

# LOVE GOD. LOVE OTHERS.

A quarterly newsletter from Our Daily Bread Ministries.

SUMMER 2024

## EMBRACE AUTHENTIC LIVING USING GOD'S GIFTS

- ▶ *See the Beauty of God's Restoration through the Eyes of His Children*
- ▶ *Living an Authentic Christian Life*
- ▶ *Through the Lens*
- ▶ *Playing in Concert*



## dear FRIEND



In a world that promotes individuality and being our “true selves,” living an authentic life seems to be the common answer. But how does our definition of authenticity change when we realize that the things that make us special don’t put us center stage but in a supporting role serving someone much greater?

Our unique identities are not a mere accident. They are intentionally crafted by a purposeful God who invites us to use our talents, passions, and gifts to proclaim how we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14).

Encouraging others to live an authentic life in Christ is certainly something we do not take lightly. As a ministry, we are humbly blessed to be a small tool God is using to change lives all across the globe with the materials inspired by your endless support. Showcasing the gifts received and sacrificially given to others is not to glorify us, but to fully glorify our heavenly Father who knows and prepares us for His chosen path.

So let us confidently embrace our label as “God’s handiwork” (Ephesians 2:10) and seek the opportunities where we have the exact skills and talents to complete His good work.

Boldly unhindered (Acts 28:31),

Dr. Matt Lucas  
President/CEO  
Our Daily Bread Ministries

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### THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

Looking back on the many years of this ministry with humble gratitude, it’s only with your love and support that we can share God’s truth in ways that encourage us to live out faith in Christ wholeheartedly. Continue partnering with us as we rejoice in the countless ways God is using your gifts to reveal His truth to His beloved children around the world.

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NEWS FROM THE FIELD

# See the Beauty of God’s Restoration through the Eyes of His Children

*Return to me, for I have redeemed you. – Isaiah 44:22*

**W**e often view childhood as the “age of innocence” and hope to shield our children and grandchildren from the sometimes harsh realities of the world. But that is unfortunately not the case for all. Some children have had to navigate crisis experiences all on their own that would break even the strongest adults, resulting in them desperately seeking another way out.

Yet it’s in places like the Bahay Pag-Asa Youth Development Center that God’s light is still shining through the darkness. This past year, the Our Daily Bread Ministries Philippines team was blessed with the opportunity to share God’s Word with children ages 10 to 18 who were in trouble with the law.

After putting on a short program sharing the gospel, the staff was able to distribute Our Daily Bread Ministries resources, hygiene kits, rechargeable fans, and food. After sitting down with these young kids, sharing stories and prayers back and forth, one thing rang true: nothing is too broken for God to make whole.

Celebrate God’s active hands in the lives of these precious children and continue to pray for our Philippines team as they prepare to do similar outreaches for other organizations in this region.

Photos courtesy of Our Daily Bread Ministries Philippines.



When you give to Our Daily Bread Ministries, you help people all around the world receive access to biblical resources so they can experience the hope and love of Jesus Christ.

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## DEVOTIONAL

### LIVING AN AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN LIFE

AN EXCERPT FROM THE DISCOVERY SERIES BOOKLET BY RAY STEDMAN

There is, of course, no clearer demonstration of Christianity than Christ Himself. Today, there are many varieties of Christianity, but the most attractive form of Christianity of all is the original—the Christianity of Jesus Christ.

This was the authentic Christian life in its purest, most consistent form. Many people have a problem understanding, applying, and identifying with the Christianity of Jesus because they feel He, being the Son of God, had an edge over the rest of us. “Not fair, comparing me to Jesus!” they protest. “Sure, Jesus was undoubtedly human—but He was also God. From His divine side, He drew supernatural power to resist evil and achieve great things in a way I could never do.”

