

# ***HOPE Gazette***

March 2022





Verse of the Month

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Ephesians 6:10-11*



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This Gazette is intended to share ideas, discuss theology, and to inform. This is a volunteer-based publication. It is through the hard work of many people that we can produce and share this.

If you have any questions please reach out to us!

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# The Last Days



**Pastor Larry Mitchell presents part two of his series the “Last Days”. He will answer some of the burning questions we all have about the “Last Days”, what that term means biblically, and how it applies to us as Christians.**

**Make sure to check back in the next Hope Gazette for Part Three!**



*Pastor Larry Mitchell*



## **"SIGNS Of The LAST DAYS"**

IN Continuing Our SERIES On the "LAST DAYS," . . [ From Last Month's February 2022 "HOPE GAZETTE,] . . WE Want To EXAMINE MORE SIGNS,

For Further PROOF of "WHERE WE ARE, ON GOD'S TIME CLOCK !"

. . AND I BELIEVE ONE of the MAJOR SIGNS That CAN'T BE Overlooked, IS Found IN DANIEL'S Book of Prophecy; . . DAN. 2:1 . . [Paraphrased] "King Nebuchadnezzar Was Being Troubled Over and Over Again, By Some Pretty Wild Dreams, . . ". . SO, After Awhile, In DAN; 2:30 ~ . . DANIEL Was Brought IN, and HE INTERPRETED the Kings DREAMS ! He Explained to The King; This Great IMAGE That You SAW In Your DREAM, . . With A HEAD of GOLD, IT Represents BABYLON, O' KING;

. . BUT there Shall ARISE Another Kingdom of SILVER, Which is the BREAST and the ARMS, of This Image, . . Which is the MEDES and the PERSIANS; Then Another Kingdom Shall RISE UP, Which is the BELLY of BRASS, . . Which is the GREEKS; BUT Then Another Will Subdue the Greeks, . . Which is the 2 LEGS of IRON; The Western ROMAN EMPIRE, And the EASTERN Greek ORTHODOX; . . [ Which I Might ADD, . . ALL of THESE KINGDOMS That the BIBLE Prophesied About Many Years Ago, [Here In the Book of DANIEL,] . . ARE ALL IN OUR HISTORY BOOKS TODAY ! ]

"BUT You See, ROME Was NEVER CONQUERED, BUT IT FELL From WITHIN !" . . A POWER Which Has Come Down to US, TODAY, As the ROMAN . . . [IRON] CATHOLIC [UNIVERSAL] CHURCH;; . . Which Will PLAY a MAJOR ROLE [Here In

These LAST DAYS,] As the ONE-WORLD CHURCH; . . .

[Which Brings US To Another Prophecy Found IN REV. 17:8 . . "The BEAST That WAS, . . and IS NOT, . . But YET IS."

. . WHICH Brings US To WHERE WE Are TODAY; ". . the TEN TOES of the IMAGE," . . MADE Of IRON . . MIXED with CLAY, . . !!

. . WHICH Will LINK UP With A ONE- WORLD LEADER . . [The ANTI-CHRIST] . . . OF A ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT !! Another PROPHECY Which Will COME To PASS, . . IN the Very NEAR FUTURE ! ]

. . BUT This Kingdom Of IRON and CLAY, . . The FINALITY Of Nebuchadnezzar's DREAM IN DAN: 2:43-45 . . Tells US . . "THIS KINGDOM, or This POWER, WILL BE DESTROYED, . . AND Be BROKEN INTO PIECES, . . By a STONE or A ROCK, . . NOT CUT From HUMAN HANDS, . . BUT BY GOD, . . Whose KINGDOM SHALL NEVER END !"

WE ARE AT THE END OF DAYS !!

. . Once Again, The NUMBER One SIGN That WE SHOULD Continue to BE WATCHING, IS Found in the Book of MATT. 24:32-33 . . Where JESUS SAYS; . . "Now Learn the Parable of the FIG TREE, when its Branch is yet Tender, and Puts forth it's leaves, YOU KNOW that SUMMER is NIGH; . . . And SO IT IS, WHEN You SEE ALL THESE THINGS Come to Pass, . . KNOW that the END is Near, . . Even at the DOOR."

The FIG TREE is Mentioned 38 times in the Scriptures, And IN THIS Scripture, . . IT Represents the HOUSE of ISRAEL !

"Very Importantly, . . . ALL EYES ARE ON ISRAEL !!

WE Looked AT MATT. 24:34 In Last Month's Discussion, Where JESUS Says; "Surely I tell you, . . THIS Generation Shall NOT PASS, . . Until ALL these THINGS BE FULFILLED."

> "WHAT" ARE SOME Of "THESE THINGS ?" JESUS said in LUKE 21:24 ; ". . And Jerusalem shall be Trodden down of the Gentiles, until the TIMES of the GENTILES Be Fulfilled." WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN ? . . IN 1967 . . When ISRAEL WON A DECISIVE VICTORY Over THREE THREATENING COUNTRIES That Surrounded THEM; . . EGYPT, . . ASSYRIA, . . and JORDAN !" . . . AND ISRAEL, . . a Country, HALF the SIZE of Indiana, . . WON That WAR IN SIX DAYS, . . AND THEY TOOK CONTROL of Their BELOVED JERUSALEM, Once Again !!

"NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE !!"

. . . AND THIS HAPPENED . . IN OUR GENERATION !!” ITS The BUDDING of the FIG TREE !! ONCE AGAIN, ISRAEL Becoming a NATION in 1948 . . THAT WAS 72+ YEARS AGO !!! JUST A THOUGHT !!! HE WHO HAS EARS LET HIM HEAR !!!

> . . SO, WHAT Are Some of These Other THINGS That JESUS PROPHESED, . . Would HAPPEN . . IN ONE GENERATION ??

1. ONE of the MAJOR SIGNS That HE Mentions, SEVERAL Times, IS IN; **MATT. 24: . . . Vs. 4 - 5 . . Vs. 11 . . Vs. 23- 24 . .** THIS is Where HE Says to “BEWARE of FALSE PROPHETS,” and “FALSE Messiahs”, . . AND A “FALSE CHURCH !” > HE says; “WATCH OUT, For there will be MANY that will come In My NAME, CLAIMING They are the Messiah, and WILL Deceive many !” HE said, “They will appear and perform great Signs and Miracles, DECEIVE Even the VERY ELECT – IF it were Possible.
2. I TIM. 4:1 says, “That in the latter times, (Last days) some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to Seducing spirits and Doctrines of Devils.”

