

# activated

A man in a white shirt and dark trousers is sitting on a red sofa, reading a book. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, creating a cozy atmosphere. The man is looking down at the book in his hands, which is open. The sofa has large, plush red cushions. The background is a warm, textured wall.

CHANGE YOUR LIFE | CHANGE YOUR WORLD

## **SLOWDOWN OR MELTDOWN**

Less is best

## **SANITY SAVERS**

Five tips to keep from  
coming unglued

## **TECHNOLOGICAL TAKEOVER**

The Antichrist's strategy  
revealed

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## PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Who said “Simplicity is a very rare thing in our age”? If your guess was one of today’s legions of “life coaches” and “time management consultants,” you missed it by about two thousand years. That remark was penned by the Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC-17 AD), known to the English-speaking world as Ovid. And speaking of the non-simple life, if there was ever anyone who knew about the toll that can take on the soul, it would be ancient Israel’s King Solomon, who lived about a thousand years before Ovid and was one of the great success stories of ancient times. After listing his grand achievements, Solomon lamented that “all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 2:11). Fame and fortune weren’t the end-all after all.

Imagine what Ovid and Solomon would say if they could see the way we live today! Wealth and accomplishment were the generally accepted measures of success even in their day, but with today’s overload of information, rapidly advancing technology, and celebrities, global sports icons, and twenty-something dot-com multi-millionaires now raising the bar and setting the pace, most of the rest of us feel unprecedented pressure to do more, know more, earn more, own more, go farther, and get there faster. “Doing” and “knowing” have crowded out “living” and “loving.”

But is that the way life is supposed to be, or the way it needs to be? How does the pressure to keep pace affect the areas of our lives that matter most? When we achieve a measure of that kind of success, does it bring us genuine happiness and lasting satisfaction? Or does it merely perpetuate the cycle and keep us going so fast that we don’t notice that life is passing us by? Are the quick successes worth the stress? Is the pace worth the price?

If you’ve been asking yourself these questions, I hope this issue of *Activated* will help you find new ways to get God’s very best out of every day.

Keith Phillips  
*Keith Phillips*  
FOR ACTIVATED

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# TWO PATHS

BY CHRISTINA ANDREASSEN

I WENT TO SEE A FRIEND THE OTHER DAY. I passed through two sets of polished doors and ascended the building in a gleaming elevator to get to his office. A receptionist offered me a cup of gourmet coffee before ushering me into a spacious conference room, where personal mementos, souvenirs from world travels, and numerous awards competed for space on teak shelves.

My friend arrived a minute later and greeted me warmly with a winning smile, his tailored suit slightly rumpled from a long day in the office. He sighed as he sat down across from me, and his smile dropped momentarily, revealing a tired and careworn face.

“Long day?” I inquired. He nodded. It *had* been a long day. It seemed like *every* day was a long day, even weekends, especially now with the burgeoning economy and the flood of new projects coming the company’s way. Business was good and he was happy, he said, but I knew him well enough to not completely believe him.

Had I already heard that he was buying a second house? His wife was visiting friends in Rome and had been gone for over a month now, his children were studying abroad, and he had just returned from Madrid. A third car was arriving from the BMW showroom next week. An extra car would make things easier for him and his family. One less thing to argue about. There had been a lot of changes recently—a new office in a better location, a more efficient staff, a better PR manager—and there were more changes coming in his company’s management, image, and products. It takes a lot to succeed in the fast-paced world of today.

We chatted about my recent volunteer work, a trip to a flooded province. He glanced through the pictures I showed him and commented on the beauty and simplicity of rural life.

His phone rang and he excused himself, returning a minute later to apologize for a hasty departure. Some urgent matters had come up, and he needed to attend to them at once. “We should get together again soon. Call me next week,” he said.

I went to see a friend yesterday. I drove eight hours up winding mountain roads to get to a refugee camp scattered across four square kilometers of rural countryside. A breathtaking view, but rudimentary common conveniences. Where the road ended, the walking began. I waded through a knee-deep stream and hiked up a deeply rutted mud trail, accompanied by a dozen eager children who had spotted me on the road below. I sat on the step of my friend’s bamboo hut and smiled at the ragged children who promised that my friend would arrive shortly. Then they ran off in the direction of the local well to announce my arrival to the others.