Yes, Jesus was fully God—but we must never forget that He was also fully human, with all the limitations that go with our humanity. We can live our lives as He lived His. We can base our lives on the model He has set before us. This is practical, livable truth, and the Scriptures are very clear on this point. Here are a few passages which commend Jesus to us as an example we can and should follow:

*Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted (Hebrews 2:18). We do*

*not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin (Hebrews 4:15). To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps (1 Peter 2:21).*

How is this possible? How can we hope to pattern our lives after the life of a perfect Person who was God in the flesh? Isn't that like trying to high-jump the Empire State Building or broad-jump the Pacific Ocean? Isn't that asking the impossible? Well, yes and no. Yes, it is impossible for us to live perfect, sinless lives; but no, it is not impossible for us to set a goal, we simply go back to God for forgiveness and restoration, and He puts us back on the road to our goal once again. The key principle is found in Philippians 2:5–8,

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross (NRSV).*

Note that key phrase: Jesus “emptied himself.” He set aside the prerogatives and powers of Godhood in order to identify fully with us. He lived the same kind of life we live, facing temptation, suffering pain and sorrow, enduring frustration, just as we do.

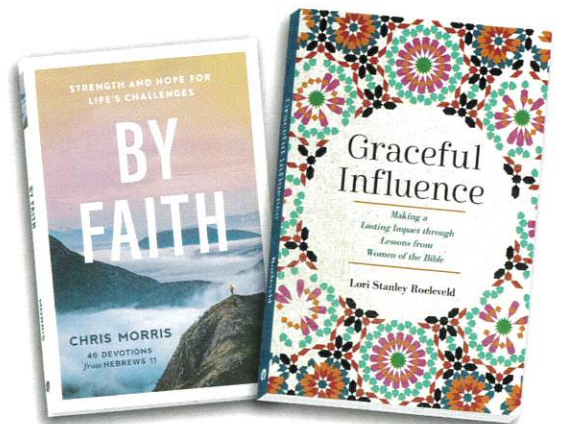
He approached life the same way you and I must approach life: living in dependence on God the Father, seeking guidance and strength through continual prayer, trusting God and listening to His leading, and being humbly obedient—“not my will, but yours.”

That is why we are to “let the same mind be in [us] that was in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5 NRSV). That authentic Christianity of Christ; Christianity in its truest, purest, most distilled form. That is the Christianity which you and I are to follow, the only Christianity worthy of the name.



Read the entire Discovery Series booklet,  
*Living an Authentic Christian Life*, at  
[go.odb.org/living-an-authentic-christian-life](http://go.odb.org/living-an-authentic-christian-life)

