will see that you never lack the necessities of life. Therefore, we must give it all over to the Lord (Matthew 6:33-34). If we do, cruising that airplane at 36,000 feet won't suddenly make life an easy walk in the park, but it will mean our decision-making won't be based upon ourselves or what other people say anymore. Our decisions and follow-through will be based upon our sovereign God who has our best in mind. We won't be tempted to keep squeezing more in with no end in sight. We'll simply try to carry out the mission God has for us in the context of where He has put us. Submission to His ultimate authority is the greatest peace you can ever hope to find in this life. In the end, we should consider whether we truly believe that God is better than anything or anyone else, including our own personal hopes and dreams. If you are like most people with a pulse, you desire "something more." Allow the Holy Spirit to break you of trying to do it all in order to give it all away to Him.

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)



¹ All biblical references come from Tyndale's NIV Life Application Bible

² *Every Good Endeavor*, Timothy Keller, p. 67, 2012

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THRILL RIDE

By Pastor Justin Thomson



THE FIRST commercial rollercoaster made its debut in New York in 1884. It wouldn't be for another 9 years until a "horseless carriage" (gasoline powered automobile) would hit the road in the States, and the Wright brothers hadn't even begun to *think* about airplanes, so in the mid-1880's you'd have a hard time finding anyone who'd ever travelled at a speed faster than their own feet could carry them. Needless to say, when LaMarcus Thompson unveiled his "*Gravity Switchback Railway*" at Coney Island, people lined up immediately to see what speed would actually feel like.

The rollercoaster has since become the central component of theme parks around the world. Re-engineered over the years to produce faster speeds, higher heights, and thrilling turns, the rollercoaster has given way to *Mega-coasters*, *Hyper-coasters*, and *Giga-coasters*. People seem to have a strange, innate pull toward fully committing themselves to an adventure that requires their full surrender. Speeding down an unfamiliar path, full of unexpected twists and turns, feeling joy and dread all at once...experiencing the sense of living and dying at the same time...it seems to excite them. For every one rider who can't stomach the experience, there are 10 more lined up behind him, ready to try it out for themselves.

Christian discipleship is similar in many ways, but it predates theme-park joy-rides by about 1900 years. Like a rollercoaster, discipleship takes you down a winding path of nerve-wracking, gut-wrenching high's and low's, without the luxury of a map or a compass or a barf-bag. Christian discipleship requires the same amount of surrender and offers the same sense of exhilaration as a rollercoaster, only longer in duration. And theme parks, like discipleship, aren't for the faint-of-heart. But the big difference is this: At the end of the rollercoaster experience, you're dizzy... whereas at the end of the discipleship experience you get rewarded by Jehovah God. If we had to pick, logic would suggest we'd choose the latter, but statistics might reveal that we're actually picking the former. The world offers cheap, consolatory thrills for anybody willing to forego the offer for true discipleship, but don't be deceived. We were made for more than carnival-ride Christianity.

When God built people, He wired them for discipleship, and because He did, human beings strangely crave it. They might not know it, but discipleship is what they need. Full surrender is the only appropriate way for God's creation to respond to their Creator. God designed us with an internal longing for something we mistakenly believe can be fulfilled by riding a rollercoaster (or some other silly thing), not realizing that that longing was put there by God to pull us like a magnet into Christian discipleship, which is the only means by which that desire can truly be satisfied. Our sinful nature often compels us to try and satiate our God-given cravings in any way it possibly can, *other than the one God intended*. But when we opt out of discipleship, we doomed seek a cheap, substitutionary thrill to replace it, only we don't usually see how cheap it is until it's too late. We're guaranteed to be disappointed.

There are all kinds of things in life that compete for your time, affection, and attention. Your affections are important to God, and He demands them. In trade, He promises to fulfill the desires of your heart...the longings of your soul, the cravings He designed you with. Until we surrender to Him with all our heart, mind, body, and soul as the scriptures declare, we can only expect to suffer the same spiritual malnourishment that has ravaged the human race since Eve tried to fill her belly with an illicit apple. But until we're ready to buckle into the seat of discipleship, not knowing exactly where the rail might take us, we'll never feel the true joy and satisfaction of those who trust the Lord enough to enjoy the ride.

Touch lightly the things of the world. It may be that you are reaching out to take hold of them because you believe that they will fulfill a longing within your soul. Be careful. You are likely to discover that you're wrong about that. That longing in your soul is no mistake, for God put it there. The mistake is made when you look to something temporal to fulfill that yearning rather than God Himself. There is no rollercoaster on the face of this earth that can do for you what God can by His own design. Surrender yourself to the Lord's care and steer clear of the cheap thrills the world offers you.

**WHEN
YOU
ARE
READY
TO**



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**TAKE A
LEAP OF
FAITH**

**STREET LEVEL
MINISTRIES**