A minute later my friend was rushing to embrace me, a six-month-old baby slung across her back. She ushered me away from the throng of children that had reassembled,

playfully shooing away the ones that chattered over one another as they tugged on my pants leg. In the dim, warm interior of her one-room hut, coffee was served. As I savored each sip, I considered my friend’s thoughtful gesture; my cupful was probably her ration for the week.

Our conversation was broken and limited due to the mountain dialect she spoke, but her face shone as she struggled to tell me about her new baby, her family, and the small group of orphans she was helping to care for.

“What do you need most?” I asked her, thinking to offer her the best from the truckload of supplies I had waiting back on the road at the trail’s end. I anticipated a detailed list in reply.

“Nothing,” she answered. “Whatever we need, God supplies. He takes good care of us.” Her baby began whimpering and she hugged him close, describing once again the joy he brings her every day and mentioning nothing of the lack of money, official papers, and other resources needed to give him a good start in life.

Another refugee, a T-shirted boy in his late teens, came into the hut. After introductions he sat on the matted floor next to her, his fingers skillfully plucking a soft, sweet tune on the weathered guitar he held in his lap as he listened to our conversation.

“It must be wonderful to live in a city,” he said at last, a little wistfully.

“Have you ever been to one?” I asked.

“No,” he replied, shaking his head sadly. “But I hope to one day. I hope to move to a big city and become rich and famous.”

I smiled as my eyes took in the breathtaking mountain sunset that lit up the western sky and my ears caught the happy laughter from a volleyball game outside the hut.

“I don’t think that’s what you really want,” I replied to his surprise. “Believe me, sometimes the best things in life are the things that money can’t buy.”

CHRISTINA ANDREASSEN IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THAILAND. ■







# SLOWDOWN OR MELTDOWN

BY MARIA FONTAINE

I USED TO THINK I HAD TO DO A LOT MORE THAN I TRY TO DO NOW. There were so many things that I was sure I absolutely had to do that I wound up carrying too heavy a load. I didn't think I could do any less—until God stepped in and made me slow down by allowing me to develop a painful, debilitating eye condition. When that happened, I found out I didn't have to do all of those things after all. I found out first of all that others could do some of the things I'd been doing, and I also found out that there were some things that didn't absolutely have to be done.

still accomplish quite a bit, while staying healthy and happy. That's certainly better than trying to do too much and cracking up! Sooner or later, one way or the other, you'll have to slow down—either because you wisely choose to, or because you're forced to.

We tend to think we're stronger and more capable and more indispensable than we are. And if we carry on in that frame of mind, trying to do everything ourselves, we just might find out how dispensable we are. When we collapse physically, mentally, or emotionally and can't get *anything* done, we'll find out that the world can go on without us.

Sometimes God has to dispel our delusions of grandeur, our feelings of self-importance. He knows we have our limits, and He knows how frail we are. "He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14). He just wishes that we would wake up and realize that too.

The solution is to slow down and go at a slower daily pace. God forces me to do that through my physical weakness. He gives me enough strength every day to continue to do

◀ We tend to think we're stronger and more capable  
and more indispensable than we are. ▶

It's not likely that you would ever develop the same rare eye condition that I did, but if you overdo and allow yourself to get under too much pressure, you may very well get run down and sick or perhaps even have a nervous breakdown. Then you would be out of action completely, unable to do anything.

Wouldn't it be better to recognize your limits, slow it down, just do so much and no more, and leave the rest until later? Even though you wouldn't get as much done as you previously thought you needed to, you would

my work, but not enough to do any more than is necessary. But because the pace is slow and steady, I'm at least able to take care of the most important matters without too much strain. It was a matter of finding the right balance.