TODAY, WE Have a Smorgasbord Of ALL KINDS Of FALSE Pretenders ! . . . Witchcraft – Wicca – Paganism – Islam - Psychic Hot Lines – . . New Age Doctrine – “We’ve Got MORE FALSE, . . Compromising Abominations Than You Can Shake a Stick AT !” . . .

TODAY, WE Have So MANY, “SO-CALLED CHURCHES,” THAT SAY, . . THEY’RE CHRISTIANS, . . (BUT in FACT,] They’re Nothing More Than a COMPROMISE . . of PAGANISM, . . GREEK PHILOSOPHIES, . . SECULAR HUMANISM, . . . And a Whole Lot of Other “Traditional, Mumbo-Jumbo RELIGIOUS BELIEFS !”. . EACH ONE MIXED-IN With A FEW . . . CHRISTIAN TRUTHS, and VALUES, . . BUT ALL . . BECOMING “ABOMINATIONAL,” . . Instead Of “DENOMINATIONAL !”

I Heard SOMEBODY SAY; “Well, I Believe THIS 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY GENERATION is Probably ONE of the MOST RELIGIOUS, Of Any GENERATION, THUS FAR !! “AND THEY’RE RIGHT !” . . . BUT That’s All IT IS !! . . IS RELIGIOUS !!

I TIM. 3:16 says; “They Have a FORM of godliness, But they DENY The POWER thereof; “From such, Turn away !”

> THEY Have Steeples On Their Cathedrals, And They Wear Crosses Around Their Necks, And They’ll Sing “Amazing Grace” Till the Cows Come Home !”

. . “AND MANY, . . WHO Have FALLEN INTO, These “CHURCHES,” Are SINCERE, . . BUT THEY Have Been . . SINCERELY. . DECEIVED !”

PAUL Says In II COR. 11:14-15 SAYS; “And It’s NO Wonder, For Even SATAN Himself, Masquerades as an Angel of light. (He’s a WOLF in Sheep’s Clothing) “SO it’s NO Surprise that his Servants, Also Masquerade as Ministers of Righteousness, . BUT Their END Will Correspond With Their DEEDS.”

SO, You See, Satan’s NOT the Guy in the Red Flannels with 2 horns and a Pointy Tail, That Everybody Makes Him Out to Be ! . . HE Really Masquerades as An ANGEL, . . . . An ANGEL of Light ! HE Appears to Be Good, . . HE Appears To Have a FORM of godliness, . . . BUT He’s Really EVIL !!

HE DEALS in HALF-TRUTHS ! NOT ALL the Way a LIE, BUT NO Where NEAR ALL the TRUTH, Either !! HOW Many Knows IF It’s NOT the WHOLE TRUTH, – THEN, It’s a LIE !

“HOW Many Has Heard of Reincarnation ?”

Through Hinduism, - The Doctrine of Reincarnation Implies That WE Can Become Our OWN SAVIOR, . . And That, JESUS’ DYING ON the CROSS, Has NO Bearing On OUR Destiny WHAT SO EVER !

REINCARNATION, . . IS Taught To Be a Cycle of Evolution; To Be an Evolvement of a Person’s SOUL, as IT Repeatedly Passes From One BODY, or ONE LIFE, to the NEXT ! . . After Each DEATH, . . THEN, A NEW BIRTH OCCURS !

AND THIS PROCESS Continues, Over and Over, Until the SOUL Reaches a STATE of Perfection. In Other Words, Working Your Way to Perfection, For However LONG That Takes! [WHICH is NEVER !]

The NEW AGE Movement Believes That THIS PROCESS of RE-INCARNATION, . .



Brings FINAL UNION, With a god Force; . . BUT the PROBLEM IS; .... "IT'S NOT the RIGHT GOD !!" . . IN FACT, . THERE IS NO OTHER LIVING GOD !!

AND the THING IS; IF You Keep On Being BAD, . . IF YOU Continue to REAP What YOU SOW, . . And YOU Continue to REINCARNATE, Until You Get it RIGHT, . . AND IF YOU DO, Get DUPED Into Believing Such Far Out MESS, . . Your REWARD IS; ... "NIRVANA !" In Other Words, . . "NOTHING OCCURS !"

"WHOOPIE !"

BUT the BIBLE, . . GOD'S WORD says in HEB. 9:27 says;" It is Appointed unto MAN, . . to DIE Once, and THEN the judgment." The Bible Teaches in EPH. 2:8-9 That You CAN'T WORK Your WAY to SALVATION, . . BUT Its TOTALLY BY the GRACE of GOD !

EPH. 2:8-9 says;" For its by GRACE you are Saved; Through Faith, and that not of yourselves; It is a GIFT of GOD, And NOT by WORKS Lest any man Should Boast."

2. ANOTHER SIGN That HE Mentions; IS ALL the Wickedness in the World Today . . . !

SO MUCH WICKEDNESS in These United States of America, That IF the LORD Doesn't Come Back SOON, . . . HE'S Gonna Have to APOLOGIZE to SODOM & GOMMORAH !!

JESUS says, MATT. 24:12 says; "And Because Iniquity (Lawlessness) Shall Abound, . . the LOVE of MANY Shall GROW COLD."

II TIM. 3:1- 4 says; "This know, also, that in the last Days, perilous times shall come." For men shall be Lovers of their Ownselves, Covetous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers, Disobedient to Parents, . . Unthankful, Unholy, Without Natural Affection, Truce breakers, . . . Fierce, Incontinent, [Out of Control] False Accusers, . . . [Always Blaming Others] Despisers of Those Who Do Good," Traitors, Heady, Highminded, . . [Prideful] . . [And the BOTTOM LINE IS ] . . LOVERS Of PLEASURES. . MORE than LOVERS of GOD."

RIGHT NOW, EVERY ONE of These EVIL Influences, IS ALL AROUND US !

There are Parents Out There, That Are Afraid to Send Their CHILDREN to Public Schools, Because of Kids Carrying GUNS and KNIVES to SCHOOL, . . LET ALONE, Being Afraid That Their Children Will BE CONFRONTED BY DRUG DEALERS !!

BACK in the 40`s – 50`s – 60`s . . the Biggest Problems That WE Had Back Then in SCHOOL, was CHEWING GUM in Class, AND SNEAKIN` OFF the School Grounds to Go SMOKE a CIGARETTE. Lol

> II PETER 3:3-7 says; "Knowing this First, that there shall Come in the LAST DAYS, . . SCOFFERS, walking after their own lusts," And saying, "Where is the Promise of his Coming?" . . "For since our fathers fell asleep, All things have Continued as they were from the beginning of creation."

