

Children

Good morning, boys and girls. How many of you have ever been in the army? (Let them answer.) How about the navy or the marines? None of you has ever been in the service. Why not? (Let them answer.) You say that you are too young. That's a good excuse.

Perhaps you will recognize some things that I brought with me today even if you have not been in the military service. (Take out the rank insignias and see if any of the children can identify the rank that they signify.) Very good, we have a sergeant and a corporal and a private. Which one of these three is the highest rank? (Let them answer.) That's right, a sergeant. And which one of them is the lowest? (Let them answer.) You are right, again. A private is the lowest, then the corporal and finally the sergeant. In the army it is very important to know rank and even more important to have it.

Jesus was not in the army, and neither was John the Baptizer, but even so, the Bible speaks about rank. John the Baptizer once said that Jesus ranked before him. Do you know what that means? (Let them answer.) It means that John believed that Jesus was tops. He was the best, and also the closest to God. John knew that, and he didn't argue about it. He wanted Jesus to be who he was, and he was willing to take orders from Jesus since he believed that he was sent to give orders. You and I know that we must take our orders from Jesus also. He is the Son of God and has the highest ranking of anyone who ever lived. When Jesus speaks, we listen, and we listen closely because whatever he says is important.

When a sergeant hears a general speak, he listens. So do a captain and a major. When the general speaks, everyone in the army listens and obeys him. When Jesus speaks, even the general listens and obeys. Jesus is the tops. He is at the head of the list and none of us should ever forget it.

The next time you hear someone talk about rank or see a rank insignia like the ones that I have shown you today, I want you to think about Jesus and how he outranks everyone. When he speaks we should all listen and obey him.

Adult

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Read an amusing story concerning John the Baptist recently that is simply too good not to tell.

It's about a Bible scholar from this country who travels to Jerusalem every few years where he enjoys walking the streets of Jerusalem's Old City. Once he was walking down a quiet alley when he was waved into a small shop. Within a few minutes he found himself with a glass of tea in his hand, sitting in the back room of a rug merchant's stall. The merchant assured him that he had a priceless treasure for him. The merchant reached beneath a pile of carpets and brought out a small bundle which he carefully unwrapped to reveal . . . a human skull.

"This," said the merchant, "is the skull of John the Baptist." John the Baptist, you will remember, was beheaded by Herod. The merchant said the skull had long been lost but recently had been found. This, he assured the Bible scholar, was a treasure indeed. Then he asked his guest how much he would be willing to pay for it. The visitor to Jerusalem responded, "Well . . . I was in another shop just yesterday, and the man there wanted to sell me John's head as well, but his was bigger." And without missing a beat, the shopkeeper replied, "Ah, yes. But this, this is John the Baptist's head . . . when he was a boy." (1)

Well, I guess John the Baptist lost his head at least twice.

Today we want to look at another aspect of Jesus' encounter with John the Baptist. We need to understand that John the Baptist had a real impact on the people in the area around Jerusalem. It is estimated that as many as three hundred thousand people came out to be baptized by John. (2)

John was somewhat eccentric, to be sure, dressed in a garment made of camel's hair and girded with a leather belt, surviving in the wilderness on a diet of locusts and wild honey, and devoting himself to warning his generation of the wrath that is yet to come. But undoubtedly that was part of his appeal. He was so completely different from the temple priests in Jerusalem who dressed in fine linens. John was not an establishment figure. Thus his call for a different way of living carried a great appeal, especially to those for whom life was a struggle.

According to John's Gospel, when John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him to be baptized he uttered some remarkable words: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!"

Such a proclamation even before Jesus had begun his ministry is unique to the Gospel of John. Jesus to this point has performed no miracles, called no disciples, raised no one from the dead. He is still fresh from the carpenter shop. He has made no enemies, issued no controversial teachings nor ruffled any royal feathers. Any comparison to the Paschal Lamb sacrificed for the sins of the people is certainly premature. It would be some time before Jesus would be warning his disciples that he must suffer and die. Yet here we find an allusion to that event in the first chapter of John's Gospel.

