



Number 202

AMERICA 250

June 2026

America and most of western civilization was founded on Judeo-Christian values. Most of the rest of the world was not.

Whereas we see Christians persecuted in most of the world, in America we live relatively free of persecution.

Continued on page 2

WHAT IF THE SOLUTION TO AMERICAN PROSPERITY IS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT?

Our country has taken what used to be a foundation and turned it into a finish line.

We feel it at the grocery store. We feel it when we pay our utility bills. We feel it every time we check our bank accounts and browse house listings. I especially feel it when just two bags of groceries cost me more than a hundred dollars.

Continued on page 5

5 COUNTRIES WHERE CHRISTIANS FACE BRUTAL PERSECUTION – AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

"Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them."

For American Christians, biblical accounts of martyrdom can seem far removed from everyday life. And yet some 388 million Christians worldwide face high levels of persecution or discrimination — from imprisonment and government surveillance to mob violence and social exclusion — for practicing their religion.

Continued on page 8

HAPPY BIRTHDAY USA!!!!**Wearing Jesus**

"Having a life jacket is not the same as wearing it." (sign near DeGray Lake)

Knowing all about Jesus is not the same thing as wearing and living the character of Jesus. "Rather, clothes yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of your sinful nature." (Rom. 13:14 NIV)

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Dealing With the Devils We Know

From the beginning of organized civil governments of every civilization, culture and nation, there have been according to our human nature, a characteristic number of "public servants" who lacked sufficient moral or spiritual integrity to resist temptation to help themselves to public funds for personal benefit and benefit of like-minded associates.

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AMERICA 250

THE BIRTH OF AMERICA

Of the 55 delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention, historical consensus indicates that **51 or 52** identified as Christians. The remaining delegates held deist beliefs or had unspecified religious affiliations.

The U.S. Constitution does not explicitly mention "God," "Creator," or "Jesus." The only reference is in the closing endorsement, which dates the document "...in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven". Instead, the Constitution establishes a secular government.

The First Amendment forbids the government from establishing an official state religion and protects the free exercise of religion.

The term "In God we trust" was added to our coins starting in 1874 and to our paper money starting in 1957.

CYCLIC TRENDS

There seems to be a cyclic trending towards Christianity and trending away from Christianity. During and after World War II there seemed to be substantial change toward Christianity. This was when Churches of Christ grew the most. There seemed to be a clear right and wrong concept prevalent in the country at that time.

From the 60's until recently the pendulum has been swinging in the opposite direction. Church attendance has been declining, our congregations have been dying, and religion has generally been falling out of favor.

Some states have been specifically violating federal laws with policies such as sanctuary cities (for lawbreakers), promoting illegal entry into our country, pushing murdering babies, promoting illegal voting, sponsoring riots, and promoting fraud.

RETURNING TO CHRISTIAN VALUES

We have come through 4 years of hostility towards religion and are now experiencing society being more supportive of Christianity.

Five or six years ago, we began hearing stories of mass baptisms on college campuses. Maybe the baptisms weren't exactly what we would have preferred, but they were baptisms.

Churchgoers between the ages of 18 and 28 attend church more frequently than their older siblings, parents, or grandparents. A new study, part of the State of the Church research initiative from Barna Group and Gloom, found a post-pandemic surge among Gen Z. For those attending church, they found:

Gen Z	23 services annually
Millennials	22 services annually
Gen Xers	19 services annually
Boomers	17 services annually

It is apparently the first time they have found better attendance among the young than the older folks.

What the terms mean:

Gen Z	1997-2012
Millennials	1981-1996
Gen X	1965-1980
Boomers II	1955-1964
Boomers I	1946-1954
Silent	1926-1945
Greatest	1906-1925

The Barna study, released today, calls this a "historic" and "generational reversal."

"The fact that young people are showing up more frequently than before is not a typical trend," "This data represents good news for church leaders and adds to the picture that



spiritual renewal is shaping Gen Z and Millennials today.”

Barna’s research, based on 5,580 online surveys done between January and July, does not look at the overall decline of the number of people going to church in America, however. A recent Pew Research Center study found that just 45 percent of adults under 30 attend religious services—a number that seems to have dropped nearly 20 points in 10 years, although comparisons are inexact.

It is possible that the frequency of Gen Z church attendance has increased in the last five years because less-committed, less-regular churchgoers have simply stopped going. Perhaps the ones who still go, are more likely to go more.

Older generations, meanwhile, are going to church less frequently even when they still attend, Barna’s data shows.

“In our collective memory, we have this memory that people attended church every week—twice on Sundays, Sunday school, and midweek services. The data is telling us there has been a shift,” Barna CEO David Kinnaman told CT. “The data helps us recognize the elephant in the room: When people are in church, they’re going about every two out of every five weekends.”

Barna’s study found that churchgoers born before 1946 are attending, on average, 11 fewer services in 2025 than they did in 2000. Churchgoers born between 1946 and ’64 are at church 7 fewer Sundays every year. That’s between one and a half and three months of skipping church.

