

# eternal perspectives

with author Randy Alcorn

Fall/Winter Issue • 2014

## *God's Sovereignty and Meaningful Human Choice*

**Why Is This Tough and Controversial  
Issue Worth Studying and Discussing?**

**PLUS**

**A Prayer about Good  
and Black Fridays**

**Choosing to Trust  
God Today**

# contents

- 3 **If "no eye has seen" Heaven, how can we know about it?**  
Randy Alcorn
- 4 **A Prayer about Good and Black Fridays**  
Scotty Smith
- 5 **Q&A**  
Randy Alcorn and Chelsea Weber
- 6 **God's Sovereignty and Meaningful Human Choice**  
Randy Alcorn



- 10 **"Even as the Lord Loves"**  
Charles Spurgeon
- 11 **Prayer + Thanksgiving = Peace**  
Randy Alcorn

- 12 **I Will Choose to Trust God Today**  
Randy Alcorn
- 13 **News from EPM**
- 14 **The Guardian Project Story**  
Heidi Boos



## about

*Eternal Perspectives*, a publication of Eternal Perspective Ministries, seeks to encourage readers to learn to live in light of eternity.

### Subscribe

This magazine is sent free to all who request it. To subscribe by mail or to receive an email notification when the latest edition is posted online, go to [www.epm.org/magazine](http://www.epm.org/magazine). Do you currently receive a magazine in the mail but would prefer to receive a notification to read it online? Update your subscription preferences at [www.epm.org/preferences](http://www.epm.org/preferences).

### Permissions

Articles in this publication (and on our website) written by Randy Alcorn may be freely quoted or copied, in part or in whole, provided EPM's name, address, and website are placed on the copy. (If you wish to revise or leave out portions of an article, please submit to us for permission.) Feel free to reproduce this magazine, and pass it on to individuals, churches, or groups. It is our desire to spread this information, not protect or restrict it. A printable PDF is available at [www.epm.org/magazine](http://www.epm.org/magazine).

### Contact

39085 Pioneer Blvd., Suite 206, Sandy, OR 97055  
info@epm.org | 503.668.5200 | toll-free order line 1.877.376.4567

### Donate

EPM is a nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. All contributions are tax-deductible. Donate online at [www.epm.org/donate](http://www.epm.org/donate).

### Online Store

Shop online at [www.epm.org/store](http://www.epm.org/store) for Randy Alcorn books and products.

Copyright © 2014 by *Eternal Perspective Ministries*. Layout by Stephanie Anderson, EPM staff member.

## connect

Ways to stay connected with Randy and EPM for the latest news and resources:



[www.epm.org](http://www.epm.org)  
Find resources and purchase books.



[www.epm.org/blog](http://www.epm.org/blog)  
Read Randy's latest blog posts.



[www.facebook.com/randyalcorn](http://www.facebook.com/randyalcorn)  
Connect with Randy and read daily posts.  
[www.facebook.com/EPMinistries](http://www.facebook.com/EPMinistries)  
Follow EPM for the latest news from our office, including promotions.



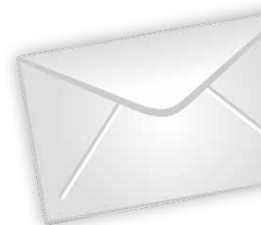
[www.twitter.com/randyalcorn](http://www.twitter.com/randyalcorn)  
Read short daily thoughts from Randy.  
[www.twitter.com/epmorg](http://www.twitter.com/epmorg)  
Receive updates on our promotions and links to our latest online resources.



[www.pinterest.com/randyalcorn](http://www.pinterest.com/randyalcorn)  
Explore and pin quotes and resources.

## Do you receive our email newsletter?

Stay in touch with our ministry by signing up at [www.epm.org/subscribe](http://www.epm.org/subscribe)



# If “no eye has seen” Heaven, how can we know about it?

BY RANDY ALCORN

*“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.” But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God’s deep secrets. (1 Corinthians 2:9-10)*

*The LORD our God has secrets known to no one. We are not accountable for them, but we and our children are accountable forever for all that he has revealed to us. (Deuteronomy 29:29)*

**F**irst Corinthians 2:9-10 is a wonderful passage; it’s just that it’s nearly always misused. It says precisely the opposite of what it’s cited to prove! What we otherwise could not have known about Heaven, because we’re unable to see it, God says He has revealed to us through His Spirit. This means that God has explained to us what Heaven is like. Not exhaustively, but accurately.

God tells us about Heaven in His Word, not so we can shrug our shoulders and remain ignorant, but because He wants us to understand and anticipate what awaits us. We should accept that many things about Heaven are secret and that God has countless surprises in store for us. But the things God has revealed to us about Heaven belong to us and to our children. It’s critically important that we discuss and understand them.