Most of us are aware that the writer of the Gospel of John, in contrast to the writers of the other three Gospels (the Synoptic Gospels as they are called) was not so much interested in writing history as he was in writing theology. He wanted us to know not only that Jesus came into the world but also what that great fact means. He uses tremendous imagery in this first chapter of his Gospel--"the Word became flesh," and "the light shines in darkness." But no image carries greater power than this one, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

When John asks us to "behold the Lamb" we have a pre-figuring of that dramatic scene in Revelation when millions of angels and the twenty-four elders bow down before the only being who is worthy to break the seven seals and open the sacred scroll. Together they sing, "Worthy is the Lamb to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." (Revelation 5:12) Here we have a stunning portrayal of the majesty of the Christ.

**You and I desperately need an appreciation and understanding of that majesty in our own lives.** In this day when nothing is holy, we need more than ever before a knowledge of the one whose very essence was holiness.

Do you remember that somewhat amusing scene in Matthew 14 when the dependably impetuous Simon Peter tries to imitate the Master and walk on the water? That scene is so instructive. Peter starts to walk out on the water to come to Jesus but makes the mistake of taking his eyes off of Jesus and looking around at the high waves that are breaking about him. As a consequence he becomes terrified and begins to sink.

That can happen to us. If we keep our gaze fixed upon our problems, our frustrations, our limitations, our poverty of either money or other resources, we will never make any headway in coping with life. It is a matter of focus. You and I have within ourselves the resources for achieving amazing things if we do not allow our problems to overwhelm us.

You may know the story of a young Hungarian athlete in the 1952 Olympics who won a gold medal with his ability to shoot a pistol. His right hand and eye coordination were so perfect that he simply could not miss the bull's eye. Six months after those Olympics were over that young man lost his right arm. Such a tragedy would have overwhelmed many of us. It did not overwhelm this young man. Four years later at the Melbourne Olympics he was back and he did it again. Another gold medal. This time he shot with his left hand. How much time and effort do you suppose he devoted to mastering this skill a second time?

We have in us the ability to turn tragedies into triumphs--or, in Robert Schuller's famous phrase, to turn "scars into stars." One of the keys to that, however, is to have a God who is big enough to handle any problem we may have and to keep our attention fixed on him rather than upon the circumstances.

R.A. Torrey once put it like this, "If you make but little of Christ, Christ will make little of you."

Torrey, as usual, is saying something important to us here. We need a Christ who is Master of wind and the waves. We need a Christ to whom both physical illness and emotional pain are manageable crises. We need a Christ who can make us think in terms of being victors rather than victims.

"Behold the Lamb . . ." says John and we need to do that. We need to look beyond our present difficulties to the One who can deliver us. We need to behold the majesty of Christ.

But there is more: “. . . who takes away the sins of the world.” **We are summoned to contemplate his majesty. Now we are challenged to consider his mercy.** The majestic Christ “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” that you and I might be redeemed from the power of sin. Someone has said that in creation God shows us his hand, but on Golgotha God gives us his heart.

There is something about the cross that has changed the world forever. It is not that the cross changed God. The cross came about in the first place because “God so loved the world . . .” Maybe it was the complete outpouring of love there that made such a difference.

A young soldier was utterly humiliated by his senior officer. The officer had gone beyond the bounds of acceptable behavior in disciplining the young soldier and knew it, so he said nothing as the younger man said through clenched teeth, “I’ll make you regret this if it is the last thing I ever do.”

A few days later their company was under heavy fire and the officer was wounded and cut off from his troops. Through the haze of the battlefield he saw a figure coming to his rescue. It was the young soldier whom he had treated so badly. At the risk of his own life, the young soldier dragged the officer to safety. The officer said, apologetically, “Son, I owe you my life.”

The young man laughed and said, “I told you that I would make you regret humiliating me if it was the last thing I ever did.” That is God’s kind of revenge.

“Behold the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world . . .” Something happened on Calvary that bridged the gap between a holy God and unholy humanity. We see Christ in his majesty but also in his mercy.

In a cathedral in Copenhagen, Denmark there is a magnificent statue of Jesus by the noted sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. When Thorvaldsen first completed the sculpture he gazed upon the finished product with great satisfaction. It was a sculpture of Christ with face looking upward and arms extended upward. It was a statue of a majestic, conquering Christ.

Later that night, however, after the sculptor had left his fine new work in clay to dry and harden, something unexpected occurred. Sea mist seeped into the studio in the night. The clay did not harden as quickly as anticipated. The upraised arms and head of the sculpture began to droop. The majestic Christ with arms lifted up and head thrown back was transformed into a Christ with head bent forward and arms stretched downward as if in a pose of gentle invitation.