**"And because of this, they willingly are ignorant, and overlook the fact that the heavens came into existence long ago, by the Word of God, and the earth, which was also formed out of water and by means of water." . . . . "Through which, the world, then existed, was flooded with water and perished." . . . .**

**"But by the same Word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up and reserved for Fire, being kept until the day of Judgment and the destruction of Ungodly People."**

> THEY SAY THAT the SINGLE LEADING CAUSE For ATHEISM, . . IS WHEN PEOPLE, . . (Who PROFESS Themselves to BE CHRISTIANS With Their Mouths), . . . WALK OUT Church DOORS, and With Their LIFESTYLES, (By the WAY THEY LIVE) . . . THEY DENY . . That THEY Even KNOW JESUS CHRIST, . . . AND To the UNBELIEVING . . THIS IS Simply "UNBELIEVABLE !"

3. IN MATT. 24:7 JESUS says; "Their will be FAMINES and PESTILENCE; FAMINES in INDIA and in AFRICA and Many Other Countries Around the World, HAVE Been CAUSED By the Peoples of THESE Countries, . . THEY Have Gone Whoring After Other gods !!

REMEMBER; "The QUALITY of YOUR LIFE, . . . DEPENDS . . ON The ABILITY of YOUR GOD !"

WHO'S FAULT IS IT, . . WHEN People DIE of Famine and Starvation Because They Choose to Worship Cows and Rats Instead of Serving the Living GOD ?

II THESS. 2:11-12 says; "For this cause, GOD shall send them strong delusion, that they should Believe a LIE !" That they All might be DAMNED WHO BELIEVED NOT the TRUTH !!"

. . . AND PESTILENCE and DISEASE Has Been CAUSED Mostly By the LACK of NUTRITION !! . . POOR DIET!! People NOT Giving DUE Diligence To Their EATING HABITS !!

The OLD Saying Is; "YOU PUT GARBAGE IN, YOU GET GARBAGE OUT !"

AND Most Of the FOOD That IS Available To US, In These LAST DAYS, . . "IS GARBAGE !" "IT HAS NO NUTRITIONAL VALUE," Because the FOOD PROCESSERS and MARKETEERS Have Taken Most of the NUTRIENTS OUT, . .

To Make SHELF LIFE Last Longer in the Supermarkets, . . Thereby SELLING MORE, and TRADING OUR HEALTH For MONEY ! MAMMON !! "LAST DAYS FOLKS !!"

FIRST Came the BLACK PLAGUE – Then SMALLPOX – DIPHTHERIA – COLLERA; . . THEN CAME; MEASLES – POLIO – RHEUMATIC FEVER – TB – CANCERS, . . .NOW; - AIDS – ALL KINDS Of FLU'S - CORONAVIRUS . . . PESTILENCE !

4. MATT. 24:7 Also says; " And there shall be Earthquakes in Divers places." ("Divers," means; "Many Different" ) And One Can't Help But Wonder, . . Let Alone All the Earthquakes, BUT WHAT About ALL the Rest of the Natural Disasters That are Taking Place . . ALL OVER the WORLD ? . . .

HURRICANES –TORNADO'S – VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS –SUNAMI'S Caused By EARTHQUAKES ! . . HORRIFIC RAIN STORMS That Have Caused FLOODING and MUD SLIDES !

. . ALL of THESE . . Causing Significant DAMAGE and LOSS of LIFE ? . . . WE'RE SEEIN' IT !!!

5. MATT. 24: 6-7 Says: "WARS and RUMORS of WARS," – Nation Rising Against Nation, Kingdom Against kingdom!

IF WE Would Just Look at HOW MANY WARS That AMERICA . . HAS Been INVOLVED IN, In These LAST DAYS; JUST IN the LAST 240 yrs. . . Since AMERICA Became a NATION !

1776 - Revolutionary WAR . . . Civil WAR North & South - WAR with Mexico - World WAR I - World WAR II . . Spanish-American WAR - VIET NAM WAR - Korean WAR - Racial Civil War in America - Desert Storm Gulf WAR 2004 -- WAR Against Terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan !!!!

NOT to Mention the RUMORS of WAR, - the Cold WAR With RUSSIA, with CUBA, . . OUR Involvement in Granada, . . RUMORS of WAR with North Korea, . . NOT to Even Mention ALL of the Native-American-INDIAN WARS That Lasted 50 Yrs, That Was Fought Since the BIRTH of THIS COUNTRY !!

. . . NOT to Mention ALL the Street GANGS, and Motorcycle GANGS, and the MAFIA Families, . . Fighting – Fighting – Fighting !

6. JESUS said in MATT.26:13 . . And THIS GOSPEL of the Kingdom, will be Preached in the WHOLE WORLD, as a TESTIMONY to ALL Nations, . . and THEN. . . Will the END COME !"

IT Has NOW Been Reported, That Through the On-Going Efforts of Indigenous Evangelist Missionaries, Preaching and Teaching, and Sneaking Bibles Into Countries That Have FORBIDDEN the Teachings of the BIBLE, . . . Through the EFFORTS of TV Evangelism, Through Radio, Through Internet, Through EVERY MEANS of Communication Possible TODAY, . . . THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, Has NOW Been DECLARED and Preached in Almost EVERY Country, . . to Every NATION, to EVERY TRIBE of PEOPLE, Around the WORLD !

JESUS said in LUKE 21:28,"And when YOU SEE These THINGS COME to PASS, THEN LOOK UP, Lift Up Your Heads, for Your REDEMPTION Draweth Nigh." LOOK UP !!!

For We are IN the LAST, . . . of the LAST DAYS ! IN the NEXT Edition Of the HOPE GAZZETTE, . . We Will Look At MORE SIGNS, . . And MORE of the Prophetic Word That's Been Given About the RAPTURE of the Church, . . And a ONE World LEADER . . WHO is About to Take CENTER STAGE !

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# Brief History of Latin American Christianity

Kasey Parrott

## Introduction

The spread of Christianity has happened in numerous ways across the world. Each region has its own unique story of how Christianity has spread. Latin America is a large and diverse area which has its own distinctive narrative to finding religion. Fueled by greed and the desire for power, Christianity was brought to Latin America with violence and suffering. While we discuss colonization, liberation, political agendas, racism, and violence in a timeline sequence, we see the work of the Holy Spirit moving throughout this part of the world in untold ways.

## Violent Beginnings (1400's to 1820s)

Violence and greed have always been a part of the world. We find it in numerous Biblical accounts beginning early in the book of Genesis. It has showed no signs of stopping or slowing down and in our modern time it is the way of life in most regions of the world. Christianity and the commandment by Christ to love others and share the gospel should be a beacon of light, removed from the violence and greed of the world, to offer hope and redemption. Yet is not immune from the world and its practices.

