



How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? (Rom 10:14)



The Elephant In The Room

BY BILL POWELL

It seems these days when having a conversation with friends, family, or co-workers the elephant in the room is the state of our society. It's hard to find the truth, and when we do it's bad. I heard someone ask the question, "What's the definition of a conspiracy?" It's when the facts become the truth." I grew up in a different world and don't recognize this one. I will spare you the details.

What do we do about it? How do we navigate through this? Are we doomed? Do we fight? Can we change it? Will the next election put everything back? I made a statement a while back to someone who was ranting and raving about the state of the Union. I asked, "Do you expect the world to stop being the world?" How many thousands of years have elapsed? Look at the debris that has been left behind. Jesus taught us to pray "thy kingdom come thy will be done." He will make that happen.

In the meantime, we have been left with an instruction manual that gives us all we need to be able to navigate through this with hope, joy, and love in our hearts. I have put together a few verses and there are many more that put things in perspective. Remember this from the sovereign God who made all things. He will make His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. But while we wait, here is His advice (all verses are ESV).

(Pro 3:5,6) Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

(Php 4:4) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

(Psa 46:10) "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"

(Joh 14:27) "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

(Jas 1:2-4) Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

(Joh 15:10,11) "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

(Rom 12:12) rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,

(Gal 5:22,23) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things, there is no law.

The future is bright, Jesus is coming, and all the wrongs will be made right. Keep the faith. *(Psa 123:1) A Song of Ascents. To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!*

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Not Funny! Yes, It Is!

BY DENISHA STEARNS

Who can't appreciate a bit of humor? The goofy, slapstick, ironic, and punny. How about the slightly snarky (without sliding into sarcasm)? I remember the laughter of my children and smile. Many years ago, when Isaac was an infant and Rachel was four years older, she would make silly faces at him. He would giggle. She would do more. His giggle turned into a belly laugh turned into a round of hiccups until he completely fell over sideways. Oh, couldn't we all use some laughter like that?

Humor brightens a dark and gloomy mood. It also illuminates truth without offending. Like when Jesus was talking about the splinter in someone else's eye. Did he hold a log up to his face to make his point? Or when talking about asking for a fish but giving a stone, maybe Jesus performed a slight-of-hand trick . Fish goes into robe, stone comes out (nothing up my sleeve, folks).

Does your pastor pull humor from his toolbox sometimes? While, as Titus pointed out, stern rebukes are necessary (Tit 1:13), other times, like Paul encouraged, we should avoid foolish arguments and gently instruct (2 Tim 2). Christian comedian Mark Lowry knows both the power of the gospel and of humor, "God spreads grace like a four-year-old spreads peanut butter. He gets it all over everything." And can our laughter can be a witness to the Lord? Go read Psalm 126, verse two.

Over the years and with much effort (my folks will tell you), I learned to pout less and to laugh more. (I think it was the funny bone that finally grew). And when, in true humility I learned to laugh at myself, ta da! What an accomplishment! And not too soon, because with this thing in life called aging, I'm gonna need that skill. Can I get a witness? Be joyful and blessed, Friends.



The Greatest Designer

BY CHRISTINA HUTCHINSON

Here we are in May of 2023. Just two years ago, I wrote an article about buying our second home and all the excitement that goes into renovation projects, designing our home, and decorating. I have to be honest, my home looks nothing like I dreamed it would two years ago. In and even more so, neither does my life! My life looks nothing like I thought it would just 5 years ago. It amazes me the places that God takes His people. It amazes me the course that He put us on to get us there too. When my plans fall through it is so easy for me grimace and say "this is not how I would have done it."

I guess that's why God is the Great Designer, and I am not. Because not only does He create the best plan for His created, but He keeps that plan in motion without a single interruption. He is faithful! Not one thing keeps God's plan from fruition. His perfect timing, His perfect provision, and His perfect omniscience, never change and never stop. When it seems like I'm nowhere near where I want to be, I remember that He has directed my steps on the path that He designed for me.

As I look at my walls, some of them still bare, I envision what they could look like. The brand new kitchen I dream of, I wonder when we can make it happen. Sometimes I wonder if God looks at each of us as His canvases. He has painted the picture of each of our lives. We are not a blank canvas to Him. We may feel unfinished, because we know the things we long for have not yet been given to us or the accomplishments we strive for haven't been reached yet.

