

# Christian HealthCare

## NEWSLETTER

### MEMBER LETTER:

**Knowing people were praying filled our hearts with gratitude**

**We praise God** for leading us to Samaritan Ministries. We always look forward to sending our share each month. It gives us such joy to help another brother or sister in need.

Then we found ourselves with a need. What peace of mind knowing our need would be met. Before joining Samaritan we always had to pay a large deductible. But with Samaritan we didn't have to pay any of our need because we were able to get discounts!

What fun it was going to the mailbox every day to see where God's provision was coming from. Knowing people were praying for us caused our hearts to be filled with gratitude for such a large Christian family who cares for one another.

Thanks to all of you, those who prayed, sent their shares, and you at the office helping organize it all.

*Kerry and Jean McGonigal  
Aurora, Oregon*

### Join in the National Day of Prayer on May 4

**M**any Christians are unaware that they live in a nation that has a law in place requiring our president to proclaim a National Day of Prayer each year on the first Thursday in May.

The President shall issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a National Day of Prayer on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as individuals. (Public Law 105-225)

As citizens and residents of the United States and as believers in Christ Jesus, we not only have a spiritual responsibility according to 1 Timothy 2:1-2 to pray, but a civic duty as well to heed our president's call to stand in the gap for our nation. Who but God's people have the ability to enter into the very throne room of heaven with prayers and petitions!

The theme this year is "For Your Great Name's Sake! Hear Us ... Forgive Us ... Heal Us!" taken from Daniel 9:19, which says, "O Lord, Listen! O Lord, Forgive! O Lord, Hear and Act! For Your Sake, O My God ..." On May 4 join with thousands of individuals, churches, and communities to rally millions of Christians to once again heed this call!

Scripture tells us again and again that our fervent prayer is effective—that our loving God responds to His children's

earnest pleas in mighty ways that avail much, and ultimately determine the course of history.

At this crucial time for our nation, we can do nothing more important than pray. Please consider making this spiritual discipline a personal priority and encourage others to incorporate prayer in their lives. We look forward to seeing His hand move across our land in exciting ways each May in response to our petitions!

#### Visit [NationalDayOfPrayer.com](http://NationalDayOfPrayer.com):

- Read this year's national prayer.
- Watch the LiveStream on May 4.
- Access resources on prayer.
- Find a prayer gathering near you or learn how to start one.

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**Sharing Summary from April**

Shares:	\$24,928,934	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:	\$24,832,728	
In Negotiation:	\$ —	
New Needs:	3,669	
Total Needs:	7,162	
New Rewards:	255	Member Households: 69,043 (as of 3/24/17)
Miscarriages:	47	
Final Rewards:	16	

**Contact Us: 877-764-2426 [samaritanministries.org/members](http://samaritanministries.org/members)**

**Questions about?**

**Email**

**Phone Menu**

Your medical need	needs@samaritanministries.org	1 - 1
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Your membership	membership@samaritanministries.org	1 - 3

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**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.

## Drawing conclusions without good evidence is a dangerous game

by Rob Slane

Imagine a game of Clue where instead of sitting down to play by the rules—going from room to room, eliminating suspects, places and weapons—the players start making accusations and counter-accusations before a move has been made.

One player says it must have been the Reverend Green, because he is known for his religious extremism. Another reacts to the charge by calling the first player an anti-religious bigot. Still another says that it must have been Miss Scarlet, since she has a certain sort of femme fatale look about her. Another counters with an accusation of misogyny and says it must have been the Colonel, the Reverend, or the Professor, since they are representatives of the patriarchy. And so on and so on.

A game of Clue like this is plainly absurd, but unfortunately much of the back and forth in the culture wars is similar. We jump to conclusions because of personal prejudice and political correctness.

Recently I've noticed that as a society we often jump to conclusions about tragic events as well. We often see it when an atrocity occurs, such as a truck attack or a bombing. Within minutes the media tend to describe them as terrorist attacks bearing "all the hallmarks of ISIS." The Twittersphere then erupts and counter-erupts, with some blaming it on Islamization, and others decrying their Islamophobia.

The suspicion that such incidents are inspired by Islam and/or connected with terrorism is of course a very reasonable one, since there have been enough occurrences

where this has indeed been the case to make it at the very least a strong possibility. However, there are also enough of such incidents where this has turned out not to have been the cause to at least make us wary of turning a suspicion into a "fact."

## We are losing a basic understanding of the rule of law, and even a basic ability to reason.

I can think of numerous such incidents where the perpetrator has turned out to have had no connection to any terrorist organization whatsoever, but has been acting entirely on his own. I can think of such incidents where the perpetrators have turned out not to have had any particular terrorist motive, but have simply been lowlife criminals with a long history of mental illness and regular users of drugs, prescription or illegal. I can even recall the shock many felt when the perpetrator of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah building in Oklahoma turned out to be a fairly average white American with no links to any extremist group.<sup>1</sup>

This tendency to draw conclusions before the facts are established is not confined to incidents which

may or may not be explained by terrorism, however. For example, Hillary Clinton once said that women who make a claim of rape "should be believed at first until they are disbelieved based on evidence."<sup>2</sup> Her attitude is not uncommon, nor is it confined to rape. Having largely imbibed the Marxist ideology that society is made up of oppressors and the oppressed, we are increasingly developing an instinct which rushes to believe the "victim."

This is the very opposite of how we should operate in a law-governed society, which in the Christian West has been based on the Bible for 1,500 years. It is not the police's or anyone else's business to "believe" the one making the claim, if they happen to belong to what society has deemed to be an oppressed group. Neither should such accusations be disbelieved. Instead, they should be taken seriously and treated with sensitivity, but judgment should be postponed until the evidence is collected.

