

APRIL 2023

"TRUTH"

**A SURE WORD
FOR TODAY**



Truth is like a mountain,
It cannot be moved and it never changes

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UPDATE

This month we bring you Scarlett Macaws, Green Macaws, and Brown Hooded Parrots from our trip to Costa Rica. Those who view our website will only see one photo but our subscribers will see many more.

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FEATURE ARTICLE: "Do you Have a Blind Spot?"

WARNING: You are entering the "TRUTH ZONE". You may not like what you read. At times it may make you feel uncomfortable. That is not my goal. My goal is to speak truth that will provide spiritual guidance for you and your family in a time of great spiritual darkness.

You can be sure that what you read here will be TRUTH!

Many years ago I had an experience that changed my life. For most of my adult life, I had poked fun at a certain group of people over a particular situation they had to deal with on a daily basis. Even though it was not done as a hateful thing, it was hurtful to those who bore the brunt of my thoughtlessness. Our church had been taught to avoid strife and division and because of this, and because of their intense love for their pastor, they never made it a big issue. They tolerated me.

Then one day I received a letter from someone who had felt the sting of my words. Usually, people who write after being hurt will express how badly you hurt them and then lash out and tell you what a horrible person you are. This letter did express the pain I had caused, but in no way did it lash out at me. After reading it I did not feel attacked or disrespected, instead, I felt deep conviction as I realized how my words had hurt others. The letter had been skillfully written with great love, and because of this, I was able to respond with a sincere apology coupled with a promise it would never happen again. (And it never has.) But that is not the end of the story.

The Holy Spirit continued to deal with me and lovingly showed me that this had been a **"blind spot"** in my life. I had always believed that if something was truth it was okay to say it. After all, I was a pastor and it was my job to speak the truth. While this is true, how that is done can either bring healing or hurt; bring people to Jesus or drive them away. The more I considered this the more I became convicted and determined that I needed a new metric to guide my words. I found it in Ephesians 4.

Ephesians 4:29 NOG

29 Don't say anything that would hurt another person. Instead, speak only what is good so that you can give help wherever it is needed. That way, what you say **will help** those who hear you.

The biggest challenge was finding a way to speak truth but do so without hurting people. To abandon truth was impossible because I had the heart of a true shepherd. Once again I found my answer in Ephesians 4.

Ephesians 4:15 KJV

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

I must confess, this was not easy for a man who had lived his whole life by a different set of guidelines and there were times I failed. However, I would repeatedly ask myself, "How would Jesus have said this?" And slowly but surely I began to see the power of speaking the truth in love, and my life and my ability to help others turned in the right direction.

I would ask you to consider, "Do you have a blind spot?" When we feel passionate about an issue it is very easy to forget to choose our words wisely. We tend to focus on the cause more than how we present that cause and this is not good, nor is it Christ-like. We end up hurting others and driving them further away from the same "truth" we want them to embrace, resulting in strife and division. Because of the broken condition of our world, I suspect this may be far more common than we realize. We must never forget if we truly want to help people find the truth we must allow the Holy Spirit to guide and temper our words.

The key to doing this is to never speak before asking God for his help. **Just because you think you know what is right, does not mean you know how to say it right.** Let that sink in! Saying the right thing in the wrong way will diminish your influence and may cause others to see you in a very negative light. And if that doesn't bother you, then you truly have.... a huge blind spot.

Lord, help me to see myself as others see me.



A MINUTE WITH MISS LINDA



“Spend Your Time Wisely!”

It is hard to comprehend that we are already starting the 2nd quarter of the year 2023. So many people I talk to say they feel like time is going by

faster. I admit, some may feel this way because they are getting older, but I have talked to young people in their 20s who say the same thing.

So is time really going by faster? I am not a physicist so I cannot answer that question, but it could be possible.

Mark 13:20 KJV

And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

I did a quick study and it revealed that the word, "days" used here can be referring to a time period that includes many days but also can refer to a literal 24-hour day. No matter which it is, there is another scripture that tells us how to view life.

