

# SERVANT

## HOPE

### AT THE END OF THE AGE

**MARK  
MAXWELL**

Of Dogs and the  
Long Walk

**ED  
LANDRY**

Miracle of the  
Goat Soup

**MAX LUCADO**

on why God wants us  
to be prepared, not  
scared; informed,  
not intimidated



## A Long Walk in the Right Way

I love dogs. They are loyal, joyful, patient, affectionate, and good listeners. I've had several faithful canine companions in my life, from Tippy, the first pet I remember, to our most recent Sammy, who loved us unconditionally.

Perhaps God gave us dogs as a reflection of his own faithfulness to us—his unwavering, steadfast love that remains constant through every season. Or maybe he wanted to illustrate the kind of faithfulness we are called to have toward him. Either way, we treasure the loyalty of our pets. Their devotion is wholehearted and unwavering, a glimpse of the kind of relationship God desires with us.

**"A dog's devotion is wholehearted and unwavering, a glimpse of the kind of relationship God desires with us."**

I think faithfulness shines brightest in the little things, the ordinary routines of life—preparing another meal, washing another load of laundry, pulling weeds in the garden, showing up for work, teaching another lesson, or simply going to church again. These quiet acts of life may go unnoticed, but I believe they matter immensely to the God who sees all.

Nowhere is this steadfast devotion more vital than in prayer, a rhythm that invites God to be part of the ebb and flow of our daily life. Prayer is our ongoing conversation with God, an intentional practice of making room for him in our lives. It is more than presenting requests—it is an act of surrender, aligning our hearts with his will, and inviting him to guide our words and our steps.

Prayer has been, and remains, an ordinary routine at Prairie. We, as staff and faculty, meet for 30 minutes at

8:00 on Wednesday mornings to pray together; the students gather for their own time on Wednesday mornings as well. We set aside one full day each semester to pray as a whole community. And we have our own departmental prayer routines.

I think the best example of an extraordinary prayer warrior is not someone who speaks well while praying. Rather, I think it is someone who prays regularly, persistently, and often in a whisper. Doing the ordinary—again and again—results in extra-ordinary.

Prayer might be just as normal as breathing, permeating our daily routines. Or it might be a protected

time and place, a sanctuary or "prayer closet" where we go to meet with the Almighty. Jesus modeled this kind of prayer life, withdrawing to lonely places to seek the Father (Luke 5:16).

### A Call to a Life of Prayer

When teaching his disciples to pray, Jesus told them (and us) to pray:

1. To our Heavenly Father (Matt 6:5-9; John 15:16).
2. That his will, the Father's will, would be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt 6:9-13).
3. In Jesus' name (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24).

The Apostle Paul urged the early church to embrace a life of faithful prayer:

- "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thes. 5:16-18).




Mark Maxwell: President of Prairie College

- "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" (Col 4:2).
- "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" (Eph 6:18).
- "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:6-7).

Faithfulness in prayer is not about eloquence or perfection but about consistency, obedience, and trust. It is about bringing our joys, struggles, and uncertainties to God in the throne room of the heavens. King David in Psalm 116:2 said, "Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!" (NLT). He listens and cares.

Even when we do not see immediate answers, we continue in faith, trusting that he is working in ways beyond our understanding...because we know "that in all things God is working for the good of those who love him" (Rom 8:28).

As Romans 12:12 reminds us: "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." Let's embrace this call, steadfastly seeking the Lord in every season of life, knowing that he is always faithful to us. 



The remarkable tale of how God's truth sparked a Babushka breakout.



The story behind Max Lucado's latest hit book: *What Happens Next*.

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Prairie alumnus Joel Megli tells of his childhood tragedy Down Under and what God has done.



Humor about the good old days and a reminder of what never changes.

"ONE & DONE."

A BIG mistake.

It's common to get **final documents** done, tucked away and forgotten. With normal 'life seasons' those documents can silently lose their relevance and create grief.

At the same time opportunities abound to **unleash the power of your estate** to benefit you now and your values later.

**Scan the code** to explore possibilities.

**PRAIRIE COLLEGE**



## FACULTY FOCUS

### SIX QUESTIONS FOR BOB MURRAY

*Avid sports fan and long-time coach Bob Murray recently returned to Prairie College to direct the campus athletics program. He and his wife Kristal are the busy parents of seven children with one on the way and are once again making Three Hills their home. The award-winning coach, who was named ACAC Athletic Director of the Year and nominated for the CCAA National Director of the Year three times, firmly believes that sport can have a great impact on the social and spiritual lives of young people, as well as developing their leadership skills.*

#### THIS ISN'T YOUR FIRST TIME SERVING AT PRAIRIE.

I was originally on staff from 2005-2008. I went on to serve as athletic director at Olds College until 2017 and then at SAIT in Calgary until 2021. As a result of COVID cuts at SAIT, I spent a year consulting and then an opportunity arose at Prairie. We did not



**Bob Murray:** ACAC Athletic Director of the Year aims “to reimagine and reclaim athletics as an avenue to glorify God.”

The key ones would likely be recruitment and retention, as well as a strong sense of belonging and community. Collaborations on campus with student

**“My love of sport started as a way to escape my situation.”**

anticipate coming back to Three Hills, but the Lord paved the way for a return to Pilots Athletics.

#### HOW DID YOUR OWN INTEREST IN ATHLETICS DEVELOP?

I came from a broken home and my love of sport started as a way to escape my situation. Boys and Girls Clubs, ball fields and courts became a home where I was comfortable when my real home was not.

#### WHAT DOES A STRONG ATHLETIC PROGRAM DO FOR A SCHOOL?

I think there are many benefits to having an athletics program on a campus.

development, student union and, of course, academics allow for a healthy campus physically, as well as spiritually and emotionally.


#### COULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR VISION FOR ATHLETICS AT PRAIRIE COLLEGE?

The vision of Prairie Athletics is to reimagine and reclaim athletics as an avenue to glorify God and join him in his work in the world. Prairie College Pilots will be recognized as a faith-based organization that develops leaders with Christian values who desire to use sport for missional engagement in the world.