And large numbers of older people have stopped going altogether. Although Pew says direct comparisons are problematic because polling has shifted from phone calls to internet surveys, a 2007 study showed that about 22 percent of people over the age of 65 seldom or never went to church. In the most recent survey, that number was up to 40 percent.

UNDERSTAND PEOPLE IN 2 MINUTES

1. The one who is talking too much is the one who have weakest mentality.
2. The one who is always joking is often the most dangerous.
3. The one who avoids eye contact is usually hiding something.
4. The one who dresses flashily is often seeking attention.
5. The one who speaks slowly is often the most calculating.
6. The one who mirrors your actions is often trying to build rapport.
7. The one who listens more than they speak often knows more than they show.
8. The one who reacts emotionally too fast is easier to influence than they think.

If that’s right, then 18 out of every 100 senior citizens quit participating in religious services sometime in the last two decades.

“One of the larger trends in social research on religion that we see is a winnowing the wheat from the chaff as nonpracticing Christians are tiptoeing toward identifying as ‘nones,’” Kinnaman said. “That’s one reason it’s so remarkable to see younger generations saying, ‘I don’t think we’ve given religious communities enough of a chance.’”

related

Gen Z Wants to Talk about Faith

When COVID-19 restrictions lifted, many churchgoers seemed to reevaluate what they wanted to do with their Sunday mornings.

Barna found that Gen X attendance returned to pre-pandemic levels—and increased slightly from start of the century. Today, Gen



X churchgoers average 1.6 services per month.

Millennials' church attendance has also gone up, according to Barna. Today, churchgoers between the ages of 29 and 44 average 1.6 services per month—going to church about six or seven more Sundays per year than they did in 2000.



Barna researchers think this data will confirm the intuition many pastors have about shifting demographics, with younger people coming more often, and average attendance rates, how often people show up. The study notes that many pastors feel frustrated by irregular attendance and find it hard to build momentum in their congregations.

At the same time, the church-tech company Gloop wants Christian leaders to see new possibilities.

“These shifts in church attendance open the door for leaders to innovate,” Gloop president Brad Hill said. “Churches that prioritize relational touchpoints and digital engagement—through text, social media and other online tools—can better reach younger generations where they already are.”

Kinnaman hopes the data will help church leaders be proactive and encourage them to focus on how they can best meet people's spiritual needs.

“The fabric of congregational life is changing,” he told CT. “We really need to grapple with the learning needs, the content needs, of younger generations and how we're structuring discipleship and teaching calendars and building communities when

people are at church two out of every five Sundays.”

CONCLUSION:

With our youth being more inclined to participate in religion, shouldn't we be taking advantage if it?

**6 THINGS
SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE
NEVER TELL ANYONE**

1.  Success often requires years of unseen sacrifice.
2.  Confidence is built through action, not motivation.
3.  Most opportunities come from relationships, not luck.
4.  Failure happens more often than people admit publicly.
5.  Discipline matters far more than talent in the long run.
6.  The biggest competition is becoming better than your past self.

THINK BIG



Continued from page 1

WHAT IF THE SOLUTION TO AMERICAN PROSPERITY IS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT?

America's affordability crisis is real. Inflation is hurting families. Housing costs are through the roof. The American dream feels increasingly out of reach for many young people.

Our story isn't unique. For most of history, families have built stability and wealth together rather than waiting until they had already achieved it.

But what if part of the problem isn't just economic? What if it's cultural?

What if it's that more and more of us are postponing — or outright rejecting — the very milestones that once allowed our country to thrive?

For generations, marriage and family were some of the biggest building blocks of financial stability and success. Today, marriage rates are declining, family formation is delayed, and birth rates have fallen so low that we can't even replace ourselves. At the same time, Americans are marrying later than ever, and first-time homebuyers are now 40 years old on average.

These aren't isolated trends. They are interconnected signs of a culture that has turned family from a foundation for building a good life into a finish line that many feel they must reach only after they have "made it."

Foundation, not finish line

I didn't grow up in affluence by any means. Things were often tight at the Thorman household with nine children (yes, all from the same parents), though none of us went

"without." My parents and their friends welcomed kids into the world with open arms even though they had no idea how they were going to afford us.

When my older siblings were born, things were so tight that they mostly lived on beans and rice and a whole lot of prayer. My dad



Vintage Images/Getty Images

worked extremely hard, and with smart financial decisions coupled with his integrity and strong work ethic, his salary increased over the years — just as the data has long predicted.

But one thing my parents didn't have was Pinterest-perfect homes, luxury vacations, or every financial box checked before starting a family. They just did it. They just got married young, committed to one another, welcomed children, and built a life together.

I'm not advocating for irresponsibility, but we need to regain knowledge that was once intuitive: Marriage and family don't stand in the way of financial success; they help create it.