God is the Greatest Designer, the Author of our stories. Each one of us can trust Him and His plan. There isn't a single detail out of place. We get to witness each moment of His design. To God be the glory!



Jesus, The Great Heart Surgeon

BY BRANDON SCHMIDT

In the Old Testament, the people of God were given all types of laws to obey. For example, thou shall not murder, or thou shall not commit adultery. (Ex. 20; Deut. 5) However, Jesus began to teach that hating someone was like murder and lusting after someone was like committing adultery in the heart. Jesus took the Law of God and seemed to take it to the next level. Jesus taught that it was not only the outer actions that God cared about, but it was also your thought life and the meditations of your heart. Too often we only want to deal with the outer manifestations of our sin, but we never deal with the root of the problem, our heart. Due to the sin nature that curses all humanity, our hearts are desperately wicked and deceitful (Jer. 17:9). They are beyond repair; they need to be replaced. We need a heart transplant. The Bible teaches that Jesus removes the old, wicked heart and replaces it with a new heart that is led by the Spirit. (Ez. 36:26; 2 Cor. 5:17) If you are a believer in Christ, you have been given a new heart by Jesus Christ and sealed by the blessed Holy Spirit. (Eph. 1) Praise be to God and His Son, Jesus Christ, for loving us so much that He rescues us and restores us from sin. I pray that you take some time and worship our God for this magnificent truth. (Col. 1:12-14)

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

1 JOHN 5:14 ESV

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Brandon Schmidt

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Christina Hutchinson

WEEKDAYS

12:00pm - 3:00pm

Brandon & Christina

3:00pm - 6:00pm



Bobby Mitchell

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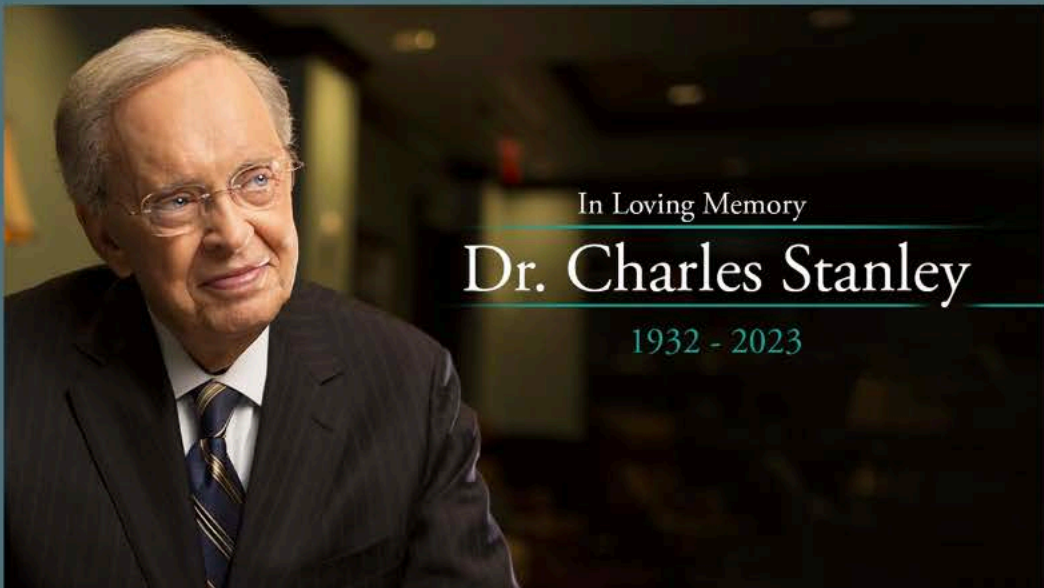
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*The Cornerstone will forever be thankful for the faithfulness of Dr. Charles Stanley. He was devoted to preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and we are honored by the blessing of our long partnership with his ministry "In Touch." While bittersweet to say goodbye to a man of great faith, we rejoice in knowing that he now knows fully what he has been preaching and teaching all those years. and is with the Lord. His ministry, In Touch, will continue and his program will always have a place here on The Cornerstone.
**Tune in: WJLU- Monday-Friday at 8pm and Sundays at 8pm
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