

DENNIS BURKE MINISTRIES

# Insights

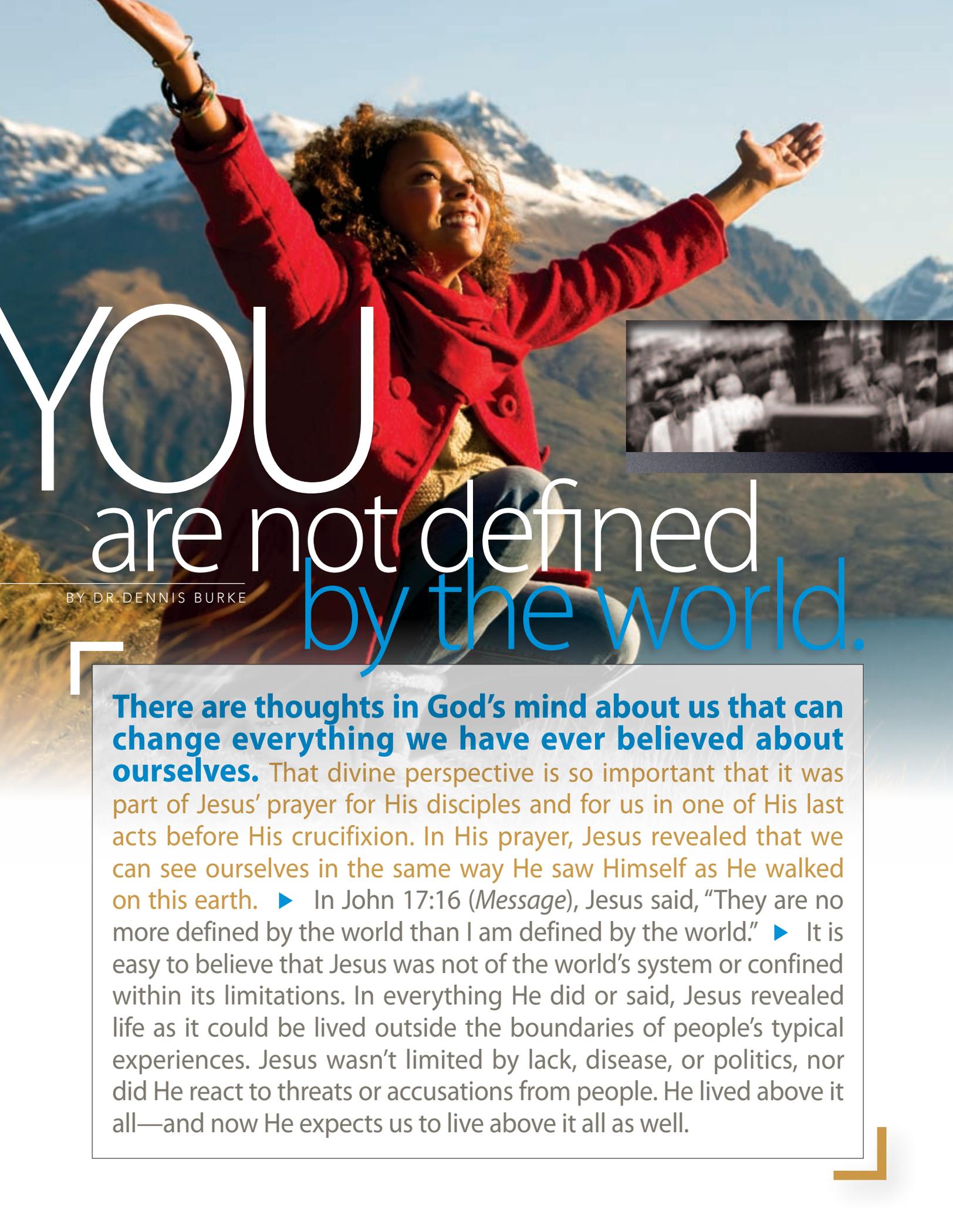
The Way to a New Life  
MAY / JUNE 2010

# YOU

are not defined  
by the world.