#### PRAIRIE OFFERS A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE IN SPORTS MANAGEMENT. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM AND HOW DOES IT EQUIP STUDENTS?

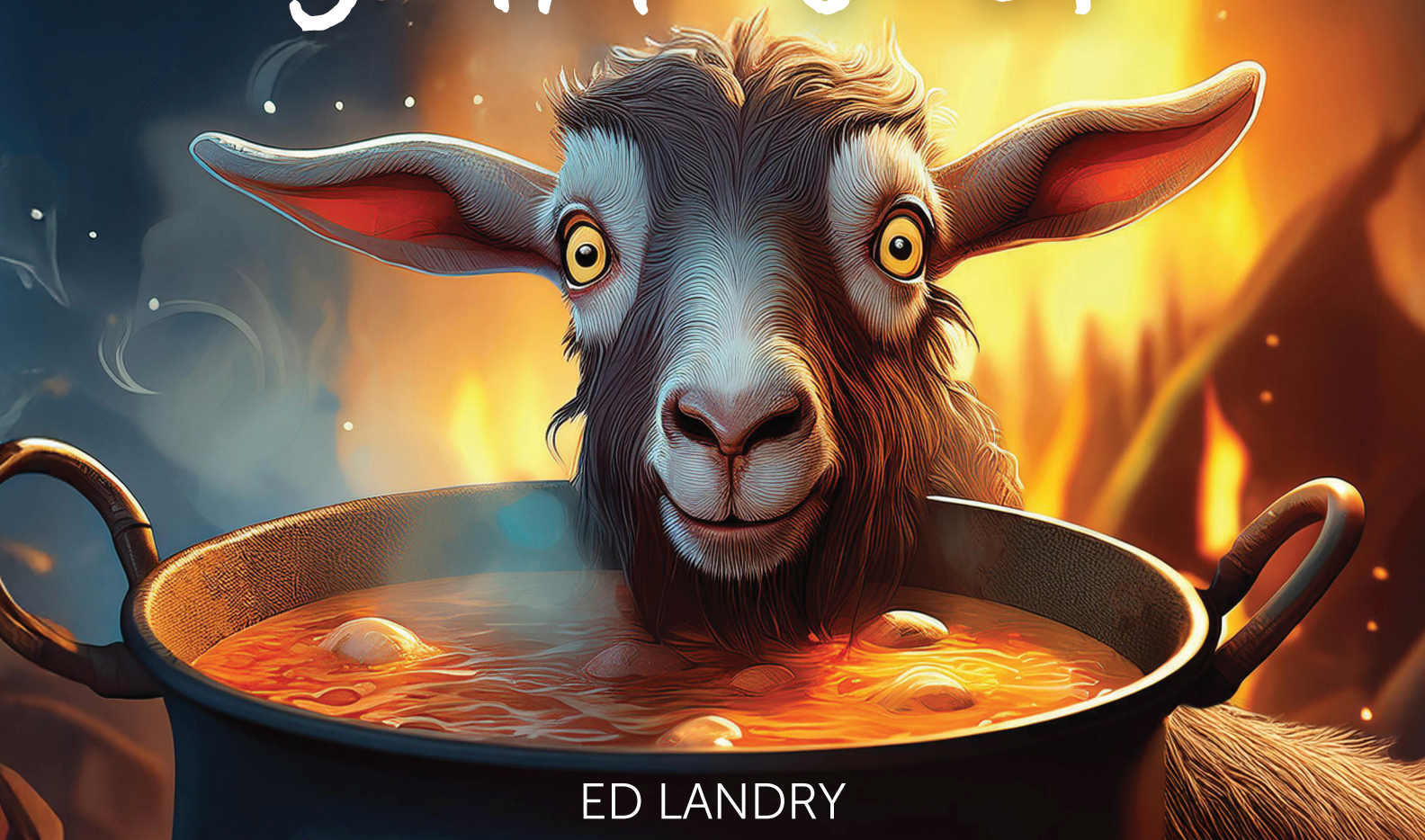
The current four-year program prepares the student for employment in sport-related fields. The main focus is on leadership, programming and the integration of faith in sport. We are also looking at the possibility of offering additional credentials in coaching and recreation certifications that would enhance a student's resume.

#### WHAT GIVES YOU THE MOST SATISFACTION IN YOUR JOB?

I really love helping people move from “here to there.” That could involve big leaping bounds or just small steps, but always looking forward and pursuing their passion. As I look back at over twenty years in post-secondary I can recall numerous times where a student has invited me to their wedding or sent a message thanking me for helping them when in the moment they did not recognize it as that, but years later they did. 



# MIRACLE OF THE GOAT SOUP



ED LANDRY

A trip to eastern Russia is not an easy experience, even when things go well. I was on my first of three pastoral training trips to what was the former Soviet Union when something happened that I have never forgotten.

After an all-nighter on what was surely one of the worst airlines on the planet we arrived in Almaty, Kazakhstan, where our hosts shuttled us to the seminar location in what seemed to be the only brand of car in the country—a Russian-made junker patterned after a Fiat made in the early 50s. Five large adults, their luggage and medical supplies didn't come close to fitting, but somehow we managed. Good thing the ride was only two hours long.

We arrived at a sanatorium in the mountains that had been used for decades to treat TB patients. After an impromptu worship service on the street to thank God for sparing our lives, we entered the dining hall just in time for breakfast.

Starving after our long journey, we were taken aback when we realized what was on the menu—goat soup. The creature appeared to have died from arthritis. And it was a Billy. You may never have had the privilege of eating wild game, especially the male of a species, but males have a special gland of some kind that secretes a strong odor that makes girl goats roll their eyes and drool. Well, it certainly did that to us, too. The stench of that soup permeated

the entire cafeteria. And when you mix stinky goat with beets, you have Goat Borscht.