*This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 1:1-2)*

God commanded the apostle John to talk about his prolonged visit to Heaven, which he did in detail in the book of Revelation. Likewise, Isaiah and Ezekiel wrote about what they saw in Heaven. If God didn’t intend for us to understand what He revealed to these men about Heaven, why would He bother telling us about it? When was the last time you wrote someone a letter using words you didn’t expect them to comprehend? So, we should study, teach, and discuss God’s revelation about Heaven given to us in His Word. ■

## New giftable book on Heaven

*Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Heaven* is a beautiful leather-like gift book that provides solid, biblically based answers to more than 100 questions about God, Heaven, angels, and eternity. It would make a great gift this Christmas season. (This is a special edition of Randy’s book *TouchPoints: Heaven*.)

EPM price \$9.99 (retail \$14.99)

Order online at [www.epm.org/everythingheaven](http://www.epm.org/everythingheaven)



Randy Alcorn

*Eternal Perspectives* • Fall/Winter 2014 3



# A Prayer about Good and Black Fridays

BY SCOTTY SMITH

*So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:31-33*

Lord Jesus, this is one early morning I don't feel alone at all. From where I'm seated, I can already see streams of cars heading for the stores and malls, and it's not even 4:00 in the morning! They call it Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving—a day when your words about "running after all these things" really come to life.

People will be pushing against doors, running up aisles, and grabbing for items. They'll act like famished people who haven't eaten in weeks with manners that would usually embarrass most grandmothers—except today, because the grandmothers are right there with them.

Lord Jesus, I'm not sitting here smugly judging anyone, for there's no one, by nature, more greedy or grabby than me. I thank you that I live in a time and place of abundance. I thank you I've never had to be concerned about what I'll eat, drink, or wear. I even thank you that many people will enjoy fine savings and

get real bargains today.

But on this Black Friday, I'm especially grateful for Good Friday and what you accomplished on the cross. It's only because of you, Jesus, that we know God as Abba, Father—who knows our every need, who answers before we ask; who gives us all things richly to enjoy; who satisfies our hunger, slakes our thirst, and clothes us—not only with cotton, but in your righteousness. What riches we have, indeed... to feast upon you as the Bread of Life and to drink the living water you alone can give—we are a wealthy, beloved, cared-for people beyond all deserving and accounting.

In this next season of our lives, show us, Lord Jesus, how to seek your kingdom first, above everything else. Rather than spending more money on ourselves, where would you have us invest our time, talent, and treasure; our energy, tears, and laughter? What new chapters of your story of redemption and restoration would you write through us? So very amen we pray, with gratitude and anticipation, in your loving name. ■

*Scotty Smith is an author and a pastor who serves at West End Community Church in Franklin, Tennessee as teacher in residence. You can read his blog at [www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/scottysmith](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/scottysmith).*

## #GIVINGTUESDAY™

EPM would like to introduce you to the "Giving Tuesday" movement. It's the philanthropic community's response to the consumerism of Black Friday and Cyber Monday and is designed to provide people with a charitable day to consider giving as they go into the holiday season. **This year's day is December 2, 2014.** Learn more at [www.givingtuesday.org](http://www.givingtuesday.org).

Whether or not you participate in "Giving Tuesday," may this Christmas season focus on the person and work of Christ. —Randy Alcorn

## What is the most impactful thing a Christian can do to break the cycle of abortion?

Answer from Randy Alcorn

**F**irst, make yourself aware of the need that unplanned pregnancy and abortion creates. When you give your time to learn about abortion, abstinence, adoption, and caring for needy women, you can pray for divine appointments where God can use you to make a difference in people's lives. Next, offer your God-given resources to the Lord. Ask God to show you the unique ways He has for you to contribute to helping. He will use your God-given skills and resources to make a difference. Ask yourself: "What has God given me? How can I use that to help touch lives?"

I remember how years ago my friend Mark Kost used his carpentry skills to remodel the house that became the pregnancy resource center in my hometown of Gresham, Oregon. Mark, who's as big as an NFL lineman, might not be the first choice to counsel a pregnant woman! But the work of his hands has had eternal impact on literally thousands of women and unborn babies. ■



## What should I do if my spouse doesn't want me to talk to our children about Heaven?

Someone wrote to EPM: *Ever since my children could talk, I have been instilling in them a joy and longing for Heaven. My daughter especially loves to talk and ask questions about Heaven. However, this is unsettling for my husband. He sees her longing for Heaven as something morbid. How should I balance my approach? I want to be sensitive to him but also instill joy and hope in our children, and answer their questions.*

Answer by Chelsea Weber, an executive assistant to Randy Alcorn

**T**his is a difficult situation. Scripture says to honor, respect, and submit to your husband. But it also says that we should anticipate and long for Heaven. I would start with prayer and asking God for guidance. God is the only one who can change your husband's heart.