At first Thorvaldsen was bitterly disappointed. As he studied the transformed sculpture, however, he came to see a dimension of Christ that had not been real to him before. It was the Christ who is a gentle, merciful Savior.

Thorvaldsen inscribed on the base of the completed statue, “Come Unto Me,” and that picture of the Lamb of God in his mercy has inspired millions.

There is one thing more to be said, however. We have considered Christ’s majesty and his mercy. **Now we need to consider the meaning of his ministry for our lives.**

Notice that John says, “Behold the Lamb who takes away the sins of the **world**.” He does not say the sins of the church or the sins of middle-class Americans. “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” There is enough saving power in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the entire world. If only the world knew. If only our battle buddy knew.

The world needs to know--our friends and neighbors need to know--that they have won something far bigger than a state lottery. They need to know that their name has already been selected to receive the greatest prize ever awarded to anybody--an eternal victory over sin and death. All they have to do is to claim their prize. An eternal love relationship with God through Jesus Christ is theirs--and ours--simply for the asking.

So, what does all this say about our lives? We are those who are called to tell the story. Following in the footsteps of our Lord, we are not sent out to condemn the world, as John tells us in chapter 3, verse 17, (For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.)

but that we might tell the saving message of the great love that was poured out on Calvary’s tree.

We are those who are called to help others to look beyond the enormity of their problems to One who is big enough to overcome any problem. We are to finish the work begun by our Lord 2,000 years ago--the work of reconciling the world unto God.

Leonardo da Vinci had started a work on canvas in his studio. He chose a subject, sketched its outer lines, shaded here and lightened there. About half way through his work, however, he halted his sketching. He turned to a student of his and said, “I want you to finish the work that I have started.”

The student protested. He surely was not worthy of such an honor.

Da Vinci reassured him, "Will not my example inspire you to do your best?" he said. "And besides I am right here beside you if you should need any help." That is Christ's message to us.

"Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world." See him in his majesty. See him in his mercy. See him in his ministry to the world, a ministry he calls you and me to complete. May his example inspire us and his presence empower us until all the world knows that the victory has been won.

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1. Contributed. Source unknown.

2. Rodney L. Cooper, *Holman New Testament Commentary - Mark: 2* (Kindle Edition).

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The Bible lists several stories to grasp God's strategy. The Lamb of God is one of them (maxppp.com).

Even in the face of evil, God has a plan. He is not content to accompany us in our trials or to warn us against sin. His ambition goes further, he wants to destroy evil.

The Bible lists several stories to grasp God's strategy. "The Lamb of God" is one of them. It means a victory of good over the evil.

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The Gospel is written in Greek, but the expression allows us to perceive the riches of the Hebrew language where the word "lamb" got from the root nasa means both to take and to take away. To take something is necessarily to remove it from its place, to remove it from somewhere.

By taking on sin, the Lamb of God lifts it up from the world, separates it from our hearts, and makes us righteous.

In this way, God performs the miracle of accepting within Himself everything that is not Him, that He reproves and that He never wanted - sin, misfortune, suffering - in order to remove it, definitively.

The Lamb of God reminds us that the heart of God is wide enough to accept the power of nothingness. Carried, supported and contained in the very love of God.

### **Meditate**

"He is the one." The recognition of Jesus comes as a kind of shock. John the Baptist understands in an instant that the prophecies were true, that the world would indeed be saved. We can guess the exchange of glances between them.

John the Baptist was waiting for the One who would lead God's fight in this world. His eyes finally discerned the newness. Nothing will ever be the same again.

The One he had long hoped for is now approaching. The Lamb of God is here, just a few feet away. And he, John the Baptist, in the midst of the commotion, recognized him.

This Sunday's text is a call to relive this shock and to remember it. As daily life resumes its course and crashes into banality, we are invited to keep alive the luminous shocks of our faith.

Those special moments when we understood who Jesus was, when we recognized him. These scenes, however fleeting, actually form the first chapter of the Gospel of our lives.

When was it the first time? The last time? An unexpected conversation, a time of silence in the middle of the day, a work in progress. Sometimes we can no longer tell what exactly happened. Maybe nothing much, nothing much...

But we saw Jesus approaching. We understood that He was coming for us, even though the wait was long and we had secretly given up. Silently, the consciousness of being his permanent possession came alive again. The Holy Spirit bathed us with his fire. We recognized Him who loved us.