This type of thinking is very dangerous, such as when the abuse of children is involved. I can think of a number of cases in which people have had their reputations utterly trashed by what turned out to be unfounded accusations of child abuse, where the police and the media automatically believed the claims being made long before any evidence had been presented. Such reputations are not easily restored.

These type of reactions to events, where we assume we know who did something, or why they did it, or

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## Twila Brase: Citizens' Council for Health Freedom

by Michael Miller

One day in the 1990's Twila Brase was called into the principal's office over health care freedom.

A school nurse at the time, Twila was trying to alert teachers to the dangers of the "Health Security Act" proposed by the Clinton administration.

Not long after, she started alerting Americans in general to the dangers of government intrusion into health care as the co-founder and president of Citizens' Council for Health Freedom ([cchfreedom.org](http://cchfreedom.org)) and the host of the daily radio feature "Health Freedom Minute."

CCHF works to "protect health care choices, individualized patient care, and medical and genetic privacy rights." The council works on such

issues as patient privacy, individualized patient care, the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, government newborn screening, and state "Baby DNA" storage.

"Our plan is to transition everything in health care back to freedom," Twila says.

When Twila was a school nurse in Minneapolis-St. Paul in the early 1990s, she became aware of the Clinton administration's effort to impose a universal health care plan. That clashed with her love of freedom and privacy, and she began to study the issue.

"I realized that if the government took control of the health care system, it would take control of people's lives and be the beginning of the end of freedom in this country," Twila says.

She decided to educate the teachers at the three schools she worked at with a "packet about what the Health Security Act would do."

"I had copied all these news articles," she says. "I feel like that was a first step, and it's been forward ever since."

In the principal's office, she was told that she couldn't pass around "things like that."

Some time after that meeting, Twila started passing around "things like that" in an even bigger way. The Minneapolis Star-Tribune published an op-ed she wrote in May 1994, which resulted in connections that led to the formation of what was then called the Citizens for Choice in Health Care. By March 1995, she had left behind her school nurse



job to work full time for the new organization.

She hasn't been called into the principal's office since.

Twila, a registered nurse, sees CCHF's mission as one that protects not only freedom, but the profession of healing, which comes from God Himself.

"Jesus was the great physician, so this is a precious profession," she says. "This is not a profession to be exploited. When the patient is at their most vulnerable, we should be protecting them."

Twila also says integrity in health care has been compromised by government intrusion.

"Part of our mission is individualized patient care, because we look at every patient as being unique," she says. "But government health care says we can standardize the practice of medicine and forget the uniqueness of the patient, all the way down to the patient's DNA. Standardized medicine does not



recognize unique, God-given characteristics, personality, preferences, or genetics of patients. It makes every person a widget.”

At the beginning of her mission, Twila was concerned that, even though the Clintons’ health care plan failed at the federal level, states like her native Minnesota began adopting elements of it, and other parts, particularly related to patient data, found their way into federal legislation. For instance, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) was enacted in 1996 to create “standards for the electronic exchange, privacy and security of health information.”

“The law required the Clinton administration to set privacy requirements if Congress failed to write a privacy law, so the so-called HIPAA privacy rule was issued. Between the law and this permissive rule, almost everybody has access to our data without our consent, unless a state legislature writes a stronger privacy law,” Twila says.

The federal government lists 2.2 million entities with HIPAA-enabled access to medical data without patient consent if those holding the data, such as the doctor or the hospital, agree to share it. This number does not include the federal, state, and local government agencies that also have access. Most patients, Twila says, think that signing the HIPAA privacy form or the acknowledgement of the Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP) means their privacy is protected. However, their signature only acknowledges that the patient understands how broadly their information can be shared without their

*Continued on page 12*

## 10 Harmful ways government can intrude and use your data



1. Research conducted on all Americans to develop standardized protocols.
2. Standardized treatment protocols imposed on non-standardized patients.
3. Research-based health care rationing according to your productivity, age, etc.
4. Penalties on doctors who refuse to follow one-size-fits-all treatment protocols.
5. “Team-based care” directed by computerized protocols, not your physician.
6. Charging doctors with fraud if they fail to follow standardized treatment protocols.
7. Eliminating medical innovation through standardized treatment protocols.
8. Using race/sexual orientation data to accuse doctors of civil rights violations.
9. Locating the uninsured and the unvaccinated for penalties and enforcement.
10. Genetic and medical profiling of individuals and families.

Source: “10 Harmful Ways Gov’t Will Use Your Data”  
<[cchfreedom.org/cchf.php/990](http://cchfreedom.org/cchf.php/990)>

## Primal Panacea

by Dr. Thomas Levy

reviewed by David Lehnert

*Overwhelming documentation proves that in high enough doses Vitamin C prevents and cures cancer, heart disease, infectious and degenerative diseases, and can neutralize and reverse damage from virtually all toxins, venoms, and radiation.*

Dr. Thomas Levy has grown accustomed to being dismissed as a medical crackpot, but he doesn't fit the stereotype. He is a cardiologist with an impressive *curriculum vitae*. He has supervised an ER, held several teaching positions, served on hospital review boards, been published in a variety of medical journals, and is also an attorney.

*Primal Panacea* sums up 25 years of Dr. Levy's research on Vitamin C. He is well aware that calling it a "cure" is an affront to modern medicine. Nonetheless, he patiently, persistently presents evidence that Vitamin C meets all the criteria necessary to earn that designation.

