

Christian HealthCare

NEWSLETTER

MEMBER LETTERS:

The notes help me experience the love of the Body of Christ

It has been a joy to send checks to people who need help with their health care, but to be on the receiving end has really helped me to experience the love of the Body of Christ. Some of the notes I received made me weep. They are so precious and meaningful. I go out of my way to tell people about Samaritan so they can experience the love and support I have been blessed with.

*Debbie Gilbertson
Ellsworth, Wisconsin*

Having our need met for Ellie's appendectomy was a huge blessing to our family. The most significant blessing though was the sweet notes, which were a great encouragement to me, but more significantly a model to our 11-year-old daughter of how the Body of Christ cares for one another.

*Jennifer Utecht
Beulah, North Dakota*

The great American health care rip-off

by Kevin D. Williamson

Ask a politician how he wants to balance the budget and, nine times out of ten, he'll give you a politician's answer: cutting "waste, fraud, and abuse." Normally, the correct response to this is contempt and mockery: What drives federal spending isn't office supplies walking out the back door with a rogue secretary at the Merit Systems Protection Board—what drives federal spending is Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

And you know where there's a lot of waste, fraud, and abuse? Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.¹

Identifying small-ball efficiencies at obscure federal agencies would not do very much to get federal spending under control, but getting a grip on the shenanigans that plague the major entitlements—especially the health-care entitlements—could mean substantial savings, "substantial" here meaning *hundreds of billions of dollars per year*.

Medicare and Medicaid together account for about \$1 trillion in federal spending annually, and estimates suggest that \$1 out of every \$10 of that spending is fraud. Some estimates go much higher. We do not have a very good idea of exactly how extensive fraud in the system is, because the federal government has put a fair amount of effort into not knowing. According to Malcolm Sparrow, a Harvard professor of public management who studies medical fraud, the government's approach long has been back-

ward: "Basically, the audits they're using on a random sample are nothing like fraud audits," he told *The Nation*.² "The difference between a fraud audit and a medical review audit—a medical review audit, you're taking all the information as if it's true and testing whether the medical judgment seems appropriate. You can use these techniques to see where judgments are unorthodox or payment rules have not been followed, but almost nothing in these methods tests whether the information you have is true."

Which is to say, investigators are asking whether a certain treatment was in fact appropriate for what ails Mrs. Jones, not whether Mrs. Jones exists.

Fraud tends to cluster in certain areas and in certain treatment categories. The

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Sharing Summary from July

Shares:	\$23,719,380	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:	\$23,719,352	
Unshared Needs in Negotiation:	\$ —	
New Needs:	3,780	
Total Needs:	7,178	
New Rewards:	284	
Miscarriages:	30	Member Households: 69,576
Final Rewards:	9	(as of 6/22/17)

Contact Us: 877-764-2426 Dash.SamaritanMinistries.org

Questions about?

Your medical need

Shares you are sending or receiving

Your membership

Email

needs@samaritanministries.org

membership@samaritanministries.org

membership@samaritanministries.org

Phone Menu

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Your Member Services Leaders



Cameron Easley
Member Services Director
Needs Processing



Rob Waldo
Member Services Director
Contact Center

Remember:



1 SEND A NOTE—

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



2 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.



3 ALWAYS STAY ALERT IN PRAYER—

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

Questioning climate change is perfectly reasonable

by Rob Slane

President Trump's decision to pull out of the Paris Climate Agreement provoked a strong, though predictable, reaction from around the world, with governments, media, and many millions of ordinary people hailing it as a disaster for mankind. Among the more unsavory reactions was the resurgence of the word “denier”—a term that consciously alludes to denial of the Holocaust—to describe those who do not believe in, or who question “man-made climate change” (MMCC).

I want to question the logic behind the claims of MMCC, and therefore show that the “denier” label is at best disingenuous, and at worst a slander used in order to silence debate. I am not making the claim that man's activities are not causing changes to the global climate. I do not know that, and cannot possibly know that for sure. What I am doing is simply denying that it has been, or even can be, scientifically proven.

Behind all the jargon and mass of data, the theory of MMCC rests squarely on two fairly simple observations:

Observation A: Man is pumping more CO₂ into the atmosphere than ever before.

Observation B: Global temperatures are rising.

From these two observations, the following deductions are reached:

Deduction A: Man's release of CO₂ is responsible for the rise in global temperatures; and

Deduction B: Man can slow/halt/reverse the rise in global temperatures, by reducing emissions of CO₂ in particular.

Now, which of those statements can be demonstrated scientifically to be true?

The only one that comes close is Observation A. I say “comes close,” rather than “is,” simply because there

**The Man Made
Climate Change
hypothesis is
driven not by a
commitment to
truth and science,
but rather by
politics and
ideology.**

are no records of CO₂ emissions down the centuries from which to prove or disprove its accuracy. There is no way of knowing how much CO₂ was released into the atmosphere in the times of the Romans or the Reformation, for instance. Nevertheless, since it seems highly unlikely that a pre-industrial civilization could have emitted more CO₂ than today, I am happy to treat it as an obvious truth.

Observation B, on the other hand, is far from being a scientifically demonstrated fact, and is very much open to challenge. First, there is the

fact that again we simply do not have records going back far enough to give us an accurate picture. There is, however, abundant anecdotal evidence to show that there have been periods that have been generally cooler, and periods that have been generally warmer than today.