I would encourage you to talk to your husband again in a respectful, humble, gracious way and simply share your heart with him. Ask him how he would like you to respond to your kids when they ask questions. Be careful about being defensive or preaching at him but instead think of coming alongside him. First Peter 3:1-4 says, "even if he is disobedient to the word, he may be won without a word by the behavior of his wife as he observes her chaste and respectful behavior... and let

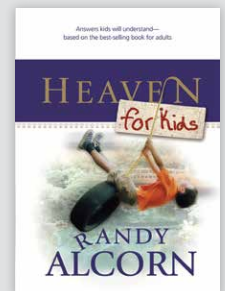
her adornment be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit which is precious in the sight of God."

Maybe you could suggest spending some time looking at Scripture together to see what God's Word says about Heaven. I'd also suggest getting one of Randy's books on Heaven and reading through it with your husband. Or if your husband isn't a reader, maybe he would be willing to talk to a pastor at your church or another godly leader about Heaven. Your willingness to work through this together before sharing with your kids would speak loudly to your husband.

Above all pray and trust God to bring a resolution to your hearts. If after all of this your husband still does not want you to talk to your kids about Heaven, it sounds like he would be ok with you talking to them about Jesus. The best part of Heaven is that we will get to be in God's presence. Share the gospel with your kids, talk to them about having a relationship with Christ and what that looks like. Encourage them to fall in love with Jesus. ■

### more resources

Read an excerpt from Randy's book *Heaven for Kids* at [www.epm.org/heavenforkids](http://www.epm.org/heavenforkids)



# God's Sovereignty and Meaningful Human Choice

Why Is This Tough and Controversial  
Issue Worth Studying and Discussing?

*By Randy Alcorn*



What good can come from studying the mysterious and often upsetting subject of God's sovereignty and human free will?

In small-group Bible studies, at colleges and seminaries, on blogs and radio programs, sovereignty and free will are bantered about. Some recognize these issues as hugely important. Convinced of their position, they look for opportunities to make their case.

Others shrug and say, "These doctrines cause division and are impossible to understand. Why even try?"

I believe one compelling reason to study them is to *better* understand what we cannot *fully* understand. And in the case of God's sovereignty and human choice, while it's not imperative that I understand everything, it *is* important that I believe in both. If I don't believe in God's sovereignty, I'll either despair or imagine that I must carve out my own path. If I don't believe in my freedom to make meaningful choices, I'll either give up on life or not take responsibility for my decisions.

Following are six other excellent reasons:

### 1. To develop a deeper appreciation for God and His Word, which reveals Him to us.

When the United States announced its intention to send a man to the moon, it mobilized untold resources. By the time Neil Armstrong set foot on the lunar surface in July 1969, the US space program had done much more than reach its objective. Along the way, countless advances were made in medicine, engineering, chemistry, physics, and numerous other fields. NASA aimed at the moon and got a whole lot more.

Likewise, our pursuit of godly wisdom and understanding will not only deepen our perspective on a specific passage or topic, but will also help us in countless other ways, as we give extra effort to diligently and prayerfully meditate on God's Word (see Psalm 19:8; 119:30, 105; 2 Peter 1:19).

### 2. To help us mirror Christ's humility.

True humility and wisdom consist of recognizing how little we really know. The Bible insists we "know in part" and we "see but a poor reflection as in a mirror" (1 Corinthians 13:9, 12).

*True humility and wisdom consist of recognizing how little we really know.*

However, God is honored when we go to His Word to learn more about Him and His ways. We're to bow to the wisdom of Scripture, even when its mysteries are

In the case of God's sovereignty and human choice, while it's not imperative that I understand everything, it is important that I believe in both.



hard to wrap our minds around. Humility requires that we not think more highly of ourselves than we ought (see Romans 12:3) and that we realize how much we have to learn from God.

When the Ethiopian eunuch was puzzling over Scripture, Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" (Acts 8:30). Asking God to enlighten us and give us insight from His Word will go a long way toward benefiting from this study.

Bible study is exciting when we come expecting to learn, to be challenged, and to be transformed.

### 3. To embrace all of God's inspired Word, not just parts of it.

"The first to present his case seems right," says Proverbs 18:17, "till another comes forward and questions him." Our families and churches and the books we've read may have presented their cases first, but that doesn't mean they are right.

*The Message* paraphrases Ecclesiastes 7:18: "It's best to stay in touch with both sides of an issue. A person who fears God deals responsibly with all of reality, not just a piece of it." God inspired *all* of His Word, not just parts of it, and He calls us to embrace it all.

We should compare Scripture with Scripture to discern the whole counsel of God.

Large dogs can get two tennis balls in their mouths at the same time. Not our Dalmatian, Moses. He managed to get two in his mouth only momentarily. To his distress, one ball or the other always spurted out. Likewise, we have a hard time handling parallel ideas such as grace *and* truth, or God's sovereignty *and* free or meaningful choice. We need to stretch our

undersized minds to hold them both at once.

A paradox is an apparent contradiction, not an actual one. Sovereignty and meaningful choice aren't contradictory. God has no trouble understanding how they work together. In His infinite mind they coexist in perfect harmony.