One of the main misconceptions Dr. Levy seeks to overturn is that studies show Vitamin C is useless for treating major medical problems. This conclusion is reached by looking at a few studies which only involved trace amounts of Vitamin C. However, when Vitamin C is used in optimal doses, which are hundreds or thousands of times more than government issued Recommended Daily Intakes, it produces very impressive results. In *Primal Panacea* Dr. Levy cites more than 1100 scientific sources to show that Vitamin

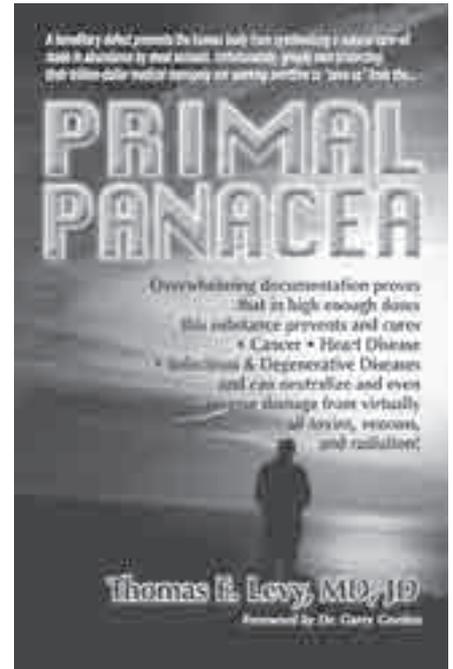
C has amazing antibiotic, antiviral, antifungal, antitoxin, and antiaging benefits when used in high doses.

First Dr. Levy discusses Vitamin C being used to cure viral infections, which is well documented back to the 1930s. Dr. Frederick Klenner cured polio patients within 72 hours by using IV and oral Vitamin C.\* Other researchers showed that Vitamin C killed every herpes virus that came into contact with Vitamin C, including the strain that causes shingles.\* Dr. Robert Cathcart reported that Vitamin C reversed AIDS, allowing patients to live out their lives relatively devoid of symptoms.\*

Vitamin C has also been used as an antidote to toxins, treating potentially fatal poisonings such as pesticide exposure, black widow bite, barbiturate overdose, highland moccasin snake bite, and mushroom poisoning, including the *amanita phalloides*, also known as "death cap."\*

The list of maladies that have been successfully treated by Vitamin C is long: polio, viral hepatitis, measles, mumps, viral encephalitis, chickenpox, herpes, viral pneumonia, influenzas, rabies, AIDS, ebola, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, tuberculosis, streptococcal infections, leprosy, typhoid, malaria, brucellosis, trichinosis, amebic dysentery, bacillary dysentery, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and trypanosomal infections.<sup>1</sup>

The next topic Dr. Levy addresses in *Primal Panacea* is heart disease. He explains that a deficiency of Vitamin C diminishes the quality and quantity of collagen in the arterial wall, causing further breakdown



of the artery and facilitating the growth of plaque. He says Vitamin C deficiency is associated with every known heart disease risk factor, and supplementation with Vitamin C lowers cholesterol and reduces blood pressure.<sup>2</sup>

The next chapter deals with cancer. Although Vitamin C therapy for cancer might be perceived as contradictory to mainstream approaches like chemotherapy or radiation, it is actually in harmony with it. For starters, The American Cancer Society acknowledges that pathogens and toxins are significant in causing cancer, and, as discussed above, Vitamin C is known to be a very powerful antimicrobial and antidote.

The main problem with cancer is metastasis, the malfunctioning and multiplying of cells. Dr. Levy presents evidence that Vitamin C keeps

the cellular glue, known as “ground substance,” in blood vessels firm and healthy. Vitamin C also forms a strong extracellular matrix in tissues throughout the body. Conversely, a Vitamin C deficiency weakens these systems, allowing malignant cells to break through lymphatic and blood vessel walls and migrate to other areas of the body.\*

As our understanding of biochemistry continues to develop, we have also gained insight into a process by which Vitamin C kills cancer cells. Cancer cells have high levels of free iron, which in the presence of Vitamin C produces oxygen that kills the cancer cell. This is known as the Fenton reaction.\* In one sense, Vitamin C therapy is just another way to target cancer cells, and it can be used as a compliment to other therapies.

It is no wonder that studies have found people with higher Vitamin C levels experienced 50 percent less death from cancer than those with lower Vitamin C levels.\* Dr. Levy also reviews clinical cases where individuals with advanced kidney, lymphatic, and colon cancers underwent IV Vitamin C therapy and completely recovered, and includes references to many additional success stories.\* Dr. Levy says that when all this evidence is considered together, it suggests that Vitamin C has the potential to eradicate cancer.

Next Dr. Levy reviews how Vitamin C is being used to treat the degenerative diseases that afflict many of us as we age. The primary force of diseases like osteoporosis,

arthritis, and Alzheimer’s is oxidation, and Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant able to donate two electrons per molecule. Proper blood levels of Vitamin C are essential to bone and joint health, and studies have shown that Alzheimer’s patients given antioxidants demonstrate significantly improved cognitive scores.\*

In concluding chapters Dr. Levy discusses some common tactics that the medical community uses to perpetuate misinformation about Vitamin C. He says there are strong incentives for doctors to use expensive drug therapies and ignore the promise of Vitamin C.

Dr. Levy also offers recommendations for how much Vitamin C to take. He says adults should start with a minimum of 6000 mg per day. He recommends powder over a pill for increased absorption, but also adds that liposomal Vitamin C is the best form because of its unique delivery system that bypasses normal metabolic processes and achieves very high levels of absorption.\*

Dr. Levy identifies six organizations that can help people find doctors that might be open to treatments that involved Vitamin C: The Riordan Clinic, American College for Advancement in Medicine, *The Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine*, American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, International College of Integrative Medicine, and Academy of Integrative Medicine.