Secondly, although the data does appear to support the idea that there has been a rise of surface and lower atmospheric temperatures in the latter half of the 20th century, this was then followed by a slight drop in temperatures from 1998 onwards. It is interesting that MMCC proponents themselves once accepted that this was the case. Yet, rather than allowing it to challenge their hypothesis, which is what scientists are supposed to do when data contradicting their assumptions comes along, they simply said it was a “pause” or “hiatus.”¹

The hiatus itself was then disputed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in a report that was conveniently timed to coincide with the UN Climate Conference in Paris in 2015. However, one of NOAA's top scientists, Dr. John Bates, later revealed that the report was based on “unverified” data.² Dr. Bates accused the lead author of the paper, Thomas Karl, of:

Insisting on decisions and scientific choices that maximized warming and minimized documentation ... in an effort to discredit the notion of a global warming pause, rushed so that he could time publication to influence national and

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Chrystal Evans Hurst

She's Still There

by Kathryn Nielson

Chrystal Evans Hurst is known as an author, speaker, and oldest daughter of pastor Tony Evans, but that doesn't tell the story of the woman who found herself off track and heading in a direction she had never planned.

Born the oldest daughter of Tony and Lois Evans, Chrystal, along with her three siblings, was raised in the Dallas area, where church and family were tightly intertwined. This family legacy brought her through trials and shaped her into who she is today.

Being Tony Evans's daughter is "not as big a thing as people want to make it," Chrystal says. "Who [my parents] were in front of people was who they were at home. We never had a disconnect of character or integrity with them. And it's one of

the reasons we still love Jesus and why we still are happy to serve in our home church. He made that tasteful."

On the other hand, the reality of the preacher's kid becoming a single mom at 19 contributed to years of shame. She lived with the attitude "Let me prove you otherwise," determined to show people that they were wrong about whatever they thought all of that meant about her.

She's Still There, her newest book, releasing this month, is not about teen pregnancy. In fact, she gives that part of her story just one chapter. The rest is her story of God: God's grace. God's care for her. God leading her step by step out of the darkness and into the light. God's view of her and how that should define her.

From the very beginning, God was taking care of her in all of the details through what she calls "kisses from heaven," which was "God just letting me know in different ways that He saw me."

One of those ways was in providing child care for her so she could finish what she started at Texas A&M University. Her accounting degree earned her the title of "CPA by exam only because I couldn't hold the job long enough in the field to put the letters behind my name, but I did pass the test," she jokes.

Armed with the fancy attaché case and a job, she set out to be either single and successful or married with the white picket fence, "housewife extraordinaire." She



hated the accounting job and took a different job in a field that didn't require a degree, finding herself discontent in where she was career-wise as well as in her singleness.

"This can't be how it ends," she remembers thinking. "I [was] just kind of on the wheel, moving but not going anywhere. I knew that I wanted to feel fulfilled and feel good about going to work. I was in a relationship and didn't intend to be a single mother, so nothing was really adding up."

As Chrystal says on her website:

I'm a "used-to-be" corporate, career-minded, bean-counter, on-the-path-to-big-bucks, single gal ...

... turned homeschooling, bread-baking, garden-growing (or at least attempting), cloth-diapering, mommy-blogging, family-minded dame ...



Little by little, God began the process of getting her back on track by showing her that “we have to admit that sometimes our desired experiences change, and sometimes it’s simply about enjoying the small things that are controllable and doing the most with where we are in that moment.”

“I started looking for things that were within my reach instead of lamenting the things that seemed to not even be on the map,” she says. “Most of us get sidetracked by things that are five years down the road or what maybe could have been here if we had made different decisions. You get stuck when you feel like it’s always going to be out of your reach.”

Part of her getting back on track was learning to own her story, a difficult task for more than one reason. Admitting that she “messed up,” realizing that she had walked through adulthood wearing a “cloak of shame,” and feeling inadequate for the task God had given her proved to be powerful deterrents to living her God-ordained life.

Taking a lesson from Moses and finally surrendering to what God had for her no matter what she had done, she learned to embrace all parts of it.

“Sometimes the only way out is through,” Chrystal says.

“[I’m] constantly having to remember that He loves me the way I am and loving me to Himself. What I can do is respond to His love in small ways every day. Trust that I am enough because He’s enough.

Learning to walk in constant trust that I am enough in His ‘enoughness.’”

To this day, she still struggles to get in front of people and believe she should be there.

“[He’s] still teaching me not to apologize or hesitate to use the gifts He’s given me,” Chrystal says. “If He has opened a door, to show up like I’m supposed to be there. If He’s put me there, act like it. Every time I hesitate, I’m wasting time.”

Perhaps the key to it all is found in her book when she says,

In that dark, desolate, damaged place, I learned the value of who I am because of Whose I am. The more conscious I am about Whose I am, the better I get at fully expressing who I am.

Remembering where one’s value

lies is a simple and easily forgotten concept, but it’s important, she insists, because “when it’s not about me, then the pressure’s off.”

“I’m just playing my part,” Chrystal says. “I just have to show up and know that He’s writing the story. The problem is when we make it all about us. If it’s not about me, the pressure’s on Him.”

Hoping to spare as many people as possible the angst of less than desirable decisions, Chrystal wrote *She’s Still There*, a playbook of how God set her back on track.

“A part of me figuring things out involved some choices that weren’t that great—when I was a teenager and in my 20s. It’s because of that that I so tightly hold onto Him and want to share. This is the conversa-

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Why SMI?

Because of her husband’s health issues, insurance was not a good option for Chrystal Evans Hurst and her family, which left them looking for other ways to provide for their health care.

Friends kept telling her about Samaritan Ministries.

“Before I keep paying out the nose for individual insurance, let me see if this works,” she recalls thinking about health care sharing, “and within five months we had our chance to see.”

Before joining in September 2015, “we were totally a healthy family,” she says. But “three of us have been in the hospital in a year.”

Besides sharing their needs, the personal touch has meant the most to the Hurst family.

