

Christian HealthCare

NEWSLETTER

MEMBER LETTER:

Step one: pray

I don't know if I can put into words how God has blessed us through this ministry. Even from the moment we went to the ER I had peace, knowing God would provide.

We spent six weeks and two surgeries trying to get our son back to health. By the time we got the "all clear," we had racked up a small fortune in bills.

Then came prorating, but I had peace. The instructions say step one when your need is prorated is to pray. So we did! Yes, God is in control.

We even received notes with our shares saying members were praying for the prorated amount to be met. Sure enough, God provided a huge discount on our bills. I am hopeful that will help another family. It helped my perspective to see outside of my own family and pray for others too.

What an incredible ministry. It totally changed my fear-based approach to healthcare.

*Joleen Wilson
Denton, Texas*

What can I do about the coming election?

Many Christian voters say they are not happy with our options for the November elections and are uncertain what to do. It is important that we do not let our dissatisfaction with one race cause us to ignore other races. What can one person do? One person can do a lot if they are in a position of authority.

There are thousands of important races going on, from the White House, to the U.S. Senate, to Congressional districts, to our state governments, to our counties, cities, and villages, and all the other local governments. There are elections for judges and law enforcement officers.

The U.S. Congress will have great influence for good or bad, no matter who is President. State governments can provide resistance to federal overreach and abuse. There are millions of elected officials who can use their offices to reward those who do good and to punish those who do evil, or they can do just the opposite (1 Peter 2:14). Every elected official can exert influence.

We need to actively seek and support those who we believe will uphold and protect Biblical truth, or at least not work against it. We have been commanded to take the light of Jesus Christ into all the world, and that includes government. Failure to do this virtually guarantees that darkness will prevail.

Who should we support? For federal elections there are Christian

voter guides available to help us. AFAAction.net, FRCAction.org, and ChristianVoterGuide.com, provide helpful resources.

In Illinois, where Samaritan Ministries is based, we are blessed to have SMI member David Smith leading the Illinois Family Institute, which distributes voter guides for elections around the state.

Illinois Family Institute is part of the State Policy Network, and you can visit their website at SPN.org/directory to find similar organizations in your state.

James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."

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Sharing Summary from August

Shares:	\$18,990,825	Personalized prayer requests of the members with Needs are in the Prayer Guide. Please use your version of the Prayer Guide to support the members assigned to you.
Needs:	\$18,643,317	
In Negotiation:	\$4,178,341	
New Needs:	2,504	
Total Needs:	6,259	
New Rewards:	234	Member Households: 62,337 (as of 7/22/16)
Miscarriages:	43	
Final Rewards:	9	

Contact Us: 877-764-2426 samaritanministries.org/members

Questions about?

Email

Phone Menu

Your medical need

needs@samaritanministries.org

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Shares you are sending or receiving

shares@samaritanministries.org

1 - 2

Your membership

membership@samaritanministries.org

1 - 3

Your Member Services Leaders



Bryan Evans
Vice President/Member Services
msvicepres@samaritanministries.org



Cameron Easley
Member Services Manager

Remember:



SEND A NOTE—

Burdens can be lightened emotionally as we encourage one another in the Lord.



PAY YOUR SHARE—

Burdens can be lightened physically as we do our part to financially meet others' needs as they would in our time of need.



ALWAYS STAY ALERT IN PRAYER—

Burdens can be lightened spiritually as we unite to call upon the God of the impossible.

Creating islands of stability in an unstable world

by Rob Slane

A year ago I entered my 40s, so you can correctly calculate that I was born in the 1970s. When I think back to the world of my childhood, and compare it to the world today, there are far too many differences to list them all. Yet if I had to pick one thing among all others that I think stands out as the defining difference, it would be the stability then compared to the instability now.

I realize that in the 1970s, huge societal changes were already in full swing. No fault divorce was becoming increasingly common. Legalized abortion had just reared its ugly head. Parental authority was starting to be challenged like never before.

Despite these things, the world back then still seemed to have at least some kind of moorings. Most people still wanted to get married, and when they did so, they remained married. Most people still wanted children, and when they had them, they knew their responsibilities towards them. Most people accepted parental authority over children. And even though real belief in the Triune God was on the wane, most people still had some sort of nominal belief and saw the relevance of the moral law.

Today, so many of these stabilizing forces have simply vanished. Not only that, but the pace of life is generally so much faster than it was back then. Our transportation and our technology are faster. We change jobs far more often. We demand quicker access to this, faster service for that, and we are annoyed or indignant when we don't get it. Yet the faster the pace

of life becomes, the more we find it disappoints, and we find ourselves caught up in a world of flux, tired and burned out.

This rapid pace of life and continual change feeds back into our everyday lives and actually makes it harder for us to maintain stability in areas of life where we most need it. Which people would find it easier to remain faithfully married until death parts them: the ones who lived 200 years ago at a time when people put down roots in a place, had a job for life, and understood that they were—to quote Edmund Burke—part of a “contract between those who are dead, those who are living, and those who are to be born,” or those who have no concept of putting roots down, who have been brought up by the ever-changing TV screen, and who have been severed culturally, socially, morally, and historically from every generation that has been before?

And so we see our society becoming unglued, unravelling year by year, and it can leave us dumbfounded and often genuinely confused about how we should live within it. Yet live in this world we must. What are the alternatives?

Do we seek to “turn the clock back” (to quote that dumbest of slogans)? Can't be done. Do we seek to retreat? Not an option, since Jesus commanded us to live in the midst of this world, to occupy until He comes, and to make disciples of all nations. No, we must learn to live within it, but we must do so by recovering something of the stability we have lost, even when the world around us continues in constant flux.