*A paradox is an apparent contradiction, not an actual one.*

As you may have noticed, however, *our* minds are not infinite. And while our brains can never fully grasp sovereignty and meaningful choice, by affirming what Scripture says about both, we can avoid the mistake of denying one in order to affirm the other.

### 4. To foster unity in the body of Christ.

In my new book, *hand in Hand*, I bring a respect for brothers and sisters in Christ who believe God's Word but understand it differently than I do. I encourage you to carefully examine your own positions and

inconsistencies before subjecting fellow Christians to blistering critique. Puritan Thomas Brooks stated, "There are no souls in the world that are so fearful to judge others as those that do most judge themselves, nor so careful to make a righteous judgment of men or things as those that are most careful to judge themselves."

Let's bear the fruit of the Spirit, which includes both peace and patience (see Galatians 5:22). Unity has an evangelistic power that needless division undermines (see John 17:20–21). When we seek to become peacemakers among Christ-following Bible believers, we please Jesus (see Matthew 5:9).

Let's recognize our core areas of agreement, making an honest attempt to *understand* one another while refusing to let peripheral issues separate us. If we love the same Jesus and believe the same Bible, let's start and end there.

## 5. To avoid both fatalism and crushing guilt.

Church history shows us that leaning heavily toward a particular set of verses can result in apathy and passivity: "God is going to do whatever He wants to do anyway, so why bother doing anything ourselves?" Leaning heavily toward another set of verses can result in something close to frenzy and unrelenting guilt: "We have to save the world! It all depends on us!"

What is God's role and what is mine? Is my life in God's hands, my hands, or the hands of demons or other people? What we believe about God's sovereignty and human choice has a significant impact on how we live.

## 6. To prevent us from becoming trivial people in a shallow age.

The times we live in are in no danger of going down in history as "The Era of Deep Thought." In our world, feelings overshadow thinking, and sizzle triumphs over substance.

Taking their cues from the culture, Christians who hear about the paradox of sovereignty and free will might say, "It's a mystery; we're never going to solve it." But this can just be laziness, a spiritual-sounding way of saying, "I don't want to think too hard. Let's watch a movie instead."

How can we keep the shallowness of our culture from turning us into trivial Christians? "Reflect on what I am saying," Paul writes, "for the Lord will give you insight into all this" (2 Timothy 2:7).

Though surrounded with sweeping superficiality and

slavery to what's trending on Twitter, we must learn to think deeply. Paul warned, "The time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths" (2 Timothy 4:3–4, NIV2011).

*If we devote our lives to dealing only with trivial issues, we can't help but become trivial people.*

If you want truth and depth, you have to spend time in God's Word, allowing it to make the crucial sixteen-inch journey from your head to your heart. Yes, the question of how human choice and divine sovereignty can coexist is big and difficult, but it's also vitally important. If we devote our lives to dealing only with trivial issues, we can't help but become trivial people.

## The relationship of God's sovereignty and our meaningful choice is both intriguing and beautiful.

Of all the dilemmas we confront in life, none is more enigmatic than God's sovereignty and human choice. So why do I find the perplexing question of God's sovereignty and human choice beautiful rather than frustrating?

It all depends on perspective.

When astronomers gaze into deep space they're confronted with the universe's puzzles. One of them is dark energy, which is "thought to be the enigmatic force that is pulling the cosmos apart at ever-increasing speeds." How and why is it doing this? Another unknown is how dark matter, "thought to make up about 23 percent of the universe," somehow has "mass but cannot be seen"; its existence is deduced by the "gravitational pull it exerts on regular

matter." What exactly is it?

Cosmic rays are highly energetic particles that flow into our solar system from deep in outer space, but where do they actually come from? It's been a mystery for fifty years. The sun's corona, its ultrahot outer atmosphere, has a temperature of "a staggering 10.8 million degrees Fahrenheit." Solar physicists still don't understand how the sun reheats itself.

These mysteries and countless others have not so much frustrated scientists as fascinated them. Watch their interviews and read their articles; their wonder about things they don't comprehend is palpable. You don't have to be able to wrap your mind around something in order to see its beauty.

This is how I view the conundrum of God remaining





sovereign while still granting His creatures the gift of choice. The immensity of the marvel itself should move God's children to worship.

Human beings are capable of inventing nonliving machines, including computers they program to do complex tasks. But God goes far beyond that by creating complex beings with choice-making capacity, including the freedom to worship or revolt.

For God to fully know in advance what billions of human beings could and would do under certain circumstances, and to govern our world in such a way as to accomplish His eternal plan—is this not stunning?

If we can gaze at the night sky or a waterfall or the ocean with hearts moved at their sheer beauty, should we not be able study the metaphysical wonders of God's universe with equal or even greater awe?

Surely our lives are greatly enriched when we recognize the mysterious beauty of the interplay between God's ways and ours.

God's choices come first, and ours second.