Having it all

Our culture has it all backward. The expectation that we have to travel the world, have perfect-looking homes, and "find ourselves" before settling down has not made us happier or more financially savvy. Rather, it has only made us more miserable, lonely, and empty.

The very lies society feeds us about delaying marriage and family in order to "have it all" often undermine the very things people are seeking: financial stability, purpose, belonging, and long-term happiness. These are not obstacles to marriage and family; they are the fruit of them. We have convinced an entire generation that family should come after success, when for much of human history, family was the primary way people built success.

The data bears this out. Marriage and stable two-parent households consistently produce better economic outcomes: higher household income, greater wealth accumulation, lower poverty rates, and greater financial stability for children. Imagine that. The family structure God designed not only benefits individuals spiritually and emotionally, but also creates some of the strongest economic outcomes for families and society alike.

Having a family will alter your priorities, and rightly so. For my husband and me, having two kids (with more to come, God willing) has changed how we spend our money, where we spend our time, and what we value the most. We hardly get to take vacations, let alone the kind "influencers" brag about on social media, and that's OK. I'll take my kids over luxury experiences every day. So yes, kids change your lifestyle — and that's a good thing.

For me, I get to do life with my best friend and make carbon copies of us, and it's exceptionally awesome. I want everyone to experience it, because my family isn't the obstacle to a meaningful life; it's the source of one.

My story isn't unique. Social science has been documenting the economic benefits of marriage and family for decades.

Marriage: The great anti-poverty program

Washington politicians love to debate tax credits, subsidies, and government programs, yet one of the strongest predictors of economic stability isn't a government policy at all — it's marriage. Certainly, government policies matter. Washington can lower taxes, reduce burdensome regulations, and make housing more affordable. But no government program can replace what strong marriages and families provide: stability, sacrifice, belonging, and a purpose larger than ourselves.

Research from the Institute for Family Studies found that among Millennials who graduated high school, worked full-time, and married before having children, 97% avoided poverty altogether by their mid-30s. Far from being obstacles to financial stability, marriage and family are often among the strongest predictors of it.

My husband and I are a testament to that reality. We got married in our 20s with very little to our names. No trust funds or other "head starts"; nor did we have every financial box checked. We simply started building our life together anyway.

Since then, our careers have grown and our incomes have increased. After living in a small apartment and saving as much as possible, we purchased our first home — including a nice yard to play in — after welcoming our first child. Our story isn't unique. For most of history, families have built stability and wealth together rather than waiting until they had already achieved it.

Worthy inheritance

The financial advantage enjoyed by married households extends to the whole family. Children raised in stable two-parent homes are far less likely to experience poverty and far more likely to move up the economic



ladder. In 2021, just 9.5% of children living with two parents were in poverty, compared to 31.7% of children living with a single parent.

Strong families provide stability, support, and opportunity in ways that no government program can ever replicate. If we truly want to reduce poverty, expand opportunity, and strengthen our nation's long-term prosperity, we must acknowledge the indispensable role marriage and family play in human flourishing.

Whatever efforts Washington makes to ease Americans' financial burdens — whether through tax cuts or education reform — lasting change must start with us. Too many young people who tell themselves they're putting off marriage and children for financial reasons are in fact mistaking risk for impossibility. Building a life has always required a leap of faith.

It's a leap more of us have to make if we want to keep the American dream alive. Can we afford to have children? The better question is can we afford not to. If we want more prosperity, opportunity, and stability, we should start by strengthening the institution that has helped make those things possible for generations: the family.

Caroline Woods, Blaze Media, June 14, 2026

Caroline Woods is the founder of Woods Strategies and a wife and mother residing in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Zero Intelligence

Let's Reason Together

Once upon a time (all fairy tales begin this way) there was a big dumb rock sitting on top of a hill. Like most rocks he had been there for many years. His name was Zero Intelligence because after all he was a rock. After a billion years Zero thought within himself, "I need an ear so I can hear what is going on in the world." So he thought and thought for another billion years and one day he noticed a funny looking flap on both sides of his stone head and he thought that must be my ears! But he still could not hear; there was no "ear canal" to funnel sounds to his hard head.

So, he tilted his head first to the right and then to the left and let the rain drill a hole in his head to channel the sounds into his thick skull (that took another billion years). Zero had the ear and the canal but he still could not hear. He still needed the middle ear (drum, hammer, anvil and stirrup), and the inner ear, and nerves connecting the auditory system to the brain. But zero was not discouraged, "Just give me more time", he thought to himself. He was still a dumb rock with zero intelligence. A fully developed human would take billions and billions more years. That, my friend, is evolution.

Try this instead: "In the beginning" (the highly intelligent) "God created the heavens and the earth". He created the babbling brooks with their soothing sounds. He created the birds that sing sweet songs. He created the lowing cattle. Last of all God created a full grown man, ears and all, and since day six the sweet sounds of nature have been heard by all.

Now you tell me which makes more sense: A Zero Intelligent rock forming an ear or a highly intelligent God creating it. (Read Genesis chapters 1 and 2).