When the kitchen staff came to serve the rancid soup, I thought this might be a good week to start my diet. Grandmotherly ladies with hands like colonial blacksmiths brought out the food and plopped it down in front of us, their broad faces devoid of expression. One look at those women told me not to eat that soup and the smell confirmed the look. But I needed food, so resisting all my involuntary vomit muscles, I prayed the usual missionary prayer, “Lord, I’ll get it down, you keep it down.”

As we struggled to eat the putrid gruel, a man rushed over to our table.





**Ed and Janet Landry:** *Graduating from Prairie, they soon left for the Philippines with five children in tow.*

Apparently one of the kitchen staff was having a serious problem of some kind and wanted one of the foreigners to help her.

Now, what would you do at that moment? Your mouth is full of stinky goo and while struggling to chew the soup you hear that one of the cooks is having a major mental problem and needs help or wants to confess to something. Instantly I felt compelled to offer the poor lady my assistance!

With an interpreter and a Russian-speaking missionary, who for some reason was also not very hungry, I hurried back to the kitchen to find a woman named Maria cowering in the corner of the room in absolute terror. She was shaking violently and refused to make eye contact with anyone. It seemed she had come to work that morning experiencing uncontrollable fear. With the help of the interpreter, I tried to talk

to her. The entire kitchen crew gathered around us as work came to a halt and we became center stage. Realizing that this was a spiritual battle, we asked God to calm the situation and give us wisdom. Then we gently began to explain the gospel to her.

Soon the women all began asking questions, so we divided up the group. I took the kitchen staff and the interpreter while the missionary took the fearful woman to the other side of the

room to speak with her privately. Before long my friend returned with the once terrified Maria. But something was very

different. She was radiant, smiling from ear to ear. The place became silent as they approached us and I knew without a doubt that she had been born again.

The rest of the staff had no idea what had taken place; just that something amazing had happened. It was a hushed and holy moment. Shock and wonder filled their faces. There in a kitchen in remote Kazakhstan God had touched a lowly kitchen helper. As we were called to the first session, I rejoiced that Maria had just become a believer; that God's light was shining in the darkness. And also that I didn't have to finish that horrible goat soup.

When I asked the kitchen helpers if they would like to have a Bible study, they all said "yes" without hesitation, so we set up a time two days later during their break when I wouldn't be teaching the pastors. When I got back to our team and told them what had happened in the kitchen and about the upcoming Babushka Bible study, I was met with some unexpected resistance.

The leader of our missionary team, whom I'll call Ron, reminded me that we were there to teach Russian pastors and not to be sidetracked by doing Bible studies with peasant women. Since he really was a great leader and had not only just travelled all night, but had eaten a soup made from Methuselah the goat, I decided to let it go, promising that the Bible study would not detract from my teaching. Besides, at lunch time we could all eat something besides that goat. That would put us in a better mood.

This was my baptism into Russia. These people were poor, really poor, and that goat was about all they had. We ended up eating rancid goat borsch *every meal* for the entire week. Each time we went to the cafeteria, we could

## A woman named Maria cowered in the corner of the room in absolute terror.

smell the concoction all the way down the hall. There would be no reprieve.

The day of the Bible study arrived

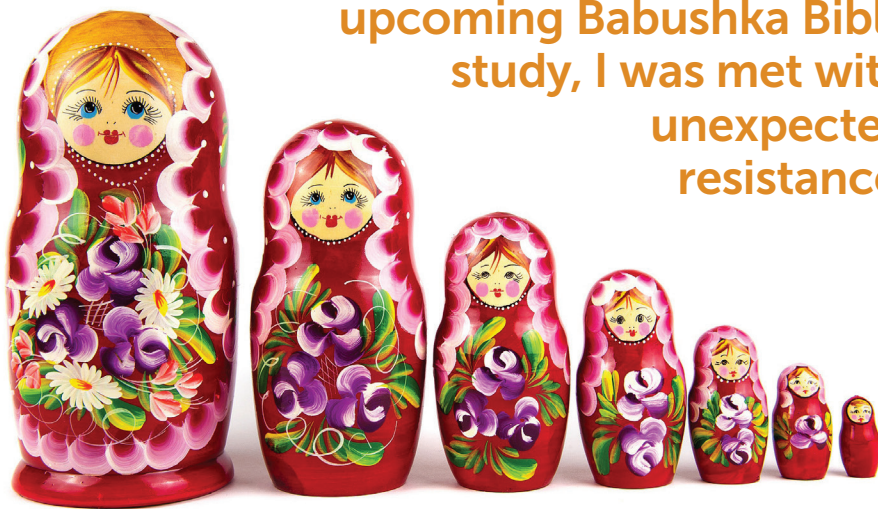


and I found the Babushkas all waiting nervously. The formerly fearful but now radiant Maria was also there, a totally different person from when we first saw

she was and proceeded to do so.

All this time I just sat there lost in wonder as the Spirit of God brought six new daughters into his Kingdom.

## When I told them what had happened in the kitchen and about the upcoming Babushka Bible study, I was met with unexpected resistance.



her cowering in the corner. Now she was full of life and joy.

Not sure where to begin, I started to talk about the existence of God. But I was soon interrupted by one of the ladies who politely told me that they knew God existed. So I started to share about the reality of sin. They interrupted again and said they knew they were sinners.

"Well," I asked, "what do you want to know?" They said they all believed that there was a God and that they were separated from him. They just wanted to know how to get right with him; they wanted what happened to Maria.

I told them how God had sent his Son Jesus to die for their sins and if they would put their trust in him, then he would give them eternal life. I had barely finished when the lady on my far left stood up and started crying out to God for mercy. As the interpreter relayed her passionate words to me, I had tears in my eyes. When she finished, the lady beside her stood and prayed a similar prayer. A miracle was happening. The third said she was not ready to make such a commitment. The next one said

The last lady was shaking like a leaf in a storm. When the wind of God got to her side of the room I asked her if she was alright. She said yes, her voice quivering, but she just could not wait to ask Jesus to be her Savior.