In today's fast-paced world it's very difficult to slow down due to the many demands on our time, but finding that balance is something we should be doing constantly, because moderation in all things is one of the keys to physical health and spiritual well-being. ■



# sanity savers

BY ANDREW MATEYAK

EVERY MORNING I WAKE UP TO WHAT SEEMS LIKE A LIST OF TWO MILLION THINGS I THINK I NEED TO GET DONE BEFORE THE SUN SETS. I used to push myself to the limit physically and mentally, but still rarely accomplished everything I had planned, and that left me frustrated and stressed. My solution? I came up with a list of five things to help me get more done without feeling so pressured. Believe it or not, none of them are “work harder” or “go faster.”

**01 Pray for solutions.** When we ask God in prayer for the help He has promised us in His Word, this sets heavenly forces to work on our behalf. So when I begin to feel pressured, I stop and ask Him to work out whatever situation is putting me under stress. This is getting at the root of the problem, not just dealing with the symptom, the stress.

**02 Still my spirit.** All prayers aren’t answered instantaneously, of course, so I also pray for God to still my spirit and help me to trust Him for the outcome. I spend a few moments meditating on God and turning my worries and concerns over to Him. Jesus says, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29).

**03 Plan and organize.** The Bible advises, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40). I have

found that by planning my day the night before, I can free myself of much of the stress on even the busiest of days. I start with a list of everything I need to do or would like to do, set priorities, and pare down the list to what seems realistic. Then I plan the order in which to do them, including my route and travel times, estimating on the outside to allow for the unexpected. If everything doesn’t fit, I cut some more. Having a solid plan sets my mind at ease.

**04 Take breaks.** Friends who work in offices, banks, schools, and other busy workplaces tell me, “That’s impossible! I don’t have the time for breaks.” But I’ve found that a break doesn’t have to take 30 minutes or an hour to be effective. Five minutes or less will usually do. I drink a glass of water and step outside for a deep breath of fresh air. Or if I can’t do that, I look out a window or lean back and close my eyes. Relaxing physically helps to calm my mind. The next hour or two usually go so much better that it’s clear those five minutes were a good investment.

**05 Stay positive.** No matter how carefully I plan my day, there are times when things go wrong or the unexpected happens. Instead of panicking or getting frazzled, I make a conscious effort to look for the good, to focus on possible solutions, not the problem.

So there you have it—five sanity savers that don’t require any special genius, just a little discipline and practice.

ANDREW MATEYAK IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THE PHILIPPINES. ■



# SNAKE PATROL



Getting acquainted.  
Jordan (2) and  
Cherise (5) with a  
newfound friend

BY JAY PHILLIPS

TODAY I WENT FOR A WALK WITH SOME OF MY FRIENDS' KIDS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE SURROUNDING THE VILLAGE IN WHICH WE LIVE, an area consisting of farmland, dirt paths, and small woods. The weather was great, so it was a good opportunity for the kids to get some fresh air and exercise as they ran around looking for the little creatures that are abundant in spring and summer.

It was an enjoyable break for me, away from the beehive of activity in our house, which doubles as living space and office for our local foundation and volunteer work. Out on those country trails there are no computers, no pressing work, no phone calls, no chores, no meetings, no messes to clean up, and none of the myriad of other things that keep us quite busy most of the day.

Time can seem to stand still while out in nature—at least until the kids excitedly holler, “Ladybug!” or “Spider!” But even such sudden alerts are okay, because just a few minutes of peace is usually all I need to clear my head. Then I’m ready to jump back into action and run into the bushes to get a photograph of the latest “cool bug” they found and to take in the moment with these little explorers.

When Jesus said that unless you become as little children you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 18:3), maybe He wasn’t just talking about Heaven to come, but also about the peace and little bit of heaven we experience in our hearts here and now when we take the time to put our cares aside, quiet our minds and spirits, and tune in to His voice speaking to us through creation.

The children I was with seemed to do that naturally. They weren’t worried about the work that still needed to get done back home, or the bills that needed to be paid; they were simply full of energy, excited about life, and happy to have a big guy along to watch out for them and take snapshots of their activities. How much more peace should we have, knowing that we have the ultimate Big Guy looking out for us and, I’m sure, taking snapshots of our lives too?