Finally, the word “primal” in the title of this book relates to some fascinating speculation about genetics. There is evidence that sometime

in the past, our bodies were able to make their own Vitamin C. The complete instructions for a key enzyme related to Vitamin C production are in everyone’s DNA, but the ability of liver cells to follow the instructions is missing. Most animals, on the other hand, produce their own Vitamin C, and they don’t usually die of heart disease, cancer, and chronic degenerative diseases.

In an evolutionary worldview, it is assumed that “primal” man was much stronger and healthier than modern man. Perhaps an evolutionary misstep resulted in a mutation, and perhaps science could someday fix it by genetic engineering. Of course, Christians who hold to the historicity of Genesis could just as easily say that the genetic problem is related to the curse of the Fall, and it should be fixed as part of our calling to fill the earth and subdue it.

More important than this speculation though, Dr. Levy presents compelling evidence Vitamin C should be taken by all at optimal levels. ♦

*Primal Panacea is available from peakenergy.com, where you can also contact Dr. Levy by using the contact button. Many of Dr. Levy’s lectures can be watched online by searching for his name on YouTube.*

\* Sources are available in the online version of this article at [bit.ly/primalpanacea](http://bit.ly/primalpanacea)

1. Our review of Dr. Levy’s book on this topic, *Curing the Incurable: Vitamin C, Infectious Diseases, and Toxins* is available at [bit.ly/cureincurable](http://bit.ly/cureincurable)
2. Our review of Dr. Levy’s book on this topic, *Stop America’s #1 Killer: Reversible Vitamin Deficiency Found to Be Origin of All Coronary Heart Disease*, is available at [bit.ly/stop1killer](http://bit.ly/stop1killer).

*This article is for educational purposes and is not meant as medical advice.*

## Should you trust your doctor?

by Jed Stuber

A recent Mayo Clinic study on the “extent of diagnostic agreement among medical referrals” made national headlines:

- “Study finds more than 20 percent of patients are misdiagnosed.”
- “1 of 5 patients with serious medical conditions are misdiagnosed.”
- “Get a second opinion—doctors usually aren’t right the first time.”
- “First medical diagnosis often incomplete or plain wrong, study finds.”

Dr. Michael Joyce, who used to work for Mayo Clinic, debunked those headlines:

- Much of the Mayo Clinic workload is dealing with difficult cases referred there. You can’t use it to draw conclusions across the board.
- Media reports left out the finding that the Mayo Clinic was able to make a better defined diagnosis two thirds of the time.
- The sample was very small and there was no follow-up over time.

The Mayo Clinic has tried to study this issue before, and it’s not easy.

One attempt was made to review medical literature, but there was great difficulty determining which keywords should be searched to try to find cases of changed diagnoses. The study “concluded” that somewhere from “10 to 62 percent of second opinions yield a major change in diagnosis.”

An attempt was made to sepa-

rate out patients with a poorly defined diagnosis. Ninety percent of them don’t get a better diagnosis from a second opinion. Hard cases are hard cases.

A couple of Proverbs, which aren’t about medicine or science, do seem applicable.

- “The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.” Proverbs 18:17
- “Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.” Proverbs 15:22

### Medical errors

The issue of medical errors is of greater concern than disagreements over an exact diagnosis.

Last year a *British Medical Journal* article made headlines for reporting that medical errors are now the third leading cause of death, after cancer and heart disease. More than 250,000 Americans die every year from “iatrogenic” causes, meaning their death is caused by a physician’s or hospital’s activity, manner, or therapy.

The doctors who published the article say the evidence proves the health care system is letting patients down. They also add a qualifier that the data being collected leaves some things to be desired. Reporting has to line up with insurance codes, which “are designed to maximize billing rather than capture medical errors.”

Dr. Joseph Mercola, owner of one of the world’s most visited health websites, wonders why it took so long to get the media’s atten-

tion. *The Journal of the American Medical Association* first reported similar findings in 2000. A 2013 article in the *Journal of Patient Safety* came up with an even higher number of 440,000 deaths per year.

The two biggest factors are prescription medications and hospital infections.

### Adverse drug reactions

Dr. Mercola sums up the problems related to prescriptions:

- One study showed that, from 1976 to 2006, almost a quarter-million deaths were coded as having occurred in a hospital setting due to medication errors.
- An estimated 450,000 preventable medication-related adverse events occur every year.
- The costs to society of adverse drug reactions are more than \$136 billion annually—greater than the total cost of cardiovascular or diabetic care.
- Adverse drug reactions cause injuries or death in one of five hospital patients.
- The reason there are so many adverse drug events in the U.S. is that so many drugs are used and prescribed—and many patients receive multiple prescriptions at varying strengths, some of which may counteract each other or cause more severe reactions when combined.

### Hospital infections

Betsy McCaughey is passionate about raising awareness of the hospital infection problem. She’s the former lieutenant governor of New York, and founder of the Committee

to Reduce Infection Deaths.

McCaughey says nasty, life-threatening infections like C. Diff are rampant because hospitals refuse to acknowledge that their cleaning standards are inadequate.

C. Diff can survive for months on almost anything: uniforms, wheelchairs, bedsheets, call buttons, you name it.

The Mayo Clinic reduced C. Diff by 79 percent in a pilot project by doing one thing: wiping the frequently touched surfaces around patients' beds once a day with a bleach wipe.

McCaughey says it is an outrage that hospitals won't adopt this practice. Doctors, nurses, and other hospital personnel will often say the problem is caused by antibiotics, which can play a role by weakening gut bacteria and making people more susceptible to infection.

But The Mayo Clinic study is conclusive in McCaughey's estimation. She does not mince words, and insists that the medical community is lying to patients.

Her advice is, "If you're going to the hospital to visit someone you love, don't bother with flowers or candy. Instead, bring a canister of bleach wipes and a pair of gloves. You could be saving a life."