I went back to the pastors' sessions in the other room, feeling like I was walking on clouds. The team was amazed when I shared the incredible story. Except for our leader. He just remarked that I needed to focus on my task and not get involved with these women. Ron was not normally like this. Perhaps it was a long-term adverse goat reaction.

At the end of the week, we sat down to our last supper. I had never looked forward so much to eating a final meal. If I ever smelled that horrid stuff again, it would be too soon. Even after a week, you couldn't get used to it and I wondered how they would ever get the smell out of the dining room.

Everyone was served but for some reason, I was left out. Beside me Ron made some comment about God punishing me for getting sidetracked with Bible studies during the week. Prayer

was said and everyone began forcing their meal down. One of the other missionaries offered me some of his but I kindly told him to go ahead and eat it, secretly relieved.

Then something happened that I will remember forever. The doors to the kitchen opened and out filed a procession of all the ladies who had trusted Christ that week. They pushed a cart over to my table and gathered around me smiling as they presented me with a special chicken dinner they had purchased themselves and cooked just for me.

The entire place grew still. I was afraid to even look at grumpy Ron. The women thanked me for bringing them the message of life in Jesus and then served me this incredible meal. They had even baked a cake with a candle on it.

This was a Mary-anointing-the-feet-of-Jesus type of moment. It was a gift of great love and sacrifice for these new sisters. I don't think anyone could smell the goat anymore; it had been replaced with a new fragrance: love.

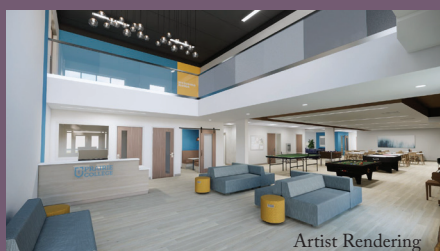
Leaning over to Ron, who was sitting in stunned silence, I just couldn't help myself. "Say," I whispered, "I sure hope God keeps on punishing me!" ❧



*Ed and Janet Landry have been missionaries since graduating from Prairie in the early '80s. They lived in Asia for 20 years and have traveled the world training pastors and church planters. They have written ten books and are with First Love Ministries. You can reach them at [edjanetlandry@gmail.com](mailto:edjanetlandry@gmail.com).*



# GOD'S PROVISION THROUGH YOU



Thanks to the abundant provision of God and generous friends like you, Prairie College is thrilled to announce that we have reached our **\$22.4 million goal**, by gifts received and pledges committed, for the **New Student Residence**. A huge thank you for your prayers and support. If you gave a pledge, you are welcome to use the form on this page to fulfill it.

When the Campaign for Greater Impact launched at the 2022 Centennial, President Mark Maxwell wanted this project to be a part of each of our stories. At Prairie, we are a global community of missional professionals, and we are so encouraged to testify to God's goodness.

Construction is on track to complete the residence by August 2025. We will be welcoming students into their new dorm suites this fall. To commemorate, Prairie will host a **ribbon cutting event on August 9th** during the annual Alumni Reunion Weekend. Everyone will be welcome to tour the new residence and join us in celebration. Mark your calendars to come join us for the weekend, August 8-10.



Watch this short video of our delighted students



## Thank you for your support of SERVANT over the years!

We hope the stories and interviews continue to challenge and encourage you.

As our printing and mailing costs have tripled in the last eighteen months, we have sought ways to reduce our expenses. In an effort to be good stewards, we will **NO LONGER BE INCLUDING RETURN ENVELOPES** in the magazines.

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*Spending of funds is confined to board-approved programs and projects. When the goal for the project has been met, the remaining contributions will be used where needed most.*

As an Alberta registered charity, we are planning to raise an estimated amount of \$100,000 in this Fund-raising campaign. It will cost our organization an estimate of \$6,886 to raise this. The money raised will be going to Campaign projects. For further information, please contact Stacey Bell, (403) 443-5511 ext. 282. Our address is PO Box 4000, 350 5th Ave NE, Three Hills, AB T0M 2N0.

You can also **DONATE ONLINE** or find instructions for **eTransfer** at [www.prairie.edu/donate](http://www.prairie.edu/donate) or call **1-403-443-5511** or toll-free **1-800-661-2425**.

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☐ Prairie's email updates.  
☐ One receipt at the end of the year for all my gifts.

*Prairie Bible Institute, in business as "Prairie College," is a registered charity in Canada and the US and issues tax receipts in both currencies.*





In other news, the **Prairie Aviation Training Centre** expansion continues with securing permits and finalizing detailed infrastructure plans. With your donations to MAF Canada and Prairie College, we are around 50% funded for this project.

As we press on with our Phase 1 projects, next up is the **new Cafeteria** space. Situated in the old Oasis Cafe area (once known as the old staff store or butcher shop), it will be right next to the new residence.

Excitement on campus is in the air, as we look forward to seeing the **student community flourish** in these new and renovated spaces. Would you consider partnering with us in the *Campaign for Greater Impact* through a one-time gift or monthly gifts? Thanks SO much for your vital role in helping us know Christ and make him known!



## NOW YOU KNOW

The seven astronauts aboard the International Space Station see 16 sunsets and sunrises each day. *NASA*

At 3.75%, Islam is now the largest non-Christian religious group in Canada. [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)

Protestant churches in the US: 314,000. How many attendees say they read the Bible daily: 32%. *Hartford Institute for Religion Research/Lifeway*

Top reason teens gave for dropping out of church: Moved to college and stopped attending. *Lifeway Research*

Thanks to cones around each eye, the chameleon can see in a 360-degree circle around itself. *National Geographic*

When the Port Authority of New York ran an ad seeking electricians with expertise at using Sontag connectors (there's no such thing), it got 170 responses. *Boardroom Reports*

52% of those sampled say social media has benefited their lives; 29% say it has hurt them personally. *New York Times*

## “QUOTE WORTHY”

### ELISABETH ELLIOT

“Elisabeth Elliot wrote to her friend Jan Webb, ‘One year ago tomorrow we learned that (her second husband) Add’s cancer had moved to the bone. I look back and can hardly believe what God has done for me in this year. How did I get through last summer? One thing—I hung onto Scripture with my fingernails, as it were, more desperately than ever in my life.’ She told Jan how she’d stuck a note on her mirror, Jesus’s words when his disciples panicked in their fishing boat in a storm. ‘Take courage. Fear not. It is I.’ Elisabeth closed her letter, ‘I think of you in your uncertainty and longing, and wonder if perhaps those simple words may do for you what they did for me—they gave me spiritual equilibrium.’” From Ellen Vaughn’s biography *Being Elisabeth Elliot*.