Do we give these moments the necessary attention? Do we let them be the authority in our lives?

The great spiritual writers repeat it over and over again: reality only becomes consistent if we make it resound in ourselves, if we remember it, if we bear witness to it. We must learn to look intensely at the Lamb and to fix his image in us. We will know the secret joy of John the Baptist: "Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

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III

When was the last time you had an "Aha!" moment? A revelation? An epiphany? I don't know what you might call it, but we've all had a before-and-after moment when a sudden insight, a moment of truth, changed our life.

Simon Lovell was one man who had his life changed in such an Aha! moment. Simon was a professional con man. His most successful con was to convince some innocent person that he had a get-rich-quick scheme that couldn't fail. Once his victim handed over a large wad of cash, Simon would disappear with it, never to be seen again.

One night in 1988, Simon Lovell tried this con on a new victim. Everything went smoothly until it was time for Simon to leave with the man's money. The man must have realized that he had been conned, because he suddenly started crying. And Simon said that for the first time in his life as a con man, he felt sorry for someone. He recalls that moment as an "absolute epiphany." For some reason he suddenly felt what it was to walk in the shoes of one of his victims. He handed back the cash to the man who was the target of his aborted scam, and he walked away. That was the last con he ever tried.

Simon Lovell did one thing more. He took all the tricks and deceptions he had learned in his years as a con man and created an entertaining sleight-of-hand show. He made a living teaching audiences to pay close attention and to not let themselves be deceived. He took what he had learned in his former life and used it to help people rather than harming them. When Simon suffered a stroke a few years later, he received so many cards and offers of help from friends and fellow performers that he was overwhelmed by their loving response. As a con man, he didn't know what it was like to have friends. This outpouring of love from his friends and fellow performers was the final proof to Simon Lovell that his new life was the kind of life he wanted. Simon's "Aha!" moment made him a better man. (1)

Sadly, some people experience a moment of truth that leads them away in a different direction. Some of you may remember the name Jack Welch. Welch is the former CEO of General Electric. GE was very successful under his leadership, and the company paid him hundreds of millions of dollars for his leadership. He also got free use of a luxury corporate apartment in New York that rented for \$80,000 per month, a corporate plane, and free courtside tickets to all the major sporting events. He has also been recognized as one of the greatest business leaders in the United States.

In 1995, Jack Welch underwent serious open-heart surgery. Just after the surgery, a reporter asked him if he'd had any epiphany moments as he considered his own mortality. Welch replied, "I didn't spend enough money." Now think of that! The multimillionaire's big epiphany was, "I didn't spend enough money." In fact, Jack Welch vowed that from then on, he would never drink another bottle of wine that cost less than \$100. Only the best stuff would do. (2)

Jack Welch's definition of an epiphany moment is not my definition of an epiphany moment—nor is it God's definition. I believe that when God blesses you with a moment of truth about your life, it should not only change you but it should open up a new life for you, a life that blesses those around you.

What is God trying to say to us about our lives? What is God trying to do in this world through us? And what difference does it make in our lives, how we live and how we serve, when we have that epiphany moment--when we see God more clearly?

Kyle Idleman wrote a book, *AHA—The God Moment That Changes Everything*, where he talks about how God creates life-changing moments in people's lives. He says that there are three stages to the AHA moment. Those stages correspond to the letters A, H, and A.

The first stage in the AHA moment is the *Awakening*. It's the "light bulb moment"—when we suddenly realize some new truth from God.

The second stage in the AHA moment is the *Honesty* stage. This is when we are honest with ourselves about the problem or the negative aspect in our life that God is trying to address. We take responsibility for our part in the problem.

The third stage of the AHA moment, according to Idleman, is the *Action* stage. We decide to take action on this new truth. We experience new life when we **awaken** to the truth God is trying to show us, when we are **honest** about the need to change our life to reflect God's truth, and when we take **action** to fully live out that truth. (3)

That's an excellent breakdown of an "Aha!" moment, isn't it? I think we can all relate to those three stages. And I think that's what John the Baptist was experiencing in this passage today.

In Matthew 3, we read the first encounter between John and Jesus when they both started their public ministries. John announced Jesus as one who would baptize people with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He announced Jesus as the Messiah who would separate the righteous people from the unrighteous people. John was one of those fire and brimstone preachers who put the fear of God into people's hearts. John was a little rough around the edges, but his message was honest and direct. Repent or be doomed!