I do think it's reasonable to look at God's choices as

being more foundational than our own. Why? Because we're made in His image, and His choice-making precedes and empowers ours. The universe is first and foremost about the purposes, plan, and glory of God. Because He is infinite, His choices naturally hold more sway than those of His creatures. As His power exceeds ours, so does the power of His choices.

That doesn't mean our choices don't matter—they certainly do. He gives us room to make choices according to the prevailing disposition of our will and within the limits He imposes in His sovereign plan. My perspective is simply that everything about God, including His choices, is greater than everything about us.

A. W. Tozer said, "Every soul belongs to God and exists by His pleasure. God being Who and What He is, and we being who and what we are, the only thinkable relation between us is one of full lordship on His part and complete submission on ours."

That's the spirit in which I'm approaching this subject in *hand in Hand*: eager to acknowledge His lordship and willing to submit to whatever He has revealed in His Word. I invite you to join me in exploring this fascinating topic...and experiencing the joy of discovery. ■

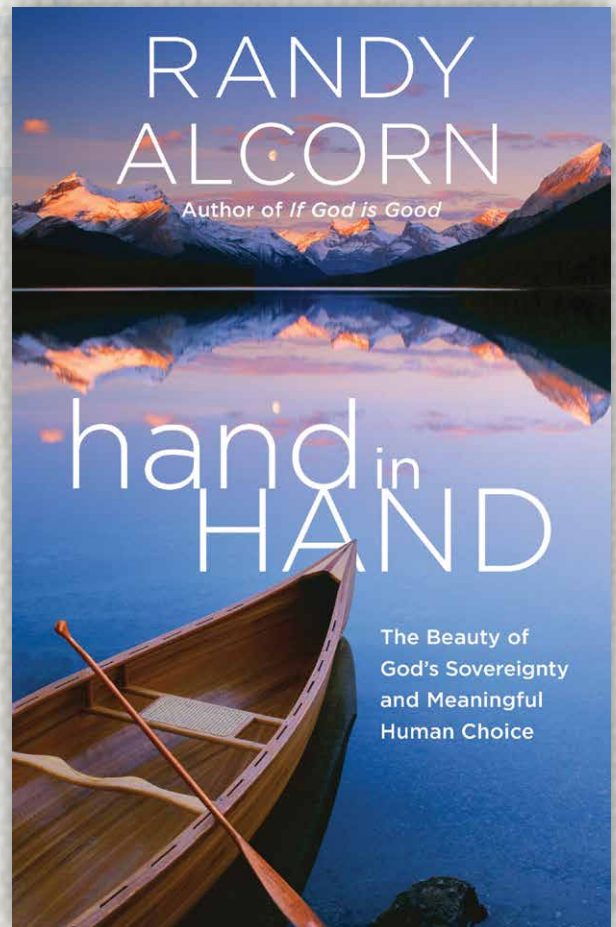
God's sovereignty. Human choice.  
They go hand in Hand.

One of the most perplexing theological questions—*Is it possible to reconcile God's sovereignty with human choice?*—is also one of the most personal. A careful guide through Scripture, *hand in Hand* shows us why God's sovereignty and our choices were meant to go together.

*hand in Hand: The Beauty of God's Sovereignty and Meaningful Human Choice* is available from [www.epm.org/handinhand](http://www.epm.org/handinhand) for \$11.99 (retail \$14.99).

Includes small-group discussion questions.

Also available on audio CDs, read by the author, for \$14.98 (retail \$19.98). Order online at [www.epm.org/handinhandaudio](http://www.epm.org/handinhandaudio).



# “Even as the Lord Loves”

BY CHARLES SPURGEON

(REVISED BY ALISTAIR BEGG AND SLIGHTLY ADAPTED BY DOUG NICHOLS)

**B**eliever, look back through all your experience, and think of the way in which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness, and how He has fed and clothed you every day—how He has suffered your poor behavior—how He has put up with all your murmurings and all your longings after the world. Think of how His grace has been sufficient for you in all your troubles—how His blood has been a pardon to you in all your sins—how His rod and His staff have comforted you.

When you reflect upon the love of the Lord, remember it is also for the future, for Christ’s covenant and blood have something more in them than the past. He who has loved you and pardoned you will never cease to love and pardon. He is Alpha, and He shall be Omega also: He is first, and He shall be last.