James 4:14 AMP

Yet you do not know [the least thing] about what may happen in your life tomorrow. [What is secure in your

life?] You are merely a vapor [like a puff of smoke or a wisp of steam from a cooking pot] that is visible for a little while and then vanishes [into thin air].

This scripture gives quite a description of our time here on earth. It says our life is like a vapor that **quickly** vanishes away. When I was growing up my mom would often say, "Life is like a dream." At the time I didn't understand why she said this but I do now. Our brevity of life is very difficult to comprehend because most of us tend to think we will live a very long time, and maybe we will. But, even if we do, it doesn't change the fact that our time on earth is limited and so how we use it is very important. We can't change the past because those days and hours are gone forever and can never be reclaimed, but we can value the time we have left on this earth and make quality decisions about how we spend each precious hour we have.

With these thoughts in mind, I want to share some things I place high value upon when deciding how to spend the 24 hours I have been given each day. Being happily married for 60 years has taught me that time spent being a blessing to my mate is never time wasted. Both John and I have always felt this way, but now that we are in our golden years we are able to look back and see what a valuable thing this was in our younger years. If you are married, this should be high on your list of priorities.

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"Spend Your Time Wisely!"

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The next area I would add to my list of time well spent would be the time I used to influence my children to serve the Lord, This included church attendance, planting the Word in their hearts, and training them to live righteous lives. We also felt it was important to do things with them that created memories they would never forget. My husband always taught that people should spend their money creating memories instead of buying things that get old and are soon discarded. This was very solid advice!

I also firmly believe that living to be a blessing to others will always be time well spent. Each day we come in contact with people we can touch with God's love in practical ways. A few months ago we had a big snowstorm up in the mountains that dropped about a foot of snow. We have a widow that recently purchased a home not far from us and we noticed her driveway hadn't been plowed. I wish you could have seen the big smile on her face when we knocked on her door and asked if she would like us to plow it for her. Her big smile made us feel like we were the ones who had gotten the biggest blessing that day.

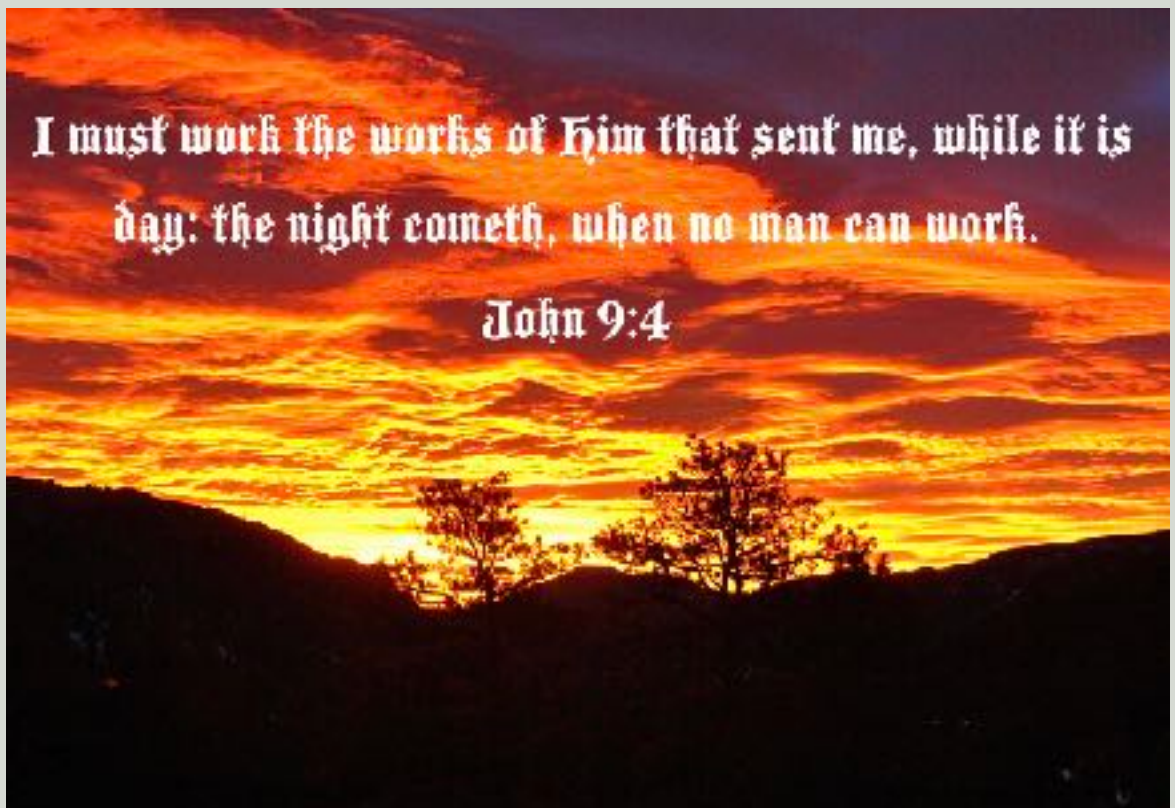
But, this article would not be complete if I left out the most important thing any of us can do with our time. It is the one thing that makes all the