Have you ever seen one of those videos where they speed up people walking on a busy street, but there is one person walking towards the camera at normal speed? The rest of the world is rushing on around him, going somewhere or even nowhere really fast, and there's this guy in the middle of it all, calmly walking along, seemingly oblivious to the rush and the panic around him. Essentially, this is what we need to become. We need to create islands of calmness and stability in the midst of an unstable society.

It should be so in the Church, but here's the problem: there are thousands of churches out there that have decided that the way to deal with a world that is constantly reinventing itself is to constantly reinvent themselves. In their desperation to be “relevant,” they shape their service around what they think the people want, what they think will get the people in, and what they think will keep them there. Hack the service up. Change the order every week so that no one who comes three weeks in a row is in any danger of getting the same order of things twice. Cut the sermon to 10 minutes. Can't speak for longer in case people get bored. Throw a few gimmicks into the mix. That should work.

Of course there is an opposite ditch to fall into, which is a sort of “deliberate obscurantism” that makes it feel like you've just stepped back into the 17th century. That's another issue for another article. But in the context of this article, the problem of relevance in the midst

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Hal and Melanie Young Raising Real Men

by Marcia Krahn

“What are You doing here, God?” asked a stunned Hal and Melanie Young when the advance copies of their newly written book, *Raising Real Men*, sold out in fifteen minutes. That was in July of 2009. In December they had their answer.

That month, Hal was diagnosed with stage 4 Hodgkin’s lymphoma. Hal’s work as an independent engineering contractor ended when his clients “dropped him like a rock.” By then, however, the Lord had provided nationally recognized endorsements, with contracts to write and speak full-time throughout the country. “It amazed us,” Melanie says. “This was very much the Lord’s hand in our lives.”

Hal and Melanie first recognized the Lord’s leading to speak on par-

enting sons when local homeschool groups kept requesting them to talk. Since Hal and Melanie were blessed with six boys in a row, followed by two daughters, they had already wrestled through many matters in parenting by Biblical principles. They soon realized that parents often do not see God at work in their sons, because they do not “understand boys Biblically.” The Youngs then wrote *Raising Real Men*, in their own open and witty way, to more tangibly share the wisdom they had garnered in how to raise men of God.

In *Raising Real Men*, the Youngs explain that Scripture champions traits such as self-sacrifice and self-denial, which are often devalued by our culture’s quest for self-fulfillment. Hal warns that “we need to not only give our sons answers to what it means to be Biblically masculine, but also to prepare them for a society that is rapidly saying to the Church, ‘We are tired of your message. We don’t care about your morality. We don’t want to make allowance for your God-talk.’” With society’s increasing contempt for Biblical values, “we need to be prepared to stand on the truth of the Scripture, even when the whole world is disdaining it.”

As the initial tumor spread to several organs, the Youngs were thankful they had already written *Raising Real Men*. Hal knew if God called him Home, Melanie could point to the book and say to their boys, “This is what your dad thought. This is what we are trying to accomplish.”



“When doctors tell you that you have a 50-50 chance of living, it makes you think,” Hal says. “It’s wonderfully clarifying to the mind,” Melanie adds. Hal and Melanie began considering what they wanted their sons to understand about life, and what advice to “leave as a legacy” if Hal were to die in the coming year or two. They realized that *Raising Real Men* took their sons through the teen years, but didn’t address how to choose a wife or lay the foundation for a strong marriage.

Their second book, *My Beloved and My Friend*, provides that legacy. Hal and Melanie believe a vibrant marriage begins by acknowledging God’s statement in Genesis 2:18, “It is not good for man to be alone.” Their message to their sons and other believers is simple: “God created marriage for the companionship we so desperately need in this fallen world.” *My Beloved and My Friend* teaches couples to be and stay best



friends. They emphasize that “when couples are best friends, romance comes naturally,” and that couples who focus exclusively on romance are being “consumed with the fruit without tending the tree.”

Throughout the writing of *My Beloved and My Friend*, the Youngs continued to travel. Because of Hal’s susceptibility during his cancer treatment, he was allowed to speak publicly, but not to interact with attendees. His

teenage sons stepped up. “Don’t worry, Dad. We’ll take care of the books.” Their help managing the exhibit space at events enabled Hal and Melanie to keep their speaking engagements during Hal’s

treatments. God blessed the aggressive approach the doctors used, as well as their sons’ faithfulness. Hal has been cancer-free for six years, and their ministry has kept going.

The Youngs chose “Making Biblical family life practical” as the theme to define their growing ministry, which they named The Great Waters Company. The name alludes to a passage in Psalm 107, and reminds Hal and Melanie that as they do business for the Lord, they may feel tossed on great waters, facing storms and shipwreck, yet the Lord will help them, and they will see His works.

The Great Waters Company decides on projects by considering

issues families face, researching what the Bible says, and then asking how that Scripture applies to 21st century Western culture. “We don’t live in ancient Israel. We don’t live in the Roman Empire,” Hal says. “But the Bible is timeless, so how does doctrine work out in daily living?”

“Our goal is to communicate Biblical principles, then suggest different ways—not *the* way—to live that out in family life,” Melanie says.

“We don’t give specific steps. No checklists. Instead, we say ‘Here’s another idea you can try.’” They want parents to see God behind all the talk and to know He will lead them to apply Scripture in a way that is right for their family, even

though that may be a bit different from any other family.

Their award-winning publishing company, Great Waters Press, publishes a few new books from various authors each year. In 2011, *Raising Real Men* won the Small Publishers Book of the Year award. *My Beloved and My Friend: How to be Married to Your Best Friend without Changing Spouses* received the same award in 2015. Great Waters Press welcomes email inquiries about possible projects at info@greatwaterspress.com.

Love, Honor, and Virtue: Gaining or Regaining a Biblical Attitude

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Why SMI?

