

# activated

CHANGE YOUR LIFE | CHANGE YOUR WORLD

## **THE SPARK OF LIFE**

Where did it come from?

## **PERFECT LOVE**

It can be yours

## **“I SAW, I TOUCHED, I BELIEVED”**

One man's journey to faith

For a wide range of books and audio and video productions to feed your soul, contact one of our distributors below, or visit our website at [www.activated.org](http://www.activated.org)

*Activated Ministries*  
PO Box 462805  
Escondido, CA 92046-2805  
USA  
Toll-free: (1-877) 862-3228  
E-mail: [info@actmin.org](mailto:info@actmin.org)

*Activated Europe*  
Bramingham Pk. Business Ctr.  
Enterprise Way  
Luton, Beds. LU3 4BU  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0) 845 838 1384  
E-mail: [activatedEurope@activated.org](mailto:activatedEurope@activated.org)

*Activated Africa*  
P.O. Box 2150  
Westville 3630  
South Africa  
+27 (83) 556 8213  
E-mail: [activatedAfrica@activated.org](mailto:activatedAfrica@activated.org)

*Activated India*  
P.O. Box 5215  
G.P.O.  
Bangalore - 560 001  
India  
E-mail: [activatedIndia@activated.org](mailto:activatedIndia@activated.org)

*Activated Philippines*  
P.O. Box 1147  
Antipolo City P.O.  
1870 Antipolo City  
Philippines  
E-mail: [activatedPI@activated.org](mailto:activatedPI@activated.org)  
Cel: (0922) 8125326



## PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Not long before his death in 1990, the British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge wrote, "I see my ancient carcass, prone between the sheets, stained and worn like a scrap of paper dropped in the gutter and, hovering over it, myself, like a butterfly released from its chrysalis stage and ready to fly away. Are caterpillars told of their impending resurrection?—How in dying they will be transformed from poor earth-crawlers into creatures of the air, with exquisitely painted wings? If told, do they believe it? I imagine the wise old caterpillars shaking their heads—no, it can't be; it's a fantasy."

And so it is with us. We've been told in the Bible what happens—or at least what *can* happen—to our souls, the "real us," when we come to the end of this life and shed our earthly bodies. And like those caterpillars, we have been given the choice to believe it or not. That's the crunch, the pivotal point, the one condition on which the door to eternal life in Heaven hinges—belief. "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus said. "He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live" (John 11:25).

The miracle of Easter is that because Jesus didn't remain in the grave, we don't have to either. We don't have to suffer eternal separation from God as the payment for our sins. After taking that punishment for us, Jesus rose to life again. And because He lives, we can live also (John 14:19). All it takes is belief in Jesus' redeeming sacrifice.

If you believe, you're good to go! If not, we hope this issue of *Activated* will help you to believe. And you just might be surprised at how little faith it takes. If all you can muster is the prayer of one desperate man in the Bible, "Lord, help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24), you're opening your mind and heart to Jesus and giving Him a chance to prove Himself, and He will.

Keith Phillips

*Keith Phillips*  
FOR ACTIVATED

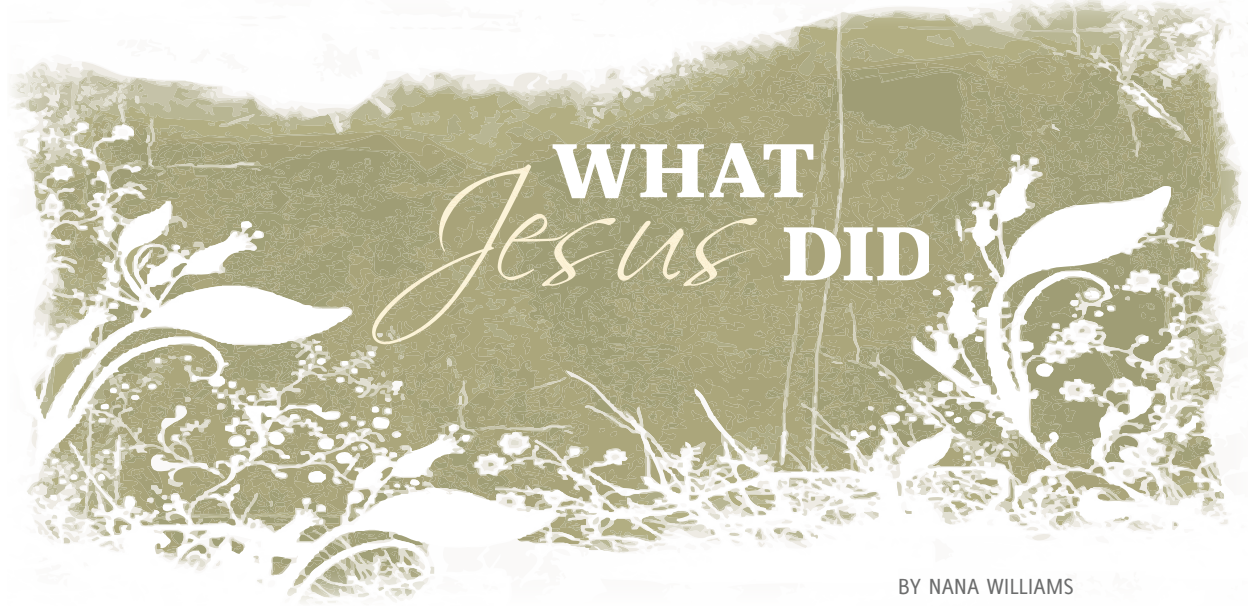
VOL 9, ISSUE 3 March 2008  
EDITOR Keith Phillips  
DESIGN Giselle LeFavre  
ILLUSTRATIONS Doug Calder  
PRODUCTION Francisco Lopez