But then notice . . . John's preaching does a 180 degree turn. Our Bible passage for today begins with these words, "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'"

John has been preaching fire and brimstone, but suddenly in John's Gospel, when he sees Jesus, he becomes a preacher of grace—God's loving-kindness toward humanity. John the Baptist's focus has been on the avenging Messiah who would send the non-repentant to fire and torment, but now his focus is on the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. These are two very different images of God!

Perhaps this was a huge "Aha!" moment for John. In this moment, John saw humanity's greatest problem, he saw God's awesome solution, and he wanted everyone who heard his message to see it too. And that's what I want for us today, that "Aha!" moment when we see God more clearly and it changes our life.

**In his Aha! moment, John saw just how far sin has taken us from the presence of God.** Now I know, respectable people don't talk about sin anymore. I wonder why not? After all, sin separates us from God.

Why doesn't that terrify us? God is life. Without God, life ceases to exist. If you were separated from air, you would die. If you were separated from food or water, you would die. Air, food and water are necessary for human life. God is the source of spirit-life, soul-life, eternal life. Separation from God is spiritual death.

In 1946, the movie *The Razor's Edge* received four Oscar nominations. It is considered a great movie. But it's also remembered for having one of the worst lines of movie dialogue ever. The movie follows a traumatized soldier and his high-society friends as they search for meaning at the end of World War I. In the midst of this the main character has this awful line of dialogue: "The dead look so terribly dead when they're dead." (4) Isn't that an absurd line? "The dead look so terribly dead when they're dead."

It's a horrible line! But that's our problem. We don't see the true nature of sin. We don't see how terribly dead we are. Jesus didn't just come to clean us up and make us better, shinier version of our selves. He came to raise us up from the grave.

Here's something interesting. One of the most popular cell phone apps in the Health & Fitness category is an app called WeCroak. WeCroak costs 99 cents. Its only purpose is to pop a reminder on your phone five times every day that you are going to die. (5) Do you need a reminder like that? That's what aging is all about, isn't it?

So a phone app can remind us that we will physically die someday. The cross reminds us that we were already dead, eternally dead, before we met Jesus Christ. John saw the horrifying destructive power of death looming over us, and he realized how urgently he needed to point people to Jesus. In his Aha! moment, John saw just how far sin has taken us from the presence of God.

**In his Aha! moment, John also saw how far God would go to bring us back.** "Look," he said, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" His hearers would not have been shocked by this language. Jump back about 3,400 years. The people of Israel are living as slaves in the land of Egypt. On the night before God sets the Israelites free from slavery, He announces that every Israelite household should take an unblemished, perfect lamb from their flock and kill it. The blood of the lamb was to be spread over and around the doorway of each Israelite home. That night, all the firstborn males of every household in Egypt died. But in the homes protected by the blood of the perfect lambs, no one died that night. Death "passed over" and let them live. This, of course, is the beginning of the Jewish holy day of Passover.

John the Baptist spoke the Aramaic language. And in Aramaic, the word for *lamb* is the same word for *servant*. So when John the Baptist announces, "Look, the Lamb of God," he could also be saying, "Look, the Servant of God."

The one who came to do the Father's will. And God's will is not to destroy us in our sin, but to take it away by covering us with His own blood.

The lamb was completely innocent. Its physical perfection made it extremely valuable as an object of trade. And it had no choice, no way to escape being used as a sacrifice. Jesus was also completely innocent. Even in his humanity, he never sinned. He lived in

complete devotion and submission to the will of God. His spiritual perfection made him an extremely valuable object of trade. Trade his sinless, perfect character for our sinful, rebellious character. Trade his life for our life. But here's the difference: Jesus had a choice. He could have escaped his fate at any time. He chose to be our sacrifice. John looked at Jesus and he saw God's sacrificial, unconditional, never-ending love for us.

In March 2011, an earthquake in Fukushima, Japan, shut down critical processes at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, causing a nuclear meltdown and the release of radioactive materials into the environment. Hundreds of workers were called to clean up the site after the meltdown. Day after day, they were exposed to dangerous levels of radiation in the course of their work.

Yasuteru Yamada, a 72-year-old engineer, hated the thought of all the young men who would be sickened and killed by the radiation. So he organized the volunteer force of hundreds of elderly Japanese engineers to take over the worst part of the clean up project.