JAY PHILLIPS IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN CROATIA. ■

## OUT IN THE FIELDS WITH GOD

*By Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

The little cares that fretted me,  
I lost them yesterday,  
Among the fields above the sea,  
Among the winds at play;  
Among the lowing of the herds,  
The rustling of the trees;  
Among the singing of the birds,  
The humming of the bees.

The foolish fears of what might happen,  
I cast them all away  
Among the clover-scented grass,  
Among the new-mown hay;  
Among the husking of the corn,  
Where drowsy poppies nod,  
Where ill thoughts die and good are born—  
Out in the fields with God!





# —don't **JERK!**

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

**O**NE DAY MY WIFE AND I WERE IN A HURRY TO GET HOME, but instead we sat down on a lovely rock wall to enjoy the view for a moment—and we got this inspiration:

There is hardly anything that can be enjoyed in a hurry—not a glass of wine, a walk, a talk, a ride, a view, a meal, or an embrace. God is hardly ever in a hurry! It takes Him time to make a baby, a flower, a tree, a sunset, or even a blade of grass.

It's a funny thing, but thoughts like this used to come to me when I was a little boy. Sitting on a hill, I used to think about what everything in creation meant. I always felt that it was all an illustration of something; everything *said* something.

Speed kills. Haste makes waste. Patience takes faith. If you're in a hurry, you miss things, lose things, forget things, and wear out quickly. You may live it up, but you might not be able to live it *down*. You may marry in haste but repent at leisure! You may save a minute but lose a life! You may be penny-wise but pound-foolish.

If you go slow, you get there quicker—at least you *get* there. Better late than never; better safe than sorry! If you stop to look before you leap, you may not have to leap at all. A miss is as good as a mile! It takes time to aim straight.

When I was in the army, we often had target practice at the shooting range. Some of the targets were moving, while others appeared for a moment and then disappeared. Many of the other soldiers were in such a hurry to shoot for fear that the target would disappear, that they jerked the trigger so quick and hard that it jerked the whole rifle, which caused them to miss the target. But I took time to rest my elbow firmly, hold my rifle securely, aim accurately, and squeeze the trigger slowly. I learned to wait until I was sure I could hit the bull's-eye, and then fire. I got so good at this that I was rated as a sharpshooter, an expert rifleman with nine out of ten bull's-eyes in competition. I was neither





hasty, nor did I forget to fire altogether. I took reasonable time to aim straight and *squeeze*, not jerk! Squeeze, don't jerk, or you'll miss something!

Rome wasn't built in a day. Once when I was in a big hurry to do something, the Lord spoke to me with the following illustration:

It takes *time* to build a house. First, you must lay the foundation solidly, then build the walls, brick upon brick and stone upon stone, firmly joined with mortar, each piece fitting accurately—and you cannot do this in a *hurry*, or your wall will crumble. Then the roof must be laid securely, beam upon beam, rafter upon rafter, roofing tile upon roofing tile. Then come the plasterers; then the finishers to hang windows and doors, lay the flooring, and finally paint. Then at last, you have a building fitly joined together—a well-made structure built slowly and well to *last*.

But I've seen some buildings thrown up in a hurry that were, as some crooked contractors used to joke, “strong enough to get out of them before they fall!”—And it's this kind that collapse in storms and kill their occupants! I saw thousands of buildings demolished by a hurricane once. Hundreds of people were killed because of faulty, hasty construction that could not stand the wind of adversity.

You can have peace even in the midst of storm if you know you are secure and at rest in a safe building—strong, solid, well built, immovable by the wildest gale. A *good* building doesn't get up and run away. It's not blown away by the storm. It just sits tight until the storm blows over.

We are to wait on the Lord. “Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength” (Isaiah 40:31), instead of wearing out. “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Isaiah 26:3). Those who believe enter into rest (Hebrews 4:3).

Rest in the Lord! Patience takes faith. Tribulation teaches patience (Romans 5:3,



KJV), because it *compels* you to trust the Lord, to have faith in God for the outcome.