© 2008 Aurora Production AG  
[www.auroraproduction.com](http://www.auroraproduction.com)

All Rights Reserved. Printed in Taiwan by Chanyi Printing Co., Ltd

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version®.

Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



BY NANA WILLIAMS

**ON EASTER, JESUS DID A WONDERFUL THING FOR US.** But just how does this translate into everyday experience? A story told by Gigi Tchividjian in *More Stories for the Heart*<sup>1</sup> explains what can be yours because Jesus died and rose again on Easter.

In the story, there was a man who felt terribly guilty about a sin he had committed as a young man, because he thought God could not forgive him. One day he heard of an elderly lady who had conversations with God, and finally he gathered enough courage to visit her. Over a cup of tea, he asked if she could ask God a question for him.

“I would be happy to,” she answered. “What would you like me to ask Him?”

“Well,” the man began, “could you please ask Him what sin it was that I committed as a young man?”

The woman, who was quite curious by this time, readily agreed.

A few weeks passed, and the man again went to visit this woman. After another cup of tea he timidly asked, “Have you had any conversations with God lately?”

The woman said that she had, and that she had asked God what sin he had committed as a young man.

The man, nervous and afraid, hesitated a moment and then asked, “Well, what did God say?”

“He said He couldn’t remember,” she replied.

The Bible tells us that because Jesus took the punishment for our sins, God promises, “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:34). •

## PERFECT LOVE

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

Our salvation is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8), but it cost Jesus dearly. He went through an experience that, thank God, we will never have to go through—not just crucifixion, not just the agony of the body, but the agony of mind and spirit, feeling that God had actually deserted Him. “My God, My God,” He cried out from the cross, “why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46). Had God forsaken Him? Yes, momentarily, that He might die the death of a sinner, without God. That was the highest price anybody could have paid for our salvation, and only Jesus could have done it.

Jesus loved us enough to do that for us, so that we could be forgiven and be saved. Such love! •

<sup>1</sup> Alice Gray, *More Stories for the Heart* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 1997).



BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

## **“I SAW, I TOUCHED, I BELIEVED”**

**IF THOMAS COULD TELL US WHAT HE EXPERIENCED WHEN JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED, BURIED, AND ROSE FROM THE GRAVE, I THINK IT MIGHT GO SOMETHING LIKE THIS. ...**

A lot of people read the Gospels and think how wonderful it must have been to be one of Jesus’ first disciples, especially one of the twelve whom He chose to be closest to Him while He taught and worked miracles. Those three and a half years with the Master *were* wonderful, because *He* was wonderful—perfect, in fact.

There was nothing particularly wonderful about us disciples, though, and our flaws showed all the more clearly in the light of His presence. Peter was outspoken and impetuous. James and John tended to get carried away in their zeal. Philip was a harsh realist. And me? Because I doubted God’s power and was so vocal about it, my name has become synonymous with skepticism, as when someone is called a “doubting Thomas.”


That’s not a label I’m proud of, nor the legacy I would have chosen, but I’m happy if others can benefit from my experience. If you have doubts about Jesus, or the Bible, or the power of God, or the scope of His love, this story is for you.

After Jesus was crucified and His body was laid to rest, we all went into hiding for fear that His enemies would come after us next. I spent the third day alone, wrestling with my mind about what had happened to Jesus. When I saw the others again that evening, I found that a lot had happened in my absence. Everyone started talking about it at the same time. “We have seen Jesus!” “He’s alive!” “It’s true! It really is!” “I saw Him, too!”

Peter took charge and tried to help me understand. “We were huddled here, still trying to make sense out of what happened to the Master, when Mary came to the door out of breath. ...”

