

Letter From the EditorDr. Terry Ellis | Page 3

Choosing Joy Melissa Hill | Page 6 **Educational Dept. Update**Dr. Fred Russell | Page 4

CONTENTS

Fall | Winter 2021



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

ON A RAZOR-THIN EDGE



EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT UPDATE: IRON SHARPENETH IRON



LOVELY LADIES:

CHOOSING JOY



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: ROA45

COLLEGE & BIBLICAL SEMINARY INFORMATION

ROA STORE

SPECIAL MARKED DOWN ITEMS FOR THE HOLIDAYS



ABOUT ROCK OF AGES MAGAZINE The Rock of Ages Digital Magazine is a quarterly publication of Rock of Ages Ministries Cleveland. Tennessee.

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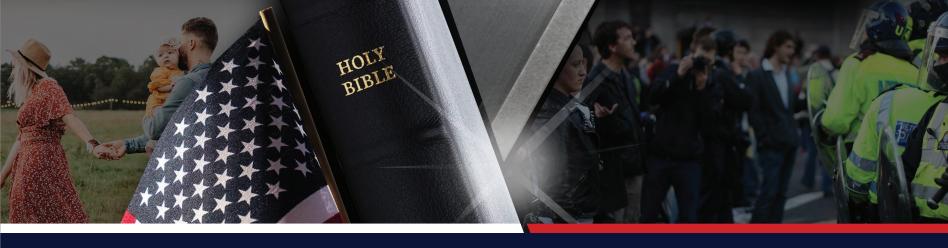
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ON A RAZOR-THIN EDGE

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." Joel 3:14

merica today is teetering on a Razor-Thin Edge morally, politically, biblically, and spiritually.

However, America's history reveals that our nation was founded on conservative biblical principles, which led to a healthy establishment of government, churches, and families. With the passing of one generation to another, conservative values have become diluted and displaced. In the past few decades, our nation has traveled down a path of liberalism, leading us to a Razor-Thin margin between conservativism and liberalism. Our generation is the one who will determine which side America will stand on for future generations.

Today, America is where Israel was when Elijah challenged them to choose between God and Baal. They were on a Razor-Thin edge between God and Baal and were conditioned to accept the ways of Baal as a regular part of daily life and culture. While they did not deny God, they did not acknowledge Him either, thus resulting in Elijah's challenge to the prophets of Baal. The

challenge was a defining moment for God's people. The outcome would define Israel's present state of affairs and its future status among the nations.

After the challenge, they readily acknowledged, "The LORD, he is the God." Their decision brought about a revival. As we face the defining challenge set before our generation, may we pass the test and return to the Lord and proclaim, "The LORD, he is the God."

1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

1 Kings 18:38-39 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD,

he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

Dr. Terry Ellis President & Executive Editor

Educational Department Update:

Iron sharpeneth iron...

We have been so busy CHOPPING WOOD,

that we have not taken time to sharpen the axe."

- Vance Havner



Proverbs 27:17 "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

everal years ago, I had a brotherin-law that brought his portable saw mill to where I lived, to cut trees and saw them into lumber so I could build a garage.

Our second day in the woods as we were getting ready to start cutting down some trees, I noticed the first thing he did was sharpen the chain on his saw. I reminded him that he had done this the evening before and had only made two cuts before we stopped for the day. I would have just cranked the saw and started cutting. His response was great. He said, that the saw had been in the back of the truck and may have bounced the saw where the chain had hit something and dulled it, or the oil or fuel may have leaked some. He said it is better to start with everything checked and right, rather than starting and having to stop because it is not right.

When it comes to serving the Lord, I believe many are as I was when it came to cutting down trees. They have a zeal and want to jump in and get started. Their zeal is great, and we do not want to quench it, but they will be limited by their knowledge. I became more productive cutting trees when I heeded to the instructions of one that was wiser than I was. The zeal to do does not need to be set to the side, but in addition to the zeal we need to seek knowledge also.

Proverbs 19:2 Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.

Romans 10:2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

As the opening verse said, "Iron sharpeneth iron." The study of God's Word is crucial as we endeavor in our attempts of serving and pleasing Him.

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

The Lord does lead many, but not everyone, to uproot their lives and go to a Bible College to get a formal Bible education. Praise the Lord for those who can. Some people have the ability and discipline needed to get a Bible education through a correspondence or distant learning curriculum.

At Rock of Ages College of Biblical Studies, we are there for those that cannot attend on campus classes. We offer excellent curriculum that is second to none, that I believe will, as Proverbs 27:17 said, "Iron sharpeneth iron." Studying God's Word gives the cutting edge that is needed to serve the Lord, in this evil world we live in today.



Proverbs 9:9-10 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning

of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Vance Havner said, "We have been so busy chopping wood, that we have not taken time to sharpen the axe."



DR. FRED RUSSELL

College of Biblical Studies



based on our "happenings," but Joy is independent of our circumstances.