“He sins who hastens with his feet” (Proverbs 19:2). “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. ... ‘There is no peace,’ says my God, ‘for the wicked’” (Isaiah 57:20–21). They are tossed to and fro, and they cannot rest. But “there remains a rest for the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9).

Squeeze, don't jerk, or you'll miss something—and missing the mark of God is sin!

When Moses was in a hurry to deliver the children of Israel, he killed an Egyptian and had to flee for his own life, alone. But after 40 years of patiently, humbly tending sheep in the wilderness, with time to listen to the voice of God instead of his own impulses, he was finally ready for the slow, laborious, patient work of the Exodus—slow, but sure!

Then he spent 40 days and nights on the mountain and heard from God, but in one split second of anger, he broke all Ten Commandments and had to go back up and spend

another 40 days there. His haste cost him twice as much time (Exodus, chapters 32–34.)

In Aesop's fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare," the hare never made it, but the tortoise did!

My wife used to say to me on the way to some meeting or appointment, "Now, Honey, we don't have time for any of your shortcuts!" She knew what usually happened when I started cutting across country trying to find a quicker way: We'd get lost and wind up later than ever!

Sometimes my wife gets very impatient with me because I don't answer her immediately when she asks me a question; but it takes time to think and pray, to be sure I give the right answer. Anybody can reply immediately, but are they really saying anything? Be slow to speak and slow to anger (James 1:19). Go slow. Take your time. You'll enjoy things more, and you'll get more out of life.

My father used to sing a funny little ditty: "Never let yourself get worried, hurried, or flurried,

or else you'll find yourself getting harried, married, or buried!"

"Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise" (Proverbs 6:6). But it takes time even to study the busy little antics of the ant, to learn anything from her. Don't be slothful, but be diligent in business (Romans 12:11). The sloth hangs there on the limb all day with his eyes shut, sleeping, scarcely moving, till he looks like part of the tree. He's not just slow; he acts like he's *dead!*

Be "temperate in all things" (1 Corinthians 9:25). "Let your moderation be known to all men" (Philippians 4:5 KJV). Don't run too fast, lest you stumble, and don't just sit there. Do something, but be circumspect, be prudent (Ephesians 5:15).

Squeeze, don't jerk, or you may miss the mark—and that's a sin!

DAVID BRANDT BERG (1919–1994) WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL. ■

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## the Upward look

RETOLD BY ABI F. MAY

THERE WAS ONCE A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR who sprinkled his lectures with personal reflections that invariably began with, "As I was walking in my garden, it occurred to me that..." Over and over he passed on to his students thoughts that his garden had inspired.

One day he invited two of his most promising students to visit him at home, and over a cup of coffee the students asked to see his garden. To their amazement it was only a narrow strip, barely wider than the walkway, with the house on one side and a high wall on the other.

"Is this really the garden where you have all those inspiring thoughts, Doctor?" one of the students asked.

"Yes," came the professor's reply.

"But it's so small!" protested the student.

"Ah, yes," said the professor, a twinkle in his eye as he gestured toward the sky, "but look how high it is!" ■



a cupful of

Joy



A SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

*“The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10).*

JOY AND PRAISE—THANKFULNESS TO GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS—ARE CONNECTED. When you take time to thank God for your blessings, your problems and concerns fade into the background. Concentrating on the good things God has brought into your life puts you in a positive frame of mind. Do that for a while, and you’ll find that you’re happier than before. Keep it up, and your happiness will grow. With this joy in your heart, you won’t be so easily pulled down by problems or worries; you will be encouraged and strengthened in spirit.

This short exercise may help.

You’ll need a cup, a stack of paper (any scraps will do) cut into pieces just large enough to write a phrase, and a pen or pencil.

Take one of those small pieces of paper and write one of the things you’re thankful for. Wad the paper into a ball and put it in the cup. Take another piece of paper, write another blessing, wad it up, and put it in the cup. Keep repeating the process. Be specific. Cover topics such as recent successes, members of your family and circle of friends, experiences you’ve enjoyed, sicknesses that are now behind you, problems that have been resolved, material comforts, your favorite things, and so on.