“We had gone to the tomb to anoint His body with spices,” Mary blurted out, “but when we got there, the stone was rolled away from the opening and His body was gone!”

“We thought it was just a wild story,” Peter continued. “You know how emotional women can be. But when she kept insisting that we go and see for ourselves, John and I did. And we found it just as she had said—empty except for the shroud His body was wrapped in. On the way back here, I remembered how He had said, ‘Just as the prophet Jonas was three

A stylized illustration of a hand, likely Jesus's, with visible nail holes on the fingers. The hand is rendered in shades of brown and tan, with a textured, almost wood-grain-like appearance. It is positioned on the left side of the page, with the fingers pointing downwards and slightly to the right. The background behind the hand is a light, textured surface, possibly representing a wall or a parchment-like material.

## Suddenly, a figure walked right through the wall— and I wasn't imagining it either!

days in the whale's belly, so must the Son of Man be three days and nights in the heart of the earth,' and I began to wonder if maybe Jesus *had* risen from the dead."

Peter's voice rose with excitement. "Then the most amazing thing happened! Just a short while ago, all of a sudden Jesus was standing right where *you* are standing now. He showed us the nail holes in His hands and the spear wound in His side..."

My doubts drowned out the rest. Impossible!

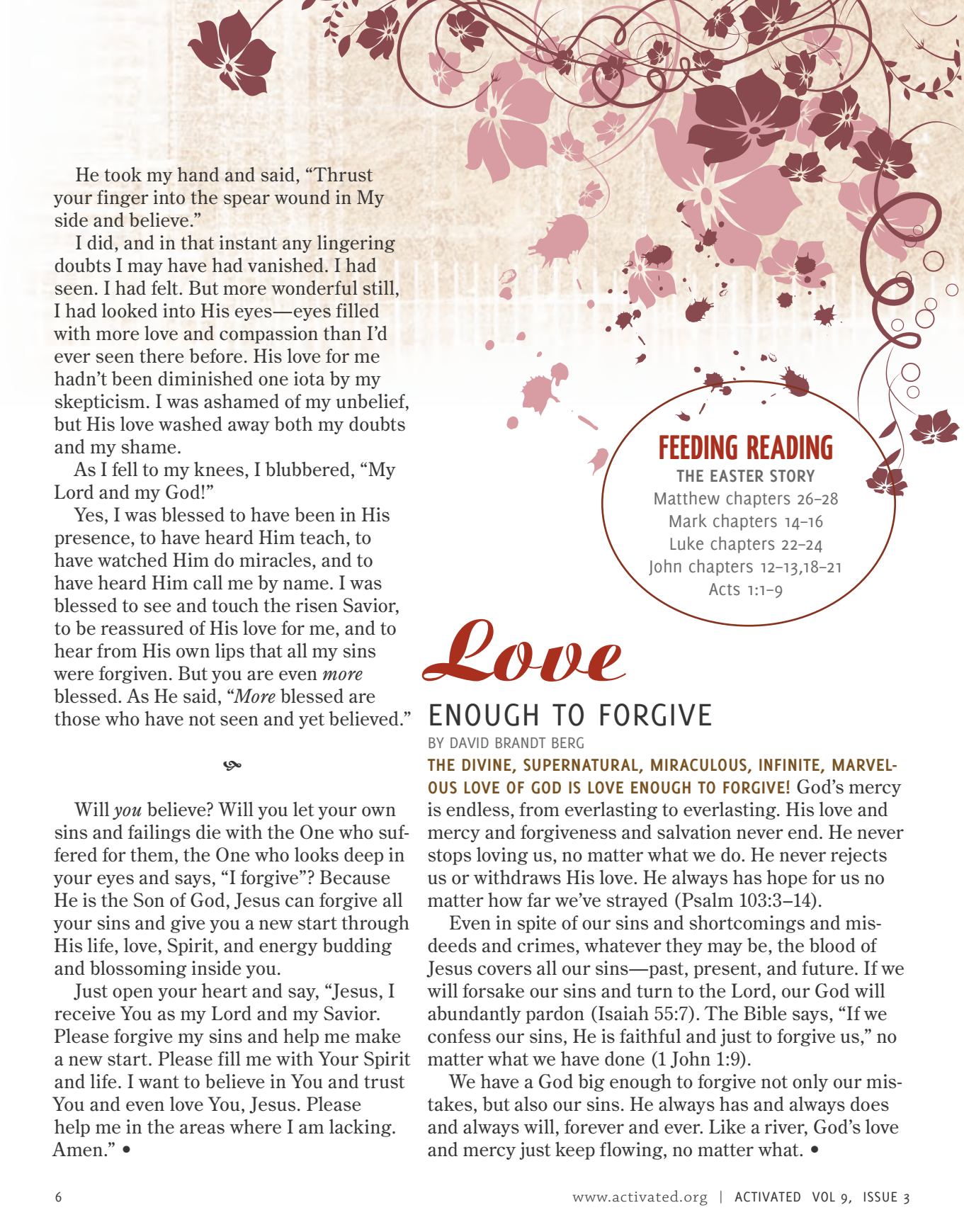
My attention came back into focus as two others related an equally incredible story about meeting a mysterious stranger on the road to Emmaus. Cleopas spoke for them.

