



POWER *for* LIVING

March 31, 2024

I Can Do All Things Through Christ

"I See You"



Flowers on the Bus Route

BY LINDY SCHNEIDER

We can't leave Montana!" I told my husband. "Our children need to stay where they have family, teammates, and school friends."

"But we have to go where I can get work," replied Tom.

I frantically prayed that God would work out the details for us to stay in our beautiful home. Despite my fervent prayers God did not answer the way I hoped He would.

Tom and I owned a school supply store that drew customers from all over the state. We sold not only children's books and educational toys but also tools and supplies for teachers. We were the only store of its kind in Montana. We had worked

hard to build this store, loaded its shelves with resources to be a blessing to our community. For years everyone had loved our store. In fact, teachers would make an annual trek during the summer months bringing purchase orders from their schools to stock up on books and classroom essentials. That was the cornerstone of our business.

The store didn't make us wealthy, but it provided for our family and employees, and it served the local schools and homeschooling parents well. Occasionally we had to close the doors due to Montana's heavy snowfalls and mountain fires that would make the roads impassable. All commerce would come to a halt for a week but then it would pick



back up again.

However, one year several difficult circumstances hit the entire state and the government had to make some tough cutbacks in the annual budget. The legislature voted to freeze all special funding for two years for the schools. That funding was used annually to buy the supplies we offered. School purchase orders abruptly ceased. Although parents continued to come in to buy a book or stickers or pencils, the government ruling proved to be fatal for our store.

Despite business counseling, strategic planning, and our best efforts, our school supply store of many years failed. And like a black hole it seemed to suck away my life.

After a difficult search for employment my husband was hired to a new position in Arizona. With aching hearts, we explained the circumstances to our four children, packed up everything we owned and moved.

All our kids were sad to leave but I assured them this would be a new adventure. My daughter was not so easy to console. It was the worst time to move her; she was just beginning her senior year in high school and would leave behind her friends of several years to become the “new kid” at a new school in a new state. She sobbed into my shoulder. I comforted her as best I could, but I did not understand the “why” either.

I wanted to stay strong for my husband and children so after our move I thought it would be best for me to journal my thoughts rather

than voice my grievances. I began to compile a list of things we had lost. I wrote several pages and thought of more things to add each day.

- We lost our beautiful home and had to move into an apartment.
- We moved away from my mom, the kids’ beloved grandmother.
- We gave up one car only to have the other one break down during the move.
- We didn’t have any friends or family here.

I not only committed to writing in my journal every day I also committed to reading my Bible, but I could not find peace. I did not understand why God would allow this to happen to our family. I pondered “what if” questions and chewed on “if only” imaginings and fought back tears when I saw the loneliness in my children’s eyes.

One day during my Bible time, Philippians 4: 7 tugged at my heart. It read, “and the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” I longed and prayed for that peace.

“Finally, brothers and sisters,” the verses continued, “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.” The words in Philippians 4:8 admonished me to think about “anything” that was praiseworthy.



I could not get past those words. In my pain I argued with God, “If I could think of anything that was praiseworthy, I would think on that!”

I had found a part-time job in Arizona, but because of our car situation I had to ride the city bus to and from work. I disliked the

When I returned home to my apartment one afternoon, I discovered bougainvillea petals strewn all across my path by the wind. Even the steps up to my apartment were covered in beautiful pink petals!

My eyes welled with tears as I felt God tugging at my heart saying, “I

Okay God, I silently prayed, I will thank you for the bougainvilleas. It was one small thing, but I would praise Him for that.

inconvenience as the bus stop was also a significant walk from our apartment. The commutes, however, gave me time to think and pray.

One morning on my way to work I was staring out the window of the bus when I noticed a large bush covered in bright, fuchsia-colored flowers. I loved that color. I asked a fellow commuter for the name of that bush for I had never seen flowers that color before.

“They are bougainvilleas,” she replied.


Okay God, I silently prayed, I will thank you for the bougainvilleas. It was one small thing, but I would praise Him for that.