Although the thought of joining Samaritan Ministries appealed to Hal and Melanie Young, they didn’t think it was wise to change from their conventional insurance plan because of Hal’s pre-existing cancer condition. But in 2014, when the premiums for their self-employed insurance became unaffordable, they knew it was time.

Several months after becoming part of the Samaritan family, Melanie contracted a disease. She has spent many of their engagements “speaking all day and crying all night.” During this time, Samaritan has been a “huge, huge blessing and encouragement” through members’ notes and prayers.

The freedom Samaritan gives to members in choosing their own doctors has been a help. “I found an expert, and I knew Samaritan would share it. I didn’t have to worry,” Melanie says. “With insurance you call, and the immediate response is suspicion. With Samaritan you call, and the immediate response is concern. They want to pray with you. They want to help you. It’s such a blessing.”

Being assured that their money is not funding “sex change operations, abortifacient treatments, and other pernicious stuff” is a Samaritan distinctive the Youngs highly value. “We think Samaritan is the perfect option for Christians in the world that we find ourselves in right now. It allows us to take it out of the government’s purview and handle it as the Church, which is the way it was meant to be, letting the Church be the Body of Christ for one another.” ♦

Share increase vote results

Sixty one and three tenths percent of the weighted votes cast on the recent share increase proposal favored increasing the share—slightly more than the required sixty percent. The increase takes effect this month. Just over half of the ballots sent out were returned—62,135 ballots were sent out to those whose memberships were active as of July 7, and 32,999 were returned. The ballots were counted electronically, and because the results were so close, our staff did a manual recount to confirm the accuracy of the electronic count.

As we said in the letter accompanying the ballot, there were three consecutive months of sharply increased needs submitted leading up to the share increase proposal. After the proposed share amounts were decided and the ballot mailing was ready to go out, we learned that the needs submitted for August had declined, making prorating unnecessary that month.

The needs submitted for September also remained lower, so after much thought and prayer, we decided to give a 7 percent reduction from the new share amounts for this month. Unless you are sending to the office, your assigned share amount this month will be 7 percent less than the amount that was approved.

That means that the family share for September is \$460.35, instead of the \$495 that was approved. For a two person membership, the September share is \$409.20 instead of \$440. The single-parent family share is \$283.65 instead of the

approved amount of \$305, and for an individual this month's share is \$204.60 instead of \$220.

These reductions are only for this month. We will be watching closely to see the trend in needs for October and the months following to determine how much of the approved share increase will be needed. We don't know the future, but God does. Please be praying for us, and with us, as we make these decisions.

How Our Monthly Share Amount Is Determined

Remember that the share amounts that are sent to members are used only for the actual medical needs of other members, so when the amount of needs is lower, share amounts are reduced. The final amount Samaritan members send to one another is determined by the amount of needs the members actually have. The monthly shares that will be assigned in future months will not exceed the amount recently approved by the members, but they can be less. Assigning share amounts greater than what was just approved would require another vote. Please be praying for God's provision and direction.

Office Share Amount

If this is the month you send to the office, your share will not be increased from last month, but will remain at the old amount. The Board of Directors will be reviewing what office share amounts are needed to continue increasing service to the growing number of members and will be making a final decision in the future about office shares.

Financial Help

If you believe the increased share amounts will make it impossible for you to continue sharing at the new amount, we hope you will apply for Samaritan Ministries' Sponsorship program by emailing our team of advocates, who are ready to help you with Sponsorship questions (resources@samaritanministries.org). The Sponsorship program is designed to enable members to keep sharing in other members' needs, even if they can't give quite all of the increased monthly share. Be sure to pray to the Lord for wisdom and provision.

Thank You For Your Input

We appreciate those of you who gave us your input by voting. We also appreciate those who took the time to watch our town hall meeting and give us additional input, both before and following the broadcast. As we said in the ballot mailing, we understand that the increases will be difficult for many, and impossible for some. We hope that reducing the amount of the increase for this month will enable more members to be able to adjust to the change, while we wait to see the trends in needs for the following months. Again, please be praying that we will see God's provision in amazing ways in this time of transition. ♦

More information available at SamaritanMinistries.org/shares

- Video from Executive Vice-President, James Lansberry
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Recording of "Town Hall" meeting

For a year and a half we were on an ACA exchange plan. It was a nightmare to get anything covered. This is my first time having a need shared and it was an amazing blessing. To receive the shares is a joy but the letters of prayer and encouragement from each member reinforces my love and faith in Jesus Christ and His body of believers. I'm so thankful that Samaritan Ministries exists.

*Christopher Maquire
Ft. Collins, Colorado*

It was lovely to receive gifts and notes of encouragement. It is totally different than my experience with insurance companies! I'm so happy I made the choice to join Samaritan.

Unsigned

My need was met, physically, financially (even during a time of prorating), and spiritually (God's people praying). Praise the Lord!

*James and Tammy Nicholson
Rileyville, Virginia*

We're so thankful for the Special Prayer Need gifts we received. It was such a blessing to see God move in the hearts of members to meet our financial need.

*Rick and Angel Hall
Dothan, Alabama*

It is quite humbling to receive checks and prayers in the mail from fellow followers of Christ. It truly reflects what the church should look like, bearing one another's burdens and edifying each other.

We share with others what a great encouragement it is to be part of this God honoring program.

*Randy and Ranae Krull
Shell Rock, Iowa*

We have six children—five out of the house now, and six grandchildren. We've been missionaries since 1998 and members of Samaritan since 2012.

Our ministry focus is in the pro-life arena. We have been commissioned to stand in the gap at the Rochester, New York abortion clinics.

We use signs, praise, worship, and prayer, as well as pleading with the moms and dads to change their minds and receive the blessing of the new life within.