Thank you for reasoning with me.

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5 COUNTRIES WHERE CHRISTIANS FACE BRUTAL PERSECUTION – AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

Christ never promised his followers a life free from suffering; the New Testament repeatedly warns that persecution is part of the Christian experience. Yet Scripture couples that warning with a command: Christians are not to forget their fellow believers who suffer for the faith.

Few Christians in the United States or Europe will ever face the kinds of pressures endured by believers in North Korea, Nigeria, Pakistan, China, or Armenia.

"Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body" (Hebrews 13:3).

Christians today do respond in many ways, from prayer and advocacy to humanitarian aid and legal assistance. Here are five places where believers face significant challenges in 2026 — and five organizations working on the front lines to support them.

Related Content

1. NORTH KOREA

North Korea remains one of the most dangerous places in the world to follow Christ. While North Korea's constitution formally guarantees freedom of religion and the government permits a small number of state-controlled churches, independent Christian activity is treated as a threat to the regime. Believers caught with a Bible or participating in unauthorized worship can face imprisonment, forced labor, or worse. In some cases, punishment extends to entire families under the country's system of collective responsibility.

Organization helping: Open Doors

Founded by the Dutch missionary known as Brother Andrew, Open Doors has spent decades serving Christians living under persecution. The ministry is best known for its annual World Watch List, which tracks countries where Christians face the most severe restrictions.

North Korea again ranked at the top of this year's installment. The organization supports underground believers through networks operating outside the country, assists defectors, and helps document conditions that would otherwise remain hidden from the outside world.

Open Doors recently published the story of a North Korean Christian who spent more than a decade imprisoned because of his faith before being released. The testimony provided a rare firsthand account from inside the country and reflected the organization's broader work supporting underground believers and documenting religious persecution that is otherwise difficult to verify from outside North Korea.

2. NIGERIA

Nigeria remains one of the deadliest countries in the world for Christians. Islamist extremist groups, armed militants, and recurring attacks on villages have left thousands dead and displaced countless families in recent years. In May, suspected Fulani militants killed five people and abducted several others in attacks on Christian communities in Plateau State, highlighting the persistent insecurity facing many believers.

Organization helping: International Christian Concern

Based in Washington, D.C., International Christian Concern focuses on advocacy, reporting, and direct assistance for persecuted Christians worldwide.

In April 2025, ICC reported that more than 300 Christians had been killed in Nigeria in



just over three months. The organization has consistently documented attacks on churches and Christian villages while advocating greater international attention to the crisis.

Last month, ICC released "Nigeria's \$10 Million Genocide Cover-Up," a report alleging that government officials and international actors have obscured the religious dimensions of violence that has killed tens of thousands of Nigerian Christians over the past two decades.

3. PAKISTAN

In Pakistan, an accusation of blasphemy against Islam can upend a person's life long before a verdict is reached. Christians have frequently found themselves among those targeted under the country's controversial blasphemy laws, while recent investigations have raised concerns about organized networks that allegedly fabricate accusations and profit from the resulting prosecutions.

Organization helping: Voice of the Martyrs

Voice of the Martyrs was founded in 1967 by Romanian pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who spent 14 years imprisoned by the communist regime for his Christian faith before escaping to the West and launching a ministry dedicated to serving persecuted believers.

Because many of the Christians it serves live in dangerous environments, the organization often withholds names and identifying details from public reports.

In September 2025, Voice of the Martyrs Radio featured Pakistani Christian scholar Dr. Yousaf Sadiq discussing efforts to preserve and distribute the Punjabi Psalter, a collection of Scripture-based worship songs used by Christians in Pakistan. The project was presented as one way of strengthening believers living under pressure. VOM has also highlighted cases involving Christians accused under Pakistan's blasphemy laws and encouraged prayer for imprisoned believers.

4. CHINA

Unlike North Korea, China does not ban Christianity outright. Instead, the government seeks to control it. Churches are expected to submit to state oversight, religious leaders face pressure to promote Communist Party priorities, and believers who resist can find themselves under surveillance or behind bars.

Organization helping: Aid to the Church in Need

Aid to the Church in Need is a Catholic pontifical foundation that supports clergy, seminarians, religious communities, and Christian families in countries facing hardship or persecution.

Like many ministries operating in sensitive regions, ACN does not always disclose detailed information about beneficiaries or projects in countries where publicity could place local Christians at risk.

This year, Aid to the Church in Need spotlighted the case of Jimmy Lai, the imprisoned Hong Kong Catholic publisher and pro-democracy activist serving a 20-year sentence under Hong Kong's national security law. Through interviews with Lai's family and its "Faith Under Siege" podcast, ACN has helped keep international attention focused on one of the world's most prominent Christian prisoners of conscience.

5. ARMENIA

Armenia is one of the world's oldest Christian nations and the first kingdom to adopt Christianity as its official religion. But recent disputes between the government and the Armenian Apostolic Church have prompted warnings from religious-freedom advocates who say one of Christianity's oldest institutions faces mounting political pressure.