Therefore, remember when you pass through the valley of the shadow of death, you need fear

no evil, for He is with you, for death cannot separate you from His love; and when you come into the mysteries of eternity you need not tremble, “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

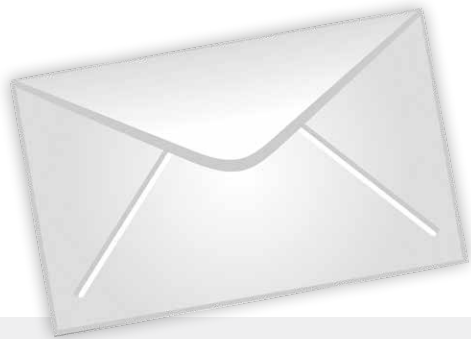
Does not this make you love Jesus? Does not a survey of the vastness of God’s loving care stir your heart and compel you to delight yourself in the Lord your God? Surely as we meditate on the love of the Lord, our hearts burn within us, and we long to love Him more. ■

*Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92) was England’s best-known preacher for most of the second half of the nineteenth century. It is estimated that during his lifetime, he preached to more than 10 million people. His collected sermons fill sixty-three volumes and remain one of the best-selling writing series in history.*



## more resources

Randy’s book *We Shall See God* is filled with insights on Heaven from Charles Spurgeon. Learn more at [www.epm.org/wssg](http://www.epm.org/wssg)



## Do you receive our email newsletter?

- Be the first to hear about Randy’s upcoming book releases
- Receive specials and coupons for our store
- Get links to encouraging resources directly in your inbox
- Keep in touch with our ministry’s latest news
- ...and more!

Sign up at [www.epm.org/subscribe](http://www.epm.org/subscribe)

# Prayer + Thanksgiving = *Peace*

BY RANDY ALCORN



When one of our daughters had surgery a few years ago to remove a mass suspected to be cancer (it wasn't), my wife Nancy and I were grateful to the surgeon who operated on her. But we weren't praying to the surgeon. We prayed to God, and credited Him for the results. Our highest gratitude was to our Savior. We knew the surgeon's hands were under God's sovereign control, making us more grateful—not less—for the surgeon's God-given skill.

Of course, not every circumstance will turn out as we hope and pray. Either way, our gratitude for God's sovereign plan, and for His promise to work all things for the ultimate good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28) will make us slower to blame others and less likely to be embittered against them.

"Do not be anxious about anything," the apostle Paul wrote, "but in everything *by prayer* and supplication *with thanksgiving* let your requests be made known to God. And the *peace* of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7, emphasis added).

Prayer plus thanksgiving equals peace.

We must recognize, however, that God's will is often different from ours. He is never under any obligation to do as we ask. Though we are free to ask Him to deliver us from something especially difficult or painful, the final outcome of *every* situation is solely in God's hands. Proverbs 19:21 declares, "Many are the plans in the mind of a

man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand." While we may only see our earthly circumstances, God is working to increase our dependence on Him and to make us more like Christ. We should thank God no matter what, not out of pretense, but out of trust in His wisdom, goodness and love.

Dr. Helen Roseveare was a medical missionary to the Congo during the 1950s and 1960s, where rebel armies posed a constant threat to her team's work and safety.

In August of 1964, word spread that the local chief had been abducted and flayed alive. One night Helen and the other women missionaries who had not already fled the country were seized at gunpoint by guerrilla soldiers who took over the hospital compound and occupied it for five months. The women were savagely beaten, humiliated, and raped by the rebel soldiers.

She has never forgotten that first very dark night: "I felt unutterably alone. For a brief moment, I felt God had failed me. He could have stepped in and prevented this rising crescendo of wickedness and cruelty. He could have saved me out of their hands. Why didn't He speak? Why didn't He intervene?"

But in the midst of that terrifying ordeal, as she cried out to the Lord, she sensed Him saying to her, "*Helen, can you thank Me?*" Helen wrote, "That healing and release began when I said, 'Lord, I'm willing to thank You for trusting me with this experience, even if You never tell me why.' No, my circumstances didn't change. But He changed me in the midst of them." ■



"Lord, I'm willing to thank You for trusting me with this experience, even if You never tell me why."

—Dr. Helen Roseveare

# I Will Choose to TRUST GOD Today

BY RANDY ALCORN



In her book *Choosing Gratitude*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss shares a pledge written by a Bible teacher named Russell Kelfer. He challenged believers to write these words on a sheet of paper, and sign their names, then make a habit of recommittting themselves to it on a regular basis:

*Having been born into the kingdom of God, I do hereby acknowledge that God's purchase of my life included all the rights and control of that life for all eternity.*

*I do further acknowledge that He has not guaranteed me to be free from pain or to have success or prosperity. He has not guaranteed me perfect health. He has not guaranteed me perfect parents. He has not guaranteed me perfect children. He has not guaranteed me the absence of pressures, trials, misunderstandings, or persecution.*

*What He has promised me is eternal life. What He has promised me is abundant life. What He has promised me is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, meekness, and self-control. He has given me all of Himself in exchange for the rights to my life...*

*Therefore I acknowledge this day the relinquishment of all my rights and expectations, and humbly ask Him by His grace to replace these with a grateful spirit, for whatever in His wisdom He deems to allow for my life.*

In other words, this day—like every other day—belongs to God, not me. So, if God determines that I should spend time contending with a flat tire, an unpleasant confrontation, or even an unexpected trip to the emergency room, that's completely up to Him. He knows best. He's the master, I'm His servant. I have trusted Him with my eternal life, and I will trust Him with my life today. ■



## Now available from EPM Gift Certificates

Starting to think about Christmas and the perfect gifts for your loved ones? EPM now has gift certificates available! Check out our new easy-to-use online store and our new gift certificates today: [www.epm.org/giftcertificates](http://www.epm.org/giftcertificates)

## PARTNER WITH US BY GIVING

If you'd like to make a year-end, tax-deductible donation to EPM, you can give online at [www.epm.org/donate](http://www.epm.org/donate). If God lays it on your heart to give to our ministry, or to pray for us (the greatest gift you can offer), know that we deeply appreciate it.