"We were here when Mary came and said that she and the other women had found His tomb empty and seen an angel who told them that Jesus was alive again. The two of us left for Emmaus, as sad and confused as you are about what had happened to Jesus. On the way we met a man who explained the prophecies in the Bible concerning the Messiah's death, and the prophecies all fit Jesus exactly! Suddenly we realized that the stranger was Jesus, and in that same instant, He vanished!"

Had everyone gone crazy? "I don't believe it!" I blurted out. "I think you all are imagining things—seeing what you *want* to see." I pled with them to be more rational. "I loved Him as much as you did. Don't you see how ridiculous this is? As for me, I would have to see and touch the nail holes in His hands and the wound in His side before I will believe!" I was so disillusioned by the events of a few days earlier that I wasn't able to see the power of God working in our midst.

Eight days later, we were all gathered again. Suddenly, a figure walked right through the wall—and I wasn't imagining it either! It was Jesus! He came straight to me, smiled, and pointed to the wounds in His hands. "Thomas, put your finger here," He said. I could tell by the tone of His voice that He was disappointed because of my doubts, but patient and understanding.

My words from the week before rushed through my mind, and I felt ashamed. He hadn't been there when I had told the others that I wouldn't believe until I saw and touched Him myself, but He knew. Ever since I had met Him, it seemed He always knew my deepest thoughts and feelings.



He took my hand and said, “Thrust your finger into the spear wound in My side and believe.”

I did, and in that instant any lingering doubts I may have had vanished. I had seen. I had felt. But more wonderful still, I had looked into His eyes—eyes filled with more love and compassion than I’d ever seen there before. His love for me hadn’t been diminished one iota by my skepticism. I was ashamed of my unbelief, but His love washed away both my doubts and my shame.

As I fell to my knees, I blubbered, “My Lord and my God!”

Yes, I was blessed to have been in His presence, to have heard Him teach, to have watched Him do miracles, and to have heard Him call me by name. I was blessed to see and touch the risen Savior, to be reassured of His love for me, and to hear from His own lips that all my sins were forgiven. But you are even *more* blessed. As He said, “*More* blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed.”



Will *you* believe? Will you let your own sins and failings die with the One who suffered for them, the One who looks deep in your eyes and says, “I forgive”? Because He is the Son of God, Jesus can forgive all your sins and give you a new start through His life, love, Spirit, and energy budding and blossoming inside you.

Just open your heart and say, “Jesus, I receive You as my Lord and my Savior. Please forgive my sins and help me make a new start. Please fill me with Your Spirit and life. I want to believe in You and trust You and even love You, Jesus. Please help me in the areas where I am lacking. Amen.” •

## FEEDING READING

### THE EASTER STORY

Matthew chapters 26–28

Mark chapters 14–16

Luke chapters 22–24

John chapters 12–13, 18–21

Acts 1:1–9

# Love

## ENOUGH TO FORGIVE

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

**THE DIVINE, SUPERNATURAL, MIRACULOUS, INFINITE, MARVELOUS LOVE OF GOD IS LOVE ENOUGH TO FORGIVE!** God’s mercy is endless, from everlasting to everlasting. His love and mercy and forgiveness and salvation never end. He never stops loving us, no matter what we do. He never rejects us or withdraws His love. He always has hope for us no matter how far we’ve strayed (Psalm 103:3–14).

Even in spite of our sins and shortcomings and misdeeds and crimes, whatever they may be, the blood of Jesus covers all our sins—past, present, and future. If we will forsake our sins and turn to the Lord, our God will abundantly pardon (Isaiah 55:7). The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us,” no matter what we have done (1 John 1:9).

We have a God big enough to forgive not only our mistakes, but also our sins. He always has and always does and always will, forever and ever. Like a river, God’s love and mercy just keep flowing, no matter what. •

# NOT A PROBLEM!

BY ANGELA HERNANDEZ

**IT WAS THE END OF ANOTHER LONG, HECTIC DAY.** My husband had been away on business for almost three weeks, and caring for our eight-year-old son and a two-month-old baby on my own had been a new and challenging experience. I was looking forward to some much-needed sleep, when my baby became fussy. In a matter of minutes he developed a high fever and vomited. For the next couple of hours I comforted him and tried to calm him down.