Unlike North Korea, Nigeria, or Pakistan, the concern in Armenia is not mass violence against Christians but an increasingly contentious relationship between the state



and the church that has shaped Armenian identity for more than 1,700 years.

Organization helping: Christian Solidarity International

Christian Solidarity International, a Switzerland-based human rights organization, advocates on behalf of persecuted religious minorities around the world.

In 2026, CSI conducted a fact-finding mission in Armenia, where its delegation met with imprisoned Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan after negotiating access with Armenian authorities. The group later delivered letters from the archbishop to participants at the International Religious Freedom Summit in Washington, released a report on alleged state persecution of the Armenian Apostolic Church, and urged Western governments to raise concerns about detained clergy and religious freedom in Armenia.

Remembering the forgotten church

Few Christians in the United States or Europe will ever face the kinds of pressures endured by believers in North Korea, Nigeria, Pakistan, China, or Armenia. Yet their stories serve as a reminder of both the cost of discipleship and the fragility of religious freedom in a fallen world. They also challenge Christians elsewhere not to forget their brothers and sisters in Christ.

As the Apostle Paul reminded the early Church, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (1 Corinthians 12:26).

Matt Himes, Blaze Media, June 14, 2026

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Wearing Jesus

Remember the weakest link between God's saving grace and Satan's subtle and destructive influence is human choice. God cannot and will not make the choice for us. We need to be trained in godliness. Too many are spiritually dull, still living on milk. "But solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong." (Heb. 5:14 NLT)

Where do we go for training? "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16-17 NLT)

The world won't teach us the difference between right and wrong. It know nothing of godliness and righteousness. Take care that you can discern right from wrong. "Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly." (1 Tim. 4:7 NLT)

Are you ready to commit your mind to God's training? Will you carry Jesus around in the book or wear his attitude, manner, passion and godliness for all to see? How will you strengthen every fiber of your spiritual being today?

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana



Continued from page 1

Dealing With the Devils We Know

Such people often justify their actions by masking as advocates of “social justice” for “disadvantaged”, who are frequently victims of their own greed as well as the greed of authoritarian despots to whom they report. The resulting decay of such weakened nations invites attack, destruction and oppression or annihilation.

Unfortunately, the specter of this scenario has become manifest in America today, posing a very high-risk threat to the unique Republic of The United States of America as founded according to biblical principles as “One Nation Under God” with liberty, justice and freedom for all – regardless of religion. The founders were – for the most part, men of integrity and high moral character, having mutual respect for the greater good of all citizens to ensure opportunity for all to enjoy mutual benefit in the pursuit of happiness.

However; in recent years, the nemesis of humanity has “seized” opportunity amidst the rise of “globalism” based upon “world-view” behavior rather than Biblical-view standards of behavior. Such antithetical behavior has “opened the door” for people lacking integrity or spiritual morality to pursue their ambitions without regard to responsibility or accountability to fellow Americans whose hope is based upon the principles enshrined in our Constitution designed to protect and preserve those rights held to “endowed” by God our Creator.

Once again, in order to survive as a Nation “Under God”, Americans must rely on the grace of God and submit our appeal to God for mercy and forgiveness of both citizens and leaders whom have all been led astray – to the brink of destruction.

This letter is an urgent appeal to the conscience of all those disadvantaged by deception and apathy of a contemptuous and

morally bankrupt segment of our society. Let us hope – and pray - that people of high integrity and godly character will have the courage to stand upon the solid foundation of Biblical truth that guided our Founders so we may “deal” with the devil’s surrogates that we know are amongst us. “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” James 4:7.

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison, Ohio



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Impossible for Evolution: #158 DETECTING COLOR

Vision is very complex (See CA037), and color vision is a more complex step.

As seen in the graphic, light comes through the lens and is focused on the retina. The retina is comprised of millions of cones which translate the incoming light into electrical signals. These signals are transmitted along the optic nerve to the brain and are interpreted by the brain as an image. An impossibly complex process and was the impossible for evolution topic #7 in issue CA037.

Cones are a type of photoreceptor, the tiny cells in the retina that respond to light. Most of us have 6 to 7 million cones. They are shown in the graphic.

Not all of these cones are alike. About 64 percent of them respond most strongly to red light, while about a third are set off the most by green light. Another 2 percent respond strongest to blue light.

When light hits the cones, it stimulates them to varying degrees. The resulting signal is zapped along the optic nerve to the visual cortex of the brain, which processes the information and returns with a color.