### C.S. LEWIS

“Faith...is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods. For moods will change, whatever view your reason takes. I know that by experience. Now that I am a Christian I do have moods in which the whole thing looks very improbable: but when I was an atheist I had moods in which Christianity looked terribly probable... that is why Faith is such a necessary virtue: unless you teach your moods ‘where they get off,’ you can never be either a sound Christian or even a sound atheist, but just a creature dithering to and fro, with its beliefs really dependent on the weather and the state of its digestion.” —C.S. Lewis

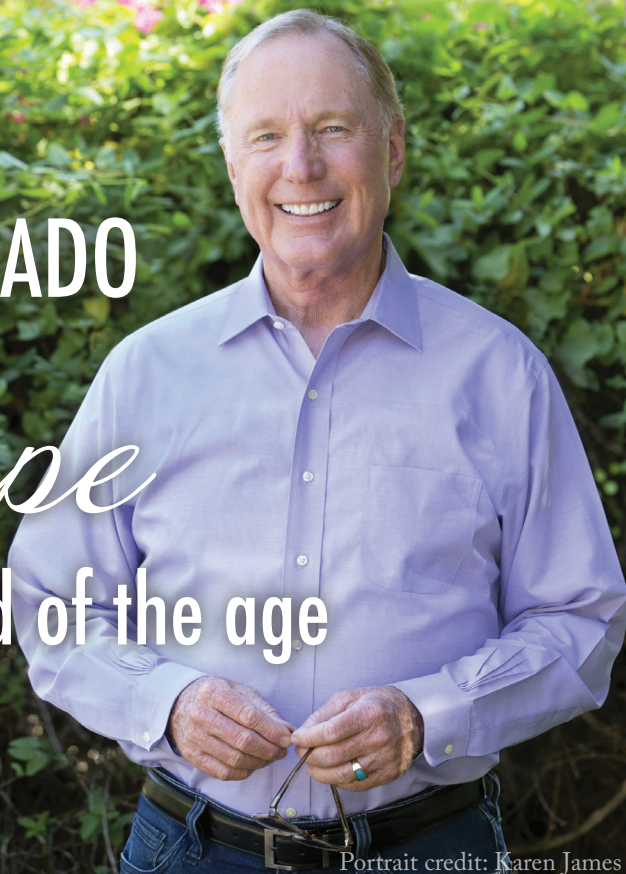
### GEORGE MACDONALD

“No words can express how much the world owes to sorrow. Most of the Psalms were born in the wilderness. Most of the Epistles were written in a prison. The greatest thoughts of the greatest thinkers have all passed through fire. The greatest poets have ‘learned in suffering what they taught in song.’ In bonds Bunyan lived the allegory that he afterwards wrote, and we may thank Bedford Jail for the Pilgrim’s Progress. Take comfort, afflicted Christian! When God is about to make pre-eminent use of a person, he puts them in the fire.” —George MacDonald



MAX LUCADO

# Hope at the end of the age



Portrait credit: Karen James

**Max Lucado:** The book “can give people hope to face the problems of this life by focusing on the promises of the next.”

**B**orn in 1955 in San Angelo, TX, Max Lucado was raised in a Christian home. But he describes his teen years as so “seriously wayward” that he “quit anything of spiritual interest because I just didn’t think that God would have me back.” Grace, he believed, was conditional and he needed to do his part before God would do his. He credits good friends and a minister with helping him see that “the whole reason Christ died on the cross was for people like me. If we could save ourselves, we wouldn’t need a Savior.” When the truth dawned, it was a life-changing discovery that has defined his life’s message, because, he says, “I’m just a walking second chance.”

Max paid his college bills by selling books door-to-door, having no idea that one day he would sell 150 million with his name on the cover. His dreams of becoming a lawyer dimmed during a Bible course and vanished altogether on a mission trip. He and his wife Denalyn became church planters in Brazil, where

Max wrote his first three books: *On the Anvil*, *No Wonder They Call Him the Savior*, and *God Came Near*.

By 1987, when they returned to the US, his books were scampering up bestseller lists. Readers warmed to his charming stories from Scripture and life,

his practical insights, and his plaque-worthy quotes. He had the heart of a pastor, the wisdom of a scholar, and an active funny bone.

Each book began as a sermon series at Oak Hills Church of Christ in San Antonio, TX, where he has pastored since 1988, (though he stopped taking a salary in 1990). By the mid-90s Max had become one of the most influential Christian authors of his generation.

Books like *In the Eye of the Storm*, *He Still Moves Stones* and *When God Whispers Your Name* explored age-old themes of God’s love, mercy, and sovereignty, but the words seemed new, popping off the pages, speaking to the deepest longings of the human heart.

His latest is *What Happens Next*. Subtitled “A Traveler’s Guide Through the End of This Age,” the book is “an optimistic, accessible, non-sensational guide to what the Bible says about heaven’s time line.” Max believes God wants us to be prepared, not scared; informed, not intimidated.

*Premier Christian Magazine* calls it “a surprisingly positive take on the end of the world.” But Max mines hope wherever his pen travels. “Face the problems of this life by focusing on the promises of the next,” he writes. “The future is not as frightening if you know the future. And you can know the future when you know who controls it.”

He believes this is a unique generation. With all that’s happening in the world, “the Christian lives life on tiptoe, searching the skies. We awaken with the thought: perhaps today! Our hope is centered on the bodily return of Christ; it’s all about him. All of history is headed to the great day that will inaugurate an endless era of justice, joy, and glory.”