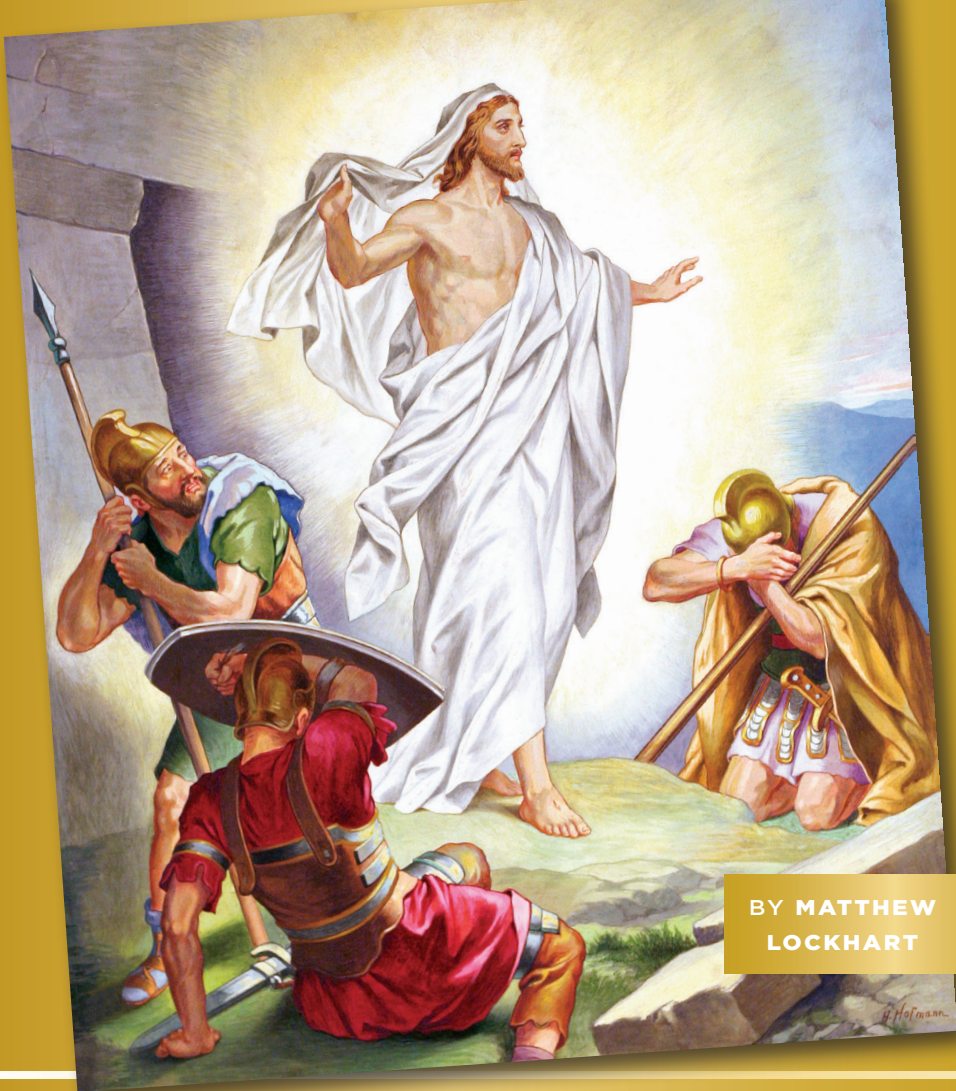
From that moment forward I began to see those bright pink flowers everywhere! Sometimes the bushes would cover an entire brick wall. Other times they were random shrubs just trying to tease a smile out of me. Each time I saw one I remembered my promise and thanked the Lord. My heart began to grow a little less heavy.

see you. Trust Me.”

I realized it was time to start journaling my blessings instead of my losses. I noticed smiles and kindnesses. Joy began to return little by little. I learned that bougainvilleas are the most prolific and bloom the brightest during times of high heat and drought. It helped me understand that God takes our times of distress and turns them into something beautiful too.

Although I never wanted to move there, our family lived in Arizona for many years. We made good friends and had many wonderful adventures. We discovered opportunities for our kids in both year-around baseball and drama productions that were not available to them in Montana. Even my daughter, who was hurt the hardest from our move, met her future husband there.

And every year God faithfully brought the bougainvilleas into bloom reminding me of how His constant love changed my heart even when I could not see Him. 



BY MATTHEW
LOCKHART

THE RESURRECTION

From *50 Bible Stories Every Adult should Know, Volume 2: New Testament*

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SETTING THE SCENE

On Friday afternoon after Christ has breathed his last, Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the high council and a secret follower of Jesus, asks Pilate for permission

to remove Jesus' dead body from the cross. Joseph owns a nearby tomb hewn out of the rock. After wrapping the corpse in a clean linen cloth, he places it in his tomb and then seals it by rolling a large stone in front of the entrance.