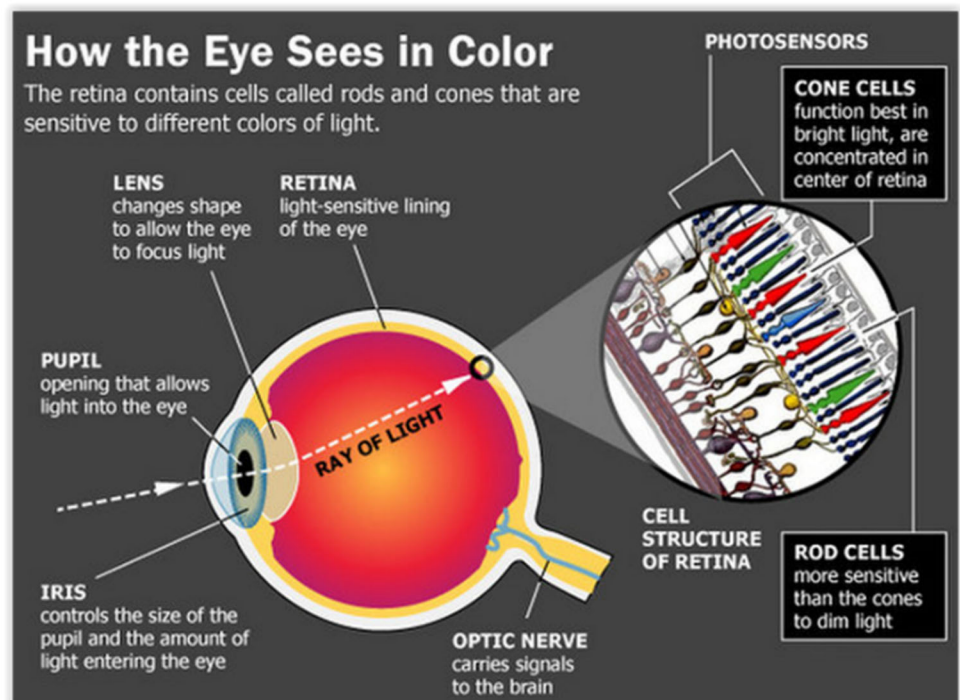
As mentioned above, the vision system is an impossibly complex system for accidents of evolution to create. Presumably the first step would have to be that you just had to recognize the intensity of light to get your

image. That is exactly what the rod cells in the graphic do. They give you shades of gray night vision.

The cone cells are effectively a duplicate set of sensors which are sensitive to light. Imagine that you have accidentally created cells that give you black and white vision. You don't know that the possibility of color vision even exists. How do you accidentally create a more complex system when you don't even know that there can be a thing like color vision.

Somebody really smart not only created black and white vision but also had the genius to know that interpreting the wavelength of incoming light would give us color vision. That somebody was God. It is naïve to suggest that accidents of evolution could create this.

Benton F. Baugh



Graphic by Karl Tate, Life's Little Mysteries



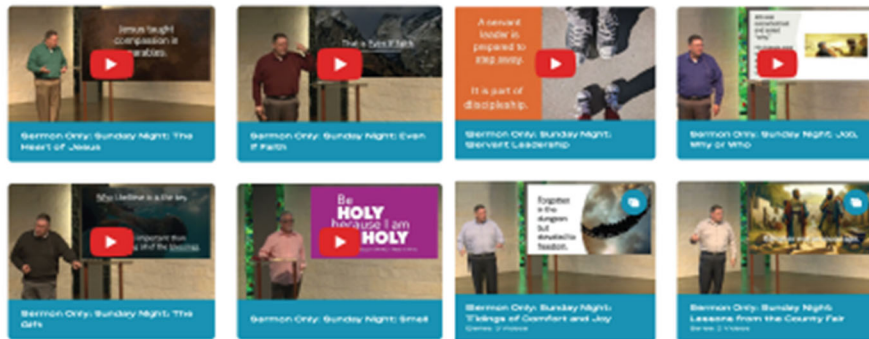
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Preparation for sermons, song leading, and prayers can often be a serious and time-consuming workload for many smaller congregations. eBiblestudy was created to help alleviate the stress that comes with preparing for these responsibilities.

Our hope is that this website can serve as a helpful tool, allowing individuals and congregations to focus more on personal evangelism.

30 new services added!

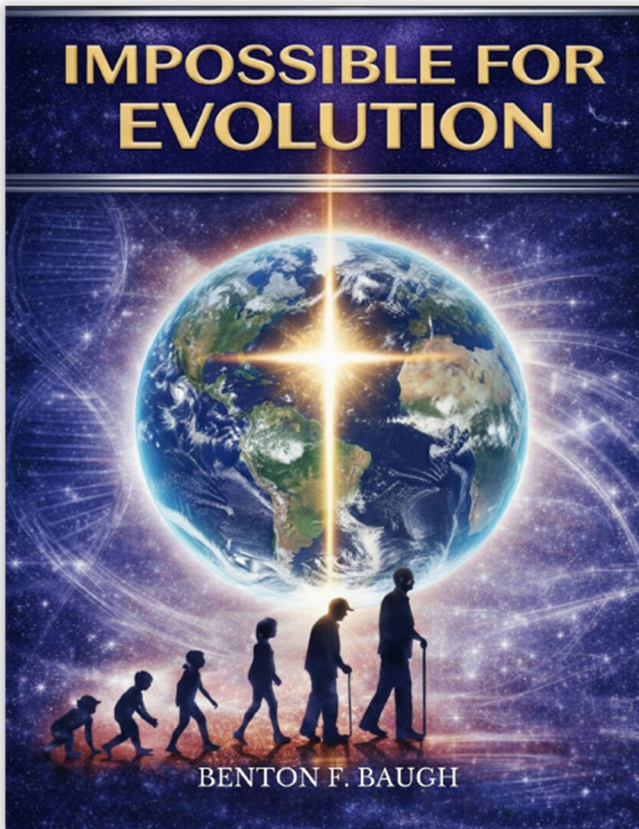
We want YOUR feedback!