Continue until the cup is filled to overflowing and you can say with David, the great psalmist of the Bible, “My cup runs over” (Psalm 23:5). You’ll probably be surprised at how many things you have to be thankful for, as well as how strengthening it is to thank God for them. ■

If you would like to experience the peace within that you’ve been reading about on these pages, you can. It starts with inviting Jesus into your life, which you can do by praying this prayer:

Dear Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died for me, so I could be forgiven my wrongs and have eternal life. I open my heart to You now. Please come into my life and meet my deepest needs. Amen.

I’ve learned to sing the song of joy,  
My cup is running o’er  
With blessings full of peace and love,  
And still there’s more and more.

—Jonathan Bush Atchinson  
(“A Glad New Song,” 1891)

## FEEDING READING

Enjoy life’s journey by  
traveling at God’s speed

*God has given us a clear plan for  
living right.*

Deuteronomy 10:12

Proverbs 30:7-8

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Micah 6:8

*Pursuit of wealth does not lead to  
happiness.*

Luke 12:15

Jeremiah 9:23-24

1 Timothy 6:10

*Let love be your motivation.*

Matthew 22:39

John 15:12

1 Corinthians 13:13

Galatians 6:2

Philippians 2:4

1 Peter 4:8

*Rest your spirit along the way.*

Psalms 116:7

Isaiah 30:15b

Matthew 11:28-30

Hebrews 4:3a

*Let God lead you; He knows best.*

Psalms 23:1-3

Psalms 25:9-10

Psalms 32:8

Proverbs 3:5-6

Proverbs 4:18

Isaiah 26:7

Isaiah 58:11

# Getting ahead without getting behind

How can you maintain peace of mind in today's fast-paced world without falling behind or getting run over by the pack? Here are some ideas.



## Slow down and take time to rest and relax.

- There will always be deadlines, pressures, and work. If you let those things run your life, you'll never find time to relax and enjoy life.

- Life is a marathon, not a sprint. Pace yourself.

- You must stop everything periodically and connect with the source—God—to get recharged, or you will run out of power.

- Better to take regular times of rest than to risk a breakdown. No matter how important your work is, it's not as important as your health and spiritual well-being.

- After creating the universe, God rested from His labor, and He tells us to do likewise.

## Set priorities and goals.

- Without meaningful goals you will never be truly successful in life, no matter how much money you earn or how great a name you make for yourself.

- Be wise; prioritize.

- Success starts in the heart. When priorities and motives are right, you're halfway there.

- Avoid self-imposed pressure by avoiding unrealistic goals and deadlines.

- Even a relatively small project can seem like a mountain when you get so close to it that it's all you can see. Cut it down to size by breaking it up into smaller tasks.

- When you feel overwhelmed with all there is to do, reassess your goals, priorities, strategy, and work habits.

- Keep things in perspective. Don't let little inconveniences become big annoyances that sap your inspiration and strength.

- If you are worried about tomorrow, it makes today doubly difficult because you're trying to carry tomorrow's burdens as well as today's. Concentrate only on what you can do today.



## Don't get caught in the materialism trap.

- Material things may temporarily satisfy the body, but only God and His love can truly satisfy the spirit.
- The truest wealth is measured in the things that money can't buy.
- Some people own things, and some people's things own them.
- At best, material success will last till the day you die; love lasts for eternity.

## Take time for people.

- Make people your priority, and the best things in life will come to you.
- Start the day with love, and love will carry you through the day.
- Take the preferences, needs, personalities, and limitations of those you work with into consideration. That will go a long way in reducing stress and friction, two archenemies of happiness.
- The life you live will soon be past,  
But the things you do for love will last.
- All you need to be a world changer is love, because love changes everything it touches.

## Stay positive and cheerful.

- To get the most from every day, look for the good in every situation.
- Success starts with a successful attitude. Train your mind to look beyond obstacles, disappointments, setbacks, and even failures.
- A smile is the lighting system of the face and the heating system of the heart.
- Laughter relaxes you physically and refreshes you mentally and emotionally by putting your problems in perspective.