IN THIS ISSUE

**LOOK BEYOND** THE NEED FOR SUPERNATURAL PROVISION  
**CHOOSE A PATH** FILLED WITH BLESSINGS



# YOU are not defined by the world.

BY DR. DENNIS BURKE

**There are thoughts in God's mind about us that can change everything we have ever believed about ourselves.**

That divine perspective is so important that it was part of Jesus' prayer for His disciples and for us in one of His last acts before His crucifixion. In His prayer, Jesus revealed that we can see ourselves in the same way He saw Himself as He walked on this earth. ▶ In John 17:16 (*Message*), Jesus said, "They are no more defined by the world than I am defined by the world." ▶ It is easy to believe that Jesus was not of the world's system or confined within its limitations. In everything He did or said, Jesus revealed life as it could be lived outside the boundaries of people's typical experiences. Jesus wasn't limited by lack, disease, or politics, nor did He react to threats or accusations from people. He lived above it all—and now He expects us to live above it all as well.

God's life-changing power within us can lift us to a higher level of living when we learn the secret of how to define ourselves now that we are in Christ. But first, we have to answer this question: What really does define us as people?

There are a variety of ways to answer this question, but we can start by looking at the dictionary meaning of the word "define." To define something is to mark its limits; to set clear boundaries; or to identify it. Limits, boundaries, and identity are all aspects of defining ourselves.

Look at Jesus' words again in John 17:16 (Message)

## The disciples handled each loaf and each fish that God multiplied. Every bit of His supernatural provision passed through their hands.

with these ideas in mind. We are not defined by the limits, boundaries, or identifying marks of the world. From God's point of view, we are not of the world, nor are we to be governed by its limits and boundaries.

One day when Jesus was walking with His disciples, He asked them a question:

"...Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God'" (Matthew 16:13-16).

Peter had an answer that was completely different from all that the disciples had heard other people say about Jesus. Here is the point: Jesus expected His disciples to have a different answer.

Jesus expects each of us to think and act differently — to have very different experiences than the world and to expect different results. Why? Because we are different; we're no longer living in the same system as the rest of the world. We are now living in God's Kingdom — His system.

In a different situation, Jesus asked His disciples another question to get their response and help them examine their own limited thinking. This account is found in John 6 and Matthew 14, where Jesus fed the 5,000. Actually, many more than 5,000 people were in the crowd that day when women and children are included in the number. Bible scholars estimate that between 15,000 to 30,000 people came to that mountainside to hear Jesus teach.

It was then that Jesus asked His disciples a question: "Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, 'Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?'" (John 6:5).

Philip and Andrew both answered Jesus' question — and in both responses, we can see how their thinking was held inside

the boundaries of their own experience. The disciples' faith and expectations were defined by their limited thinking.

First, let's look at Philip's reply to Jesus in verse 7 (CEV): "Philip answered Him, 'Don't you know that it would take almost a year's wages just to buy only a little bread for each of these people?'"

Philip's response was defined by the need they were facing. He could not see beyond the people's need. They needed more food than could have been bought with nearly a year's wages of an average worker. Philip didn't answer Jesus' actual question that asked where they could buy bread. Instead, Philip immediately became overwhelmed by the vast need.

The same thing can happen to us when



we're faced with a need that is beyond our natural ability to meet. When we allow our thoughts to be governed by our own perception of the need we face, it is difficult to see by faith the supply God promises to provide.

Andrew also replied to Jesus, saying, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?" (v.9). Andrew made the same mistake Philip did; he couldn't see beyond his own limited thinking. Andrew saw the lack of adequate bread and couldn't seem to imagine what else could be done.

When our thinking focuses on what we can do to solve a problem or meet a need, we can forget about how big God is. As a result, we risk missing out on what He wants to do to bring His supernatural provision into our situation.

The disciples were earthbound in their thinking. They were still defined, limited, and confined to the way things happen in this natural realm. Jesus intended to expand their ability to receive by multiplying the loaves and fish in their own hands.