### **The third-party payment problem**

A big problem facing patients who want to evaluate the quality of health care is that third-party payment can drive a wedge between the customer and the provider.

Some doctors avoid third-party interference by only accepting cash

payment directly from their patients, a model called Direct Primary Care.

DPC doctor Bruce Jung says:

My patients have come to understand that I work directly for them and not for a health insurance company, the federal government, or their employer. In the past I was mainly paid by these other third-party payers and so in essence was working for them and not the patient. In a typical fee-for-service office, a patient is not much more than a tool from which to obtain the best ICD-9 diagnosis code possible to justify the highest reimbursable CPT procedural code possible to bring in the most revenue possible with each encounter. In our model I am paid directly by the patient, and so I am motivated ethically, financially, and medically to do what is in their best interest alone.

### **The transparency problem**

Unfortunately, price and quality indicators that are available in other industries are obscured in health care.

Healthcare Bluebook, a service now available to Samaritan members through their Dash account, is designed to take on this challenge.

Dr. Jeff Rice founded Healthcare Bluebook after he had an eye opening experience trying to find out the cost of a foot surgery for his son. At one facility it would cost \$15,000, at another \$1,500. Incredibly, it could be done by the same surgeon at either facility!

Healthcare Bluebook allows patients to search for specific treat-

ments in their area, and then view quality and cost comparisons of the providers in their area. It is common for the costs to vary by 400 percent in the same city.

That's not all.

According to Healthcare Bluebook's data, the providers with the highest quality ratings are usually very competitive on price. It is not true that you have to pay the most to get the best.

### **Conclusion**

Despite these challenges and many others, we have to rely on doctors to some degree. Doctors bring expertise to the table.

On the other hand, we shouldn't be naive. We wouldn't want to hire a contractor to remodel our kitchen without at least investigating a few things. What's his reputation? Have others had good or bad experiences? Does he use quality materials? Are his prices competitive? Would a different contractor do it a different way?

Healthcare Bluebook offers an extensive guide for understanding your treatment options and talking to your doctor, including a list of questions you may want to ask. Visit [bit.ly/hcbbguide](http://bit.ly/hcbbguide) to check it out. ♦

*Sources are available in the online version of this article: [bit.ly/drtrust](http://bit.ly/drtrust)*

## When God said children are a blessing, He wasn't kidding

by Toby Sumpter

Recently, my son (age 2) looked up at his big sister (age 5) sitting on the bathroom counter next to the sink, raised his little arms and said confidently, "Jump my arms! My catch wu!" [Let the reader be aware that my son says "wu" instead of "you."] When my daughter laughed and told her little brother that she was too big, he insisted confidently, "Wu not too big. My can catch wu!"

When God said that children were a blessing, he wasn't kidding (Psalm 127:3). I've got blessings doing cart-wheels in my living room and blessings smeared on my kitchen nook windows. The signs of this shocking blessedness are all over the place. My wife and I spend our evenings mopping up the remnants of this blessing, regrouping, catching our breath, getting ready for another day of drinking this blessing from the fire hose of five insanely cute, creative, and (let's admit it) slightly crazy people under the age of ten.

### Part of the blessing

But not only are we juggling diapers and naps and studies and bath times and stomach bugs, it turns out that these little people are sinners in need of grace. So in a healthy Christian home, we spend a goodish bit of time correcting, disciplining, training, and spanking. The path to the proverbial woodshed is well worn, shall we say. The thing that is often hard to remember when the two-year-old is going red-faced and screaming, when everybody's getting their feelings hurt and fussing, is that this is part of the blessing too.

It's easy to think that blessing is

all butterflies and sunsets. Children are blessings when they keep their outfits clean, obey cheerfully, and say cute things. But blessing isn't a simple, paint-by-numbers kit. Without challenges, life would leave all of us (our kids included) a bunch of stunted, simplistic fools. So God in His great love sends us problems, trials, afflictions, and a pack of wild monkeys affectionately known as our children.

**When God said children were a blessing, He knew they were conceived in iniquity. He knew they would write on your walls with a permanent marker.**

So, how is your heart? Do you resent the fact that this is the fourth trip to the woodshed this morning? (And you were planning to get your dishes done!) Were you hoping for a quiet evening after a long day of work, but the kids won't be nice to each other? How will you receive God's interruption of your plans?

God is sovereign, and He has given you children that fuss and quarrel.

If your heart is already bent out of shape, and the next kid that walks by is going to be a sinner in the hands of an angry god, then you're well on your way to forfeiting the blessing God is trying to give you.

### His scheme to bless

The first task in receiving the blessing of disciplining little ones is seeing what God is up to. He's scheming to bless you. He's conspiring to bless your socks off.

Do you see it? When God said children were a blessing, He knew they were conceived in iniquity (Psalm 51:5). He knew they would write on your walls with a permanent marker.

When that old dragon of sin rears up in the hearts of your children, do you think something has gone terribly wrong? Remember, God sends his favorite sons into battle with the dragon. He wants you to fight and get the victory. He wants you to get the blessing, renewed fellowship, the grace of forgiveness.

### Much too big

Finally, for discipline of children to be a blessing, the act itself must be full of Jesus and His gospel of grace. Jesus is the center, the fountainhead of every spiritual blessing. And when the little guy shoves his mom and declares his independence from the empire, something inside you should smile because not only is his high-handed rebellion terribly cute but now you get to preach the gospel to him. If you laugh it off, if you refuse to intervene, if you refuse to discipline, you are refusing an evangelistic opportunity. You are refusing

a chance to proclaim the grace of Jesus to your family.