These elderly workers knew that this work would poison them. If it didn't kill them in the short term, then they would face an increased risk of cancer in the long run. Yet they still stepped up and volunteered for the work. They wanted to save the younger men from suffering and death, so they willingly volunteered to take their place. (6)

I wonder how many of us would make that kind of sacrifice?

In his Aha! moment, John saw just how far sin has taken us from the presence of God. In his Aha! moment, John saw how far God would go to bring us back.

**And finally, in his Aha! moment, John knew he had to share the message of Jesus, no matter what it cost him.** In verse 34 of this passage, John says, "I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One." Remember, you haven't had a true "Aha!" moment unless you put the truth into action. John saw the truth, and he lived the rest of his short life to testify to the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, God's Chosen One.

John saw that Jesus was willing to pay any price to save us from death. So John was willing to pay any price to point others to Jesus. What did it cost him? In verses 37 and 38, we see that two of John's disciples heard his testimony and left John to immediately begin following Jesus. So a little loss of influence, of ego maybe? That's nothing.

Not too long afterwards, John was thrown into prison for confronting Herod Antipas about his sin of stealing his brother's wife. And not too long after John's imprisonment, Herod had him beheaded. Just like his Savior, he paid the ultimate price for following God's will.

"You're only reading this if I died." That's how Karen Watson began her letter which she set aside for her family when she answered God's call to share the message of Jesus in Iraq. Karen converted at age 29. As she grew in her faith, she felt the call to go to Iraq and serve as a relief worker. In Iraq, Karen and her fellow aid workers built schools and

worked on a water purification project. She led a literacy project for widows, teaching them to read and write and gain job skills to support themselves. And when the opportunity arose, she shared her faith in Jesus with those she helped.

On March 15, 2004, Karen and her fellow relief workers were killed by gunmen in the city of Mosul, Iraq. Karen had sold her home and all she owned before she left for Iraq. The only things she left behind on this earth were one duffel bag of everyday items, and a letter for her family. One quote from the letter really speaks to me. Karen Watson, facing a dangerous and uncertain mission in Iraq, wrote, "I wasn't called to a place; I was called to Him . . . To obey was my objective, to suffer was expected, His glory my reward." (7)

"To obey was my objective, to suffer was expected, His glory my reward." That's Jesus' mission in a nutshell. It became John's mission too. Now what about us? You and me. Once our sin separated us entirely from God. Jesus took away our sins and restored us to God and eternal life. What are we going to do about it? Go on with our everyday lives? Sit in a pew every week? Or are we going to take action? Are we going to make our objective complete obedience to God's will? There is a world outside these doors that is separated from God and dying in its sins, and we can point them to the source of life. Will we take action?

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1. Originally published in *Reader's Digest*. From *Psychology Today*, (March 9, 2015), Copyright © 2015 by Bruce Grierson, psychologytoday.com. "The Meaning (and Science) Behind Those Life-Changing, Transformational Aha Moments" Bruce Grierson, *Reader's Digest* <https://www.rd.com/culture/aha-moments/>.

2. Philip Kennicott, "Rich with Irony: When Golden CEO Jack Welch Stepped Down, It Was into the Mud," *Washington Post*, October 14, 2002, C1. Cited by Chuck Colson, *The Good Life* (Wharton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), pp. 51-52.

3. "AHA: God Moments That Can Change Our Lives" interview with Kyle Idleman and Chris Carpenter, Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), <http://www1.cbn.com/books/aha-god-moments-that-can-change-our-lives>.

4 Gene Shalit, *Great Hollywood Wit* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), p. 201.

5. *Quartz Obsession*, March 26, 2019.

6. "11 incredible acts of courage" by Therese Oneill March 4, 2016, *Mental Floss* <http://mentalfloss.com/article/56157/11-incredible-acts-courage>.

7. "Karen Watson: A life given, not taken" by Teresa Adamo, Special to *The Californian*, February 10, 2006. Interview with Erich Bridges, author of *Lives Given, Not Taken: 21st Century Southern Baptist Martyrs*, [https://www.bakersfield.com/archives/karen-watson-a-life-given-not-taken/article\\_bb492f0b-41bf-582b-9bee-f902a2ae7063.html](https://www.bakersfield.com/archives/karen-watson-a-life-given-not-taken/article_bb492f0b-41bf-582b-9bee-f902a2ae7063.html).