To catch a vision for how EPM is making an eternal difference by encouraging believers to live for eternity, we invite you to watch our short video at [www.epm.org/about](http://www.epm.org/about).

## Crossover, with EPM's Julia Stager



EPM staff member Julia Stager has begun a new video series expressing her personal, biblical, and theological perspectives. Julia holds a Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies from Western Seminary and makes an important contribution to EPM. Randy writes, "Julia has so much to offer, and I'm really excited about her doing this. I hope you'll look for her regular video blogs and pass them on through your social media and other outlets. I respect Julia and love to hear what she has to say—I think you will too."



You can find her video blogs twice a month on [www.epm.org/blog](http://www.epm.org/blog), and can also subscribe to her Crossover Youtube channel at [www.epm.org/crossover](http://www.epm.org/crossover).

## Check out our new shopping cart!

We recently launched a new and improved online store at [www.epm.org/store](http://www.epm.org/store). We hope you'll browse the store and let us know what you think!



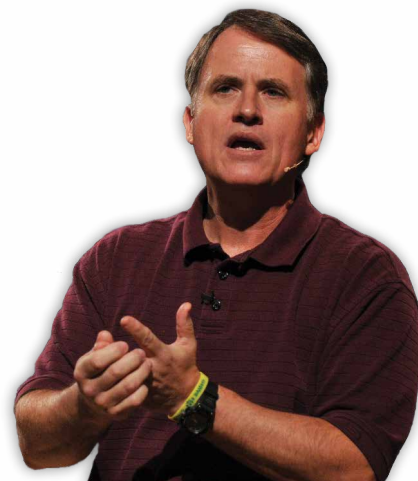
## Hear Randy at these 2015 conferences

### The Linger Conference: February 13-14, 2015

Randy will be a speaker at The Linger Conference at Watermark Community Church in Dallas, Texas. His session will be on the topic of "Knowing the God Who Brings Good out of Bad." He will also be participating in the Q&A Panel. Register online at [www.lingerconference.com](http://www.lingerconference.com). (On Sunday, February 15, Randy will be speaking at Watermark Church, [www.watermark.org](http://www.watermark.org).)

### The Gospel Coalition National Conference: April 13-15, 2015

Randy will be a workshop speaker at The Gospel Coalition 2015 National Conference "Coming Home: The New Heaven and New Earth" in Orlando, Florida. His breakout session will be on the topic "Continuity and Discontinuity: How similar or different might life on the New Earth be to our present lives?" Register online at [www.tgc.org/2015](http://www.tgc.org/2015).



# "You Can Run and You Can Pray"

## The Guardian Project Story

*Have you ever wondered how as one person, you can make an eternal impact for God's glory? This testimony from Heidi Boos, one of the founders of the Guardian Project (which has provided the first ever mobile ultrasound unit in Oregon to reach abortion-minded moms) is a powerful reminder of how a Christ follower's obedience to God's calling truly can make a difference!*

BY HEIDI BOOS

I have always enjoyed my solo runs. There is such freedom in just running—the sound of my feet hitting the pavement, the fresh smell of rain, the giving of my heart and all my worries and frustrations to God. He always seems to meet me there.

It was no different this particular cold winter day. I had recently been at our church's Sanctity of Human Life Service, and my heart was heavy with the loss of these sweet babies. "God, what can I do?" The answer was crystal clear: you can run and you can pray.

It was one of those moments when you know God has spoken to you, and you think, "Did that really just happen?" But those words never went away, even though I had no idea what plan God had in mind. At the time I had four kids age six and under. "What can just one person do?," I wondered. Still, the words didn't leave—especially when I ran.

Finally, I consented to the Spirit's leading and told my husband, Nathan. Though the details were muddy, it



**DJ and Allison Van Zanten and Heidi and Nathan Boos with the Insight mobile ultrasound unit.**

was clear that God wanted me to run to raise money for the cause of life. I wrote an email to Randy Alcorn explaining what God was doing in my heart and asking for some direction. I knew once the words were out there, I was accountable to them.

Shortly after that service, my pastor preached on not wasting your life, and living "all in" for the gospel of

Christ. It cut right to my heart, and I decided to also email my pastor and tell our Community Life group.

Always the visionary, Nathan encouraged me to dream big. He said, "Let's put on a big race with hundreds of believers joining together for one cause. It will be great!" Whoa...didn't God just want me to run a few races, raise money through pledges and give it to a cause? That seemed doable, though still out of my comfort zone. Coordinate a big race for hundreds of people? That was crazy. The doubts and "what if's" surged through my mind.