Anyone can be happy when they get a new job, get a raise at work, go on a family vacation, buy a new car, etc. But it is only the Lord that can give us true Joy in the harder times. When we get fired from our job, when we don't have money to pay our bills, when our kids are sick, or when our "happenings" aren't ideal.... THAT is when the Joy of the Lord comes in! When you watch Christian families endure trial after trial, when you see them suffer incredible loss or heartache.... but yet they can still praise the Lord, knowing His ways are higher than ours.... THAT is the Joy that can only come from the Lord!

So, if we as Christians have this JOY available to us... through the Lord...why do we become so down and out? Why do we have a hard time dealing with the trials ahead of us? Why do we get bitter or angry or disappointed when storms come into our life? Why are there times that we just can't find that "happiness" or Joy we need? Well.... sometimes we just have to CHOOSE Joy.

As I was thinking back over the past few years of my life, over the hard times, over the good times.....I began to think about those times I just had to choose Joy. Times that I didn't just wake up with a smile on my face. I woke up to trouble, I woke up to pain, and I woke up to fear. These are the times that I had a choice, and you have a choice. We can choose to continue in our emotions of fear, anxiety, and disappointment, or choose Joy. It's up to us.

LOVELY LADIES ARTICLE

CHOOSING

BY: MELISSA HILL

Many of you that know our family have seen us walk through an amazing journey the last few years. So you may be thinking, I'm sure she really had to choose Joy a lot. I'm sure she had to CHOOSE Joy when she stepped away from her dream career, everything she had worked for since she was a kid. But, not really. The Lord just gave Joy when He replaced a career with a family. Okay...well, I'm sure she had to CHOOSE Joy when the Lord called her family to the mission field, asked them to sell their dream house, and live out of their van and prophets' chambers for the next two years. Or, when her family went from a two-income household (with 1 child), to a zero-income household (with 2 children, quickly becoming 4 children with the birth of our twins!!). But honestly. I didn't have to choose Joy during those times. The Lord just provided. This was actually a very joyful time in our lives! Everything was so exciting! Okay, okay, you say.....I know when you had to CHOOSE Joy, Melissa. It was when your twins were born, and one was diagnosed with a skull abnormality that would require a complete reconstruction of his skull. No, again. The Lord provided. Then, was it when you got on a plane, moved to another country, and left your parents and friends and other family members behind? Once again, No. Don't get me wrong, all of these situations came with their struggles.... lots of them. I had lots of different emotions during these times.....but I cannot explain it, the Lord just gave such sweet peace and Joy to our hearts! So, you may be asking yourself, if you had Joy during all those times, why are you writing about CHOOSING Joy? Well, because my time for choice came after all those things.

Here we are, literally living our dream. We are in the country the Lord called us to, serving Him, trying to teach the Guatemalan people, I get to be a stay at home mom, I get to homeschool, I get to be a wife and a mom to 4 amazing kids, I'm doing everything I have ever dreamed of. So, where is the Joy? Why did I feel myself slipping farther and farther away from Joy? I don't have an answer to the why, but after a few months the Lord has shown me the solution.

There are super hard times that come, there are semihard times that come, and then there are just normal everyday times that come. But at some point we have probably all felt ourselves slipping farther and farther away from Joy. Things begin to get darker; our outlook becomes gloomier, our attitude takes a turn for the worse, and we even shut people out of our life. But it's in these times I've realized we have to CHOOSE JOY! Yes, it's a decision. When we got saved the Lord gave us so much, and one of those things was Joy. However, we have to make a conscious decision during these difficult times, to utilize that Joy every day. Remember we already said, Joy is something we can have in spite of our surroundings and circumstances. The Bible says in John 15:11 "These things have I spoken unto you, that my Joy might remain in you, and that your Joy might be full."

He gave us His Joy and He wants it to not only remain in us (choose to embrace it every day), but He wants our Joy to be Full! A few definitions I found for the word 'full' include words such as: saturated, not partial, strong, entire, ample, and abundant! He doesn't desire for us to just live with a little joy, He wants our life to be saturated in Joy.... joy that is entire, ample, strong, and abundant!!!

Of course, none of us wake up just beaming with Joy every day. We would be kidding ourselves to think this! Knowing what the day may hold, knowing the things in front of us, knowing there will also be uncertainties in our days, we must wake up each morning and PURPOSE in our heart to CHOOSE Joy each day! We aren't choosing happiness...that's based on what happens during the day, (if the kids behave, if we get a decent dinner on the table, etc.) we are choosing to meditate on God's Word, be in a spirit of prayer and thankfulness, and constantly have on our minds on where we were, what our destination WAS...and what it is now! THAT is Joy, that will make a difference during our hard times. Psalm 16:11 says ..."in thy presence is fulness of Joy; at the right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

That unlocks the secret! We have to choose to stay in His presence! Whether you are going through what looks like a major trial or simply just find your everyday responsibilities stealing your Joy.... choose to stay in His presence! And when we choose to take one day, one hour, one minute at a time, choosing to stay in HIS presencewe then are choosing JOY! Joy that the world and everything it throws at you, cannot take away!