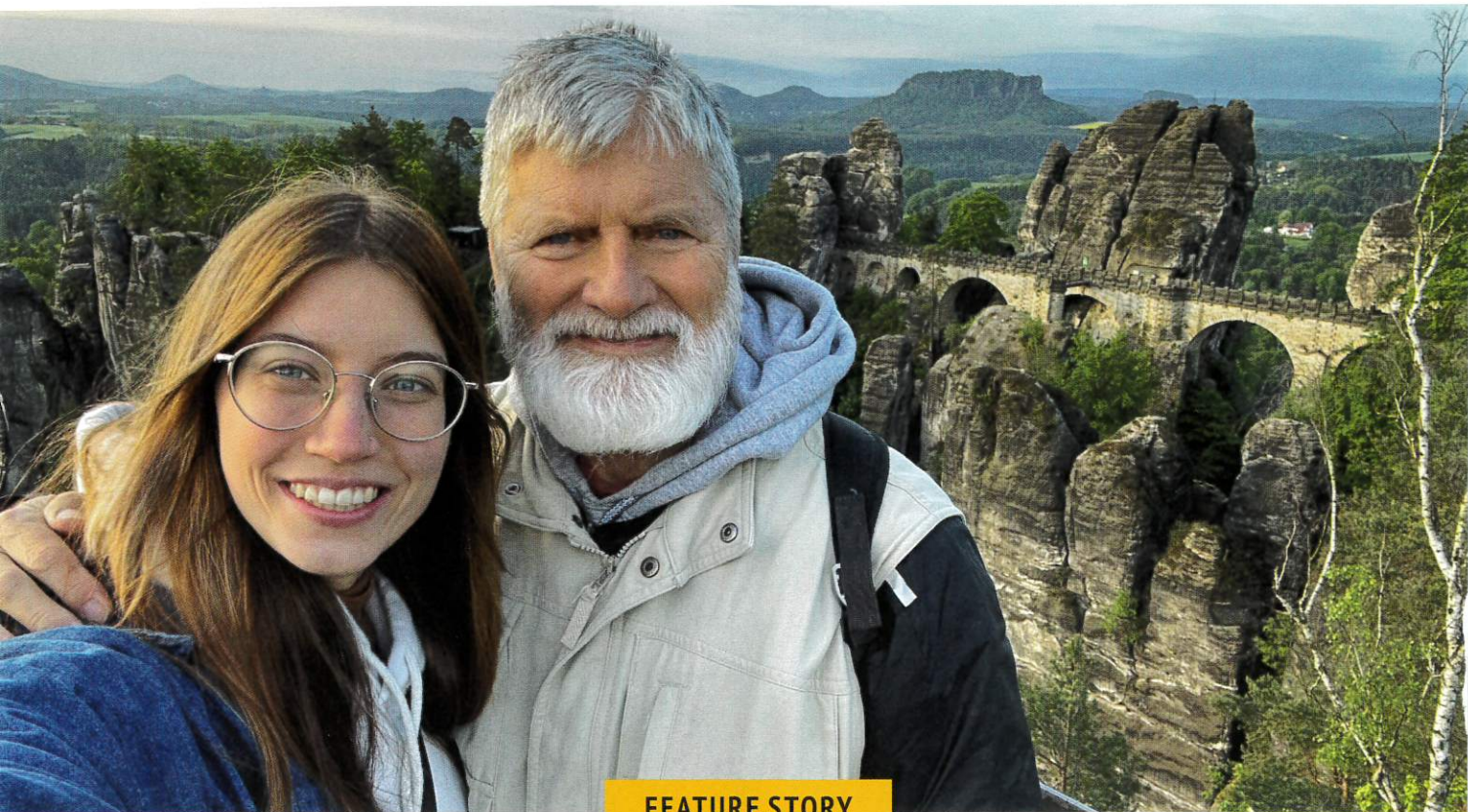
## Your Faith Can Make an Impact for the Kingdom of God



Develop a faith that endures by looking to the examples of those listed in the Bible’s “hall of faith” (Hebrews 11), then read about the women of the Bible whose relatable trials yet godly choices impacted future generations. God has a plan and purpose for you, and you can start uncovering them by ordering your copies of ***By Faith*** and ***Graceful Influence*** by scanning the QR code today!



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All photos courtesy of Sarah Bidgood.

## FEATURE STORY

Terry and Sarah by Bastei Bridge in Germany.

# Through the Lens

FATHER-DAUGHTER DUO SHARE THEIR CREATIVE GIFT

God's creativity and power are visible everywhere you look. From the delicate detail of a monarch butterfly's wings to the soaring snowcapped peaks of mountains, nature reveals our awesome Creator.

For father and daughter, Terry and Sarah Bidgood, the experience of immersing themselves in nature and seizing those meaningful moments through the camera lens is their passion.

“

The heavens declare  
the glory of God; the  
skies proclaim the work  
of his hands.

—PSALM 19:1

Sarah is thankful for the opportunity to share her photographic gifts at Our Daily Bread Ministries (ODBM), something her father has been doing for decades. Now retired, Terry worked at ODBM for 35 years as a photographer, designer, and manager. Many of his scenic photos have appeared on the covers of the *Our Daily Bread* devotional and the inspirational calendars. Now another Bidgood will receive photo credits as Sarah has two photos featured in the 2024 calendar and will have five photos featured in the 2025 calendar.

Some of these photos came from a trip the duo took together in May/June 2023. Sarah was on a 10-day assignment for ODBM, but they extended the trip at their own expense for an additional three weeks. They toured 9 countries and 19 different cities throughout Europe, making it a trip to remember. Sarah donated some of her photos to ODBM from the extra leg of that trip.