A spanking is not primarily punishment. It's discipline. We are discouraging one way of life and aiming for an audience with our children. It hurts in this small, temporary way because we do not want them to go down the path of pain that goes on and on. This is why it is love. Come with us, we say, come with us and follow Jesus. He stood in our place and took the death that we deserve. His blood makes us all clean. He destroyed the great dragon so we could be free. Let's be forgiven. Let's walk in the light. It's not really about the tantrum. It's certainly not about your peace and quiet. It's about a cross, an empty tomb, and overwhelming grace.

In this way, we see that the blessing of God is actually much too big for us to handle, much too big for us to catch. But it is still a blessing from top to bottom, a blessing in the tears, a blessing in the laughter.

We get married, we pray for children, for a family, and God is sitting up on the counter and we've asked Him to jump into our arms. We can handle this, we think. We want this blessing. And God smiles and laughs and jumps. ♦

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*Samaritan Member Toby Sumpter serves as a minister at Trinity Reformed Church in Moscow, Idaho, and is the author of the commentary Job Through New Eyes: A Son for Glory. He is married to Jenny and they have four children.*

*You can find more of his writing at DesiringGod.org or on his blog at TobyJSumpter.com*

## Billing was a mess, but I eventually got a 90 percent discount

by Phil Remmers

**I**n October 2016, I had throat surgery at a hospital in North Carolina to help address my obstructive sleep apnea. I received outstanding care from the doctors and staff, but the hospital's billing department was a mess.

Before the procedure, I was told that the cost would be about \$13,000 for cash-pay patients ("uninsured patient discount" as they called it). However, on the day of the surgery, before the procedure, I sat down with the financial counselor and she told me that the cost would be \$42,000. (In shock, I thought they might need to redirect me to the ER with a heart attack!)

Then about three weeks after surgery I received a paper bill in the mail saying that I owed \$32,000. I called the billing department, reminding them that I was a cash-pay patient and had been told prior to the procedure that it would cost \$13,000. Shortly afterwards they sent me a new bill for this lower figure.

Then about three weeks later the hospital called again and encouraged me to fill out an application for financial assistance, which I did. A few weeks later, they informed me that my application was approved and that I would receive a 90 percent discount on my remaining balance!

After all the dust settled, the final bill came to about \$4,500. Since I had obstructive sleep apnea long before becoming a Samaritan member, my need was not publishable as a regular need. I planned



on submitting it as a Special Prayer Need request for the remaining balance, but a number of churches and individuals who financially support me (I serve as a missionary) gave additional funding for the remaining expenses.

So, in the end, my medical expenses were zero! ♦

*Phil Remmers is a Samaritan Ministries member who serves as a missionary in Asia. He serves with the Robert Morrison Project, which seeks to publish reformed Christian books in the global south. To learn more please visit [www.robertmorrisonproject.org](http://www.robertmorrisonproject.org)*

consent. Brase encourages people to read the forms and the NPP before they sign.

“HIPAA is one of the largest deceptions foisted on the American people, and it’s a danger to patients and medical ethics,” Twila says. “We often say ‘He who holds the data makes the rules.’ One of our key targets is to bring back real privacy, which means to bring back consent, so we have several projects in this theme.”

The organization is working to prohibit coercive consent forms, including HIPAA. CCHF encourages patients to decline to sign HIPAA forms or acknowledgments that they have received a HIPAA notice, which is perfectly legal to do, and to send CCHF copies of these forms.

Coercive consent forms often come as a “bundled consent” in states where state law actually requires consent. These forms have only one signature required to agree to treatment, payment, the NPP, and data-sharing such as for research or “health care operations,” a HIPAA term with a 390-word definition.

“Patients want to sign for treatment and payment, but they don’t want to agree to the rest and they don’t know if they can cross out what they don’t like,” Twila says. “You feel that in order to get treated, there’s nothing to do except sign, because if you don’t sign, sometimes they’ll tell you they can’t treat you, which is just wrong.”

The federal government acknowledges online that patients can refuse

to sign the HIPAA form, Twila says, and she wants patients to know it. She also encourages patients to cross out objectionable parts of consent forms and to contact CCHF if care is being denied.

Other CCHF projects include:

- The Wedge of Health Freedom (“The Wedge”), the effort to restore affordability and confidentiality through direct payment that Twila wrote about in the October 2016 issue of Samaritan’s *Christian Health Care Newsletter*. The Wedge provides DPC and other third-party free doctors a way to let potential patients know where they are, and patients a way to find them. ([jointhewedge.com](http://jointhewedge.com))
- [Refusetoenroll.org](http://Refusetoenroll.org)—CCHF makes Americans aware of three legal alternatives to ACA enrollment.
- Affordable Care Act Repeal—CCHF is pushing for the full repeal of the ACA and a return to individual and state control over health care.
- Medicare Freedom—Twila is pushing for the creation of an escape hatch, since Medicare Part A (hospitalization) is now linked to Social Security. A Clinton administration rule says you lose access to Social Security benefits if you fail to enroll in Medicare Part A and a Bush administration rule requires repayment of all benefits from Medicare and Social Security if you disenroll. Getting rid of the rule and allowing senior citizens to opt out would not only protect seniors from rationing, but decrease the \$48 trillion unfunded liability, which Cato

## Why SMI?

**Twila Brase**, who scrutinizes health care policy for a living, was being priced out of the health insurance market, so she decided to investigate health care sharing.

The result was a report and comparison chart for her organization, Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom, and a membership for herself in Samaritan Ministries.

“I liked Samaritan best because it’s so closely aligned with my Christian beliefs and philosophy: the direct partnership with people in need, the prayers, the letters,” she says. “It just seemed like more of a ministry and less of a business.

“I’m pleased for all health care sharing organizations, but for my own perspective, I liked the personal touch Samaritan has. It seems to fit more with the Great Physician and the ethics of medicine.”