“It’s so great to see my son run to the mailbox asking, ‘Is there mail? Is there mail?’ because of the notes people send with the checks,” Chrystal says. “It’s become so much bigger than my bill. The encouragement has meant a lot to us. I’m really happy to be a part of Samaritan.” ♦

Ozone: The Miracle Therapy

by Dr. David Brownstein

reviewed by Jed Stuber

In order to help overcome illness and maintain ideal health, it is important to ensure that the cells have an optimal supply of oxygen. Ozone therapy supplies the body's cells with oxygen. Medical Ozone therapy is a safe and effective way to treat many acute and chronic illnesses.

Scientists began experimenting with ozone, often called “activated oxygen,” in the 1800's, and it has been used in a wide variety of ways.

Ozone was used in World War I to treat gangrenous infections, and now is used as an anti-infection treatment by dentists.

Many cities use it in their water treatment plants to reduce levels of viruses, parasites, metals, and the known carcinogen benzene. It's also popular in home drinking systems and swimming pools.

In many countries today, including Germany, France, England, Italy, Canada, and Russia, ozone is widely used in medicine, but it hasn't caught on as much in the U.S.

In *Ozone: The Miracle Therapy*, Dr. David Brownstein presents evidence that ozone has an impressive track record and should be used more often to treat a wide variety of maladies.

How ozone works in the body

According to Dr. Brownstein, ozone helps correct oxidant/anti-oxidant imbalances. He explains that both oxidation and anti-oxidation processes in the body are impor-

tant. Oxidation is often viewed as an entirely negative process, but it does play important roles, such as breaking down injured and old tissues as the first step in the process of regenerating them.

Ozone therapy stimulates BOTH oxidative and anti-oxidative pathways. Research shows^{1,2} that ozone therapy:

- improves circulation
- improves oxygen delivery to tissues
- activates the immune system
- upregulates enzymes

Similarly, hydrogen peroxide therapy has the benefits of regulating these body functions:

- hormones, especially thyroid production
- membrane transport
- heat production
- energy production
- immune system

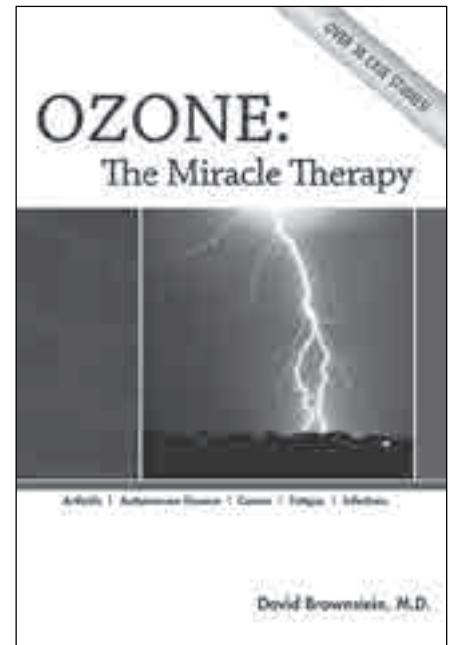
Ways ozone therapy is done

Many people assume ozone therapy can only be done intravenously, but there are many methods.

For ulcers and infections there is “limb bagging,” which simply means wrapping a plastic bag around a limb and filling it with ozone gas.

Prolozone is a combination of procaine and ozone that is injected into the body. It helps restore oxygen flow to injured areas such as joints, ligaments, tendons, and muscles. Vitamins and minerals are also sometimes included in the mix.

Major Autohemotherapy involves a patient's blood being vacuum pumped into a bottle, ozonated,



Medical Alternatives Press, Dr.Brownstein.com

and then drained back into the body. It is used to treat autoimmune diseases, cancer, diverticulitis, heart disease, infections (including Lyme), macular degeneration, shingles, pneumonia, stroke, and urinary infections.

With Minor Autohemotherapy a small amount of blood is mixed with ozone in a syringe, and injected intravenously or intramuscularly.

Direct Intravenous Ozone Therapy refers to injecting ozone directly into the veins. Dr. Brownstein explains that it is controversial, and he cannot recommend it because of conflicting reports about its safety. A few doctors say it is safe and effective, but another well-respected ozone expert says there are credible reports that a few patients died from it.

There is also a technique known as insufflation, which means a catheter is inserted into a body cavity to

allow it to fill with ozone. Bladder insufflation is used to treat urinary tract infections and cystitis. Rectal or vaginal insufflation is useful when a patient has poor venous access, and it can be done at home. Ear insufflation can treat ear infections, and the ozone can travel through the sinuses, treating sinus infections, tooth infections, and even upper respiratory infections. Ozone is also used orally by dentists to treat gum disease and infected teeth.

Ozone can also be injected intramuscularly to stimulate repair and regeneration mechanisms for injured or strained tissues. Sometimes it is only injected subcutaneously, under the skin, and Dr. Brownstein says he has found that particularly helpful for arthritis, sprains, and infections. Ozone is also injected into inflamed spinal discs to treat back pain.

The promise of ozone therapy

Dr. Brownstein includes chapters that go into more detail and give case studies about these topics:

- Orthopedics: treatment of joint and bone issues, particularly in the knee, shoulder, and lower back.
- Infections: osteomyelitis, ebola, shingles, ear infections, Lyme disease, infectious arthritis, and hospital infections.

Dr. Brownstein also discusses cancer treatment. It has been known since the early 1900s that cancer thrives in low oxygen environments. More recent studies have revealed that the big difference between cancer cells and regular cells is how they produce energy. Cancer breaks down glucose without oxygen, while normal cells break down glucose with oxygen in the mitochondria. Tumors are essentially a “dysregulation of oxygen.”