Although there were many special moments they experienced together, one highlight was near a gorgeous lake in Hintersee, Germany.



Hintersee Lake, Germany

“It was a quiet morning, with a perfect reflection of that golden hour sunrise,” Sarah said. “We walked around the whole lake looking for this view, and I was filled with pure excitement of how beautiful it was.”

Another memorable time was in Appenzell, Switzerland, as they anticipated those few precious moments of sunset as they hiked up a mountain.

“I remember going around that corner and instantly being hit with an overwhelming feeling,” Sarah expressed. “My eyes started tearing up, and I was so at peace and happy and amazed. It was too much to hold inside.”

The huge, jagged rocks with the pink and orange glow of the setting sun bouncing off the textured landscape were awe-inspiring. They were able to sit on a ledge and soak it all in as they captured God’s beauty through their cameras.



Schafli Ridge, Switzerland

One of Terry’s cherished memories came after an 8-plus-mile hike in the Dolomites, a mountain range in northern Italy. It was a rugged hike carrying heavy camera equipment, but they were rewarded.

“After hiking for hours we came over this crest and saw this incredible aqua blue lake with snow peaks behind it,” Terry said. “It was so worth it.”



Lago di Braies, Italy

This father-daughter team has a mutual appreciation for each other.

Sarah said, “Seeing how he could capture moments and beautiful images was always incredible to me. When I started becoming interested in photography, his enthusiasm and support and encouragement was extremely influential in the development of my own photography.”

Terry reciprocated the admiration. “I really liked seeing her passion for nature and beauty that God created.” He added with a smile, “And to spend that one-on-one time with your daughter—I would recommend it for anybody.”

Every moment is a unique opportunity that the Bidgoods love to share through the creative eyes that God gave them. And it’s extra special that Sarah can carry on the work at ODBM that her dad began so many years ago.

“This place will be here tomorrow, but this picture won’t be. It will never be here again exactly the same way. Every one is like a snowflake,” Terry said. “I’d like to leave a legacy of work that still inspires people about the beauty of God’s creation.” 🌿

# Playing in Concert

AN OUR DAILY BREAD DEVOTION BY DAVID C. MCCASLAND

## GROW deeper

During our granddaughter's school band concert, I was impressed by how well this group of 11- and 12-year-olds played together. If each of them had wanted to be a solo performer, they could not have achieved individually what the band did collectively. The woodwinds, brass, and percussion sections all played their parts and the result was beautiful music!

To the followers of Jesus in Rome, Paul wrote, "In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us" (Romans 12:5-6). Among the gifts Paul mentioned are prophecy, service, teaching, encouragement, giving, leadership, and mercy (Romans 12:6-8). Each gift is to be exercised freely for the good of all (1 Corinthians 12:7).

One definition of *in concert* is "agreement in design or plan; combined action; harmony or accord." That's the Lord's plan for us as His children through faith in Jesus Christ. "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10). The goal is cooperation, not competition.

In a sense, we are "on stage" before a watching and listening world every day. There are no soloists in God's concert band, but every instrument is essential. The music is best when we each play our part in unity with others.

When you give *Our Daily Bread* devotionals to people and places in your community, you are sharing the life-changing wisdom of the Bible; and we celebrate the stories we hear about how this is impacting lives! It's easy to become an *Our Daily Bread* Ambassador by signing up at [go.odb.org/sign-up-am24](https://go.odb.org/sign-up-am24) or by scanning this QR code

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## Fueling a Bible Engagement Movement

As Our Daily Bread Ministries remains committed to making the Bible a vital part of everyday life, we are delighted to be the new home of the *Immerse: The Reading Bible* collection in partnership with the Institute for Bible Reading. This collection lays out Scripture as it was originally given: without chapter or verse numbers, making way for uninterrupted reading of God's Word. This New Living Translation Bible was given the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA) Gold Medallion Award for 2022 Bible of the Year. Our hope is that resources like this will help you encounter Scripture in transforming ways that enrich your relationship with Jesus. Visit [go.odb.org/immerse-bible](https://go.odb.org/immerse-bible) for more information.