I met with Randy's assistant (who happens to be my wonderful aunt) and told her about the idea for the race. She was so excited and encouraging. God seemed to be confirming this direction the more I talked with others.

And then...life happened. There were dishes to do, piles of laundry to wash, children to read to, marriage to invest in, church and Bible Study to attend. The days were full. But the idea never went away.

Two years later, we were at another Sanctity of Human Life service and again were struck by how abortion IS the American Holocaust. Ray Comfort's 180 video ([www.180movie.com](http://www.180movie.com)) was given out at the service. We watched it that week with our Community Life group, and as soon as it ended, my husband and I looked at each other and said, "This is the year." We talked about it with our group and prayed that God would bring us people, as this wasn't something we could tackle on our own. Of course, He knew that and had already been preparing another couple well before we were aware of the need.

I had talked with my aunt and she encouraged me to give the proceeds of the run to something concrete, such as a mobile ultrasound unit. I had never heard of one, but a few days later, a friend posted a link on Facebook to Save the Storks, a similar mobile ultrasound unit ministry in Colorado. The more we started hearing about mobile ultrasound units, the more confirmed we were in the direction God was taking us. It felt so out of reach, but we began praying God would bring a mobile unit to the streets of Portland.

Meanwhile, God was moving in DJ and Allison Van Zanten (another couple at our church) in the same way. They had just watched the 180 video and had the same conclusion—we must do something now. One night they were sharing with friends about this and said, "What if we took an ultrasound machine and put it in a van and offered ultrasounds to women?" Their friends (who happened to be in our community life group) said, "Do you know Nathan and Heidi Boos? They were just talking about the same thing." Allison sent me a Facebook message asking if we could get together. After a four-hour meeting over dinner we realized God had been knitting our hearts together for some time.

Together we worked over the next six months on all the details of putting a ministry together. What would the name be? When and where should the race be? What if

no one shows up? Who should operate the mobile unit? How are we going to raise enough money? There were more questions than answers—and much, much prayer.

At times, the answers came quickly. Other times, God was seemingly quiet and nothing moved forward. There were closed doors, disappointments, worry, marriage strife and family woes. There were days my doubting heart asked, "Who am I to try and head up a ministry like this?" Then I realized it was not as if God was dependent on me being cleaned up enough to go to work for Him, or as if I even could "clean up" for God. After all, the Bible says my righteous works are like filthy rags. Yes, God uses His broken and imperfect people so all the glory is His!

By January 2013, we were The Guardian Project—raising funds for Oregon's first ever mobile ultrasound unit. In just five months, we were fully funded to purchase the mobile unit. We held the race in September 2013 and despite my fears, we had over 900 participants! This was truly the result of God bringing believers together to give of their time, money, prayers and support.

**The Guardian Project story is simply a story about who God is and how He works through His people.**

Insight Ultrasound, Oregon's first ever mobile ultrasound, was commissioned in March 2014 for use by Portland Pregnancy Resource Center. One day a week, the van can be found at Portland State University, and three days a week in the North Portland area, offering

Christ's love, truth, and hope to women in need.

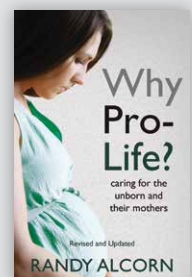
Over 850 people came to the race this year and funds raised have allowed us to partner with an additional pregnancy resource center who will go mobile in 2015. This will be Oregon's second mobile ultrasound unit! We continue to pray that God will open doors for many more resource centers to go mobile with the Guardian Project. (Learn more and donate at [www.guardianproject.org](http://www.guardianproject.org).)

The Guardian Project story is simply a story about who God is and how He works through His people. Like pieces of a puzzle, each of us has a part in God's story. He's going to accomplish His plan and by His grace, He invites us to join in. I'm so grateful for the hundreds of people who followed His still, small voice, be it a quiet nudge or a clear call. He used all of us to accomplish this. To Him be the glory! ■

*Heidi Boos is a homeschooling mom and an active member of Good Shepherd Community Church near Gresham, Oregon. She and Nathan are the parents of four girls and are expecting a boy in November!*

#### more resources

Randy's book *Why ProLife?* is available from EPM at [www.epm.org/whyprolife](http://www.epm.org/whyprolife)





Eternal Perspective Ministries  
39085 Pioneer Blvd., Suite 206  
Sandy, OR 97055

**NEW STORE! 🛒**

We're excited to introduce you to EPM's updated online store. We think you'll like the improvements!

Want to receive our store promotions and specials directly in your inbox? Sign up for our email newsletter at [www.epm.org/subscribe](http://www.epm.org/subscribe).



**FIND THESE TITLES AND MORE AT  
[WWW.EPM.ORG/STORE](http://WWW.EPM.ORG/STORE)**