Before preaching the series that would become the book, Lucado discussed the topic with church elders, asking them to “check me, test me, and correct me.” In the end all they asked

*“Since then we have seen things  
escalate in a way that was  
unimaginable 200 years ago...”*

him to do was to present the material as his point of view and not necessarily that of the church. Partly because of the positive response from congregants, he now encourages pastors not to shy away from addressing difficult topics, but to avoid presenting their positions as though they have it “all figured out.” He believes that “people love to be stimulated, to be challenged, to be led into tough Scriptures like Daniel 9 or



Revelation 20. And they appreciate the pastor at least trying.”

In an interview, he told Greg Laurie, pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship, “We don’t have to be dogmatic, but we do have to be deliberate and say, ‘Let’s, as God’s people, press into God’s Word and see if there’s something here that we can learn, if it can activate a curiosity within us.’”

When asked why he wrote a book about the end times, Max responds, “Even if my health is good, there’s a lot more sand in the bottom of my glass than the top. Some people take up gardening or painting as they grow older. I’ve taken up questions about the rapture, the antichrist, and Armageddon because I really want to know what’s around the corner. I thought: What if we could create a kind of *End Times 101* book, something that hits on all the big issues and explains them in a way that’s more approachable, not fear-mongering but faith-developing?”

Unlike some, Max sets no dates, but he’s convinced we’re down to the fourth quarter. “If we have clarity about the future, know our ultimate destiny, and trust in the God who controls it all, we can be courageous in the here and now,” he writes. “We’re all headed somewhere. Each day brings us closer to a final breath, a final heartbeat. No one is getting younger. Death comes to all. Shouldn’t our destination be an obsession?”

He says that the Bible makes almost five hundred references to heaven and the New Testament mentions the return of Jesus more than three hundred times. “Twenty-three of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament describe Jesus’ second coming, and on some fifty occasions we are told to be ready. If quantity equates to priority, then life after this life is a crucial issue to God.”

Max was researching the book on October 7 when Israel was attacked. “Israel is a huge player in end times,” he says, so he began to include more about its role. “There are several key prophecies in the Bible that have to do with the establishment of Israel as a nation. And there are several more that cannot come true unless Israel does exist. When the only nation that had been scattered to the four winds for nearly 2000 years

was reborn in 1948, I believe it was a turning point in prophetic history and we entered a new era. Since then we have seen things escalate in a way that was unimaginable 200 years ago but is very possible now. The book of Revelation talks about a global economy or a global government. At one time people would read a prophecy like that and say that couldn’t happen; it has to be purely symbolic. But now that Israel is a nation and we have Bitcoin and AI tools that can cover the globe, this is doable. We don’t know the time or the hour, no one does, but we can know the season and be genuinely excited for Christ’s return.

“The Bible tells us that Christ will return in bodily form and that those whose names are written in the Book of Life will spend forever with him in glorified bodies in a new heaven and a new earth. I believe that everybody

*“With all that’s happening in the world, the Christian lives on tiptoe, searching the skies.”*

who spends their life telling God to leave them alone will have that request honored. Jesus has done everything possible to steer people in the direction of the final event on heaven’s time line, choosing eternal life over eternal death. Those who choose to reject Jesus choose their fate. Those who choose to love and serve him in this life will know the joys of eternity.

Max loves telling the story of Joseph Stowell, former president of Moody Bible Institute, being invited to the White House. During the reception, Stowell was rehearsing what he would say to President George W. Bush. Finally it was his turn. He walked across the room, extended his hand and said, “Mr. President, I’m Joe Stowell. I’m the president of Moody Bible Institute.” The president slapped him on the shoulder and said, “Way to go, Joel!” and the interview was over. Max later told Dr. Stowell, “Joe, someday you’re going to stand before Jesus Christ and he’s not going to be in a hurry and he’s going to look you in the eye and say, ‘Way to go, Joe. Well done, good and faithful

servant.’ A person could go their whole life and never hear those words, even from an earthly father, but when we hear them from our Heavenly Father, it will make it all worthwhile. God has a place for you, space for you, and grace for you. Lift your eyes and set your heart on your heavenly home. It’s the one that will last.”

*What Happens Next* provides a well-researched overview of essential milestones such as the rapture, the tribulation, and the glory of heaven. Whether you find yourself in the “I can’t wait,” “I’m almost ready,” or “I’m not sure about all of this” camp, you will be encouraged to ponder God’s promises for the future. Max believes the book will help alleviate the widespread fear of the future and “give people hope to face the problems of this life by focusing on the promises of the next.” Those who

disagree with his dispensational views will still find the devotional aspects of the book heartening.

In 1994, Servant asked Max how he’d like to be remembered. “I’ll continue writing as long as God provides the material, but I’d feel like a failure if my children didn’t remember me as a good father. That’s what keeps me going. That and trying to break 90 on the golf course.”

More recently he told us, “I’ve given up on the last one. But I’d say the same today. If it’s God’s will, I’d like to continue writing for the rest of my life. But the thing that pushes my buttons the most is my daughters. And communicating the message that the God who rules the universe has walked your streets. Even though he’s in heaven, he’s never left the neighborhood.” ☞

*What Happens Next is available wherever you buy books.*





# OVERCOMER

JOEL MEGLI WITH PAT MASSEY

Joel and Nicole Megli, McKinney and Ivy: "We still can't explain why it had to be this way, but we're convinced that God is good and we didn't question his will."

**A**n Australian winter sun shone brightly as three-year-old Joel looked toward the fields where his father and the hired man were hard at work on the tractor. Playing alone in the yard had grown dull so the boy slipped a piece of baler twine into his pocket and bounded off to "work with Dad." Soon he was riding high above the ground, seated beside the hired man. Too excited to sit still, however, Joel stood up and unwound the string from his pocket. Without warning, a wheel caught the line and gave a violent tug that pulled the boy down and under the moving machine.