Jeremiah 17:5, 6 tells us exactly what happens when we stay focused on the world's system: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited."

This person doesn't even see when good comes. He is focused on the wrong source of supply, and it affects the way he views everything.

Surrounded by thousands of people, Jesus went on to perform one of His greatest miracles. In fact, this is the only miracle detailed in all four of the gospels. There are several things that leap out at me in this account that are vital for each of us to understand so we can change our thinking and expand our capacity to receive from God.

First, Jesus directed His disciples to bring the loaves and fish to Him (Matthew 14:18).

In order for God's people to see great miracles, they must

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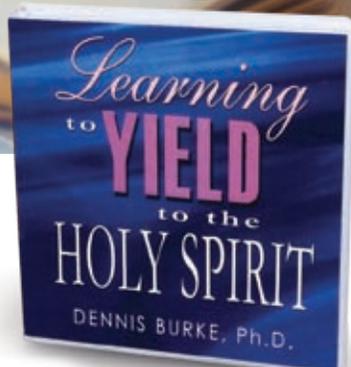


first give Him something to work with. Time after time, God directed people to give first and then to watch Him work. For example, Elijah told the widow to make him a cake with her last little bit of meal. When she gave to the prophet, God released an abundant supply (see 1 Kings 17:9-16). Another example is the time Jesus directed the servants at the wedding in Cana to bring Him water in six large pots. When they did what Jesus asked, He turned the water into the finest wine (see John 2:1-10). These are just two of the many scriptural examples of this principle.

According to that same principle, God directs us to give our tithes and offerings, as well as our lives. As we give Him something to work with — our offerings and our faith — He said He would pour out His blessing upon our lives beyond what we are able to contain (Malachi 3:10). Our natural act of giving God something in faith unlocks His supernatural supply of abundance beyond what is even needed.

# Welcome, Holy Spirit.

Come into the depth of the relationship you've always wanted as the Holy Spirit reveals His presence to you. He creates a sensitivity to His impulses and as a result you will rise to new dimensions of His power.



Second, Jesus had all the people sit down on the hillside (v. 19).

Sitting is a position of rest, and God wants us enter a place of rest in Him. Faith rests in His presence, His promises, and His provision. There is an inner calmness that comes when we are resting in Him and puts us in a position to better receive from Him.

Third, Jesus took what had been brought to Him and gave thanks (v. 19).

Our gratitude toward God for all He has already done for us keeps our heart right to receive more from Him.

Thankfulness is an expression of our faith, and it is a powerful force. We are to be thankful for what we have and for all God has done. In addition, we are to be thankful for the blessings we know God has promised to provide, even if we don't see them yet.

Thankfulness is also the expression of a humble heart. We thank God to express that we are content in Him. We are at peace with the place we are in Him. That doesn't mean we are to be complacent or apathetic about change. But we are to acknowledge that we appreciate what God has already provided and that we value what we have.

Fourth, Jesus distributed the loaves and fish to the disciples (Matthew 14:19). The disciples handled each loaf and each fish that God multiplied. Every bit of His supernatural provision passed through their hands.

Today God wants to use each and every one of us who are His disciples as distributors of His provision. We are made for abundant living and abundant giving.

Provision was certainly abundant that day for the crowd who had come to hear Jesus. Every person present ate as much as they wanted. It was a feast for a multitude, and everyone left satisfied.