Finally he seemed to be going to sleep, which meant I would be able to get some sleep too, but by the time I got myself ready for bed and was about to lie down, he started vomiting again.

I got up, changed him, and cleaned up the mess, but no sooner had I finished when he threw up again—this time all over me. So I went through the entire cleanup routine again, only to have to go through it again a fourth time a couple of minutes later.

Thankfully, after that he fell into a peaceful sleep. As I lay there watching him sleep, I thought about what had just happened. Although he had made a mess of himself several times, I didn't mind having to clean him up over and over. I didn't feel disgusted at him in the least, and the thought of distancing myself from him because of his messes never crossed my mind. To the contrary, love compelled me to take him into my arms, care for him, and make him feel safe and loved.

Jesus, I reflected, is like that with us. Regardless of how many times we mess up, He's always there, ready to take us into His arms, clean us up, and make us feel loved and secure. His love for us isn't in any way diminished by our sins and shortcomings, and whenever we turn to Him for help, He's always there for us. He understands our frailties and loves us anyway, and nothing can separate us from His love. •

*“The loving-kindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to those who reverence Him” (Psalm 103:17 TLB).*

*“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you” (Isaiah 49:15).*



# Life is a miracle

BY ABI F. MAY

**EASTER IS THE CELEBRATION OF AN EVENT THAT IS BEYOND COMPREHENSION.** A body was brutally whipped, nailed to a cross, and hoisted aloft to die an excruciating and shameful death, then pierced with a spear before being taken down from the cross and wrapped tightly in grave clothes, and laid in a tomb. Three days later, that same body was once more living, breathing, walking, talking.

There is another miracle beyond my comprehension, one that takes place daily. A sperm joins with an egg to form a single cell, smaller than a grain of salt. This one cell contains the complex genetic blueprint for every detail of human development, including the child's gender, hair and eye color, height, skin tone, and much more.

Within four days, the fertilized egg has traveled into the womb.

At three weeks, the foundations of the brain, spinal cord, and nervous

system are established, and the heart begins to beat.

At one month, arms, legs, eyes, and ears have begun to show. The heart is pumping blood through the circulatory system.

By six weeks, the rapidly developing brain begins to control movement of muscles and organs.

At week nine, the developing life is now called a "fetus"—Latin for "young one."

At three months, the baby is perfectly formed. He has fingernails and toenails, and he can raise his eyebrows, wrinkle his forehead, and turn his head.

At 16 weeks, the baby is a little over one third the size he will be at birth.

At five months, the baby's hair, eyelashes, and nails are growing.

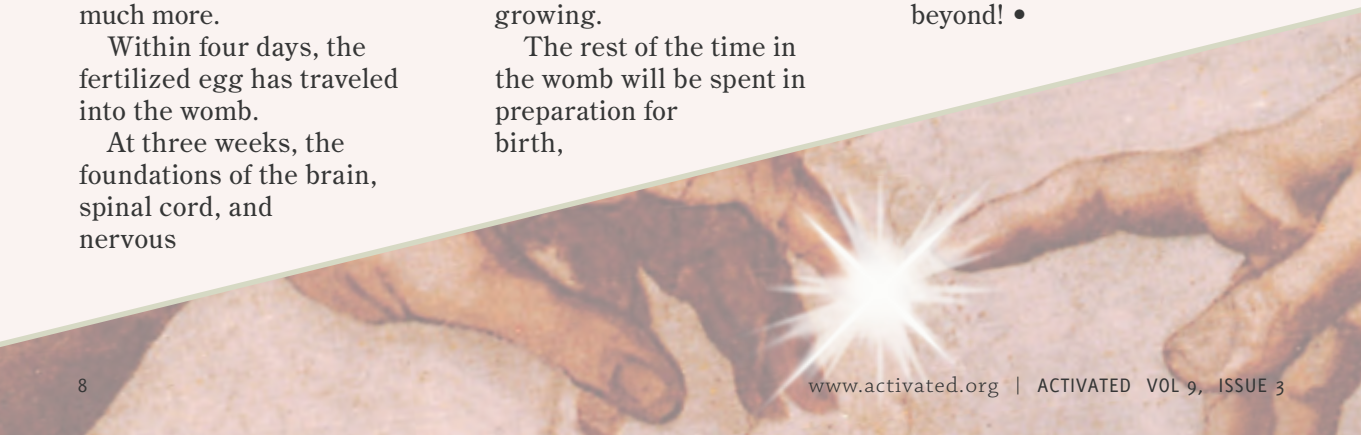
The rest of the time in the womb will be spent in preparation for birth,

which is usually at 40 weeks, although nowadays babies born at even as little as 22 weeks have a chance of survival.

Finally comes the grand exit from the security of the womb into the world. All of the possibilities, pleasures, and pains that life brings have begun for yet another human being.