Risen!

FROM MATTHEW 27-28

On the next day, which was a Sabbath, the chief priests and the Pharisees went together to Pilate. They said, “Sir, we remember what that liar said while he was still alive. He claimed that in three days he would come back from death. So please order the tomb to be carefully guarded for three days. If you don’t, his disciples may come and steal his body. They will tell the people that he has been raised to life, and this last lie will be worse than the first one.”

Pilate said to them, “All right, take some of your soldiers and guard the tomb as well as you know how.” So they sealed it tight and placed soldiers there to guard it.

The Sabbath was over, and it was almost daybreak on Sunday when Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. Suddenly a strong earthquake struck, and the Lord’s angel came down from heaven. He rolled away the stone and sat on it. The angel looked as bright as lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards shook from fear and fell down, as though they were dead.

The angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to a cross. He isn’t here! God has raised him to life, just as Jesus said he would. Come, see the place where his body was lying. Now hurry!



Tell his disciples that he has been raised to life and is on his way to Galilee. Go there, and you will see him. That is what I came to tell you.”

The women were frightened and yet very happy, as they hurried from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and greeted them. They went near him, held on to his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said, “Don’t be afraid! Tell my followers to go to Galilee. They will see me there.” While the women were on their way, some soldiers who had been guarding the tomb went into the city. They told the chief priests everything that had happened. So the chief priests met with the leaders and decided to bribe the soldiers with a lot of money. They said to the soldiers, “Tell everyone that Jesus’ disciples came during the night and stole his body while you were asleep. If the governor hears about this, we will talk to him. You won’t have anything to worry about.” The soldiers took the money and did what they were told. The Jewish people still tell each other this story (CEV).

TRUTH FOR TODAY

“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matthew 28:6, KJV).

The tomb sat empty. Perhaps the most compelling case for Christianity is what isn’t found at the grave of its leader. For

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Christ followers, the resurrection is confirmation of who Jesus said he was and what he would do.

An episode of such significance, it served as a line of demarcation (from BC to AD) for modern human history. If not for rising from the grave, Jesus would have been a footnote in history—an idealistic, if not disillusioned teacher, dying for a lost cause, his followers quickly disbanding and fading away thereafter.

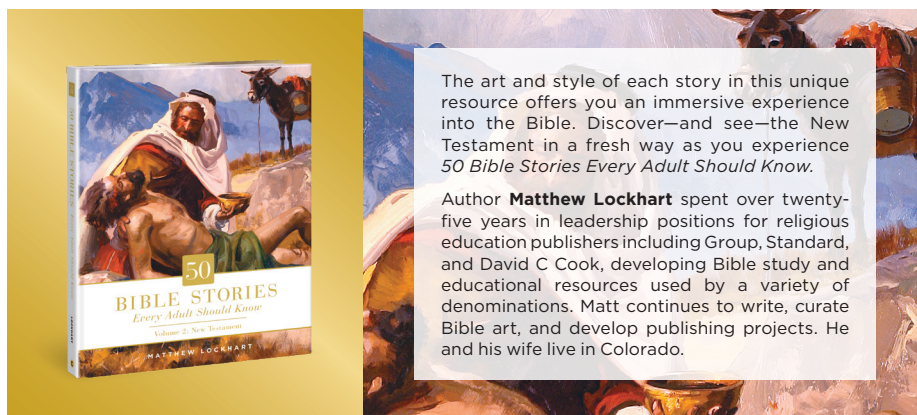
Central to Christianity, salvation boils down to this: because Jesus overcame the grave, we're able to be saved from death through faith in Christ.

The end marks a new beginning.

FYI

Among Christ's most faithful and ardent followers were the women who visited the tomb. Taking all four gospel accounts into consideration, those mentioned by name were:

- Mary Magdalene, from whom Jesus cast out seven demons (Luke 8:2; John 20:1–18)
- Mary, mother of James and Joseph (Matthew 27:56; 28:1)
- Salome, mother of James and John (Matthew 27:56; Mark 16:1)
- Joanna, wife of Cuza, manager of Herod's household (Luke 8:3; 24:10)



The art and style of each story in this unique resource offers you an immersive experience into the Bible. Discover—and see—the New Testament in a fresh way as you experience *50 Bible Stories Every Adult Should Know*.