Samaritan dovetails right into our ministry values. We don't have to participate in insurance that enables the abortion industry. We also have the great privilege of helping other believers carry their health care burden, directly giving to their needs and praying for them. We have tasted and seen that the Lord is good when He sends us help from brothers and sisters to meet our need.

All these things are a great blessing to our family. With the money we save over insurance we have been able to stay active in our ministry. Samaritan plays a vital role in the Body of Christ. May God continue to be your wisdom and source of supply.

*Michael and Jean Warren
Spencerport, New York*

It is truly a blessing to be a part of Samaritan Ministries. The notes of encouragement and the prayers we receive far outweigh the financial help. We realize now more than ever how great our God is and we rely on the truth that He is in control.

*Melissa York
Watauga, Texas*

What can I do about the coming election?

Continued from page 1

What else can we do?

Cry out to God:

- Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved! (Psalm 80:7)
- If My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (II Chronicles 7:14)

Pray for our leaders:

- First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior. (1 Timothy 2:1-3)

Remember God is in control:

- The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He will." (Proverbs 21:1)
- Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. (Romans 13:1)

Prepare yourself:

- In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15) ♦

Living Water or snake oil

by Dr. Eric Potter

Nearly every person touched by our healthcare system has a legitimate complaint concerning its dysfunction. The suffering complain that they feel like a number being shuttled through a hurried system. The doctors complain that they no longer have time to care for patients, but are instead filling out computer forms. The insurance companies complain that they must raise their rates. Conservatives complain that euthanasia and abortion are unhindered. Liberals complain that the poor go without care. There is truth to each of these and other complaints, yet I wonder how many of us really see the underlying source of the dysfunction.

We have all imbibed the snake oil of a humanistic approach to medicine. Clinically, financially, and ethically, we are drunk on this snake oil and wonder why we can't find our way out of the dark hole. Only a God-centered and God-directed approach can replace the snake oil with Living Water and bring Light to our path.

Before this Living Water can be appreciated, larger society, particularly those who follow Christ, must discern the reality of our broken system—a system broken to the core—rather than just complain about superficial symptoms. Compounded into the clinical care provided to each of us, we find at least two goal oriented deceptions in the snake oil.

On the one hand, society desires to live autonomously, unheeding either Biblical truth or a natural understanding of health. We treat our being not as God's image, but solely as an instrument of self-pleasure. Stewardship rarely enters our

thoughts or desires in regards to our personal health.

On the other hand, we look to medicine to be a savior of sorts, restoring the brokenness we suffer whether it comes from a fallen world or from our own actions. Even the seemingly noble patient-centered medicine where the doctor puts the patient into the driver seat, ultimately plays to the false notion that we can save ourselves.

What are we to do? How can we restore such a broken system?

Humanistic medicine plays the part well, promising either a cure now or a glorious cure in the near future with a little more research.

Financial matters also play a leading role in producing the humanistic snake oil. Again we see the reflections of a false savior mentality. Insurance companies and government programs promise to care for us from cradle to grave, but ultimately they require more and more monetary sacrifices to keep them propped up.

Conventional medicine's economic model requires an assembly line system that often blames patients when the short visits and pharmaceutical miracles fail to fix the suffering. Drug companies market the latest and greatest costly medicine, guaranteed to fix your problems, at least until the next study shows how they are not quite as wonderful as the initial

marketing campaign promised.

The internet offers myriads of guaranteed cures, for the right price, to those left searching for hope after the conventional system scoots them out the door. These "natural" remedies, many of which restore true health more permanently, still may require submission to a higher authority overseeing their application and sale. At the lowest level of finances, the very startup of a Christian practice along Biblical principles faces looming financial obstacles if humanistic alliances are foregone.

Ethically, the snake oil is a bitter poison flavored with artificial sweeteners. Having lost sight of the core principles, a different type of medicine is promoted by society at large, either explicitly or implicitly through participation in the programs. Killing the weak is protected, whether at the end of life or its beginning. Sinful lifestyles are not only condoned but even applauded or legitimized. Condoned sin becomes "normal." Legitimized sin becomes a disease to be overlooked or medicated. Greed overrules the principles of loving God and loving neighbor, in board rooms, government gatherings, medical offices, and even our own homes. When the moorings of absolute truth are detached, we are left to drift about in any and all directions. The snake oil not only causes us to cut the anchor, but to lose sight of the very fact that we are adrift.

What are we to do? How can we restore such a broken system? Only a work of God according to His principles can reform, or even replace the humanistic snake oil with

Living Water. Only a God-centered, Biblical, and whole-person approach can hope to be an antidote. Rather than focusing on either the physician or the patient, God must be acknowledged as the source of our health. Only in Him and according to His ways can shalom, the Hebrew word for wholeness or well-being, be approximated on earth.

If a whole-person Biblical model is practiced, the physician will be free to act and think differently. This actually allows him or her to serve God and to love the neighbor-patient across the table. The physician steps down from acting as a savior and the patient steps down from being an idol. After all, the patient finds greater security in a physician serving this higher goal than in a physician seeking to only serve the patient or physician's self-interests. Submission to God and His design for health blesses the suffering patient far more than a humanistic system focused primarily on maintaining itself.

How are we to know how to practice God-centered medicine? The truth and sufficiency of the Bible must be the highest authority, to have any hope of reforming medicine. The ethics of abortion and euthanasia may be the most obvious targets for Biblical application, but the Living Water must permeate much more deeply into the bowels of the system. The inherently dysfunctional economics of both corporate and socialistic policies must be ruthlessly measured by the Bible.