In 1974 my Canadian parents moved to Australia to live out a Louis L'Amour-inspired ranch dream. That's where I was born and grew up—on the sunbaked black plains of New South Wales. The soil there is deep and fertile. It fed me, and then saved my life.

As I fell that day, the hired man attempted to avert disaster by stopping the tractor. He jammed it into reverse, but in so doing, drove over me twice. Pushed into the deep soil, I avoided being crushed, but a major artery to my legs had been ruptured and the nerves would suffer damage due to lack of blood flow. For the rest of my life, I would be a partial paraplegic, making my way in the world on crutches.

I faced the challenges of life under the wise oversight of my parents who

were determined to help me deal with my disability in a positive way and keep it from becoming an excuse. My sister was one of my closest allies, dropping everything she was doing to help me out. Mom was my number one cheerleader, telling me I was funny and smart and good-looking. Dad did the practical problem-solving, making sure I got out on the farm and helped where I could. I was a part of what was happening and had something to contribute.

We lived in the middle of *Whoop Whoop* (Australian vernacular for a long way from the city) and so I learned, with the help of a supportive family and friends, to live with my handicap. Most of my physical activity came from swimming in the pool and my

competitiveness came out in ping pong or crokinole and watching cricket and rugby. When you start on crutches young enough, you learn how to get through doors, climb up and jump down stairs, play ping pong and pool, and entertain your buddies with intentional falls.

I came to know Christ in my home. My mum loves the Bible. That light in her eye and the way she loved me made the story almost irresistible. At different times in my life I did resist it, but eventually came to the realization that it was more than a story. There was no sudden light on the way to Damascus. It was a slow, beautiful, life-changing dawning of the gospel. Not a megaphone, but the rhythmic peal of the gospel bell washing over me, each ring clearer and more transforming than the last.

We were on a family vacation to Canada in my senior year of high school when my uncle introduced me to Prairie Bible College and before long I found myself transplanted to a Canadian college campus. From dorm life to cold Alberta winters to deep friendships it was an amazing experience and I have so many wonderful memories. Prairie played a really formative role for me on many levels. In Dr. Ed Curtis's class on Philippians I discovered that I could understand the Bible if I would read it for myself and invest my time in it. In Norm Backhouse's homiletics class I preached some of my first sermons. My pastor in high school had taught me that the Bible reveals its treasures to those who search for them, but I only began finding the treasure during my years at Prairie.

I also began to see the global implications of the gospel. I "knew" about missions, but at school I saw people on a weekly basis who were actually going. I also learned what it looked like to share my faith with a campus ministry that went to surrounding colleges on Mondays. And perhaps most significantly, Prairie was where I met people who modeled living out the message of the cross.

After graduation in 2000, I worked on my uncle's chicken farm for three years before co-pastoring with him at a small country church in Alberta. The



church took quite a risk on a young, single college graduate. I cringe when I think back on some of my early, convoluted attempts at explaining Bible passages. But the church was so patient. They helped me work on my strengths and shielded me (and themselves!) from weaknesses. In my last years there, the reality of the gospel—the good news that the King has come and the King is returning—seemed to dawn brighter and brighter each week. Working there was one of the great privileges of my life.

After ten fulfilling years at the church it seemed like the right time to pursue my Masters in Theology, so I moved on to Dallas Theological Seminary. From a remote farm in Australia to a rural church of 250 people to what is now one of the biggest metropolitan areas in the US (Dallas/Fort Worth) was a drastic change, but a wonderful one and I met God in new ways. I was also introduced to tacos!

Some of my classmates became exceptional theologians and pastors. I am not one of them, but I was privileged to have known them and I loved that time in my life.

While I had taken a couple of runs at "being a missionary" before, things had never quite worked out. But now

**"THE PRIMARY STRATEGY OF OUR ENEMY IS TO CONVINCE US THAT GOD DOES NOT HAVE OUR BACK, THAT HE IS NOT WITH US AND THAT HE DOES NOT CARE."**

the challenge of missions was taking a deeper hold on my life and I decided to try again. And, wouldn't you know it, I met a girl—one who wanted to be a missionary!

Nicole and I were married and began training with NTM, now *Ethnos 360*. To our delight there was indeed a country where we were needed and in 2018 we headed out with our girls who were two and a half and six months. Until then the message and the mission and joy and purpose of God were all still theory. But when things started to actually take shape, it was incredibly exhilarating. I could hardly wait to get out of bed in the morning!

We were learning the language and making connections inside and outside the church, working with exceptional missionaries with incredible gifts and an extraordinary capacity for communicating, loving and discipling. What was more, we found ourselves at the centre of an absolutely astounding opportunity—working with a church that had the potential and desire to reach many of the unreached people groups in their own country. It seemed like I was finally stepping into the purpose God had for me.

COVID stranded us in the US for three years, but we were finally able to return in March of 2023. Then in October of that year, just when I felt like for the first time I could do something that really made a difference, I was diagnosed with a spinal infection and we had no choice but to come home.

The primary strategy of our enemy is to convince us that God does not have our back, that he is not with us

and that he does not care. Nothing could be further from the truth. Psalm 23 has become a staple for me in hard times, especially verse 4: *"Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger for you are with me."* We were comforted by the Father's rod and staff as we journeyed through that darkest valley. The enemy attempted to convince us that we'd been abandoned, but it was a lie. He tried to tell us that we were unloved, but it was a hoax. God was with us. God is with us. We still can't explain why it had to be this way, but we're convinced that God is good and we didn't question his will for us.

Our journey home took us to Texas



where I began my recovery and in June of 2024 we moved to Waukesha, WI, to serve with Ethnos360 Bible Institute. I was cleared of the spinal infection in August and continue to recover from the secondary issues. It's my privilege to invest in the lives of students, teaching Bible classes like Corinthians and Thessalonians while Nicole homeschools the girls, now nine and seven.