How can a single cell grow into a fully formed baby in nine months? The process can be observed, but I can no more comprehend the spark that drives that process than I can comprehend the miraculous resurrection of Jesus.

But we don't *have* to understand. We can simply rejoice in the wonderful gift of life that the Creator has bestowed upon us—life here in this world, and eternal life in the world beyond! •







The Chinese have traditionally counted a baby as one year old when he or she is born, and they have a point. The baby has already been alive before birth, and what has changed is merely the baby's environment. Thanks to pioneering medical imaging technology, such as 4D ultrasound, we can watch a fetus as it sucks its thumb, blinks, yawns, smiles, and moves inside the womb, leaving no question that it is a unique living soul before birth.—ABI F. MAY

Advanced scanning means we have a window on the secret life of fetuses. At 11 weeks we can see them yawn and even take steps. At 22 weeks, they begin to open their eyes. Between 20 and 24 weeks we watch as they seem to cry, smile, and frown. ... When I see a fetus that can smile at me, I know absolutely that we should not tear it from the womb.—STUART CAMPBELL

Imagine yourself as the world's tallest skyscraper, built in nine months and germinating from a single brick. As that brick divides, it gives rise to every other type of material needed to

## POINTS TO PONDER

construct and operate the finished tower—a million tons of steel, concrete, mortar, insulation, tile, wood, granite, solvents, carpet, cable, pipe, and glass, as well as all furniture, phone systems, heating and cooling units, plumbing, electrical wiring, artwork, and computer networks, including software.—ALEXANDER TSIARAS AND BARRY WERTH, FROM CONCEPTION TO BIRTH: A LIFE UNFOLDS

The spark of life is a miracle of God, not some kind of physical accident. At conception, God combines a new human body with a new human spirit to create a new immortal soul with a distinct personality, different from anybody else in the whole world.—DAVID BRANDT BERG (1919–1994)

Science has its explanations for how children come into being, but when you first hold your baby and look into those little eyes, you know that you are holding a miracle. You are looking at one of the great mysteries of the universe—a glimpse of Heaven and the creative power of God. There in your arms is tangible proof of the love God has for you, for He has chosen you to parent a new soul.—DEREK AND MICHELLE BROOKES, KEYS TO BABY

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.  
— WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850)

# before ... DURING ... AFTER LIFE

## Life before life

You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.—Psalm 139:13–14,16

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb: "I am the Lord, who makes all things."—Isaiah 44:24

## Life during life

I [Jesus] have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.—John 10:10

You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy.—Psalm 16:11

## Life after life

I [Jesus] am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.—John 11:25–26

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.—John 3:16 •



## RESURRECTION —HOW IT WORKS

Someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"

What you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet

will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

—THE APOSTLE PAUL

(1 CORINTHIANS 15:35–38,42–44, 50–55,57) •

# rest

## FINDING REST OF SPIRIT

*A Spiritual Exercise*

*“Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him”  
(Psalm 37:7).*

**ANY WEIGHT, NO MATTER HOW LIGHT IT MAY SEEM AT FIRST, WILL WEAR YOU DOWN IF YOU CARRY IT LONG ENOUGH.** This is true physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. That’s why it’s so important to learn to take a few minutes on a regular basis to rest and renew your spirit. Even Jesus needed that. When the demands of His ministry to the multitudes became too much, He would escape to a private place and commune with His Father in prayer (Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35, 6:46; Luke 6:12). He instructs us to do the same, and He promises unparalleled results. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden ... and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29).

This exercise can help you rest in spirit.

Lie down where you will be comfortable and free of distractions. Soft lighting and music may help create a relaxing atmosphere.

Thank Jesus for slowing you down, quieting your mind, lifting your worries and concerns, and giving you heavenly peace and a sense of general well-being—for renewing you in body, mind, and spirit.

Lie still and concentrate on relaxing your toes. When your toes are very relaxed, think about relaxing the rest of your feet, then your ankles, then your calves, knees, and so on. Then do the same with your arms, beginning at your fingertips. Then do the same with your face, neck, and torso. Think about each body part until it feels completely relaxed.

When you’ve finished relaxing your entire body, imagine Jesus putting the rest of the universe on hold while He gives you His undivided attention. Imagine Him taking the weights you’ve been carrying, slinging them over one of His broad shoulders, and then lifting and carrying you. Enjoy that weightless, carefree, stress-free feeling. End your time by thanking the Lord for that time of heavenly rest, and ask Him to help you carry that spirit of peace and calm with you when you return to your work. •



## NEAR TO THE HEART OF GOD

There is a place of quiet rest,  
Near to the heart of God.  
A place where sin cannot molest,  
Near to the heart of God.