Furthermore, each individual must drink the Living Water, though it may initially taste bitter, because we must sacrifice something for the sake of supporting an alternative system. As long as Christians continue to gladly drink the snake oil, the snake oil industry will flourish. Not until we refuse

the humanistic system's enticements and begin to sacrifice in support of a Godly alternative, will that alternative system have a hope of growing out of a thousand points of light.

What would this medicine look like in the exam room? Whole persons made in the image of God would be treated as such by the physician caring for them. The economic model would offer cost-efficient (avoiding bureaucratic waste and red tape), affordable care which simultaneously furnished a living for physicians and other caregivers who invested their lives into the healing arts. This model would supply adequate time, longer than a 12 to 15 minute visit, such that caregivers of all flavors could care for not only the physical, but the emotional and spiritual needs of their patients. The reality that we are embodied souls with feelings and relationships rather than just evolved animals or soulless robots would be evident to any observer of the process.

The Living Water of Kingdom Medicine practiced under a covenant before a sovereign Lord entails far more than can be described here. It must permeate every inch of our being, individually and corporately. When the caregiver covenants before God to tend to their patient according to God's ways for His glory and for the love of the neighbor-patient, Kingdom Medicine will be sought by the multitudes.

This vision is not impossible. One of the biggest hurdles is that oil and water cannot mix. We, as patients, doctors, pharmacists, third party payers, nurses, family members, government leaders, and others must choose between Living Water or snake oil today rather than continuing to sip on some form of an eventually fatal mixture.

As I continue to strive toward a more Biblical approach to health care as a physician and for my family, the Lord has brought us to Sanctuary Functional Medicine and Samaritan Ministries.

I started the Sanctuary Functional Medicine practice along with fellow Christian doctors (sanctuary-functionalmedicine.com). It uses the Direct Primary Care model to prevent third parties from controlling health care, allowing the patient and doctor to remain free and follow their consciences. Health care sharing through Samaritan Ministries also leaves to the individual the responsibility of making health care decisions, and then brings the Body of Christ together to bear one another's large medical burdens.

I think this combination is a promising one more Christians should consider. However the Lord leads you, I hope you will join us in reforming the health care system for God's glory.

P.S. These ideas may stir some debate, but my greatest fear is not that some people will disagree but that no one will care enough to respond. Complacency, comfort, and diversion are the greater culprits convincing us to drink the snake oil. I look forward to questions, even challenges, but hope that each will first hear my undertones of repentance in having participated in the system. Let's all examine ourselves, repent of what God shows us, and begin to apply His principles to the entire system (Colossians 3:23). ♦

Sanctuary Functional Medicine

SanctuaryFunctionalMedicine.com

Offices in Franklin and Spring Hill
Tennessee

The Magnesium Miracle: Discover the missing link to total health

by Carolyn Dean, M.D., N.D.

reviewed by David Lehnert

If you've ever been to a fireworks show, you have probably seen fireworks that have some "after-sparkle." That after-sparkle is the burning of the mineral magnesium. However, magnesium is needed for things of much greater importance than fireworks. In *The Magnesium Miracle*, Dr. Carolyn Dean explains why this versatile mineral is crucial for achieving and maintaining optimal health, citing more than 420 scientific references. She also discusses how magnesium deficiency has been linked to debilitating health issues such as migraines, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, memory loss, kidney stones, and many other conditions. Each chapter ends with a dietary and supplement regimen for the conditions discussed in that chapter.

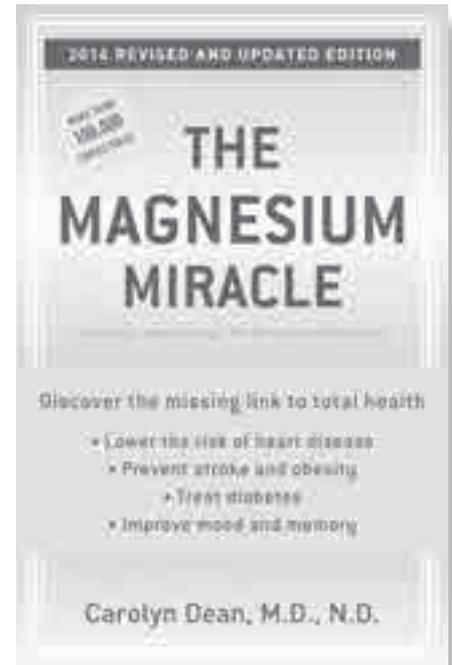
Magnesium has five major functions in the body. It catalyzes more than 700 enzymatic reactions, helps produce and transport energy, synthesizes protein, is involved in the transmission of nerve signals, and relaxes muscles.^{1,2} Digging deeper into the biochemistry, magnesium helps produce and transport adenosine triphosphate(ATP), the basic unit of energy that all cells require for life.³ Magnesium also binds to ATP so that it is biologically active and readily available for cells to use. Magnesium controls the channels which regulate the movement of calcium in and out of cells, which in turn controls both the contraction and relaxation of our muscles.

Dr. Dean says that the vast majority of Americans are magnesium deficient, getting only 172-225mg daily.⁴

The National Academy of Science (NAS) has set the recommended dietary intake (RDI) at 420mg for men and 320mg for women per day, but Dr. Dean says that individual requirements are usually higher. She says that there are many contributing factors to this widespread deficiency such as depletion of magnesium in the soil, a diet containing too much processed food, fluoridation of drinking water, antacids, and sugar. Common drugs, such as diuretics for high blood pressure, steroids for asthma, insulin for diabetes, hormonal contraceptives, and antibiotics can also create deficiencies.⁵

To increase dietary magnesium, Dr. Dean recommends eating green vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes, unprocessed grains, and sea salt. However, she says that dietary intake is usually inadequate, so supplementation is usually needed. She says that getting accurate blood tests is the key to determining the amount of supplementation needed.

