

“We train disciplemakers...”



The Day of
the Lord
— p. 3



Tearing down
high places
— p. 4

Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

Advancing the Gospel

Be sure to check out our current podcast which features messages by Mike Treneer from our 2022 Fall Conference.

[**Making Disciples Naturally Podcast**](#)

Do you look forward to Christ's return? What is the “Day of the Lord”?

[**See the article on page 3**](#)

“Embraced by the Infinite Love of God” is this month's featured blog

[**Dr. Spann's blogs are found at KansasNavs.org/blogs**](#)

What are the “High Places” and what is the danger in not tearing them down?

[**See the article on page 4**](#)

Richard Spann, MD to speak at Spring Men's Retreat

We are excited to learn from Dr. Richard Spann, former Ministry Director for the Kansas Communities Ministry and retired pulmonologist. Richard is well-known to many in the Wichita area as well as throughout Kansas and northern Oklahoma. He has a long history of being used by God as a loving, encouraging and wise disciplemaker.



Richard shares, “The overall theme is *Strengthening your Stakes*. Wherever Lorne Sanny traveled in his tenure as President of the Navigators, this would be his topic. He felt that everyone needed continued encouragement and reminders of the fundamentals of our spiritual walk and ministry with Christ. These fundamentals are vital to a reproducing ministry.”

Three messages include *The Word of God*; *Prayer*; and *Man to Man Ministry*. The fourth session is entitled *Deepening your Knowledge of God*. Richard states, “If we strengthen our stakes in these areas we will be like those referred to in II Peter 1:8. ‘They will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.’”

Be watching for registration information for this year's Spring Men's Retreat, to be held at Cross Wind Conference Center from dinner on March 31 through mid-afternoon April 1, 2023.

Where the Wind Leads by

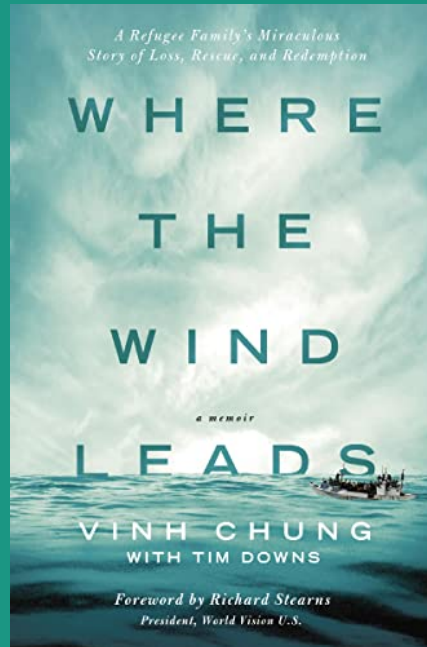
Dr. Vinh Chung and Tim Downs (Pub. Thomas Nelson, July 28, 2015)

An amazing story is told in this book which reveals the ways God protected this family as they escaped from Viet Nam. The full title ends with “A Refugee Family’s Miraculous Story of Loss, Rescue, and Redemption.” Incident after incident is told about the remarkable ways God intervened to preserve this family.

From the Amazon description: “The remarkable first-hand account of Vinh Chung, a Vietnamese refugee, and his family’s daring escape from communist oppression for the chance of a better life in America. Discover a story of personal sacrifice, redemption, endurance against almost insurmountable odds, and what it truly means to be American.”

The author was born in 1975, just before his country fell to communism. His family was a wealthy owner of a rice-milling

operation worth millions. They were one of the most prominent families in Viet Nam, losing everything to the communists. They were near death on the open water. But God provided for them.



While on open waters they were attacked by pirates and survived other perilous situations. Ultimately they were taken in by a Christian church in Arkansas where they faced many new hurdles, including poverty and a severe language barrier. Dr. Chung eventually graduated from Harvard Medical School and is currently in medical practice.

The book is a wonderful testimony to God’s faithfulness, even when the situation seems hopeless.

From Hoopla: “A refugee’s family’s miraculous story of loss, rescue and redemption. It spans two continents, ten decades and 11,000 miles.”

It is available as audiobook, hard copy or on Kindle. If you want a really encouraging book, read this one ... you won’t be able to put it down!

Goads and Nails

By Richard Spann

“There are only two things of eternal value for which you can give your life in exchange, the Word of God and people...” Walt Henrichsen Vol. 3 pages 15-18

I first met Walt Henrichsen in the fall of 1972. He was giving a talk at Ford Madison’s home in Wichita, Kansas prior to an assignment with the Navigators in New Zealand. He related that earlier in his life, one of his goals was to become an engineer and build bridges. In his reading of II Peter 3:7, he discovered that everything on the earth would eventually be destroyed in preparation for the new heavens and the new earth! It was that realization that directed him to find out what was of eternal worth for the investment of his life. In his searching of the scriptures he determined that there were two things to which he could give his life that would last for eternity — the word of God and the lives of people.

Isaiah 40:8 declares that “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.” Our Lord also reminds us in Mark 13:31 that “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.” The word of the Lord has value, meaning and purpose for all eternity. We hear, read, study, memorize, and meditate on the word of God not only for its value in this life, but also for its value in the life to come. Its usefulness will continue throughout all eternity. It will “stand forever” and “never pass away.”