Since ozone is known to help regulate oxygen, Dr. Brownstein believes it has promise for treating cancer. He includes a case study of a cancer patient who experienced great improvement, but cautions that major studies have not been done to prove ozone’s effectiveness as a cancer treatment. Dr. Brownstein recommends it as adjunct cancer therapy, especially rectal insufflation.

If a determined lay person wants to delve into research on ozone and cancer, Dr. Brownstein recommends getting a copy of *Ozone: A New Medical Drug* by the Italian doctor Velio Bocci, which is considered the definitive resource on the topic, but a copy costs more than \$200.

Dr. Brownstein also discusses hydrogen peroxide therapy, which produces the same effect: it increases oxygenation throughout the body. Studies have shown that it can stimulate fibroblast proliferation and new blood vessel growth.^{3,4}

Dr. Brownstein has treated hundreds of patients with intravenous hydrogen peroxide and seen dramatic improvements with pneumonia, cardiovascular disease, and gastrointestinal problems. Dr. Brownstein often uses ozone therapy, intravenous hydrogen peroxide, and intravenous vitamin C in conjunction.

Adverse effects, safety concerns?

After 20 years treating thousands of patients Dr. Brownstein says he has seen very few adverse affects, and even those are minor. A Herxheimer Reaction can occur in the same way as sometimes happens with antibiotic treatments. Patients experience fever, fast heart rate, and a drop in blood pressure. An experienced doctor can recognize it and make sure the patient gets proper hydration,

rest, and nutrition until it passes. It does rid the body of infection, and patients often report feeling greatly improved after the reaction.

Another adverse effect of any intravenous therapy is the disappearance of veins. Again, it’s rare, and this condition can usually be mitigated by an experienced doctor.

Dr. Brownstein says that in his experience ozone therapy is completely safe, and he cites Bocci’s book because of his familiarity with the research and data available. Millions of therapy sessions are routinely performed across Europe with virtually no acute or chronic side effects reported.

Dr. Brownstein hopes the medical community in the United States will start using and researching ozone more, so it can be more widely available to the public. He recommends these organizations for finding a medical professional who does ozone therapy: International College of Integrative Medicine (icimed.com), Ozone Without Borders (ozonewithoutborders.ngo), The American Academy of Ozonotherapy (bit.ly/AAOzone), and The Society of Progressive Medical Education (sopmed.org). ♦

Editor’s Note: A limited number of therapy sessions may be shared only if related to the treatment of an injury or disease and if lawfully prescribed by a medical professional. See Guidelines VIII.B.36.

Dr. Brownstein is the Medical Director of the Center for Holistic Medicine in West Bloomfield, Michigan (DrBrownstein.com).

1. *Ozone: A New Medical Drug*, by Velio Bocci
2. *Journal of Translational Medicine*. 2011. 9:66 <bit.ly/transoz>
3. *Life Sciences*. 1999 64(4):249-58. <bit.ly/hydropero>
4. *Free Radical Biology and Medicine*. 1998. 25:891-897 <bit.ly/upregendo>

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

Did more oxygen and pressure in the pre-flood world have health benefits?

by Brian Young

While there is much we cannot say for certain about the world before Noah's flood, we do know that the Bible tells us that it was much different than today. People were living to more than 900 years of age!

According to the fossil record, many plants and animals were of much greater size than those we see today. Dragonflies had wingspans of over 3 feet, cockroaches were 18 inches long and cattails grew to be 60 feet tall. While we may never know for sure why all of these things occurred, we know that when God said His creation was "very good" it was indeed, very good.

Modern scientific discoveries may give us some clues as to why the pre-flood world was so different. Scientists have discovered air bubbles that have been trapped in fossilized amber (tree sap). As the tree sap rolled down the side of the tree, it captured the atmosphere in these air bubbles, which when analyzed reveals an earlier atmosphere had about 35 percent oxygen compared to today's 21 percent.¹

In addition to the increased oxygen, other studies have suggested that there was a greater air pressure as well. *New Scientist* magazine, which comes from an evolutionary perspective, explains:

One implication is that the atmospheric pressure of the Earth would have been much greater during the Cretaceous Era, when the bubbles formed in the resin. A dense atmosphere could also explain how the ungainly pterosaur, with its stubby body and

wing span of up to 11 meters, could have stayed airborne. The spread of angiosperms, flowering plants, during the Cretaceous era could have caused the high oxygen levels.²

Hyperbaric chambers recreate an environment that may be similar to the pre-flood world, and they also produce some amazing health benefits.

So what does this past atmosphere have to do with us today? Here's one possibility: Many doctors are realizing the benefits of something called hyperbaric chambers. A hyperbaric chamber is a room, or tube-like structure, where the oxygen and air pressure are increased, inadvertently re-creating an environment similar to what the pre-flood world could possibly have been like.

Hyperbaric chambers are producing some amazing health benefits. The Mayo Clinic has used hyperbaric chambers for treatments of wounds that won't heal, decompression sickness, infections, and the release of growth factors and stem cells.³ Hyperbaric treatment

can also be very helpful with carbon monoxide poisoning, smoke inhalation, gas gangrene, crush injuries, necrotizing (premature death of cells), soft tissue infections, compartment syndrome, compromised skin grafts, and enhanced healing in diabetic wounds.⁴

Other research is being done on autism and other neurological disorders as well, but there is no question that many near miraculous healings of varying kinds have occurred in these chambers. Years ago I visited with Dr. William Fife, who was the head of the hyperbaric lab at Texas A&M. He said on average a person will heal in half the time it normally takes, and he shared some remarkable examples of hyperbaric benefits. Almost every professional sports team today has these chambers for their injured athletes so that they can get back in the game much sooner.⁵

I myself have seen some of these health benefits. A couple of years ago I was stung by a bee, and my forearm swelled up so that I looked like Popeye, but only on one arm. I was stung on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning I couldn't even bend my arm to shake hands at church. Because I have access to a hyperbaric chamber, on Sunday afternoon I took a 45-minute treatment inside the chamber. By 7 o'clock that evening I had full motion in my arm, the swelling was almost gone, and I never had to go through the itchy stage I normally have with these allergic reactions.