As such, the depravity of man seems to know no bounds. When we want something, we are known to just take it, by force if necessary. As a parent we see this reaction very early in our children. As toddlers they will take a toy away from another child and push them down in the process. There is no empathy, no consideration, and the desire to have the toy is all that motivates them. This same approach was used to introduce the gospel in Latin America.

Latin America for the purposes of discussion includes Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the continent of South America. Each is unique but holds a common narrative. Through “violent evangelism” the European military conquered and brought the area under Christian political rule. This was done with papal authority. This gave Spanish and Portuguese monarchs almost complete control over the Catholic Church in these new conquered lands. At this time the Catholic Church was the ruling Christianity in the land.

Needing labor for the newly colonized area, a slave system was quickly put in place. Papal authority found in the Romanus Pontifex of 1455 by Pope Nicholas V which gave Catholic rulers permission to seize the

lands of “pagans” and to enslave if the goal was conversion. This was met with international backlash when a preacher Bartolomé de Las Casas published an account of what he found in 1552 in his *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indians*. The following excerpt gives understanding to the treatment of Native Americans and the atrocities of the Spanish conquistadors.



*Two principal and general customs have been employed by those, calling themselves Christians, who have passed this way, in extirpating and striking from the face of the earth those suffering nations. The first being unjust, cruel, bloody, and tyrannical warfare. The other- after having slain all those who might yearn toward or suspire after or think of freedom, or consider escaping from the torments that they are made to suffer, by which I mean all the native-born lords and adult males, for it is the Spaniards’ custom in their wars to allow only young boys and females to live - being to oppress them with the hardest, harshest, and most heinous bondage to which men or beasts might ever be bound into.*

*The cause for which the Christians have slain and destroyed so many and such infinite numbers of souls, has been simply to get, as their ultimate end, the Indians’ gold of them, and to stuff themselves with riches in a very few days, and to raise themselves to high estates - without proportion to their birth or breeding, it should be noted - owing to the insatiable greed and ambition that they have had, which has been greater than any the world has ever seen before. . .*

Despite King Charles issuing new laws to moderate the treatment of the Indians, the new laws were opposed and ignored by most colonial officials in Spanish America. Challenges such as diseases and population loss led the Spanish and Portuguese settlers to look elsewhere for labor and as a result the African slave industry sprang into existence. This led to societies that were racially mixed which began to play a role in both church and society.

Those who were at the top of the social hierarchy (based on race) in Colonial Latin American experience Christianity differently from other population groups. Those at the top had an intense Catholicism as practiced by their contemporaries in Europe and were afforded exemplary service by bishops and priests. Those who were not in the top tiers of the social hierarchy (non-white) were treated as less than fully human and they were segregated both in church and in society.

These marginalized people were given very little spiritual or theological instruction. When explained to them it was through comparison with their local pre-Christian beliefs and practices. This led to a mix of new ideas and became a part of “popular” Catholicism which is still the center of Christian faith in the area.

### **Independence (1820s to 1900)**

Independence was the top priority and when Napoleon invaded the Iberian Peninsula in 1807 Latin America revolted as well. The new revolutionary leaders wanted to oversee society and wanted to maintain the social structure, including the structure of religion in the region. The Catholic church was anti-revolutionary and saw rebellion a sinful act. Soon the Catholic church ignored the new nations of Latin America, and many bishops fled the region. This left the church leaderless and people living and dying without sacraments.



POPE Gregory XVI

In 1835 Pope Gregory XVI wished to regain papal authority in the region and reached out to the new leaders. Eventually many regions made agreements with the pope about the status and rights of the Catholic church within their borders. Some, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico remained uncommitted. Church and state relations in these areas became tense and war erupted, to the devastation of the Church. When the Cristero Rebellion began in 1926 there were over four thousand priests in Mexico; when it ended in the 1930s there were fewer than 400 remaining. Social issues were constantly fluctuating and could be quite bloody in these areas.

### **Twentieth Century**

Thus far in the Latin American experience, colonization led to the slave trade, distrust for Christians, racism and social inequality, and untold greed. The Catholic church was being met with a love/hate relationship that was political in nature. In a move that would help establish a new vision of social Catholicism in the area happened when Pope Leo XIII convened the first Latin American Plenary Council of bishops in 1899. This brought a new sense of corporate identity and had a unifying effect on the bishops who until this time were serving their own areas without regard of the others.

Strain was mounting at this same time and Latin American Catholics were forced into social activism by the military dictatorships that arose during the decades following World War II. During this time nations across the globe were pressured to align with communism or democratic capitalism. Regimes of anti-communism sprung up and anyone who was labeled a communist or sympathizer were arrested and killed. Many simply “disappeared”. The church had to eventually respond.

During this time of post-war recovery, the Latin Americans were enjoying favorable terms of trade in the Western industrial nations. High demands for minerals and agricultural goods led to trade. After 1950 these favorable conditions began to deteriorate, and economists and Catholic intellectuals recognized the failure. The Church had optimistic expectations of economic development soon and tended to see social problems – such as working conditions, land tenure patterns, the plight of the peasants, illiteracy rates, and poor housing- as discrete problems and unrelated to the economic and political relationships Latin America had with other nations.

At this time another development emerged as a result of the reforms initiated by the Second Vatican Council and Latin America needed massive attention as a mission field. The land was full of weak churches and the common people had no desire to emerge themselves. Protestant competition and secular political groups were making inroads among the Catholic faithful. As such the theology of liberation grew.

### **Liberation**

Liberation theology emerged as a movement that combined social analysis and social action with traditional Catholic teaching. As such more worker-priest relationships were made. Clergy radicalized by direct involvement with the poor and soon began justifying the need of some form of political action to elevate conditions. Inspired by the story of Jesus’ life, clerics increasingly chose to fight for social justice

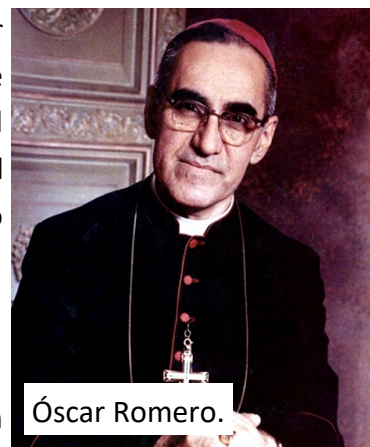




alongside the marginalized. Liberation theology interpreted Christian practice as need to be inspired by God's love which was a preferential option for the poor.