Mankind, we are told, has an eternal existence. John 5:28-29 states, “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out...” Each life, in the words of Christ, is of incomprehensible worth. He states in Mark 8:36, “For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

The permanence for which we were created is found ultimately in the Lord Himself, as Moses declares in Psalm 90:1. “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.” As we travel toward that dwelling place, He gives us direction in His word as to what He considers to be permanent and of value for the investment of our lives. These, clearly, are the word of God and the lives of people. May the Lord direct you in His will as you invest your life in these two things of eternal value.

In Christ, Richard Spann

“We train disciplemakers...”

What manner of persons ought we to be? by David Dennis

2 Peter 3:10-13 NKJV - “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

Peter describes a rather terrifying time in our future, a time that will come on suddenly and unexpectedly, as a “thief in the night.” He calls this the “day of the Lord.” According to “GotQuestions.org,” this term usually refers to a time when God personally intervenes in history directly or indirectly to accomplish some specific aspect of his plan.

However, this passage also indicates what our attitude and conduct should be today as we live in light of this certain future event.

1. We should treat all of our “stuff” as though we are stewards and not as owners. Everything will pass away and be burned up. We don’t cling tightly to the things of this earth. While we enjoy things, still we hold things with open hands as He chooses to use what we have for his glory. We take care of what we have, we are responsible with God’s creation, but we hold it loosely. That’s hard for many of us to learn to do! ***I ask myself, “Do I cling to what I have, with a demanding attitude? Let it go!”***
2. We should seek holy conduct and godliness. This doesn’t primarily mean that we should focus on a legalistic life of following rules and laws in order to be holy. According to 2 Cor. 3:18, we are to keep our eyes on Jesus who does the transforming. When we try by our own flesh to live according to the law in order to achieve “holy conduct and godliness,” we inevitably fail. That is living by the flesh. Holiness and transformation comes by looking to Jesus and His Word and letting it transform us (Romans 12:1-2). ***I ask myself, “Do I use the certainty of this judgement to be a motivation to live a holy life? Keep my eyes on Jesus!”***
3. We should pray for and seek this day to come. We are promised that a crown of righteousness will be given to us if we “love His appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:8) ***I ask myself, “Do I look forward to His return? Look up — and be encouraged!”***
4. We look beyond this event to the ultimate new heavens and new earth (vs. 13). We can take courage, and encouragement, that some day (soon, I think) He will return, He will gather those who have placed their faith in Him alone (and not in works that we do) and take us to be with Him forever, ultimately in completely righteous newly-created heavens and earth. ***I ask you, “Have you placed your faith in Christ alone, not depending on anything you have done or will do to earn salvation?” If so, rejoice and be thankful. If not, I beg you to read the Gospel of John and ask the Lord to speak to you through His Word.***

Even though the day of the Lord is indeed terrifying, it is important to keep our eyes on Jesus. He will return; He will make all things new and right and good. If we have believed in Him alone for eternal life, we have nothing to fear. This doesn’t mean ignoring current needs or challenges and doing what we can to help our world. It does mean to rely on His promise of returning and taking us to be with Him forever. Now that’s really good news!

“We take for granted that the object of the ministry is to convert sinners and edify the body of Christ. No faithful minister can possibly rest short of this. Applause, fame, popularity, honor, wealth - all these are vain.”

■ “We train disciplemakers...”

"The High Places Were Not Removed" excerpt from blog by Richard Spann (from <https://kansasnavs.org/blog>)

“As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD His God, as the heart of David his father had been.” (I Kings 11:4) “On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.” (I Kings 11:7-8) The seeds of destruction in the form of idol worship were planted throughout Judah, leading to its final destruction and removal to Babylon. Although Hezekiah removed them more than 210 years later, they were rebuilt by his son Manasseh and only finally destroyed by Josiah nearly 300 years after Solomon had built them. Even those considered as “good” kings did not remove them. Asa did not fully remove them. (I Kings 15:14) During Jehoshaphat’s reign it was said that “The high places, however, were not removed, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there.” (I Kings 22:43) Although Joash was considered a “good” king, the same was written about him in II Kings 12:3, “The high places, however, were not removed.” The same was also written about other “good” kings, about Amaziah (II Kings 14:4), Azariah (II Kings 15:4), and Jotham. (II Kings 15:35)



The knowledge of God that the people of Israel were given was to result in the love of God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) and be manifested in the fear of God (Deuteronomy 6:13), and in trust in Him. Instead the nation, progressively over 300 years, trusted false gods. They depended upon these idols to provide for them, to protect and to guide them. Instead of fearing and serving the One true God (Deuteronomy 6:13), they feared and served other gods. They went to these high places first rather than make the trip to Jerusalem to worship the One true God...

How do we, then, remove the high places in our lives? We must realize that we cannot serve God and high places at the same time. “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” (Matthew 6:24) We also need to realize that these high places are not trust worthy. “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.” (Matthew 6:19) We need to return with our whole heart to the One Source who is our Life and allow Him to be in charge of all resources. “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33) It is by trusting in Him only that we can experience His removal of the high places in our lives.

When we are freed from our high places we are then able to know God more fully. To know God is to love Him. To love Him is to trust Him. He, as our One Source, has given us the following promises. “The LORD Himself will go before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you or forget you. Don’t be afraid and don’t worry.” (Deuteronomy 31:8) “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

In Christ, Richard Spann

“We must die to ourselves - when people say that they can’t, they usually mean they won’t.” — Elizabeth Elliott, Missionary, Author, Speaker, quote found in talk “I Can’t But I Will” at <http://discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/K127.pdf> and corresponding recording at <http://turret2.discipleshiplibrary.com/K127.mp3>