Not only is this artificial "atmosphere" good for the body, it also seems to be wonderful for plants.



Samaritan member Brian Young is the director of Creation Instruction Association and the Semisaurus Mobile Museum, a state-of-the-art creation museum on wheels based in Nebraska. Visit Semisaurus.com for tour dates or CreationInstruction.org for more information about how the Bible connects with the world of today.

At Keio University in Tokyo, Japan, Dr. Kei Mori placed a cherry tomato plant in a similar chamber where he filtered out UV light and increased the pressure so the plant would take in carbon dioxide faster. The results were astounding. In two years his cherry tomato plant was 14 feet tall and had over 900 tomatoes that were baseball size. The plant went on to be over 45 feet tall and yielded around 15,000 tomatoes.⁶ This result may help explain why we see such large plants in the fossil record. In fact, some have suggested that if our pre-flood atmosphere was like a hyperbaric chamber today, not only would it produce the large vegetation seen in fossils but, it may also have contributed as one factor of why people had such long lifespans before the flood of Noah.

Russ Humphreys, a world class physicist who accepts the Bible's teaching about Noah's worldwide flood, believes that it not only explains the oxygen and pressure levels, but also that it shows how

a much warmer climate was better for mankind during the pre-flood era. Furthermore, Humphrey's says the alarmism about global warming today is misguided. He believes man-made climate change is happening, and that it's a positive development because "God's global warming worked just fine."⁷

Whatever the case may have been, we serve an amazing Creator and Savior, Jesus Christ. In His infinite wisdom He created a world of wonder, and a body that was intended to react and function with a perfect environment. Because of sin, that environment and our bodies have been cursed with disease and decay. While many today default to doctors and modern medicine, we must never forget that it is God Who holds in His hand the life of every man and the breath of all mankind (Job 12).

While modern medicine can be a blessing, it is still God Who brings about ultimate healing and causes the body to respond to treatments.

This fallen world may not function as it once did when it was first created, but still, our loving God preserves us in these bodies until we will one day be given new ones where we will live with Him in a world, that will once again, be "very good." Praise God, from whom all blessings flow! ♦

Samaritan member Brian Young is the director of Creation Instruction Association (creationinstruction.org) and Semisaurus Mobile Museum (semisaurus.com)

1. "Air Bubbles, Amber, and Dinosaurs," US Geological Survey. <bit.ly/USGamber>
2. "Dinosaurs Breathed Air Rich in Oxygen," *New Scientist*, vol. 116, 1987, p. 25. <bit.ly/pterofly>
3. "Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy," Mayo Clinic. <bit.ly/hyperther>
4. "Benefits of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy," Richmond Hyperbaric Health Center. <bit.ly/hyperben>
5. "The wonders of hyperbaric treatment," Fox Sports. <bit.ly/hyperwonders>
6. "Tomatomation: Japan's High-Tech Food Factories," UNESCO Courier. <bit.ly/supertomatoes>
7. "God's global warming worked just fine," Creation Ministries International. <bit.ly/warmifine>

reason for that is that this fraud is not random, not just the result of some yahoo general practitioner in Eucleeanna padding his bills. It's the work of organized crime. As Sparrow points out, when there is a criminal case filed against one of these fraud artists, then billing in a particular category—some years ago, it was HIV fusion treatments—falls off steeply, by as much as 90 percent. The implication here is that fraudulent billing may make up the majority of Medicaid and Medicare spending in some categories.

This is a major criminal enterprise, one involving transnational crime syndicates looking for a better return than that provided by drug smuggling and the other familiar rackets. According to *The Economist*:

Some criminals are switching from cocaine trafficking to prescription-drug fraud because the risk-adjusted rewards are higher: the money is still good, the work safer, and the penalties lighter. Medicare gumshoes in Florida regularly find stockpiles of weapons when making arrests. The gangs are often bound by ethnic ties: Russians in New York, Cubans in Miami, Nigerians in Houston and so on.³

What to do?

On a dollar-per-dollar basis, the Department of Health and Human Services fraud-recovery units by most accounts do relatively effective work—but do not do very much of it, having recovered less than \$2 billion in fraud losses in fiscal 2016. And there were only 1,160 convictions in fraud cases in 2016, or barely one fraud conviction a year for every two staffers in the anti-

fraud division. There might be some benefit to beefing up the conventional in-house anti-fraud investigations (Sparrow has suggested setting aside 2 percent of the budget to protect the other 98 percent), especially if the additional funds are used

Fraud costs much more than money. It costs us that most precious of commodities in a free society: trust.

in support of more intelligent investigatory approaches. But that does not seem likely to be sufficient.

Without indulging in black-helicopter stuff, we should squarely face the fact that organized-crime syndicates are being permitted to use medical entitlements to loot the Treasury, and that not very much is being done about that, which suggests the possibility—only a possibility—that there is political collusion in this at some level. Entitlement fraud involves enough money and enough diverse political interests—40 percent of the residents of Los Angeles County receive Medicaid—to warrant a genuinely independent investigation.

How about we ask Peter Thiel to get involved in that?