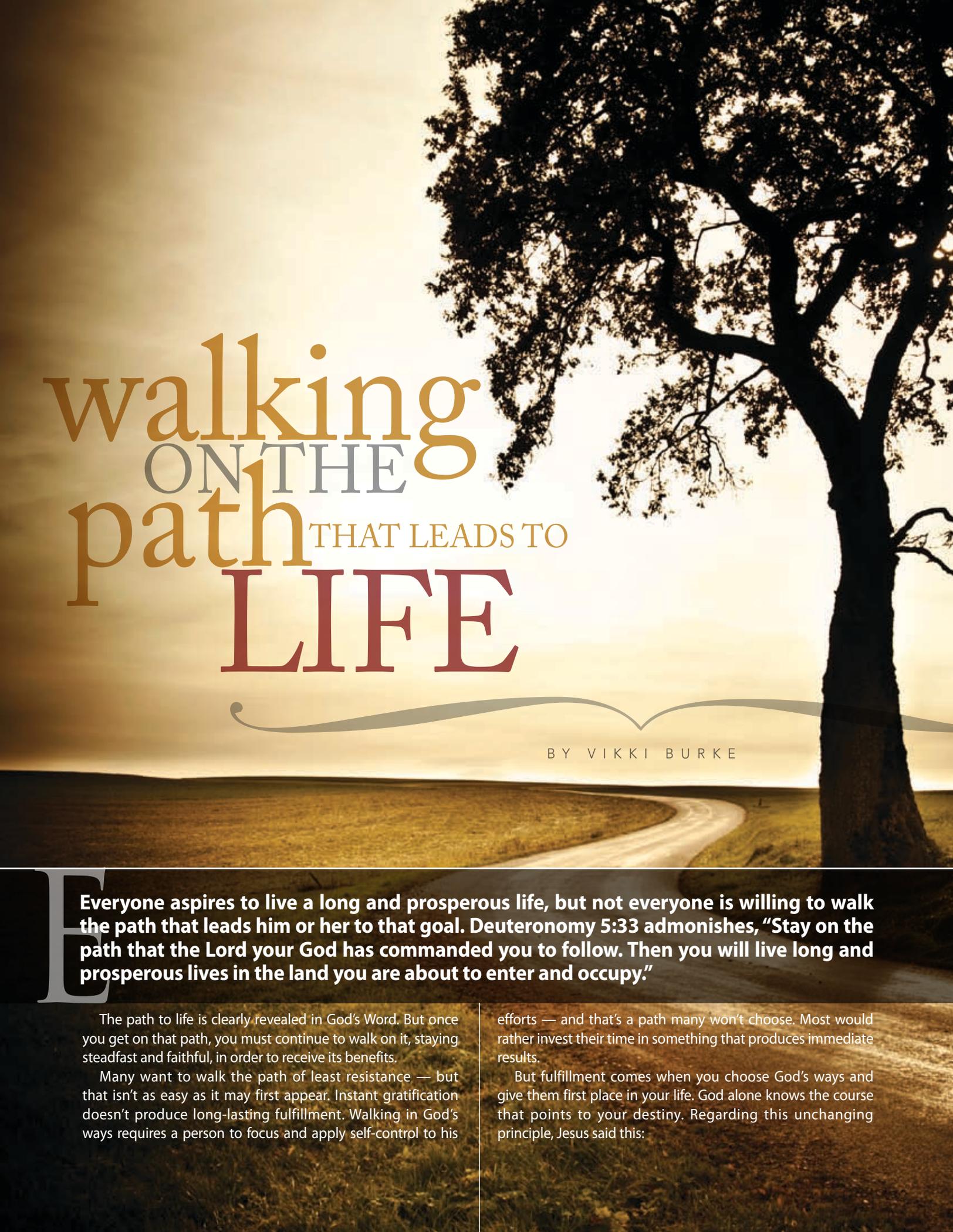
Finally, we see in this miracle that far more provision remained after the crowd had eaten their fill than the five loaves of bread and two small fish they had started with.

God doesn't think in terms of supplying just barely enough to meet a need. He thinks in terms of abundance, overflow, more than enough, and far beyond what is needed!

Jesus was teaching His disciples an important lesson that day, and it's the same lesson He wants us to learn today. He wants to redefine our lives by creating in us a new way of thinking.

So ask yourself this question: Are you defined by lack and need — or by God's abundant supply? If you can't answer that question the way you want to right now, make the decision from this point on to stop allowing yourself to be defined by or identified with the world. You don't have to stay confined within the limitations of lack, past failures, need, sin, weakness, or fear. Jesus is the One who defines you now!