This led to many Catholic bishops, priests, and devout laypeople to speak and act more assertively, denouncing the abuses of military governments and calling for reform. Many were killed by their own governments (or related death-squads) because of their concern for the poor.

One such spokesman is the assassinated archbishop of El Salvador, Óscar Romero. A quiet conservative man before his appointment as archbishop, he soon became a vocal critic of the violent activities of the government armed forces, right-wing groups, and leftist guerrillas involved in El Salvador's civil conflicts. Specifically, he denounced the regime of dictator Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero and refused to support the right-wing military-civilian junta that replaced the deposed dictator.



Óscar Romero.

His advocacy for human rights gave him nomination for the 1979 Nobel Prize for Peace by U.S. congressmen and members of the British Parliament. The following year Romero was assassinated. The *Comisión de la Verdad para El Salvador* ("Truth Commission for El Salvador"), approved by the United Nations, later concluded that Romero's death had been carried out by a right-wing death squad. During his funeral a bomb or bombs went off outside the Metropolitan Cathedral of San Salvador, where tens of thousands of mourners were gathered at what has been considered one of the largest demonstrations in the country's history. Gunfire then rained down on the crowd, leaving an estimated 27 to 40 people dead and more than 200 wounded from the violence and subsequent stampede.

Times were turbulent. Protestants felt called to become involved in these communities. As missionary work began Pentecostalism soon took off. These churches succeeded because they were entertaining, they strongly focus on experiences, no one is made to feel inferior, they are socially comfortable, and they resonated with the dynamics of poverty. The emphasis on disciplined living is highly attractive to members as well.

This new teaching led to a new sort of liberation – the freedom of choice. Traditionally Catholic faith was something one was born into. No one questioned the place of the Church in their lives. No longer is that the case. As choice has now become an unavoidable dimension of faith in Latin America, diversity is emerging. This option and idea of choice became a concern for the Vatican in the late 1980s. Pope John Paul II embraced this in the *Redemptoris missio* in 1990 stating that conversion means accepting, by personal decision, the sovereignty of Christ. This led to growth and revival within the Catholic community and millions of formerly nominal Catholics have become involved again in the life of the Church.

### Conclusion

Christianity in Latin America began in violence and violation of human rights. Colonization and the spread of disease wiped out great deals of the population across the area, led to the African slave trade being initiated, and the dehumanizing of people of color. Racism and social inequality stifled the people of Latin America for hundreds of years. The Catholic church played a large role in these injustices and didn't always have concern for those who were affected. Research shows that Church often was fueled by a desire for greed and power to the dismissal of its very parishioners.

Liberation – socially, economically, racially, and spiritually- comes at a cost. Many people died along the way, many killed by governments and revolutionary war lords. The travesty of the Latin American history cannot be fully felt or explained in such a short summary; however, we can glean several things from it. First, the Holy Spirit can move and grow the body of Christ without the help of humans or churches. Secondly, the Holy Spirit is not going to be deterred by the actions of humanity. God shows Himself consistently, the same today and yesterday, during horrible conditions. The gospel message is relevant to all.

As we investigate the movement of the Holy Spirit from continent to continent, we see a radical work. A quarter of the world's Christians now live in Latin America, with almost 90 percent of local populations identifying as Christian. This is the most numeric of the five major continents. This area has emerged from adverse conditions that I cannot understand from my own world view. They were and are still struggling for social justice and equality in some areas of Latin America today and I pray only that the will of God for the people emerges without any more lives lost.

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# WOMEN OF RELEASE "WOR"



## WHEN

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**9am-3pm**

## WHERE

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Reverend Angela Carter  
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Reverend Candis Oswalt

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# An Unspoken Danger

Mark Pitman

When I asked for the topic for this month's article little did I know that it had struck so close to home, right here in our church community. This topic is one I have come in direct contact with my work as a corrections officer. In this message about suicide I hope to convey the harsh reality of the effects of suicide on the families involved and our society. First let me explain the stigma that is attached to suicide and what it is defined as;

- **Suicide** is defined as death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior.
- A **suicide attempt** is a non-fatal, self-directed, potentially injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior. A suicide attempt might not result in injury.
- **Suicidal idealization** refers to thinking about, considering, or planning suicide.

When someone in a family decides to attempt or go through with taking their life there is a thought that comes into the family members that they want to keep it a secret. In many cases, families try to cover up the truth to “protect” the children. If it is a child or teen they may believe that people will think of them as bad parents. They start to question their parenting skills, how could I not have known? Those who have lost a loved one to suicide often feel at fault. Why didn't I see this coming? Why didn't I do something to prevent it? So they feel guilty that they weren't able to stop it. This is something wrong about my family, something wrong about my loved one, and I don't want to talk about it because it's shameful.

The next thing we want to look at is the social pressure to fit in, not to mention the relentless peer pressure that our children face everyday. With the recent pandemic this pressure has vastly increased and caused so much division among our children and families. It is no wonder that so many have come to

the conclusion that it is not worth it anymore. The enemy of their souls has them doubting their existence and causing them to believe they will never be good enough. All these factors lead someone to contemplating suicide.

The following excerpts are just a few of the countless thoughts of someone who is at the brink of ending their life. They are without hope and in deep despair.

*I want to be dead, but I don't want to die.*

*Does that make sense? Like, I wish I was dead, but I don't want to go through the act of dying. I wish I could just snap my fingers and cease to exist immediately without any pain.*

*I accepted the fact I will die by suicide. maybe not now or even in the near future, but I will die someday.*

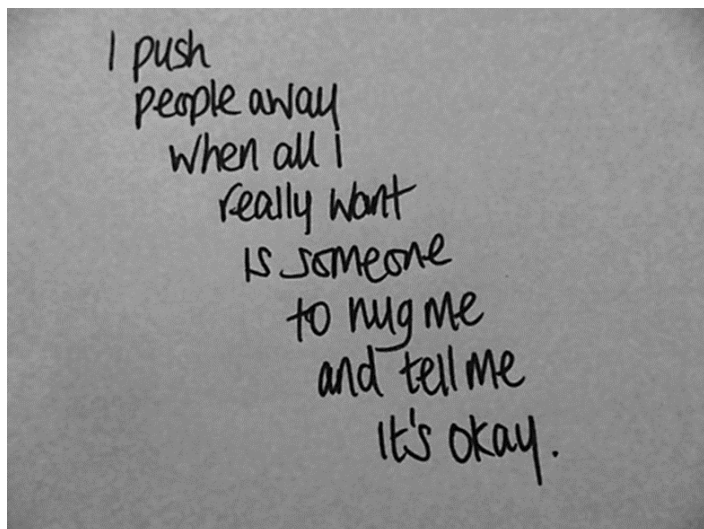
*I'm 17 and my entire life is crushed by my mental illness.*