## Give your cares and problems to Jesus.

- Prayer can lift you up on the wings of God's Spirit to where you can see the big picture more clearly.
- When the pace or the events of the day seem overwhelming, take time to reflect and talk things over with Jesus, and you will be amazed at how much more energy you'll have and how much smoother things will go.
- Prayer is meant to be like talking to your closest friend on the telephone. You talk to Jesus, you listen, and together you sort things out.
- Make prayer your prelude, and you'll stay on key all day.
- Jesus can give you solutions that will make problems that loom as large as mountains melt away.
- Jesus said, "My yoke is easy and My burden is light," but there's one condition attached: "Come unto Me" (Matthew 11:28-30).

## Maintain a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle

- An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. It's better to stay healthy than to have to be healed.
- The best way to prevent illness is to obey God's natural laws: Live right, eat right, work right, play right, rest right, love right, and maintain a right relationship with Him.
- Take time to enjoy life. God made every good thing for you to enjoy in moderation, and He created the senses with which to enjoy them.
- Taking good care of our bodies shows respect for the God who created us and gave us life and health.
- What you take in mentally and spiritually is as important to your overall well-being as what you eat. If life is full of headaches, perhaps you've been filling your head with the wrong stuff.

*THE POINTS IN THIS ARTICLE ARE BASED ON MOTTOS FOR SUCCESS, COURTESY OF AURORA PRODUCTION, AND THE WRITINGS OF DAVID BRANDT BERG. ABI F. MAY IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN ENGLAND.*

# TECHNOLOGICAL TAKEOVER

*Activated:* What do we know about the Antichrist, the future world dictator whose coming is foretold in the Bible? Is he living now and perhaps already working behind the scenes to bring about his plan for world economic and political domination?

**Joseph Candel:** Recent developments indicate that the Antichrist's system is already being set in place, based on technology that will allow him to achieve and enforce his near total control of the world and its people.

A key Bible passage about this is Revelation 13:16–17: The Antichrist's regime “causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on [or “in”] their right hand or on [in] their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Imagine what the apostle John must have thought when, in about AD 90, he saw a vision of this taking place in a futuristic world. People ever since have been baffled as to how such a universal, totalitarian economic system could be established or policed. But now the age of technology has arrived. With electronic money rapidly replacing cash,

and with virtually everything that is bought and sold being identified and tracked by bar codes, RFID chips, and other means, it is no longer inconceivable that the financial transactions of everyone in the world could one day be monitored by a central agency.

Most of the technology already exists, but before the Antichrist's plan can work, it needs to be more powerful, cheaper, and more widespread. It stands to reason, then, that the Antichrist would get behind research and development in such fields as microchip technology, biotechnology, and the Internet. Of course, those technologies in themselves are not necessarily bad. It's how they will be used that we need to worry about. In the Antichrist's case, passages such as Daniel 8:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 13:2–4, and Revelation 12:9 make it clear that he will be Satan-possessed, therefore his system will be far from benign.

*Do you really think that people will accept the type of control you're describing?* The Antichrist needs to sell the world on it. It appears that he's already busy at that, and he is not alone. He works

through others—mostly unwitting accomplices who are helping to further his agenda by developing and marketing the technology, including some of the world's brightest minds and biggest financial powers.

A scripture that goes along with that point is Daniel 11:21b (KJV): “He shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.” Some versions of the Bible translate this as “seize the kingdom by intrigue”—by secret scheming or plotting. Either way, it sounds as though the Antichrist is going to rise to power through cunning salesmanship rather than solely the strong-arm tactics that the leaders of most past empires depended on.

*Can you be more specific about the technologies you see the Antichrist capitalizing on?* Let's start with surveillance technology. Video cameras now monitor and record our faces and movements in many stores and public places. We have learned to accept this intrusion into our lives because of the benefits. It discourages crime and helps apprehend criminals. Likewise, the monitoring of Internet communications helps curtail child pornography, terrorism, and other threats to our common good.