Overcoming disability has been a significant theme in my story, although I think it impacted my mum and dad more than anyone else. They still struggle to tell about my accident without crying. Others were overcomers with me: school friends, my wife, my daughters, and all who accepted and encouraged me. Sure, there have been challenges and disappointments, but I've never felt like a failure. I've taken a run at doing some wonderful things and fallen short at times for various reasons, but I'm so thankful for the amazing things I got to do and the wonderful people I got to do them with.

Really, I'm just an ordinary person and even though I've come up short in some exceptional enterprises, I've still been allowed to witness God doing some exceptional things. I've learned that my everything is enough. He can use it. That's the amazing nature of God's work. ❧

You can reach Joel and Nicole Megli at [jrmegli@gmail.com](mailto:jrmegli@gmail.com)

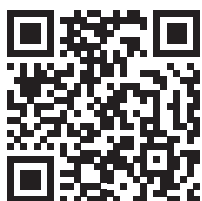


# PRAIRIE PODCAST



Tune in to hear interviews with Faculty, Students and Alumni.

Get ready for deep conversations, expert insights, and fresh perspectives on Biblical Education!



## SHANA IP

*"We need Christians in every industry and the outdoors is no exception."*

### LOOKING BACK AS A SENIOR IN THE OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM,

#### HOW DO YOU THINK IT HAS SHAPED YOUR LIFE?

It has completely changed my life. I'm not from an outdoor background, so almost everything was brand new to me. Doing different activities in God's beautiful creation was incredible, but the leadership training is unmatched. You learn a lot about yourself on a 21-day backpacking trip with no distractions and only your team around you. Being in uncomfortable situations allows you to grow, and I learned so much about myself as a person, a leader, and a child of God.

#### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM?

I'm the goalkeeper and captain of the women's futsal team and I run the

climbing wall at the RDAC.

### YOU'RE A THIRD GENERATION PRAIRIE STUDENT. WHO CAME BEFORE YOU?

One set of grandparents, all of my aunts and uncles, some cousins, my parents, and both of my siblings have all gone to Prairie.

### HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO USE YOUR PRAIRIE TRAINING IN THE FUTURE?

I'm planning to work in the outdoor industry, either in outdoor education or camp ministry. It's remarkable to see my transformation from joining Explore never even having gone backpacking to looking at the outdoors as a career. Gaining the confidence and ability to teach and share the things that bring me life is such a gift, and having a biblical foundation is so essential. We need Christians in every industry and the outdoors is no exception.



## ERIC ARMENEAU

*"It is a great vessel to bring Christ to people who might never hear of him."*

### WHAT PROGRAM ARE YOU TAKING?

I'm taking a degree in Business

Administration with a minor in Sports Management and Leadership. Athletics has been a huge part of my life. I grew up watching, playing and officiating sports and I love the team aspect. It is a great vessel to bring Christ to people who might never hear of him.

### YOU'VE BEEN SERVING ON STUDENT UNION. WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

I am the Spiritual Life Commissioner. This means organizing and facilitating different events that promote healthy spiritual wellbeing for our student body.

### HOW HAVE YOU BEEN GROWING DURING YOUR TIME AT PRAIRIE?

God has been growing me in leadership and I'm learning to trust him more. Being able to let God lead and allow me to follow has been an amazing experience. And I love being able to interact with all sorts of different people.

### WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE GOALS?

I am hoping to get involved in Sports Ministry. It would be amazing to become a team chaplain for a sports franchise someday!

### WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING PRAIRIE COLLEGE?

God is so good and so vast. The things you will learn here are life changing. Prairie does a great job of teaching you to not only study the Bible for your own personal use, but how to apply it to your specific vocation and that's amazing. 📖



# Times change, God doesn't

I heard someone say that we need to get back to the good old days. I'm not so sure. We had no air bags in the car, just your mom's arm if you stopped in a hurry. There were no heated seats. Unless you lit yours on fire. No covers on electric outlets, no childproof lids on medicine bottles, no locks on the cabinets. Have you seen pictures of the first bicycle ever built? They found the smallest wheel on earth and put in on the back. Then they took the biggest wheel on earth and put that up front. That is why the average life expectancy back then was about 23. I was personally born in a hospital without my father present and there was no doula. Mom put me to sleep on my tummy in a crib coated in lead-based paints close enough for me to lick.

We had plastic straws. Potato bags were everywhere. They made them into

**Mom put me to sleep on my tummy in a crib coated in lead-based paints close enough to lick. Those were the good old days.**

underwear. You've seen old pictures where no one was smiling? That's why. Burlap undies. Those were the good old days.

We rode bikes; no helmets; no shin pads. Four friends would share one can of Coke. Coke killed germs, we were told. It dissolved nails, so we knew we were safe. We guzzled Kool-Aid too. It was 20% dye and 140% sugar. Kool-Aid had all the nutritional value of a monkey



"You realize, of course, that if she ever gets a cordless phone we're done for."

wrench. No one was able to reach us all day on our phones. But we were fine.

Steve Erickson had the world's coolest go-cart—glossy blue and chrome—but it only ran long enough for him to plough it into a tree. So he'd work on it another week, then run it into a telephone pole. This was the mid-seventies, just before the invention of brakes. The good old days.

Here are actual quotes from the '50s. That's the 1950s.

"I read the other day where scientists think it's possible to put a man on the moon by the end of the century."


are, it's going to be impossible to buy a week's groceries for \$20."

"Did you hear the post office is thinking about charging a dime for a postage stamp?"

Well, times change, don't they? How good to know that in the midst of certain change, God's faithfulness is certain. He remains steadfast; he never changes. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." In Psalm 103, David wrote, "...from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children."

For each generation, God remains the same and can be trusted to keep his promises. Deuteronomy 7:9 says, "...the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands."

Is there better news when moods shift, symptoms increase, and devotion falters? Max Lucado said, "Even if we are faithless, he is faithful, for he cannot betray himself. He is a sure God."

Reminds me of that old ten cent postage stamp. Let's stick to it until we get there. 

Visit Phil Callaway at [laughagain.org](http://laughagain.org)





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