Dr. Dean cautions that magnesium testing is often inaccurate, but that more accurate results can be obtained with a magnesium red blood cell (RBC) test. She recommends maintaining an optimum level of 6.0-6.5mg/dL.^{6,7} and suggests taking 3.0-4.5mg per pound of body weight, having the RBC test done every three to four months, and adjusting your supplementation to stay in that range. To avoid laxative effects that may occur if a person takes in too much magnesium too quickly, Dr. Dean recommends



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dividing daily supplemental intake into several smaller doses.

While magnesium is safe for most people, Dr. Dean says there are four situations where magnesium should not be supplemented. For people with kidney failure, myasthenia gravis, an excessively slow heart rate, or bowel obstruction, magnesium supplementation can worsen these conditions and even cause death. For people who do not suffer from any of these conditions, Dr. Dean says that magnesium taken orally is safe even in high doses, and that the only side effect will be a laxative effect, which is the body's mechanism for getting rid of excess magnesium.

Magnesium can be supplemented orally as a powder or tablet and topically as an oil. Magnesium powders are inexpensive, and Dr. Dean says that the most commonly used

forms are magnesium citrate, magnesium taurate, magnesium glycinate, and magnesium chloride. She does say to avoid magnesium oxide, because of a very low absorption rate of only four percent. Picometer magnesium is a micronized form of magnesium that allows near 100 percent absorption, and can be used by those who are especially sensitive to the laxative effects.

When Dr. Dean wrote her book in 2014, heart disease was responsible for more than 610,000 deaths according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) website. She writes, "Up to 30 percent of angina (chest pain) patients do not have badly blocked arteries, but may be suffering from an electrical imbalance that is driven by mineral deficiency, most commonly magnesium."⁸ Furthermore, 60 percent of heart attacks may occur with no plaque/blockage present, most likely from spasms in the arteries.^{9,10,11,12} Magnesium is a natural antispasmodic.

Dr. Dean says that magnesium can be very useful for treating and preventing heart disease, but laments that most cardiologists do not use it, despite the fact that it's been used in the treatment of heart disease for more than fifty years.^{13,14} She cites a study in which intravenous magnesium was found to protect the heart muscle, prevent arrhythmia, and improve long-term survival.^{15,16,17} She also says an analysis of several studies showed intravenous injections of magnesium increased the odds of surviving an acute heart attack by 55 percent.^{18,19} Dr. Dean says that these studies provide compelling evidence for cardiologists and scientists to invest more time in researching magnesium.

Migraines are another debilitating condition that affect more than 25,000,000 Americans annu-

ally. Dr. Dean cites a study in which 3,000 patients were given 200mg of magnesium daily, and the group experienced an 80 percent reduction in overall symptoms.²⁰ She explains that the significant reduction in symptoms may have been because of magnesium's ability to help promote muscular and neural relaxation. She references Drs. Bella and Burton Altura, pioneers in the field of magnesium research, who were responsible for a study which found that patients who suffered from migraines had low magnesium ion levels.²¹ Dr. Dean says that magnesium ions are the active form of magnesium in the body, and if the ion count is very low, it means there isn't enough available magnesium for the body.

Dr. Dean discusses the relationship between calcium and magnesium. She says that while calcium is a nutrient our bodies need, the typical diet provides us with a calcium-magnesium ratio from 5:1 to 15:1. The optimal ratio is 1:1.²² The book says that too much calcium can lead to deposits throughout the body, increasing of inflammation, and can be a major contributing factor to conditions such as heart disease, arthritis, kidney stones, and stroke.

Dr. Dean states that while calcium is an important part of the bone matrix, magnesium is often overlooked. Between 1984-1993, there was a 700 percent increase in the incidence of diagnosed osteoporosis.²³ She says the focus needs to shift to getting enough magnesium, vitamin D, and optimizing hormone levels. All of these contribute to getting calcium into the bones and maintaining the healthy regeneration cycle caused by osteoblasts and osteoclasts (the cells responsible for bone reformation). Dr. Dean

also points out that the National Osteoporosis Guidelines Group published a report in 2013 which admits that the class of drugs used to treat osteoporosis, biphosphonates, can lead to an even greater loss in the bone density and ultimately worsen a person's osteoporosis if a person uses them and then stops.

Kidney stones are also discussed. Dr. Dean writes that calcium phosphate and calcium oxalate are responsible for about 85 percent of all kidney stones. She says that low magnesium is a risk factor for developing kidney stones, because magnesium is used to keep calcium in solution.²⁴ If there is too much calcium or not enough magnesium, the calcium will deposit, and when it deposits in the kidneys, it can eventually lead to kidney stones. Dr. Dean cites a study showing that magnesium has been shown to be as effective as diuretics for treating kidney stones.²⁵

Another topic discussed is diabetes, a major disease in the United States, affecting more than 16 million Americans, and the seventh leading cause of death. Common signs of diabetes are excessive thirst, excessive urination, and excessive eating. There are two types of diabetes. Type one diabetics typically lose weight, while type two diabetics are generally overweight. Dr. Dean says that the common complications of diabetes, such as nerve damage, vision loss, kidney disease, impotence in men, atherosclerosis, and heart attacks, relate to a magnesium deficiency.²⁶ When the magnesium levels of diabetic patients were measured, forty percent of them were shown to have low magnesium levels.^{27,28,29} A lack of magnesium in diabetics increases the risk of car-

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diovascular disease, eye symptoms, and nerve damage, but magnesium supplementation can help prevent them.^{30,31,32} Dr. Dean says that cutting back on refined sugars and processed foods can help protect against diabetes, and that optimum doses of magnesium also offer a protective effect against diabetes.^{33,34}

The relationship between magnesium levels and the rate of aging is also discussed. Centenarians (people who are 100 or older) have higher total body magnesium and lower levels of calcium than elderly people who are younger than 100.³⁵ Dr. Dean says the longevity of centenarians may be due to the fact that magnesium is an important antioxidant, along with vitamins C, E, and selenium. When you don't have enough magnesium, not only does it allow the production of oxidants, it hastens their production by as much as 200 percent.^{36,37} In this context, Dr. Dean states that it is particularly important for the elderly to take adequate amounts of supplemental magnesium, along with other vitamin and mineral antioxidants, to help prevent or reverse diseases that affect the elderly, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and dementia.