O Jesus, blest Redeemer,  
Sent from the heart of God,  
Hold us who wait before Thee  
Near to the heart of God.

There is a place of comfort sweet,  
Near to the heart of God.  
A place where we our Savior meet,  
Near to the heart of God.

There is a place of full release,  
Near to the heart of God.  
A place where all is joy and peace,  
Near to the heart of God.

—CLELAND BOYD MCAFEE (1866–1944)

BY RICHARD JOHNSTON

# THE SPARK OF LIFE

**“ABIOTENESIS” IS A TERM THAT WAS APPARENTLY COINED BY THOMAS HUXLEY IN THE 1860S.**

Commonly referred to as “Darwin’s bulldog” for his aggressive promotion of Darwin’s theory of evolution, Huxley attempted to patch the most obvious and fundamental hole in the theory by stating that life arose from non-life—that it was the result of the process of abiogenesis—in the long-distant past of the earth’s primeval existence by some natural reaction that was possible then but impossible now.

Louis Pasteur, a contemporary of Huxley, had already disproved the archaic notion of spontaneous generation (that life came from non-life, that fish and frogs came from slime, that flies came from rotting meat, and so on), which had been prevalent in western medical and biological thought since ancient

Greece. So Huxley’s idea was not new, just a repackaging of ancient superstitions. It is a sad reflection on modern science that those who hold to evolutionary theory still maintain that spontaneous generation, veiled in other terminology, explains the origin of life.

A famous laboratory experiment by Stanley Miller in 1953 purported to have reconstructed the moment when matter came to life when he

created some samples of amino acids out of a theoretical solution of “primordial soup.” Twenty of the hundreds of amino acids are the building blocks of proteins, which in turn are the essential components of cells. His experiments, which produced some of these amino acids, still have pride of place in many biology textbooks today, even though the conditions and methodology under which he

**GOD FORMED MAN OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND, AND BREATHED INTO HIS NOSTRILS THE BREATH OF LIFE**

AS WE HAVE BORNE THE IMAGE OF THE  
MAN OF DUST, WE SHALL ALSO BEAR  
THE IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY MAN

did the experiments have since been deemed unsound.

We now know a lot more about cells than we did in the 1950s. In particular, we have learned more about DNA and RNA, the amazing molecules that contain and transmit the information for life, and which inhabit the interior of cells. The processes and mechanisms of heredity continue to pose impassable barriers to evolutionary theory, while pointing to design in creation and a designer whose intelligence far surpasses our own.

Even if the 20 standard amino acids could be created by chance, scientists have calculated the formation of a 100-amino-acid-long protein (this is a small protein; the largest contain about 27,000 amino acids) assembling by random chance to be  $4.9 \times 10^{-191}$ . A chance of  $1 \times 10^{-50}$  is regarded as “impossible,” so this is not only impossible, it is impossible many times over.

Stanley Miller’s experiment is largely regarded in scientific circles as a failure; but even if it had been more successful, it would only have proven that intelligent life could create life in a test tube. In other words, the conclusion would have better supported the theory of intelligent design than the theory of evolution.

Ironically, human life *did* originate in inanimate matter—“the dust of the earth.” It just didn’t happen the way evolutionists suppose.

The account of Creation that appears in the first chapter of the Bible, Genesis 1, tells us that God made all living things on the third, fifth, and sixth days, and on the other three days He made inanimate objects. Most of Genesis chapter 2 covers the sixth day, and the creation of man is explained in a little more detail. “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his

nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7 KJV). Dust from the earth was transformed into a human

being, the first man, Adam. It was the breath of God that provided the spark of life!

And there’s more! In the New Testament book of 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, the apostle Paul refers to the first man, Adam, and the Genesis account of Creation, and it is particularly interesting that he does so in connection with Jesus, the Resurrection, and the prospect of *our* resurrection:

“It is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam [Jesus] became a life-giving spirit. ... The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from Heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. As we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. ... [When we are raised to eternal life] then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (1 Corinthians 15:45,47–49,54).

The divine spark that turned Adam from inanimate dust into a living body also turned Jesus’ inanimate dead human body into a living body. The first Adam was a biological miracle, and Jesus’ resurrection was an even greater miracle, for not only was life restored, but His body was transformed into an incorruptible supernatural body that could do amazing things like appear and disappear, walk through locked doors, and even fly into the sky at His ascension (John 20:26; Luke 24:31; Acts 1:9). Not only that, but we are promised that in the future those who believe in and receive Jesus will have bodies that are similar (Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2). I can hardly wait! •

# The **Giovanna** Solution



BY VICTORIA OLIVETTA

**AFTER FOUR YEARS AND A 44-HOUR BUS RIDE, I WAS FINALLY VISITING MY DAUGHTER AND SON-IN-LAW AND SEEING MY YOUNG GRANDDAUGHTER, GIOVANNA, FOR THE FIRST TIME.** She had my heart instantly—so cute, so smart, so active. Other grandparents will understand if I say that my granddaughter is the most adorable, wonderful girl in the world!