Thiel, a friend of the Trump administration and of *National Review*, is a Silicon Valley entrepreneur who cofounded PayPal. As a

payment system, PayPal was a natural target for fraud artists, and it developed sophisticated anti-fraud protocols, some of which were incorporated into a subsequent Thiel business called Palantir,⁴ a powerful data-mining platform that is used by everybody from U.S. intelligence agents to police detectives, for tasks ranging from mapping out where IEDs are likely to be planted to—more relevant to our immediate concern here—identifying fraud. The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services have run a few tests in which they attempted to use the system to identify fraud, but it is not clear whether that has resulted in wider implementation. My request to the agency for information on this matter remained unanswered as of this writing.

It should be understood that data mining isn't a substitute for intelligent analysis—it isn't a black box that can be switched on and start spitting out the home addresses of fraudsters. It is a tool, but one that can be used effectively only by an intelligent and creative team of human analysts. Entitlement fraud is what security experts describe as an "adaptive threat," meaning that it is a problem without a solution, because the problem mutates in response to every solution developed. But even problems that cannot be solved can be managed, and we desperately need better management here. The "Let's Put a Businessman in Charge!" school of public affairs has its limits, but lessons learned from technology companies' experience with fraud prevention ought to be applicable here.

Policing “waste, fraud, and abuse” is not going to solve our national fiscal problem, though a few hundred billion a year would be real money. But progress on that front might help solve one of our national political problems: the crisis of trust in our institutions. We spend a great deal of money on government and public services, and there is a general impression—it is not inaccurate—that much of that money is not well spent.

The Aston Martin-driving welfare queens in Brighton Beach³ do not just cost us money—they cost us that most precious of commodities in a free society: trust. For that reason as well as the billions of dollars at stake, our would-be health care reformers ought to incorporate a hammer-and-tongs attack on entitlement fraud, and on fraud across federal spending generally, into their legislative agendas. The sooner the better. ♦

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Kevin D. Williamson is the author of several books, including *The Dependency Agenda* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Socialism*.

1. “14 Arrested in New Jersey welfare fraud investigation,” USA Today. <bit.ly/14newjersey>
2. “Stop the bleeding: An interview with Medicare fraud expert Malcolm Sparrow,” *The Nation*. <bit.ly/malcomsparrow>
3. “The \$272 billion swindle,” *The Economist*. <bit.ly/272swindle>
4. “Killer app: Have a bunch of Silicon Valley geeks at Palantir Technologies figured out how to stop terrorists,” *Washingtonian*. <bit.ly/paltech>

tion that I want to have with every woman, but I know I can’t,” she says.

Having figured some things out, Chrystal has moved on and lives every day trying to be the best wife and mother she can be. Married to Jesse for 16 years, they have had three boys together—ages 14, 12, and 8. Each also brought a girl—now ages 25 and 21—to our wedding day and gave each other a gift.”

When she’s not busy with fam-

ily, she’s writing, speaking, hosting online classes, and looking for ways to use her skills not just for employment, but for ministry as well, “because Jesus is free, and I hate charging money for that,” she says.

More books are most likely in her future.

“There’s more to the story of getting pregnant,” Chrystal says. “There is more owning that I need to do.

We’ll see how God leads. ♦

She’s Still There

Chrystal Evans Hurst’s new book, *She’s Still There: Rescuing the Girl in You*, is the story of how God set Chrystal back on track after a series of decisions landed her smack in the middle of a life she had never dreamed of.

Aware of the assumptions people will make about her based on her family’s spiritual legacy, she feels qualified to speak on the subject of a life gone awry. While people may assume she doesn’t know what it’s like to struggle, she insists otherwise.



“I’m the one who does understand because I had a kid when I was 19,” she says. “When I tell you I know what it is to fall in love and be entangled in a relationship that you can see is not good for you and you can’t seem to get out, people will believe me.”

She’s Still There was written for the woman who suddenly finds herself living a life she doesn’t recognize, for the “female on the fringe who may not be all the way right with God but doesn’t want to be on the wrong side of God.”

Filled with personal stories of failure and success, reading Chrystal’s book is like sitting across the table from a good friend who is willing to be vulnerable. It gives her the platform to dole out encouragement and tough love to those who are where she was at 19 and in all the places she’s been since.

It’s for the woman “who loves God and, because she knows I may have been where she is, she will believe me when I tell her He loves you regardless of where you’ve been.”

“Regardless of where you are, you don’t have to stay there, and even if you are walking in the dark, if you take one step He will always lead you to the light. I think there’s a certain woman who, if I tell them that, will believe me.” ♦

international deliberations on climate policy.

However, his claims were brushed aside by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), which publishes the journal *Science* in which the study first appeared. Rather than engaging with his very serious criticisms, they instead seem to have basically ignored them and characterized them merely as an “internal dispute between two factions [within NOAA]”³

What this shows is not necessarily the rightness or wrongness of one side or the other, but that the MMCC hypothesis is driven not by a commitment to truth and science, but rather by politics and ideology.

Let’s not forget there are vested interests. According to its own publications, the climate change industry is already a 1.5 trillion dollar annual concern.⁴ Several proponents of more climate change regulations have admitted wealth redistribution is the real motive. Ottmar Edenhofer, who co-chaired a United Nations panel on climate change said, “One has to free oneself from the illusion that international climate policy is environmental policy. ... We redistribute de facto the world’s wealth by climate policy.”⁵

You know what happens when you assume

Based on the assumption that Observations A and B are true, MMCC scientists then make a huge leap of faith to reach Deduction A—that man’s release of CO² is responsible for the rise in global temperatures. This is far removed from science and fact. Even if we grant that both Observation A and

B are irrefutably true, this wouldn’t automatically lead one to embrace Deduction A, which is basically a statement of causation. In fact, given the current state of science, Deduction A can’t logically make it outside the realm of hypothesis to theory, let alone scientific fact.