No matter what problem or need you might be facing now or in the days to come, you can use that challenge as another opportunity to redefine your life by God's Word. Just give Jesus your own "five loaves and two fish," and then keep your eyes and your faith focused on Him. As you do, you will release His supernatural power into your situation to bring you more than enough of the supply you need.



# walking ON THE path THAT LEADS TO LIFE

BY VIKKI BURKE

**E**veryone aspires to live a long and prosperous life, but not everyone is willing to walk the path that leads him or her to that goal. Deuteronomy 5:33 admonishes, "Stay on the path that the Lord your God has commanded you to follow. Then you will live long and prosperous lives in the land you are about to enter and occupy."

The path to life is clearly revealed in God's Word. But once you get on that path, you must continue to walk on it, staying steadfast and faithful, in order to receive its benefits.

Many want to walk the path of least resistance — but that isn't as easy as it may first appear. Instant gratification doesn't produce long-lasting fulfillment. Walking in God's ways requires a person to focus and apply self-control to his

efforts — and that's a path many won't choose. Most would rather invest their time in something that produces immediate results.

But fulfillment comes when you choose God's ways and give them first place in your life. God alone knows the course that points to your destiny. Regarding this unchanging principle, Jesus said this:

“Choose God’s way and give it priority in your life because there are many easy choices you can make which will lead to meaninglessness and despair, and many persons will choose those routes. Because the choice to express the Spirit dimension requires you to focus your life and bring it under control, few people will choose it. They would rather keep all their options open, a course which results in the loss of life and meaning” (Matthew 7:13, 14 *Ben Johnson*).

You are limited in your ability to see and know what lies ahead, but God is not. There may be a way that appears right according to your natural judgment but that results in an unfavorable or

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Proverbs 19:2 expresses it this way: “Zeal without knowledge is not good; a person who moves too quickly may go the wrong way.” The last thing you want is to be detoured from your destiny — or worse yet, to miss it altogether. Both of these options are undesirable and avoidable.

Moses proved that zeal without knowledge was unprofitable when he impulsively killed the Egyptian who was mistreating a Hebrew slave. Moses demonstrated his heartfelt passion to bring deliverance to the Hebrews with this deed. However, because he acted on impulse without God’s direction or timing, he was

even destructive end. Proverbs 14:12 says it this way: “There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.”

You cannot rely on your own understanding to direct you in the ways of life. It is essential that you seek God’s way — the way that brings life and prosperity. But if you are determined to follow your own plan, be assured that you will live in opposition to His way.

### Move Toward Your Destiny

No one ever becomes so spiritual that he can quit seeking God’s way. Each day presents opportunities that either lead a believer toward God’s destiny for him or away from it.

When you acknowledge God in all your ways, He promises to direct your path toward a future filled with blessing. As Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths.”

The daily choices you make must be made after seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. You run the risk of making reckless decisions when you fail to consult God. There is never anything so pressing that you can’t take time to seek God’s direction. It is interesting to note that according to the parable of the sower, the devil is the one who acts immediately, not God. Action taken blindly is never good.

forced to flee for his life.

When people aspire to do the right thing but fail to consider the Lord, the results can be devastating. David demonstrated this principle when he attempted to bring the ark of God back to Jerusalem (see 2 Samuel 6:1-15). However, instead of consulting God about the matter, David asked his generals, captains, and the entire assembly for advice. David’s failure to pursue God’s way cost Uzzah his life. David longed to do a right thing, but he did it the wrong way; therefore, it was unacceptable to God.

After realizing his mistake, David later recovered the ark of God, saying, “Because you Levites did not carry the Ark the first time, the anger of the Lord our God burst out against us. We failed to ask God how to move it in the proper way” (1 Chronicles 15:13). David learned early in his reign as king how important it is to seek God’s ways. Years later he echoed this truth in Psalm 27:11 (*KJV*): “Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.”

Far too often people do things their own way, never thinking to consult God in a situation. Then when they fail, they blame God. Proverbs 19:3 says, “People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord.” Man’s ways lead to ruin, but God promises success and prosperity when His people follow His ways.