"GIVE UNTO THE LORD THE GLORY DUE UNTO HIS NAME; WORSHIP THE LORD IN THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS."

WORLD OUTREAC

PSALM 29:2

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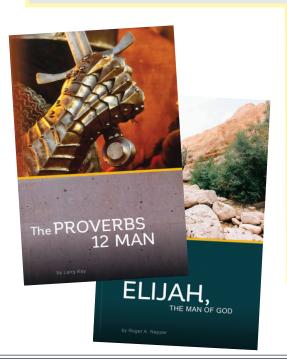
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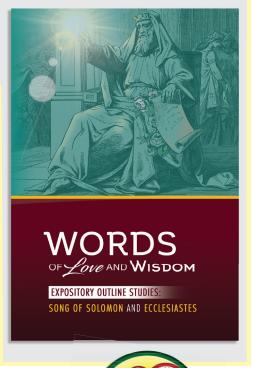
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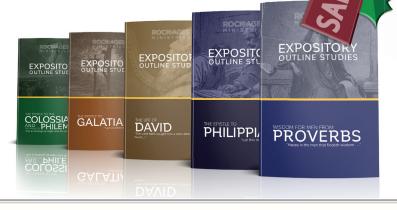
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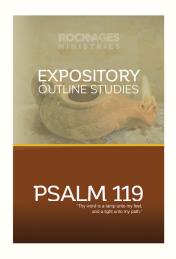


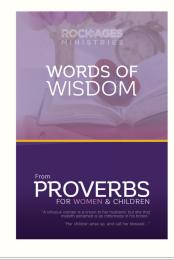
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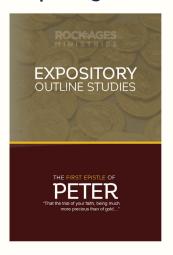
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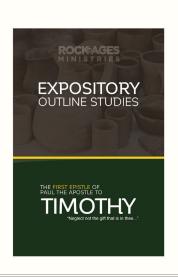


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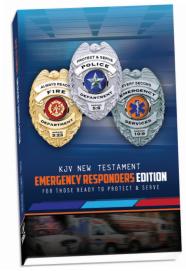
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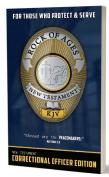
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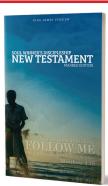
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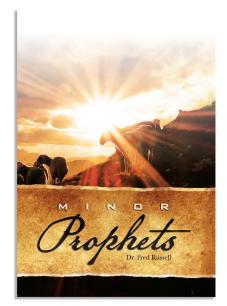
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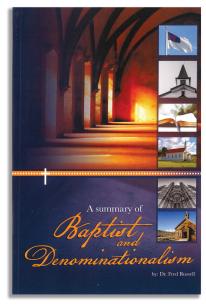
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These books are great study for Sunday School Classes, Pastoral Studies, or Home Studies. They're also a great gift idea for any Christian seeking to dig deeper into the Word of God and hungering for biblical knowledge and wisdom.

Both are easy to read in large font text, is clear and concise, and is sure to captivate the reader during the first few pages.





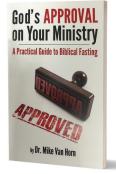
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Dr. Keeton also reveals the rapid advance of Islam in our present day and its emerging role as the one-world religious platform for the antichrist during the tribulation period.

This is a wonderful resource, and has been instrumental in many accepting Christ as Saviour through the Biblical principles it presents.



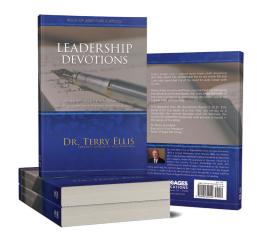
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God has given every born-again, Bible-believing Christian his/her very own ministry, and in order to fulfill the ministry the LORD has entrusted us with, we must learn to tap into His powerful resources. Dr. Mike Van Horn has a great burden to awaken 21st century Christians to the seemingly forgotten practice of fasting. In God's Approval on Your Ministry: A Practical guide to Biblical Fasting, Dr. Van Horn shows us that there are not only many different Biblical reasons to fast, but that God's Word gives us guidelines for why, when, and how to fast.

Read and find out how every Christian today can add fasting, the secret weapon in God's arsenal, to his/her prayer life!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



WHETHER YOU ARE THE LEADER OF YOUR HOME, MINISTRY, STAFF, OR BUSINESS, THIS BOOK WILL BE OF GREAT VALUE.

Leadership Devotions By Dr. Terry Ellis

A new resource filled with devotional thoughts and lessons gleaned from the personal devotions of Dr. Terry Ellis, President of Rock of Ages Ministries. Dr. Ellis has also done additional research to help encourage, equip, and give Biblical insights to God's men and those that follow them.

It is apparent that the devotional thoughts of Dr. Ellis come from the heart of a man that has served as a missionary for several decades and still believes the source for powerful leadership and service is found in the pages of the Bible.

Dr. Ricky Dunsford

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