Before explaining why, it’s necessary to remind ourselves of the differences between these three concepts. A hypothesis is a suggested explanation for an observable phenomenon, or a reasoned prediction of a possible causal correlation among multiple phenomena. A theory is a tested, well-substantiated, unifying explanation for a set of verified, proven factors.⁶ A scientific fact is an observation that has been repeatedly confirmed and for all practical purposes is accepted as “true.”⁷

There are a number of reasons that MMCC is merely a hypothesis. For instance, once again the fact that we do not have records of global temperatures going very far back means that it is impossible to say whether the rise in temperature in the latter part of the 20th century was an anomaly, or actually part of a long-term, cyclical trend. In other words, we have no testable way of identifying whether it was “natural” warming or “man-made.”

We also have no idea whether pumping more CO² into the atmosphere does actually cause warming. Some MMCC scientists believe with sincerity that it does, but this is a belief based squarely on the assumption that we have complete understanding of all the heat and energy systems in the universe. But do we? No, is the answer.

In fact, Solar/Cosmic Ray Theory

posits that changes with our sun and other stars, or even the position of our solar system in the Milky Way Galaxy’s rotation can affect cycles in the Earth’s temperatures.⁸ At a conference in 2013, scientists attempted to provide an explanation for why the effects of MMCC had apparently stalled (the hiatus mentioned earlier). Although there were many suggestions made, all speakers mentioned the absorption of solar energy by the oceans:

Whatever solar energy is making it through to the surface, much is being absorbed by the hidden depths of the oceans... readings from satellites since 2000 show how much energy is arriving at the planet, and how much is leaving, so if the energy left behind is not manifesting itself in rising surface temperatures, then it must be going somewhere—and the deep ocean is the most plausible explanation.

In other words, estimates indicate that some energy is unaccounted for. What they were essentially proposing was that the Earth itself may well include a mechanism (or perhaps mechanisms) to regulate heat and energy that they hadn’t previously considered.

If you have a Biblical worldview

None of this should come as a surprise to Christians. Our default position should be to assume that an omniscient God, Who created the Earth for man (Psalm 115:16), and expressed His desire to see it filled (Genesis 1:27-28), would have designed the Earth to be capable of coping with the “footprint” of man throughout the ages.

MMCC remains a hypothesis simply because there is no way to properly test it. We don't have other Earths with the same conditions which we can run experiments on. We don't have long-term climate records or a complete picture of how our planet has been designed to cope with energy. The claim that man's release of CO₂ is responsible for the rise in global temperatures is nothing more than a hypothetical one.

Finally, Deduction B, that man could reverse a global trend, is not even in the same ballpark as proper science. Again, it is nothing more than a hypothesis, and a fairly flimsy one at that, based as it is on layer upon layer of other questionable assumptions.

Don't misunderstand me. I am not denying that MMCC could happen or is currently happening. It's possible. Rather, the point I have made is that it cannot be anything other than a hypothesis, and hypotheses

are—or at least should be—open to challenge. However, the fact that this particular hypothesis has been so unquestionably accepted by so many, and that those who challenge it are labelled “deniers,” ought to give every reasonable person cause to wonder.

This is not how you get scientific inquiry that drives scientific progress. Actually, it has far more in common with a religious cult: There is a dogma (MMCC); a priesthood (the scientific consensus); an eschatology (we're all going to die if we don't do such and such); heretics (deniers); and punishment for heresy (“deniers” are portrayed as beyond the pale, dangerous, or even downright evil).

Whether you accept the claims of MMCC or not is something you should decide on the basis of the available evidence. But challenging the claims, far from being on a par with denying the historical fact of the Holocaust, is a perfectly reasonable position.

If you want a reasonable discussion about MMCC, start with scientists who acknowledge that we are created by God, and who have an appropriately humble attitude about the limits of human knowledge. Creation Ministries International provides a thorough discussion of the topic, considering various viewpoints fairly. Start with CMI's article “Global warming and ‘climate change’—recent developments and guidelines for discernment,” and it will lead you to many more resources.⁹ ♦

Rob Slane blogs on cultural issues from a Biblical perspective at theblogmire.com.

1. bit.ly/globstall
2. bit.ly/dupglob
3. bit.ly/whistglob
4. bit.ly/vestglob
5. bit.ly/realglob
6. bit.ly/hypthe
7. bit.ly/ncsethe
8. bit.ly/solthe
9. bit.ly/globdisc

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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 attacked by militants

An attack by Hindu militants on a Christian family in India on May 3 left a woman with a blood clot in her head, Voice of the Martyrs reports. Pastor “Falgun,” his wife, and his sister- and brother-in-law were praying for a sick neighbor when about 10 members of the group broke into the home and began hitting the pastor with sticks. When his sister-in-law tried to intervene, a militant grabbed her by the hair and smashed her head into the wall. Her husband was beat up when he tried to protect her. The four were admitted to a nearby hospital, but they were discharged the next day due to pressure on the hospital from the militants. The sister-in-law was later diagnosed with the blood clot. *Pray for healing for all of the members of the pastor’s family as well as the conversion of the Hindu extremists.*

5 Christian women detained

Indian police detained five Christian women, including a nun

and a girl, in Madhya Pradesh state in June after Hindu radicals accused them of forceful religious conversions, International Christian Concern reports. They were released after giving statements to police and traveling to Bhopal for English studies. *Pray for the safety of Christian women as they travel in India, and for all Indian Christians falsely accused of forced conversion.*