# upcoming meetings

**May 2, 2010**

Harvest Family Church  
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936-756-6565

**May 9, 2010**

Living Word Ahwatukee  
Phoenix, AZ 85044  
480-964-4463

**May 16, 2010**

East Side Faith Center  
Wichita Falls, TX 76301  
940-761-2399

**May 22-23, 2010**

Rhema Family Church  
Melbourne, Australia  
03-9879-3018

**May 24-27, 2010**

ICFM National Convention  
Mantra Legends Hotel  
Surfers Paradise, QLD Australia  
61-7-5588-7888

**May 29-30, 2010**

Victory Life Centre  
Osborne Park, Western Australia  
61-08-9202-7111

**May 31-June 2, 2010**

Victory Life Bible Training Centre  
Osborne Park, Western Australia  
61-08-9202-7111

**June 6, 2010**

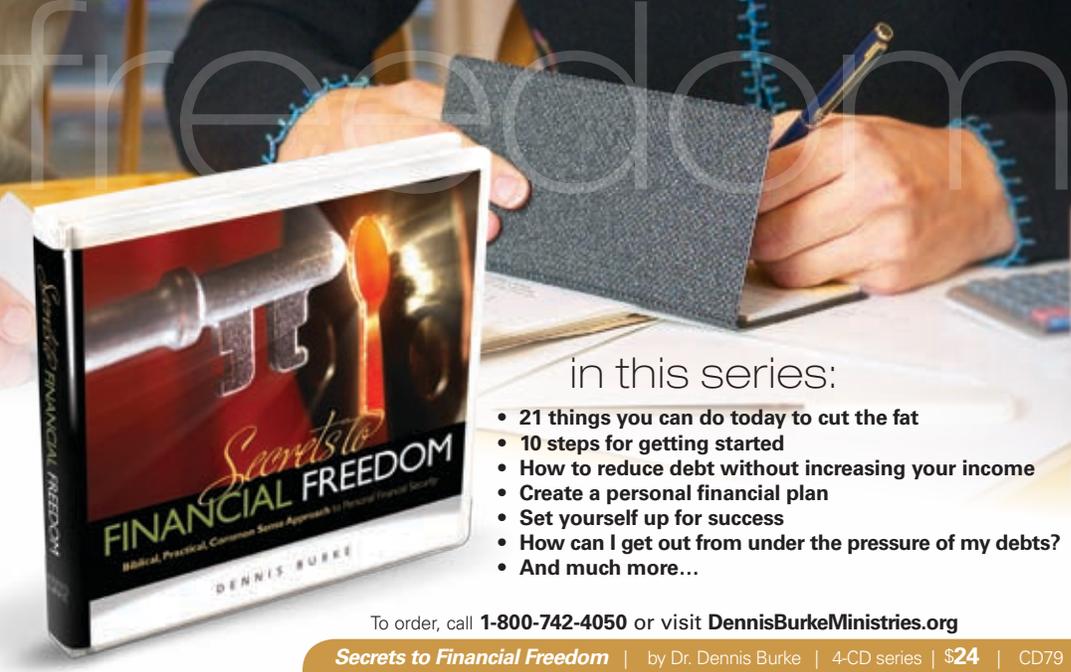
Heritage of Faith Christian Center  
Crowley, TX 76036  
817-297-2243

**June 13-14, 2010**

Capital City Church  
Ottawa, ON K4A 3N6, Canada  
613-833-1700

**June 26-27, 2010**

Living Word Bible Church  
Mesa, AZ 85213  
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## Living in Victory

God will make your way victorious just as He has for others. It doesn't matter if you are facing an impossible situation—He makes the impossible possible! Even if there are obstacles in your way, that isn't important. God will still make a way for you. He wants to lead you in the way that brings victory!

After Israel's exodus from Egypt, they came to the Red Sea, thinking it was the end of their journey. Pharaoh's army had pursued them, trapping them against the sea, and their deliverance looked inconceivable. But God sees what man cannot.