*I can't go to school because I'm too depressed every time I don't wear stockings or a jumper everyone looks at me like I'm insane because I have scars. I cry everyday because I don't want to be alive. I'm never going to be useful to anyone. I don't want to live anymore*

*The thought of killing myself is the only thing that actually makes me happy*

*Sounds ironic, but that's it. I know what to do, I know what to get, I collected all the info I could, and the simple thought of the day being near fills me with a forgotten bubbly feeling of excitement. I can't stop thinking about it, it cheers me up, it motivates me to go through my (hopefully last)*

*days, every time I think about it I cannot help but feel really content for some reason. Fantasizing about finally dying has become a guilty pleasure of mine at this point. It just feels so good, to think about my dreams coming true. It's the first time in many years I felt genuinely happy, so it's not a surprise, but sure a welcome one.*



*My best friend is dead, my dad cut me off, I've dropped out of college to work at fast food, and now, my boyfriend of 3 years has left me. There is nothing good in my life and I have no future.*

*How do I not contemplate suicide at every minor inconvenience?*

*Life is hell and I can barely keep afloat so anytime anything happens I immediately jump back to my death wish.*

I want to share the following Blog Post. This is a great description of the topic.

**I love Jesus but I want to die: what you need to know about suicide; By: Sarah From her blog “Beautiful Between”**

I was in California on a business trip, just yards from the beach, eating ice cream and laughing as the conversation drifted away from business. Eventually, somebody mentioned a friend-of-a-friend who had died by suicide.

The familiar ache and nausea filled my chest. My insides rattled when my coworker said he didn't understand what would make someone feel like taking their life was the only option.

I swallowed hard and let out the breath I'd been holding. “I do.” For the first time in my life, I spoke up. “I completely get that. I've been there.”

My coworkers stared, jaws dangling in

breathless shock. Finally, someone asked what it's like to want to die. So I told them about the physical pain, the exhaustion, the heaviness. I told them it's like dying of a terrible disease and wishing I could hurry it up, knowing things would only get worse.

The last two weeks have brought news of too many people wanting to die. Several of our friends' kids have attempted suicide, shocking their church communities. Our hearts are breaking with those in such pain.

I remember my colleagues' faces as my words sunk in. They had never heard what it's like to be suicidal and they started to understand, at least a little. And I'm reminded how little the church knows about depression and suicide.

We are called to be the light of the world, a refuge for the broken and weary. But if we don't understand the darkness people endure, it's much less likely we'll reach them in it. So here are some things every Christian should know about suicide and depression:

***It's not just mental and emotional.***

The phrase “mental illness” makes it seem like it just exists in our thoughts. But it doesn't. Web MD lists at least 12 physical symptoms of serious depression Chronic pain develops or worsens. Chest pain, migraines, stomach problems, and a weakened immune system are some common symptoms.

There's a bone-deep weariness that becomes a constant companion; no amount of sleep or coffee can shake it off. When people say they can't get out of bed because of depression, this is what they're talking about.

That day at the beach, I told my coworkers about depression's physicality. Every part of me ached from resisting gravity, as though my cells wanted to collapse in a puddle on the ground. My skin stung like lotion on a fresh sunburn and my throat hurt from the lump that lived in it. At one point, I was seriously underweight because I couldn't force food down.

***Suicide is not a selfish choice.***

Sometimes people say suicide is the most selfish act you can commit. But for many battling the darkness, dying seems like the most *selfless* thing to do. Depression often carries an intense, shameful sense of self-hatred. In those pits, I believed I was toxic and harmful to those close to me. I was certain taking my own life would be a blessing to others.

It's a familiar refrain. This mom thought her husband would find a beautiful new wife and mother for their baby. She knew he wouldn't be burdened by her illness and her child would have a better mom. My good friend, nearly died because he believed ending his life was best for his wife and infant son. Thankfully, he didn't die. He spent some time in a

psych ward, got on meds, and found support he'd never found in the church.

***We might not be sad.***

Depression isn't sadness, as this article explains. It's much more complex: emptiness, flatness, irritation, or a strange numbness. Many people who seek help for depression only report physical symptoms because they don't *feel* sad.

For me, I first noticed it as brain fog. The world seems to move in slow motion, but I still can't keep up. All I want is sleep, not just because depression is exhausting, but because sleep is an escape.

***It's not because we don't pray or read our Bibles.***

In 2013, a Lifeway Research study found that nearly 50% of evangelicals believe that prayer and Bible study alone can conquer serious mental illness. Unfortunately, this mistaken belief prevents people from seeking the help they need.

I know this firsthand. No matter how many times I recited verses, asked for healing, and did all the other things I was supposed to do, I still had an illness. I wasn't miraculously healed.

Of course, our God is powerful and able to heal in an instant. And sometimes, mild depression naturally goes into remission, like cancer, which may reinforce the dangerous idea that seeking medical help signifies lack of faith. Christians need to know prayer and reading hope-filled verses are important parts of a holistic self-care plan.

But they aren't enough. It wasn't until I started taking medication and seeing a licensed therapist (pastors don't receive adequate training to counsel people with depression or suicidal thoughts) weekly that the darkness lifted and my chest stopped aching.

And I'm just as grateful God chooses to work through little pills and skilled professionals as if he waved a magic wand and healed me instantly. He is still the ultimate source of healing and still glorified by working through people.

***People serving God wholeheartedly struggle, too.***

The lie that those walking closely with God don't ever have suicidal thoughts or other mental health issues is dangerous because it wrongly casts these issues as sin.

If we believe depression and dark thoughts are sinful, we're more likely to feel ashamed and expect God to deal sternly with us. But the truth is he's good and gracious, not waiting to punish us for our struggles.

Depression and suicidal thoughts don't care about how spiritual we are. I'm sure plenty of devout believers and faithful leaders wish it did. I do.

I was in ministry – serving, preaching, leading worship, going on mission trips, leading Bible studies – but still wanting to die. Still hurting. Still hopeless.

I mentioned a friend earlier he was a youth pastor when he tried to die. He knew what the Bible said and how to pray. He was well aware of all the “right” answers and appropriate spiritual statements. They just left him more ashamed because the stigma of being a pastor with these issues was too great.

Depression and suicide are on the rise nationwide. We can't assume that those we love and look up to aren't fighting the darkness.