Twila also continues to push health care sharing on her radio spot, “Health Freedom Minute,” which airs every weekday.

“I want health care sharing to be as big as homeschooling so the government can never take it away,” she says. “That is one of my goals. So I talk about health care sharing on the radio, I talk about it when I’m being interviewed, I talk about it in ‘Health Freedom Minutes,’ and I talk about it when I give presentations, because it has to become that big.

“We can’t ever let them take it away, because being able to pay cash for medical care, at an affordable price, is essential for health freedom.” ♦

Institute says could swell to \$88 trillion with double-digit health care inflation.

- **Baby DNA**—All states offer and many states mandate newborn screening, in which the newborn's heel is pricked and the blood specimen sent to the state health department for newborn (genetic) screening, without written parent consent. Religious exemptions are allowed in 33 states, and 13 other states offer exemptions for any reason, but most parents don't know. Some states store the child's blood sample (DNA) indefinitely, others for a couple months. Newborn DNA has been given away, sold, and used for barter and genetic research. CCHF's efforts to end the warehousing of newborn DNA have led to parent lawsuits in three states. Collections of newborn DNA in Texas and Minnesota have been destroyed. More

information, including opt-out parent forms for several states, is at [cchfreedom.org](http://cchfreedom.org).

- **Health Freedom Minute**—A radio spot which airs weekdays on 782 stations in 47 states. Episodes typically include a “nugget of news” and an occasional call to action. Twila says she frequently lets her listeners know about health care sharing. “I am probably one of your strongest promoters,” she says.

When she's not working on health care freedom, Twila is “engaged in maintaining family and friend relationships.” She doesn't get to take part in as many outdoor activities as she did before CCHF, like canoeing, skydiving, or white water rafting, although sailing, hiking, and camping are still frequently on her schedule.

She does travel a lot, but now it's mostly on CCHF business.

“The more busy this office has gotten, the less time I have,” she says. “We have a growth strategy

here because we have become too busy. So, we're working on adding more staff.”

In the meantime, Twila and CCHF need help from patients. People can:

- Send HIPAA and other consent forms perceived as being coercive to the CCHF office.
- File a formal federal HIPAA complaint if denied service for not signing a consent form.
- Share information with others about options like The Wedge and health care sharing.
- Encourage state legislators to pass true privacy laws with patient consent requirements.
- Encourage Congress to vote for a full repeal of the ACA.
- Check out [cchfreedom.org](http://cchfreedom.org) for privacy newborn screening options before having a child.
- If you want to pursue litigation to stop state storage of Baby DNA, contact CCHF. ♦

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## Twila on getting into a cash-pay/negotiating mindset

**A**fter Twila Brase left her job as a school nurse to start Concerned Citizens for Health Freedom, she bought her own health insurance, but prices “skyrocketed over time.”

Even while she had insurance, she purposely never filed a claim, because she was concerned about losing privacy. She saw insurance only as a backup for a catastrophic need.

“I would pay \$2,000, \$3,000 a year if I needed medical care,” she says. “It didn't make sense to be paying as much as I was paying (for insurance).”

She discovered positive aspects of paying cash for care, she says.

“It protected my privacy from the medical information bureau, and it gave me experience at negotiation.”

For example, she needed to have a mole removed and asked the dermatologist how much it would cost, since she was paying cash. After checking, he said it would be \$150, then offered to charge \$120.

“I thought, ‘Whatever,’” Twila says.

After the procedure, Twila asked him how much an insurance company would pay him for the procedure.

Again, he didn't know.

“I say, ‘How about if I give you \$90?’ He goes, ‘OK,’” Twila recalls. “After that I thought, ‘Shoot, I should have asked for \$75.’”

Another time, she was going to get an MRI scan of a broken toe, but thought \$1,190 was too much to pay.

She went online and found a Smart Choice MRI, with no MRI costing more than \$600, was opening in a few days near her.

“I said, ‘OK, I'm waiting.’”

“When you get into a cash mindset, you can negotiate.” ♦

## 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.*

### **80 believers arrested**

Chinese authorities arrested more than 80 Christians and detained six others for attending house churches in the days surrounding the Lunar New Year in early February, China Aid reports. The 80 were arrested for refusing to join the state-run church and the six were fined for “gathering and praying under the name of Christianity.” *Pray for the release of those arrested or detained, and for a strong faith in the face of pressure.*

### **Pastor remains under arrest**

Pastor Jin Tianming of Shouwang Church in China remains under house arrest, Voice of the Martyrs reports. The church building was closed in 2009 and Jin has been under arrest since 2011 for refusing to join the government’s Three-Self Church. He is given only two hours of personal time each day, and his wife is prohibited from leaving the home on Sundays. After Shouwang Church was closed, members started meeting outside, but now meet in small

groups in different houses due to harassment. *Please pray that Jin, his wife, and the church members will remain strong in their faith and find ways to worship together.*

### **Imprisoned pastor suffers**

An imprisoned pastor in China is reported to be in desperate need of medical care. Pastor Yang Hua was visited by a lawyer in March, who said Yang was in severe pain with an ulcerated leg. The pastor was arrested in 2015 on charges of “deliberately divulging state secrets” by passing out flyers about local government action against a church. *Pray for complete healing for Pastor Yang Hua and that he will be released soon.*

### **Vietnamese pastors beaten**

Two Vietnamese pastors say they were kidnapped, robbed, and beaten by security officers, according to International Christian Concern and Christian Today. The Revs. Nguyen Trung Ton and Nguyen Viet Tu said they were traveling to meet activists when they encountered a group of men who forced them into a van, beat them, and left them. *Pray for the pastors’ physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. Pray also that those who beat them will repent and come to believe in Christ. Praise God the pastors were found by villagers.*