Since we are still in the beginning stages of building this website, it would mean the world to us to hear from you! Please visit our website and fill out this form.



Provided by Oklahoma Christian University



A “must read” for all who will face questions about evolution, atheism, age of the earth and God. Today that is all of us from teen to senior. This book is intended to fill in the gaps and answer many of the questions which have been too long ignored but are causing doubts in many of our members. Probably more important, not having answers has caused some of our kids to not obey the Gospel in the first place.

This book features:

Definitions of relevant terms

More than 100 examples of God’s intelligent designs.

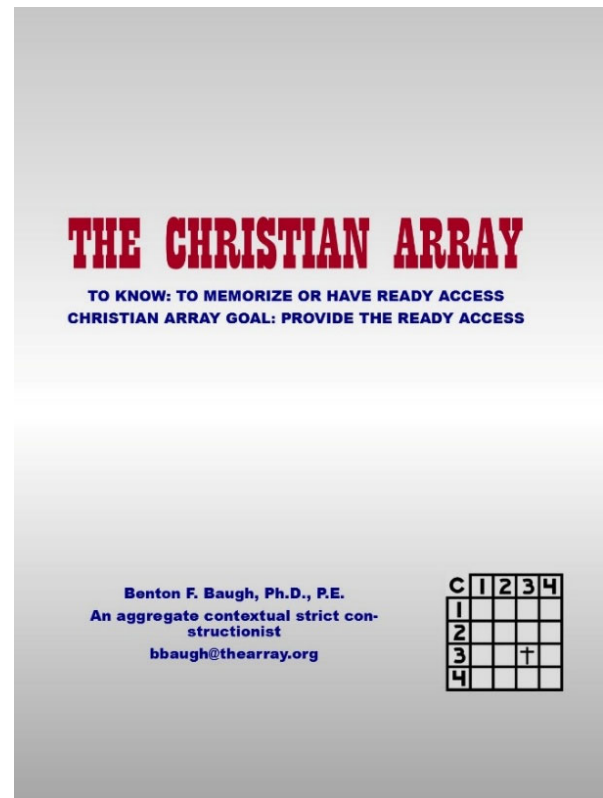
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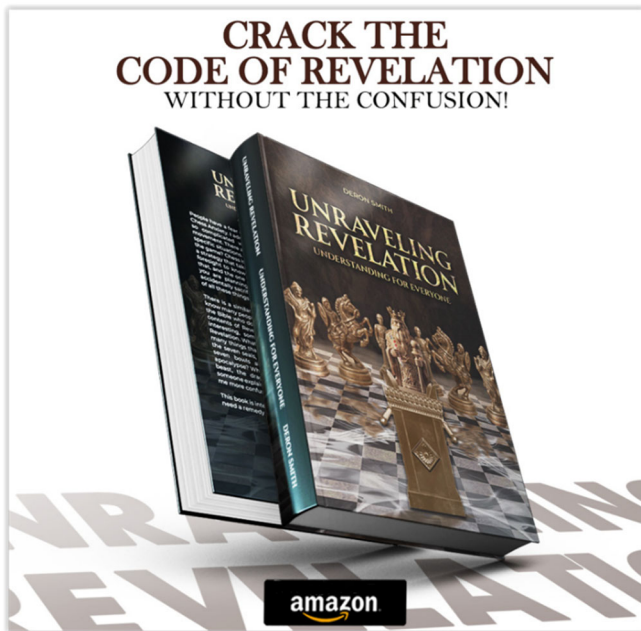
ARRAY OF GODS Discussions on the various gods put forth by different religions.

CHRISTIAN ARRAY Topical discussions on the general topic of Christianity. Includes discussions on hermeneutics, the plan of salvation, denominationalism, histories, deity, the end, etc.

INNOVATION ARRAY Discussions on various “Christian” groups, giving their approaches to following the scriptures.

Books 1 and 2 can be purchased at occg.institute/books for \$25.00 each, or

The entire CHRISTIAN ARRAY BOOK or any specific lesson can be downloaded at no cost at occg.institute, topical lessons tab.