Dr. Dean discusses many emerging studies showing that magnesium can be beneficial for women facing a wide variety of conditions including dysmenorrhea, polycystic ovarian syndrome, infertility, and preeclampsia. She discusses how magnesium supplementation can be used to treat four different kinds of hormonal imbalances.

While she presents many studies indicating the value of magnesium supplementation, Dr. Dean says there

is a need for additional research. At the end of *The Magnesium Miracle*, she includes a Resource section listing educational literature and giving contact information for centers that will perform RBC magnesium testing. ♦

Disclaimer: The information in this article is for educational purposes and not meant as medical advice.

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toward *Sexuality*, their latest book, is aimed at young men in their teens to early twenties. Hal and Melanie realized that in the years since writing *Raising Real Men*, the temptations of the Internet have overrun most young men. Since parents often struggle in addressing sexuality, the Youngs provide a guide and conversation starter from a Biblical context. Their book prepares young men to fight these battles and is a toolkit for how to repent and be restored if they fall.

Hal and Melanie are currently working on a book for raising preteens, since many problems in the teen years are rooted in the preteen years. Preteens start questioning, and parents start throwing up their hands, not understanding how to safely transition them into teens.

When asked about a book for girls, Hal and Melanie quip, “We had to do nineteen years of research before we wrote the first one. Since our oldest daughter is only eleven, we have a lot more to learn.”

In addition to their books, the Youngs have a popular weekly podcast, “Making Biblical Family Life Practical,” that goes out through the Ultimate Homeschool Radio Network and is available from the iTunes store.

Great Waters Company features several online classes. One of the most popular is Bootcamp, for parents of boys ages 9 to 12, usually broadcast from their living room. The Youngs chat with parents, giving them suggestions to try out in their family. The next week, parents come back with questions. People can sign up to watch recordings even when a live class isn’t being offered. Another class is Preflight, named for the

preflight inspection before takeoff. Parents and teens watch Preflight together to check on their preparation in crucial areas of life.

The Youngs’ line of “Gear and Gifts” includes classic hobby items like a chain mail kit, rock collections, rubberband guns, and training swords. Great Waters carries audiobooks in addition to books on business and entrepreneurship, historical adventures, creation science, and holidays.

The Youngs provide a guide and conversation starter for helping parents address sexuality and the Internet.

“We want to be where people are looking,” Melanie says. “People need practical help in following Christ, and we want to be wherever they are to bring that help.” To that end, they speak at conferences and family camps, preach in churches, teach online classes, do TV interviews, run a publishing company, write magazine articles and books, send out a monthly email newsletter, and keep up on a blog, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. In the fall, Hal and Melanie are available for weekend events and seminars that churches can use as an outreach to the community.

Wherever the Youngs go, it’s a family event, covering thousands of

miles each year. The children have continued to manage the exhibit space as their part in the ministry. Homeschooling allows the four youngest children to travel with them, turning all their travels into extended field trips.

The oldest sons travel with them when they are on college breaks or can get time off work. Every day they find content for social media, provide technical assistance on their web presence, typeset books, help with graphic design, and sometimes process and ship orders, simply pitching in where they can. They join in the family’s ongoing Skype conversation about upcoming tasks, whether brainstorming new topics or deciding cover designs for the next book.

Reflecting on their family and the ministry God has given them, Hal says they want to be remembered as “parents of awesome servants of God who far exceed whatever we do for the Kingdom.” Until that time, those glimpses of God impacting lives keeps them sharing how to order families according to God’s Word and live to glorify Him each and every day.

A friend once told them “When I die, I want to leave the biggest, broadest set of footprints leading directly to where I have gone.” For Hal and Melanie Young that means making Biblical truth practical for as many families as they can in as many ways as they can. “People ask us all the time how to start doing ministry,” Melanie says. “We have no idea. God did this.” ♦

Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Hebrews 13:3 tells us to “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.” Our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world are being persecuted for the sake of the Gospel. We need to remember them in prayer. Each month, the Christian Health Care Newsletter will provide updates gleaned from such sources as World Watch Monitor and The Voice of the Martyrs and offer prayer points. Please use them in your personal or group prayer time.

Family forced to leave village

A family in Laos has been forced to leave their village following threats from a village leader, Voice of the Martyrs reports. “Havika” told VOM in May that he and his family were threatened because five other Khmu families had become believers in Christ. Village leaders may hope that the other families will abandon Christ because Havika’s family has left. *Pray that Havika and his family, as well as the other families, will remain strong in their faith. Pray also for their material provision.*

House churches persecuted

Four house churches in Bangladesh led by Pastor “Rubel” have faced persecution this year, VOM reports. One church member was murdered in 2015 for using a Muslim water well. Since then, 12 other families have experienced different forms of persecution. *Pray that Pastor Rubel will continue sharing the Gospel with the people of Bangladesh and that*

the house churches’ members will remain strong in their faith.