other things happen. I speak about spending time building our relationship with Jesus. When we spend intimate time with Him we feel His heart and soon we find that same heart beating inside of us. It is a heart of love for others, for our mate, and for our children. This more than anything else will influence the things we watch, the places we go, and how we spend our time.

Today it is so easy to spend our precious hours watching or pursuing things of no value. Not only do they add nothing to the quality of our lives, but often they subtract and sometimes they become destructive. Now more than ever, we must learn to choose wisely how we spend our time.

"Lost Time is never found again."

Benjamin Franklin



P R O P H E C Y U P D A T E

"The Bible Is Right!"

Every now and then I come across something that is just too good to pass up. Such is the case with something I read back in February about a photograph taken by the James Webb Space Telescope of a galaxy 13.1 billion light years away from planet earth. The article was co-authored by 15 astrophysicists and astronomers from 13 universities. For you to appreciate the significance of what I am about to share I must be sure you understand that when scientists look at a photo like this they are actually seeing what was there 13 billion years ago because the light they are now observing has been traveling towards us for that amount of time.

Based on this, they were **expecting** to see very small galaxies because the accepted theory on how galaxies form has always been that they form very slowly over the course of billions of years. If this was true, the galaxies they photographed should have been very young and therefore very small. Little did they realize, they were in for a massive shock that would completely disrupt everything they had previously postulated about the formation of the universe. I will let the scientists themselves tell you what they discovered and what their reaction was.

Ivo Labbé, the lead author of the study said, "Little did I know that among the pictures was a small red dot that would shake up our understanding of how the first galaxies formed after the Big Bang. I ran the analysis software on the little pinprick and it spit out two numbers: "Distance: 13.1 billion light years, **Mass: 100 billion stars**", and I nearly spit out my coffee. **We just discovered the impossible. Impossibly early, impossibly massive galaxies.**"

The article continued, "These objects are way more massive than anyone expected," astronomer Joel Leja said. "...We've discovered galaxies as mature as our own in what was previously

understood to be the dawn of the universe. That red dot was just the beginning. The next day, we found five more apparent galaxies. And the pictures taken by JWST show them as they were when our 13.8 billion-year-old universe was a mere 700 million years old. The objects are so big that scientists may have to alter cosmology models or force a total consensus revision of the belief that galaxies start out as little dust clouds and take a long time to become giant entities." The article concluded by saying, "We looked into the very early universe for the first time and had no idea what we were going to find. **It turns out we found something so unexpected it actually creates problems for science. It calls the whole picture of early galaxy formation into question.**"

Well, how about that!

I love it when science "discovers" that what the Bible has told us for thousands of years about our world and the universe we live in is true. The very first verse in the Bible tells us that the universe did not slowly evolve after a 'Big Bang', it was created.

Genesis 1:1 KJV

In the beginning God **created** the heavens...

Yes, God created the heavens by speaking them into existence. When they came into existence they looked the same as they look today. Every galaxy and every star were fully formed, they did not evolve. That is why scientists today can look through a telescope, see them as they were back then, and confirm that what I have just said is true. There is no other plausible explanation for what they discovered!

Quotes contained in this article were first published in "Nature", February 22, 2023.

AND THAT MY FRIENDS IS THE TRUTH!