***We can't “choose joy” or “stop thinking about it.”***

Sometimes Christians tell us to “choose joy” or focus on somebody other than ourselves. There is some truth to this: caring for others and learning to cultivate joy are important parts of a healthy life.

But when death seems like the only way out of an internal torture chamber, those things don't work. What's worse, they become a way to mask pain. That's how I could be involved in several ministries and wear a big smile while I wished for death.

Saying things like, “I'm so sorry you're hurting,” and spending time with people struggling is much more effective than telling them to choose joy. It allows them to be honest, which might wind up saving a life.

Now that we have read what people's views are on suicide let's take a look at the what the Bible [God's word] says about it.

The Bible mentions six specific people who committed suicide: Abimelech (Judges 9:54), Saul (1 Samuel 31:4), Saul's armor-bearer (1 Samuel 31:4–6), Ahithophel (2 Samuel 17:23), Zimri (1 Kings 16:18), and Judas (Matthew 27:5). Five of these men were noted for their wickedness (the exception is Saul's armor-bearer—nothing is said of his character). Some consider Samson's death an instance of suicide, because he knew his actions would lead to his death (Judges 16:26–31), but Samson's goal was to kill Philistines, not himself.

The Bible views suicide as equal to murder, which is what it is—self-murder. God is the only one who is to decide when and how a person should die. We should say with the psalmist, “My times are in your hands” (Psalm 31:15).

God is the giver of life. He gives, and He takes away (Job 1:21). Suicide, the taking of one's own life, is ungodly because it rejects God's gift of life. No man or woman should presume to take God's authority upon themselves to end his or her own life.

Some people in Scripture felt deep despair in life. Solomon, in his pursuit of pleasure, reached the point where he “hated life” (Ecclesiastes 2:17). Elijah was fearful and depressed and yearned for death (1 Kings 19:4). Jonah was so angry at God that he wished to die (Jonah 4:8). Even the apostle Paul and his missionary companions at one point “were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that



we despaired of life itself” (2 Corinthians 1:8).

However, none of these men committed suicide. Solomon learned to “fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind” (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Elijah was comforted by an angel, allowed to rest, and given a new commission. Jonah received admonition and rebuke from God. Paul learned that, although the pressure he faced was beyond his ability to endure, the Lord can bear all things: “This happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead” (2 Corinthians 1:9).

So, according to the Bible, suicide is a sin. It is not the “greatest” sin—it is no worse than other evils, in terms of how God sees it, and it does not determine a person’s eternal destiny. However, suicide definitely has a deep and lasting impact on those left behind. The painful scars left by a suicide do not heal easily. May God grant His grace to each one who is facing trials today (Psalm 67:1). And may each of us take hope in the promise, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

But for the grace of God can someone have any hope of surviving the feeling of despair that comes with contemplating suicide. I have heard stories where someone was at the brink of giving up and at the point of going through with ending their life and God’s grace intervened. The following is a story of someone who was contemplating taking their life. It is my hope it will bring you some peace and comfort in this time of indecision in your life.

I grew up with idealistic missionary parents who wanted more than punch-a-clock and pay-the-mortgage normalcy. They pursued a ministry life abroad, but after I was diagnosed with leukemia as a child, we were left stateside and struggling financially. We moved a lot—Hawaii, then Nepal, then back to Hawaii, then New Mexico.

For most of my teen years, we lived in Albuquerque, and during that time, I began to resent the ways God allowed us to suffer. I began to think God was cruel, a scarce and mean God who looked the other way when we were in need. My parents gave me space and didn’t force me to go to church with them, but I knew they prayed that I would come to know Christ. My dad would often say, “I believe God has a call on your life, Alia.” But I wanted nothing to do with faith.

Everything changed in the middle of my junior year. My parents got another ministry job offer and moved us back to Hawaii.

When we arrived in Pahoa, my dad surveyed the house the ministry had provided for us. It was unlivable. The house had no plumbing and no interior walls, only a concrete slab pooling with puddles of

mosquito-infested water. Heavy green mold scaled the cement ruins and the jungle loomed around the house, unruly vines breaking through shattered windowpanes. No one had flown to the Big Island to inspect the house or property for years, and it had become uninhabitable.

We lived in Nepal in the early ’80s in a dung-style hut, so we’d never be accused of being high maintenance, but this was ridiculous. The ministry agreed to pay half the rent for livable accommodations. But even a month after we moved in, we had no furniture and couldn’t afford to get any now that we had to pay partial rent. We had two lawn chairs in the living room and a futon pad on the ground. Despite our situation, my parents decided to stay and see what God would provide for us.

The rain in Pahoa fell in constant sheets, pounding on our metal roof like an assault. And I took it as just that: a personal attack. I sat on our back porch—a slab of concrete with a tin covering—listening to the rain pinging like rapid gunfire while I dragged hard on my cigarette. This was my personal hell.

Reconciling these years of poverty and pain with a loving and merciful God seemed impossible. I could not believe in a God who continually abandoned us. I hurt everywhere. I fit nowhere. Home wasn’t a place I could feel.

And yet, I met God there one night. Or God met me.

It had been raining for 42 days straight when I considered taking my own life. I had no transportation, no license, and no hopes of getting one anytime soon. I was miles away from civilization and as sober as I’d ever been.

In Albuquerque, I had learned to silence the torment I felt inside. I didn’t know I had bipolar disorder; I just knew there were times my skin tingled with restlessness, my limbs seemed possessed, and my feet tapped out a Morse code. I felt invincible, immortal, immune to hunger and thirst and the incessant demands to slow down, to sleep, to recharge. My mind was a colony of secrets and schemes. But it’s an unfortunate law of the universe that what goes up must come down.

That night in Hawaii, blind with tears, I started ransacking the bathroom medicine cabinet and rifling through drawers. I decided it was time to quiet that steady hum once and for all. I wanted the shadows to disappear and the voices to stop, and I believed that death was the only way.

My hand shook as I picked up the flimsy disposable razor. I held it over my skin, trying to build up the courage to make the deep cut. I had flirted with death before, but just enough to blow my hair back, just enough to make me feel the tiniest bit alive. In

that moment of desperation, I cried out to God:

***I never asked to be born!  
I never asked for any of this!***

Never did I imagine that God would answer me. But he did. I found myself silenced, barefoot and open palmed, splayed like an offering across the floor. I was ready to take my own life and instead found myself laid out by God—physically knocked to the floor and flooded with a peace that to this day, I cannot fully describe. I felt the resuscitation of grace.