Hundreds freed in Nigeria

Radical Islamist group Boko Haram killed hundreds of people for refusing to convert to Islam and took 218 women and girls as wives in forced marriages according to Nigerian military reports, International Christian Concern says. The reports came after hundreds of people from Gwoza, Nigeria, were liberated. *Praise God for the liberation. Pray for the women and girls suffering in forced marriages, for provision for families trying to rebuild their lives, and for wisdom for Nigeria’s leaders.*

Christians meet with refugee

Two Christian women have been meeting with a Muslim woman named “Fatima” who fled Syria with her two young children, VOM says. Fatima’s husband left and she is struggling financially. *Pray for Fatima and her children to become believers, for the family’s financial situation, and for the two women helping her.*

Russia outlaws evangelizing

A new law in Russia on July 20 makes it illegal for Christians to evangelize anywhere other than a registered church building, VOM says. The penalty for breaking the law is the equivalent of six weeks’ wages for an individual and 20 times that for an organization. The law is purportedly meant to prevent terrorism but will mainly affect Protestant Christians. *Pray that the Russian government will repeal the law so that Jesus can be freely shared in Russia. Pray also for wisdom and effectiveness of church leaders in Russia.*

Home church closed

A home church in Guangzhou in southern China has been shut down, ICC reports. Authorities, who had been harassing the church, sealed the door and shut off water and power. While the official reason for the building’s closure was lack of proper building certificates, the head of the church had spent the U.S. equivalent of \$75,000 to refurbish the location. Churches in the region are facing widespread evictions, raids and threats. *Pray that the home church would be able to reopen, that authorities would abide by laws protecting religious freedom, and that Christians in China would remain strong in the face of harassment.*

Attacked Christians jailed

Two Christian leaders who were attacked by radical Hindus, then abducted and beaten, were rescued by Indian police and promptly arrested, ICC reports. Pastor Ram Pal Kon and Nand Lal were charged with converting people to Christianity. The Christian community and church leaders are calling for an end to attacks on Christians. *Pray for healing for Ram Pal Kon and Nand Lal, for the conversion of hardline Hindus and others in India, and that the incident will be a spark for renewal and refreshing for believers in India.* ♦

For more information on the persecuted church, contact The Voice of the Martyrs (www.persecution.com, 877-337-0302), International Christian Concern (www.persecution.org, 800-422-5441) or World Watch Monitor (worldwatchmonitor.org).

of a constantly changing society is not solved by reproducing a religious version of the same thing. What people really need in a world of constant flux and instability is stability, foundations, and an anchor point to their lives. They need the Rock of Salvation, and they need a church that is solid and steadfast in proclaiming Him week after week.

Coming into a church where God is taken seriously, worshipped reverently (and joyfully), and where there is some consistency, would actually be a massive blessing and a huge relief to so many in our manic society. Like the man in the illustration above, there in the midst of a society that is running to and fro, is the Church: resolute, unmoveable, unshakeable. The ground and pillar of the truth.

In the wider context, this is one of the main reasons God has set apart one day in seven—the Lord’s Day. It is a day in which we can worship Him and enjoy the presence of His people, but it is also an anchor point. A day which is unmoveable, unshakeable. It’s ironic that in a day when many Christians don’t really see the need to keep the day much different from the other six, the stability and breathing space it gives individuals, families, churches, and society as a whole to just pause, reflect, and tread on solid ground has never been more needed.

Yet calmness and stability must spread beyond the borders of our churches and the Lord’s Day. It ought to be a priority in our families. There are many ways of doing this, the most obvious being simply for husband and wife to remain faithful to one another and to display that faithfulness in all their dealings with

their children and with others.

Then there are shared mealtimes. There is a temptation to send our children off to this activity and that, and we end up eating together less and less, until gradually the bonds that hold us together become loosened. Yet the stability that comes

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from regularly eating together, not to mention the sheer joy of doing so, is something that really is of vital importance to our individual and collective sanity.

But this sort of thing ought not to be limited to mealtimes. The desire for stability, even in a world that is a source of constant instability, should be deeply ingrained in us, and we should be seeking ways of nurturing it. Here’s a personal example: I walk with my family in the countryside on a regular basis. Not to do anything specific, or go anywhere in particular. Rather just to amble along, talk and enjoy each other’s company. I mention this only because I rarely see other families doing it. Yet it is one of the most joyful, bonding, and stabilizing things we do as a family. I highly recommended it to those

who want to bring more stability to the lives of their families!

Let me conclude by going back to the illustration of the slow man in the rushing crowd. If that was for real, what do you suppose all those rushing people would be thinking? My guess is they’d be wondering how on earth he does it. How does he remain so calm, so serene, so unflappable when everything around him is manic?

The same will be true if we seriously strive to carve out islands of stability. It is not just for ourselves that we should strive for it. There is a genuine angst, fear, and general confusion in society, which rises in direct proportion to the changes and the flux that are foisted upon us. People need stability, and they currently don’t have it. The more that you are that guy who just walks calmly and serenely through the midst of the chaos, creating a stable family and worshipping in a stable church, the more it will be noticed, and people will want to know how you do it. That’s when you can tell them. It’s called the peace of God which passes all understanding. And the good news is that they can have it, too. ♦

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Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!

Proverbs 9:4a and Proverbs 16a

Proverbs 9 describes the appeals of Wisdom and Folly, personified as two women. Both women offer an invitation to a dinner, and ironically, they start out with exactly the same words: “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”

Those who turn to Wisdom’s invitation receive the good things that result from wise living—the way of life. Those who are lured in by Folly’s invitation think they are taking a quicker, easier, more enjoyable way that no one will find out about. But ultimately they find that turning there does not end well.

When making decisions in life, “turn in” to Wisdom. Folly may claim that something better can be gained by taking what isn’t rightfully ours and that no one will ever know, but “turning in” there is deadly.

Whenever you are offered any invitations, be sure to “turn in” only to the ones from Wisdom.

For the Kingdom,



Ray King