### **Indian church still closed**

A church in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh remains shuttered after a Hindu mob forced its closure in January, World Watch Monitor reports. The church in Dalli Rajhara was surrounded by the mob during worship and vandalized, the pas-

tor says. Local authorities consider the case “settled,” even though the church remains closed. *Pray that authorities will act, that the church will be able to reopen, and that members of the church are provided for spiritually during this time.*

### **Pastor starts business**

Pastor “Rahim,” who lives in a north African country, is unable to find work and provide for his family after being arrested several times, VOM says. His reputation as a Christian has caused potential employers to turn him down for jobs. He is now starting his own business and leads a house church of about 10 believers. *Pray for the success of Pastor Rahim’s business, and for the church members, who also face persecution.*

### **Syrian pastor won’t leave**

A Syrian pastor refuses to leave that war zone because it would mean abandoning the churches and Christians there, ICC reports. Pastor Edward Awabdeh says that the challenges of injury, death, and Christian genocide helps believers to keep their focus on Christ. He also said that new believers need guidance. *Pray for the safety of Pastor Awabdeh and his flock as they face the nightmarish conditions in Syria. Pray also for the new believers’ faith and for a spiritual awakening in Syria.* ♦

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

where we believe the accuser before the evidence is in, are symptomatic of how we are losing a basic understanding of the rule of law, and even a basic ability to reason. If we cannot grasp such simple truths as the need for evidence before believing accusations, and the need for proof before taking action, then we are truly at a dangerous point.

What does the Bible teach us about this? First, it teaches us how God judges. It is not according to partiality or prejudice, but rather according to the truth: "He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity" (Psalm 98:9). It is not hasty or impulsive, but rather careful and deliberate: "The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty" (Nahum 1:3). It is not according to an emotional response to hearing or seeing an incident, but rather according to eternal principles of justice and right: "He shall not judge by what His eyes see, or decide disputes by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth" (Isaiah 11:3-4).

Second, it teaches us that we are to judge in a similar way. Our judgements are to be according to truth and facts, rather than partiality or prejudice: "You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor" (Leviticus 19:15). We are to be careful and deliberate, not hasty and rash: "The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him" (Proverbs 18:17).

We are not to let our senses and

emotions cloud our judgements, but rather we are to establish the facts and principles of a case: "What your eyes have seen do not hastily bring into court, for what will you do in the end, when your neighbor puts you to shame?" (Proverbs 25:8).

If all this seems obvious, fine. However, my observation is that this is becoming far from obvious to many people, and we are seeing judgements and conclusions made more and more on the basis of emotions, partiality, and prejudice, rather than facts, reason, and truth.

This can and will lead to a whole host of problems. It can and has led to miscarriages of justice. It can lead to us missing the real causes of some events and atrocities because we blind ourselves to other possibilities. But perhaps most alarmingly, it leads to a sort of conformist, mob mentality where the media explodes with their explanations, and we are all supposed to accept the line on the basis that "the media says so" or "the intelligence community says so" or "most people say so," regardless of whether any evidence has been provided to back it up. This is inherently dangerous, and leaves us extremely vulnerable to manipulation and propaganda.

Again, the Bible warns us against following the crowd rather than the evidence, depicting the mob mentality as the enemy of justice and righteousness:

"You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, nor shall you be partial to a poor man in

his lawsuit" (Exodus 23:1-3).

I can't stress enough how important all this is. I have found it increasingly painful to watch the way our society now reacts to events before waiting for evidence to come in, usually in a din of collective hysteria, and often without even bothering to wait until such things as "facts" emerge. And I have found it increasingly painful to watch as we have accepted the sort of argument put forth by Mrs. Clinton, that accusers are to be believed before the evidence is in, just because they belong to some designated class of "oppressed" people.

This is not how virtuous people and societies react, and it is certainly not how Christians should be reacting. Our God is a righteous God, Who judges according to truth, and with exact deliberation. We don't have His perfect knowledge of course, but He expects us to assess situations in a similar fashion. Rather than relying on assumptions, hearsay, and plays on our emotions, we are to wait for evidence to come in, weigh it in the balance, and only when the evidence is beyond a reasonable doubt are we to arrive at a conclusion. Unless we soon regain our ability to face calamities deliberately, according to the rule of law, we will find that we bring a whole host of problems our way which should have been avoided. ♦

*Rob Slane lives with his wife and six home-educated children in Salisbury, England. He is the author of The God Reality: A Critique of Richard Dawkins' The God Delusion, contributes to the Canadian magazine Reformed Perspective, and blogs on cultural issues from a Biblical perspective at [www.theblogmire.com](http://www.theblogmire.com).*

1. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy\\_McVeigh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_McVeigh)

2 "Of course, Hillary's statement was removed from her website." National Review Online <[bit.ly/hillarystatement](http://bit.ly/hillarystatement)>

The words of the wise are like goads,  
and like nails firmly fixed are the col-  
lected sayings; they are given by one  
Shepherd. My son, beware of anything  
beyond these. Of making many books  
there is no end, and much study is a  
weariness of the flesh.

Ecclesiastes 12:11-12

Even when King Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes, before the invention of the printing press and then electronic communication, there was no end to the number of books that could be made and studied. Millenia after Solomon, with the modern information explosion, our challenge is greater than ever. There is still no end.

We need to be careful that, in our quest to grow in our knowledge and understanding, we are not distracted from the most reliable and life-giving source of teaching, that our heavenly Shepherd

has given us in His Word. Neglecting His Word is a great danger.

There are many good and helpful sources of information available to us as we walk with Jesus Christ in all of life, but we must be wise. Failure to use these resources can be harmful, but it is even worse if they crowd out the best.

For the Kingdom,



Ray King