45 Christians arrested

Forty-five Christians were arrested by Eritrean security forces on a May 13 house-to-house search targeting evangelicals in Adi Quala, VOM says. The Christians, which included children, elderly men, and a disabled woman, were taken to a nearby village and are being held without charge. Authorities arrested 122 members of “unregistered churches” in May alone. *Pray for the safety and release of those arrested, and for safety as Christians in Eritrea gather to worship.*

Church volunteer sentenced

A volunteer accountant for a church in China was recently sentenced to five years in prison due to her work with the church, VOM reports. Zhang Xiuhong, who volunteered for Living Stone Church, was arrested in July 2015 for “operating an illegal business.” Her trial lasted until February 2017. The church has been a frequent target of authorities, who have frozen its assets, expelled church members from the property, and arrested one of the church’s founders. *Pray for an early release for Zhang as well as protection from unjust treatment for other members of the church.*

Three churches closed

Three Indonesian churches were closed on May 23 after protests by Islamic education leaders, VOM says. *Pray for those Christians affected by the churches’ closure as they seek places for community worship, for opportunities for the church members to display the love and grace of Jesus, and that Muslims will be impressed by the Christians’ response.*

Several fined in Sudan

More than 10 people were arrested and fined in June in Sudan for selling food and tea during fasting times in the month of Ramadan, ICC reports. Even though many Sudanese are non-Muslims, local restaurants have been banned from catering during Ramadan. *Pray that a court will lift sentences of fines and detainments of Christians for selling food and tea during Ramadan; that the fines imposed on those accused will be lifted; and that the Sudanese government will live up to its claims of religious tolerance.*

14 kidnapped in Marawi

The May 23 Islamist attack on Marawi, Philippines, resulted in the kidnappings of 14 Christians as well as the burning of a cathedral and a Christian-run college, VOM says. *Pray for the release and safety of the hostages, the Christian community rebuilding the cathedral, and college staff. Pray also for Filipinos fighting the ISIS-affiliated terrorists.* ♦

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).

God provided 75 percent discounts on my surgeries

by Misty

With all thanksgiving and glory to God, I have been in good health throughout my life. However, in 2015 I began to not feel well. After praying with my husband, I had many tests in January 2016 to determine what the underlying cause was, but testing revealed little.

The Advanced Practice Registered Nurse I was seeing knew that I was a cash-pay patient, and wisely recommended that I fill out some financial paperwork at the local hospital in case I needed any treatment there. I talked to the hospital business office, and learned that cash pay patients automatically receive a 30 percent discount. The hospital also encouraged me to start the paperwork. The worst that could happen was that I was not granted additional discounts, so after discussing it with my husband, I proceeded to fill out the packet in May 2016.

The paperwork was relatively straight forward, though the approval process took about 6 weeks. I was surprised that we were offered a 75 percent discount on services rendered at their hospital within a one-year time frame. They explained that when a service was incurred, first the 75 percent discount would be applied, and then 30 percent would be taken off the remaining balance for cash payment (e.g. \$1000 would be reduced to \$250 and then to \$175).

Unbeknownst to us, but already known to our Heavenly Father, my health issues were coming to a head in the fall of 2016. A 14 millimeter kidney stone ended up in my urinary tract and caused major complica-

tions. I ended up having three surgeries, one ER visit, and many radiology scans (CT, nuclear, ultrasound, etc.) at the hospital. The Lord had provided amazingly before we really even knew there would be need!

In addition to receiving care at my local hospital, I had to have a specialty surgery at another hospital, and was able to negotiate the rate for it ahead of time. This was

I talked to the hospital business office and learned that cash pay patients receive discounts.

the most difficult process of all the negotiations I initiated, as the finance department was not used to working with patients asking for a pre-guaranteed rate on the procedure. It took several days to find the right person to talk to, and in the end I could negotiate a discount percentage, but not a specific price because there were too many variables in the procedure.

After my health crisis was resolved, bills were coming in from many different offices: surgeons, anesthesiologists, radiologists, pharmacies, and more. I had complete confidence in our Heavenly Father to help me navigate all of the conversations with the billing departments not affiliated with the

hospital that granted the 75 percent discount. I contacted them one by one, and just began with the question, "Do you offer a discount for cash-pay patients?" The majority of them did, anywhere from 15 percent to 50 percent. Most were willing to instantly reduce the bill just by being asked! One anesthesiologist office offered a 50 percent discount if you paid the other 50 percent of the bill the day you called. I was able to do that, and took advantage of that generous discount three times (because I needed them for three surgeries)!

Of all the offices I worked with, only one surgeon was unwilling to reduce the bill. However, the Lord worked that out, too. Halfway through my battle with this health issue, that billing office linked with the billing office of the hospital I was using, so I was able to receive the automatic 30 percent discount that all cash-pay patients receive for the last half of my care with that surgeon. (The 75 percent didn't apply, because the hospital technically didn't render the service.) Isn't God amazing?!

Overall, I was amazed and so grateful for the ease of these conversations. My need accumulated bills totaling \$131,514, and I received discounts totaling \$99,662. Across all the offices I worked with, that is an overall discount of 75 percent! Clearly, the Lord paved the way for me. As a dear sister reminded me during this journey, "He knows, He cares, and He is able." Great is the Lord and worthy to be praised! ♦

Misty is a member from Kansas.

If anyone loves Me,
he will keep My Word,
and My Father will love
him, and We will come
to him and make Our
home with him.

John 14:23

When we love Jesus, we keep His Word.

Keeping Jesus' Word does not mean we never sin—it means walking in the light, where His blood cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

When we love Jesus, walking in the light and keeping His Word, we get to enjoy the Father's love and have both the Father and the Son come to make Their home with us.

We can't earn Jesus' love by keeping His Word, but if we love Him, we keep His Word.

For the Kingdom,



Ray King