After that night, however, I began to make excuses. Maybe God reveals himself to desperate girls on chipped linoleum floors in the middle of a monsoon and says, “You belong to me. I have loved you with an everlasting love. You are mine.” But that was all too much for me to fathom. I wanted something to explain away the very real and terrible possibility that God existed and that he wanted something from me. I thought perhaps it was my body’s response to all the stress hormones and my legs had just given out. But even with all of my justifications, I couldn’t deny that I felt something I had never felt before. I felt God.

My parents had given me a Bible I never used and instead wedged under a tiny garage-sale table in my room to make the legs even. I pulled it out and began to read it at night behind my locked door. I didn’t want my parents to know. I didn’t want my dad to say, “I knew God had a call on your life, Alia Joy.” I didn’t want any spiritual I-told-you-so.

My bed was a rolled-out length of eggshell foam—the kind you put on a real mattress (should you actually have a mattress)—and not thick enough to keep my hips from falling asleep and aching through the night. As I read my Bible, I was confronted with questions and fears. I’d lie in the dark with God and whisper prayers into the void, hoping someone was there answering me back. Like Jacob wrestling with God through the night, this grappling changed my identity and renamed me.

In the Book of Genesis, when Jacob first prays for protection and deliverance from Esau, he prays to the God of his father Abraham and his father Isaac. After he wrestles with God and his prayers are answered, Jacob erects an altar with his new name, Israel. He names it El-Elohe-Israel, which means “God, the God of Israel.”

When I wrestled with God, he brought me to that same place of weakness. This weakness didn’t leave me more vulnerable before my enemies, real or imagined. Instead, it taught me that, even though we all walk with unsteady feet, we can rely on the God of our fathers and more than that, on the God who reveals himself directly to us, a God unmasked, a God who lets us grab hold of him in the darkness. In these times of wrestling, we might find ourselves

transformed. We might feel the touch of God dislocating our hip as dawn breaks. God might take us to the ground.

I am not healed in the ways one might imagine. I still have bipolar disorder. Sometimes I still struggle with suicidal ideation. I take antipsychotic meds and antidepressants to help keep me alive. These, too, are ways that God meets me on the mat, meets me in the darkness, and lets me grab hold of him.

To this day, I carry the bruises of those restless nights, of a too-thin mat and a paralysis so severe I could only be laid at the feet of Jesus. Sometimes I remember that whisper-thin foam of my bed and the ache in my hips as I wrestled with God. I think of my parents choosing to stay in Hawaii and wait on the Lord. I thank God for their obedience, for helping bear witness to the goodness of God in that horrible rental where I first believed.

I came back to life in that home that wasn’t a home. It was the place where I met Jesus and the place where I learned that I’d always been called.

*Alia Joy is a speaker and writer who lives in Oregon with her family. This essay was adapted from **Glorious Weakness: Discovering God in All We Lack** by Alia Joy,*

Now let's take a look at the rising numbers of the suicide rate, according to the National Institute of Mental Health Suicide is a Leading Cause of Death in the United States

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Reports, in 2019:
- Suicide was the tenth leading cause of death overall in the United States, claiming the lives of over 47,500 people.
- Suicide was the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 34, and the fourth leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 35 and 44.
- There were nearly two and a half times as many suicides (47,511) in the United States as there were homicides (19,141).

Additional information about suicide can be found on the NIMH health topics page on Suicide Prevention.

Suicide: How You Can Make a Difference  
June 11, 2018 Science Update

### ***5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain***

**Ask**, “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

It’s not an easy question but studies show that asking at-risk individuals if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.

**Keep them safe.**

Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal

items or places is an important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.

### **Be there.**

Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Findings suggest acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce rather than increase suicidal thoughts.

### **Help them connect:**

Save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's number in your phone so it's there when you need it: (800) 273-TALK (8255). You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.

### **Stay Connected.**

Staying in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. Studies have shown the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

So often, all it takes to save a life is being Jesus to us – being present, being loving, and being light. Christ is “in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). You don't need answers or to be able to fix it. You just need to be present, perhaps help set the doctor's appointment or just listen. Just be aware of those hurting. Just be kind.

Depressed and suicidal people just need you to enter the dark and sit there with us, your love unchanged. You could be his arms to hold us, his hands to feed us, his voice to tell us we're not alone. Your love and kindness are more powerful than you know.

National Hopeline Network: 1-800-SUICIDE

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK

Befrienders.org: <http://www.befrienders.org/directory>

***Depression and suicide are serious issues, and my heart breaks with those of you facing them.***

I conclude this message with a word of hope from God's word and a prayer.

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy. I came so that you may have life and have it abundantly.

John 5:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my Word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you,

plans to give you hope and a future.

Psalm 139:14

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Lord, We pray for those affected by hopelessness as well as people dealing with suicidal thoughts. We ask that you provide them with comfort and guidance, and the placement of a support system in their life to let them know that they are important and that they matter and that they're not alone.

Psalm 55:22

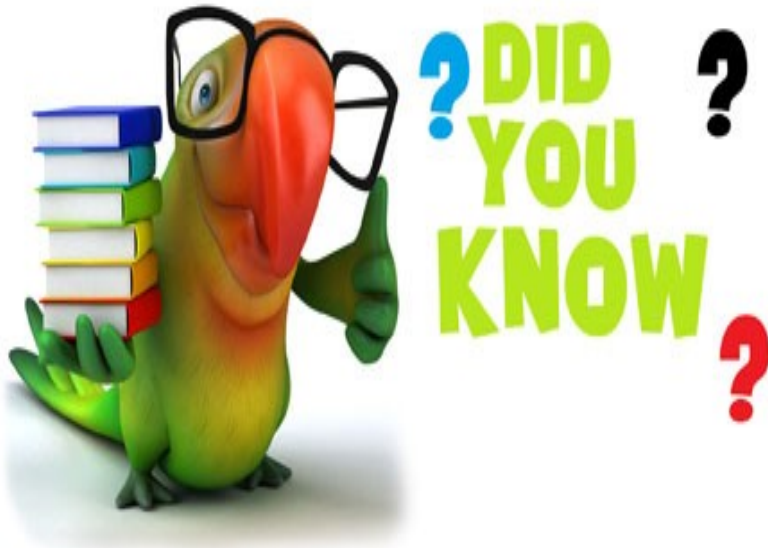
Father, I pray that our loved one puts his/her trust in You because You are the firm foundation! I pray that they cast their cares on You because You will sustain them, You will never let the righteous be shaken. So Lord, I thank You for being the rock that they can lean on. I pray that they turn to You in the darkest moments because You are the only one who can bring them out of it and build them up so that they are stronger than the suicidal thoughts they battle with; thank You Lord Jesus, Amen.

**In His service;**

**Mark Pitman**







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