I spent as much time as I could with her, trying to get to know and understand her. It was amazing to see how much Giovanna looked and acted like her mother had at the same age, but at the same time she very definitely had her own unique personality and ways.

I put great emphasis on my children's education and started early, and my daughter and son-in-law have enthusiastically started doing the same with Giovanna. At 20 months Giovanna can already read a few words, counts to 20, knows the basic colors, is starting to learn geometric shapes, and has memorized a number of simplified Bible verses. She is very bright, but still exudes the innocence of a toddler.

One day she was running around, playing, and being a little rowdy. In a flash she went from doing her famous "A-frame" exercise on the bed (head and feet firmly planted on the mattress, bottom up, arms crossing the A) to landing on the floor with a thud. She looked surprised, but thankfully wasn't seriously hurt. She sat there for a moment with an expression that was a mix of shock, disbelief, and embarrassment.

After she recovered and stood up, I offered to pray for her because I was sure that such an unexpected fall must have been at least a little painful. As soon as I finished the prayer,

Giovanna opened her big brown eyes, and there it was—that unmistakable sparkle of playfulness. She unfolded her hands and was ready to get back to the important affairs of her young life: more jumping and playing.

A few days later her father needed to travel to another city and be gone for a couple of days, and she missed him. He has made a habit of spending one-on-one time with her at the same time each day, whenever possible, and that was when she missed him most while he was away. One day my daughter told Giovanna that instead of being upset, she should pray for her daddy, and they prayed together. Immediately her expression changed from one of worry and loss to one of peace and trust; she was her happy, playful self again.

Her simple faith made me reevaluate my own. It's one thing to pray and trust that God will answer (that's why we pray in the first place, because we expect some kind of answer), but it's often something else to pray and immediately stop worrying about the situation because we truly believe the answer is already on the way. Giovanna really believed, so she could happily get on with life.

So why worry? We can apply the Giovanna solution to our own problems and disappointments. We simply need to commit those situations to Him in prayer, trust that He will work them out, and then not worry about how or when the answer will come.

VICTORIA OLIVETTA IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN ARGENTINA. •



**IT PAYS TO BE AS A LITTLE CHILD.** In fact, Jesus said, “Unless you ... become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 18:3) and, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14). We’re to be like little children—loving, sweet, simple believers, in childlike faith believing and receiving all that the Lord has for us.

Children are samples of the citizenry of Heaven, like little angels dropped from the sky. They’re so fresh from Heaven that they understand prayer and other spiritual matters better than most adults. They talk to God and He talks to them. It’s that simple. They have no

problem at all getting His ear with their pure, simple, childlike faith. It is given to children to be rich in faith. Faith just comes naturally to them. They have faith to believe anything God says, and with them nothing is impossible.

The problem with many grown-ups is that they know too much. They’ve been educated out of their childlike faith. But there are others of trusting childlike faith who are daily doing things that doubting intellectuals say can’t be done. So be like a little child, and anything wonderful can happen! •

## CHILDLIKE FAITH

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

### PARADOX

Jesus had no servants, yet they called Him Master.  
He had no degree, yet they called Him Teacher.  
He had no medicines, yet they called Him Healer.  
He had no army, yet kings feared Him.  
He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.  
He committed no crime, yet they crucified Him.  
He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN





FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

**I** understand the trying of men's hearts—the despair, the discouragement, the desperation.

I understand the pain of leaving loved ones, for first I had to leave My Father to go to Earth, and then I had to leave those that I loved so dearly on Earth to return to My Father.

I understand what it's like to feel betrayed, for one whom I had befriended betrayed Me with a kiss.

I understand fear of what lies ahead, and so I prayed, "Father, let this cup pass from Me!"

I understand what it's like to feel ridiculed and abused, for I was ridiculed and abused.

I understand pain, for I felt excruciating pain as the nails pierced My hands and My feet.

I understand what it's like to feel abandoned, for I felt abandoned by those I loved, who also loved Me. For a moment I thought that even My Father had abandoned Me.

Though My Father did not let that cup pass from Me, though one who I had loved betrayed Me, though I saw My loved ones flee from Me in time of trouble, though I was beaten and spat upon, though the nails pierced My hands and feet, though I felt My Father had abandoned Me, though I had to die an agonizing death, though it looked like a great defeat, it all brought about a great victory and great salvation—a great resurrection that changed the course of history and all eternity!

I died to save you, but I went through all the rest to understand you better.

# I understand