Author **Matthew Lockhart** spent over twenty-five years in leadership positions for religious education publishers including Group, Standard, and David C Cook, developing Bible study and educational resources used by a variety of denominations. Matt continues to write, curate Bible art, and develop publishing projects. He and his wife live in Colorado.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

SUNDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 19–20
MONDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 21–23
TUESDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 24–25
WEDNESDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26–28
THURSDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark 1
FRIDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark 2–3
SATURDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark 4–5

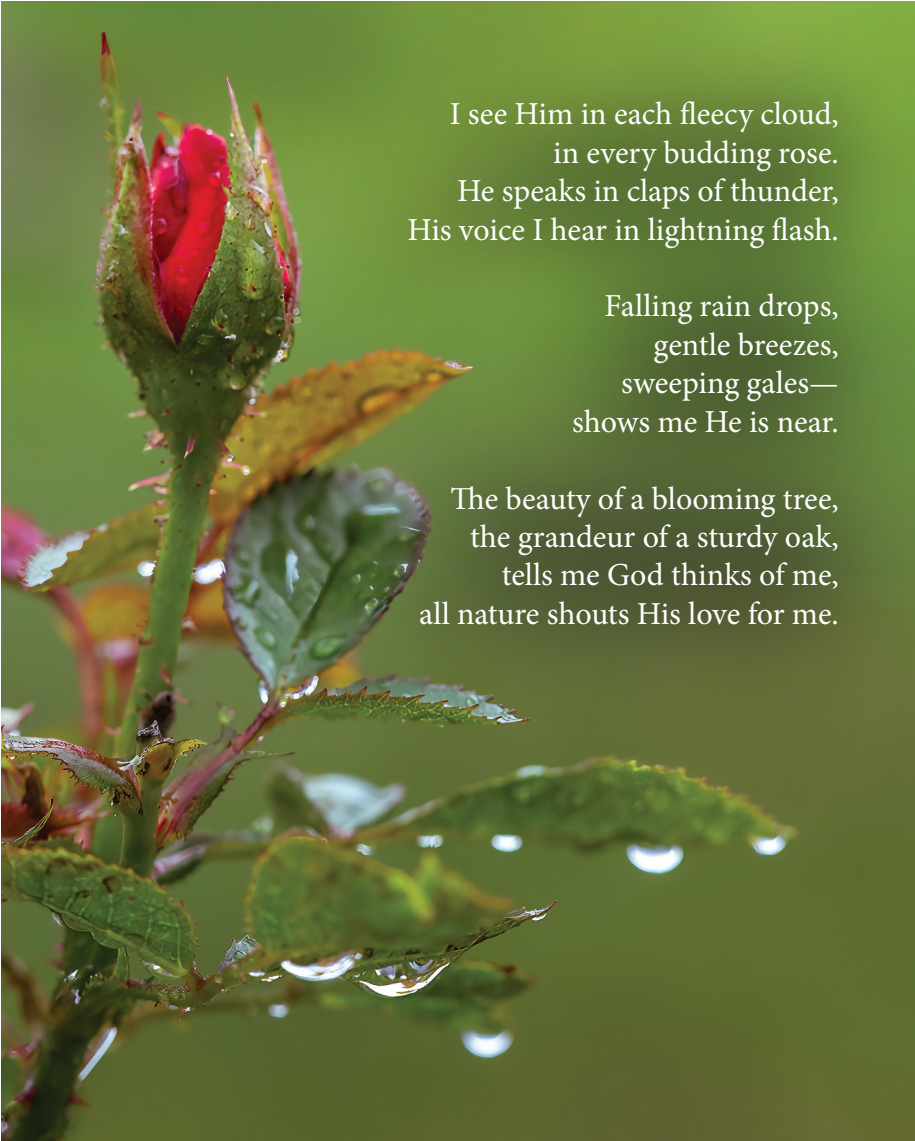


The heavens declare the glory of God. –Psalm 19:1 (KJV)



God in Nature

Jewell Johnson



I see Him in each fleecy cloud,
in every budding rose.
He speaks in claps of thunder,
His voice I hear in lightning flash.

Falling rain drops,
gentle breezes,
sweeping gales—
shows me He is near.

The beauty of a blooming tree,
the grandeur of a sturdy oak,
tells me God thinks of me,
all nature shouts His love for me.

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