As electronic databases replace filing cabinets, more and more data about us is being collected, stored, cross-referenced, and shared. Now that nearly everything we do leaves behind a “data trail,” combining information from different sources can recreate a person's activities with astonishing accuracy and detail. This reservoir of personal information is especially helpful to marketers, and it is big business. Financial privacy has become a thing of the past, as financial institutions and others now routinely put the details of their clients' lives up for sale.

Other data-gathering technologies help



complete the mosaic of information that can be collected on individuals. For example, computerized “black boxes” are being built into cars, and GPS chips into cell phones and other electronic devices—innovations that consumers are being told are for their own good.

Surveillance cameras in public places are rapidly becoming the norm, with cities like London leading the way. London’s “Ring of Steel” makes use of nearly 2 million cameras to record the movements and activities of London’s approximately 7.5 million people. China’s “Golden Shield” comprehensive surveillance program, launched in major cities like Shenzhen, goes even further with systems that can even recognize faces.

New passports issued by the U.S. and more and more other countries now contain microchips, and China is adding microchips to the ID cards every citizen is required to carry. Microchip implants are the next logical step. They are already being implanted under the skin of pets for ID and tracking purposes, and pilot programs are already being done for Alzheimer’s patients and children. Other pioneer cases continue to make news. Mexico’s attorney general and members of his staff, for example, have joined the ranks of the chipped.

The examples of chipping are isolated cases—hardly indisputable evidence of the global takeover you say is coming.

Yes, they are isolated cases, but they are preparing the way by getting people familiar with the concept and selling them on its benefits. The Antichrist will not be able to fully set up his government until these technologies are pooled into an integrated network with universal standards—an obstacle that might *not* be an obstacle much

The apostle John would have rejoiced gathering recent newspaper clippings for his second book of the Apocalypse.

—Daniel Samper, Colombian journalist

longer. Governments and industry are setting boundaries and expanding their global electronic network by sharing information, services, and technology. As more countries turn to the latest technology to help solve their particular social and economic problems, they expand the network’s reach and capabilities. The level of technological development now varies greatly from nation to nation, but the whole system could be “online” in a relatively short time.

You have to admit that these new technologies and cooperative efforts have positive features also. Think of the

convenience, security, lower costs, and improved quality, speed, and efficiency in the delivery of goods and services made possible by these advances.

Very true, but precious little is said about the negative aspects of this public intrusion into what were once private, personal affairs. Under the banner of science and technology, the governments of the world are rushing to complete the Antichrist’s economic and political system for him—the very system the Bible warns against.

If all that is true, what is a person’s best defense?

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Arm yourself with the truth, and then you won’t fall for the clever propaganda of the AC system when it comes. If your spiritual eyes and ears are open, you’ll understand what’s happening and you won’t just follow the crowd. You won’t go off the cliff with the rest of the lemmings. Your best defense is to be knowledgeable and alert.

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FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

# Stay simple

I spoke great truths, profound words that changed lives and continue to do so. But I also spoke to the children. I was simple, I was clear, and I didn't lose My appreciation of little things. I stopped to enjoy the flowers. I cooked for My disciples.

It's when you can't find joy in the everyday things of life that you become complicated and lose the human touch. You exchange depth of character for a labyrinth of complex thinking, a heart that is sensitive to the things of the spirit for mere head knowledge.

Simplicity is a gift. Everyone starts out with it, but as some people grow up they discount this gift because they associate it with ignorance, naiveté, immaturity, and

a lack of sophistication. They prefer to weave a web of complexity to cover it. But did I not say that unless you have childlike simplicity to believe in the "impossible" and the unseen—Me, the One who died for you and rose to life again so you could have the wonderful but simple gift of eternal life—you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven? The gift of simplicity remains for those who have the humility and wisdom to value it and claim it as their own.

There is much to discover throughout life and even more in Heaven, but you will always find that the most profound truths, the greatest beauty, and the most outstanding wisdom are all expressed simply.