Psalms 77:19 states, "Your road led through the sea, your pathway through the mighty waters — a pathway no one knew was there!" God's path was there all the time; they just didn't know it. The path led right through the Red Sea — the very barrier they were pressing against.

Don't be deceived into thinking your deliverance isn't obtainable simply because you can't see it. The Israelites couldn't see God's path for them, nor did they know where it would lead. It looked as though their end was imminent. But just as was true for the Israelites, the same is true in your own life: When you look from man's

limited perspective, you miss God's path.

Although both the children of Israel and Moses experienced the same deliverance, Moses had a different response than that of the Israelites. Exodus 33:13 (KJV) describes the cry of Moses' heart: "Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy ways, that I may know thee." God answered Moses' cry in Psalm 103:7 (KJV): "God made known his ways

to Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel."

## Drawing Near to God

Although Moses cried out to know God's ways, the congregation was satisfied to stand at a distance.

"When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of the horn, and when they saw the lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear. And they said to Moses, 'You tell us what God says, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us. If he does, we will die!' 'Don't be afraid,' Moses said, 'for God has come in this way to show you his awesome power. From now on, let your fear of him keep you from sinning!'"

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dennis & vikki burke



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continued on back

(Exodus 20:18–21).

As the people stood in the distance, Moses entered into the deep darkness where God was.

Although God’s ways and thoughts are beyond human imagination, He has always longed to dwell and commune with His people. Yet the shocking fact remains: Moses was the only person in his generation who had a similar longing to commune with God.

If you have walked with God for any length of time, you have realized that God’s ways and man’s ways are incompatible. God declares this truth in Isaiah 55:8-9:

“My thoughts are completely different from yours,” says the Lord. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.”

God doesn’t want your thoughts to be completely different from His. Through time spent in His presence — in communion with Him and His Word — your thoughts will begin to change. You will begin to think like He does and to understand His ways. You will be lifted to a higher level of living than the world can understand or attain.

Second Chronicles 16:9 (KJV) says, “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.” God looks endlessly for someone to whom He can show Himself valiant — whose quest is to know His ways. God’s desire to dwell among His people was so great that He sent the Holy Spirit, not just to dwell among believers, but also to live within them.

James 4:8 says, “Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you.” God has communicated His desire for a living, vital relationship with you. Now He is waiting for you to draw near to Him. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus extends the same invitation: “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

You draw near to God when you choose His ways and give them priority in your life. It is your choice to give His Word first place and make prayer a continual part of each day. You can even have constant communion with God while you are at work. As E. M. Bounds said, “The person who comes into intimate contact with God in the silence of the prayer chamber is never out of conscious touch with the Father. His heart is always going out to Him in loving communion, and the moment the mind is released from the task upon which it is engaged, it returns as naturally to God as a bird returns to the nest.”

When you answer God’s call, you will not be disappointed. Jesus declared the promise that is yours to claim: “God blesses those who are hungry and thirsty for justice, for they will receive it in full” (Matthew 5:6 *KJV*).

*Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptures come from the New Living Translation of the Bible.*

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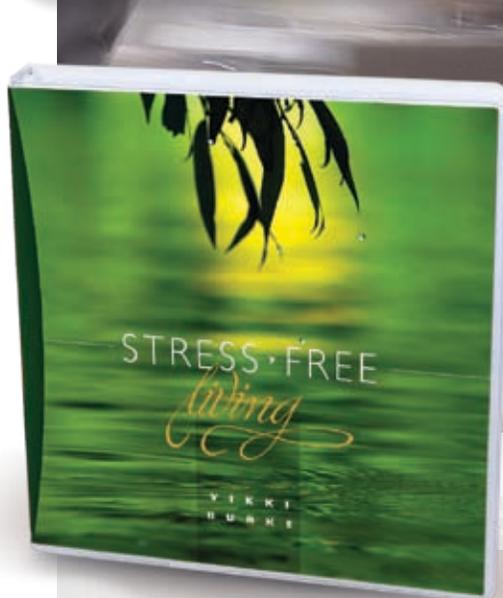
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