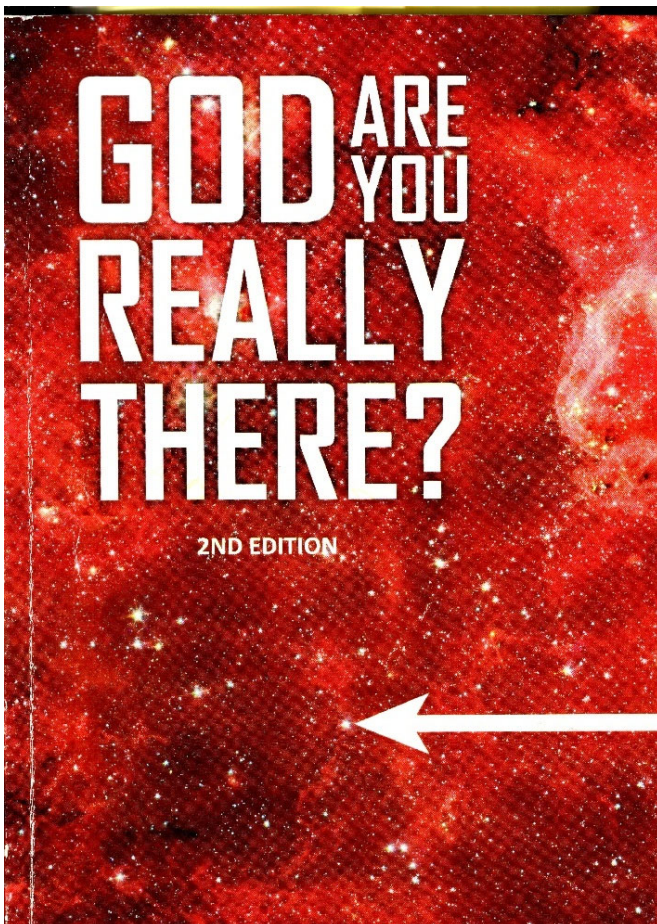
If you've ever looked at the book of Revelation and felt instantly overwhelmed, you're not alone.

It can feel like trying to play chess when you don't know the rules—confusing, intimidating, and full of pressure.

But **“Unraveling Revelation”** by Deron Smith is here to change that.

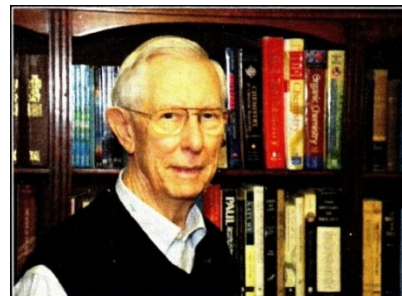
This book gently walks you through the mystery, clearing up the chaos without losing the meaning. The book is available on Amazon.

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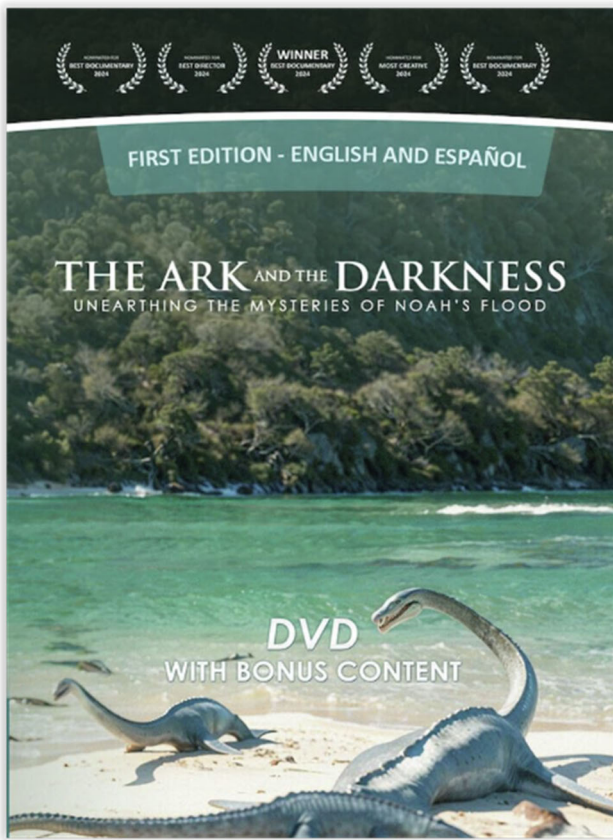


An excellent book to read by Don England. Don is an Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at Harding University where he has taught for 45 years.

My recommendation for **GOD ARE YOU REALLY THERE?** is that I bought a copy for



each of my children and grandchildren. Don eloquently answers a lot of the questions about God which they will have from time to time. Yours children and grandchildren will also have questions. **As a further recommendation, I now have also bought Christmas books for my siblings, nieces, and nephews. It is well received by all. My sister is now using it to teach a ladies class.** Available on Amazon



THE ARK AND THE DARKNESS

A friend loaned this DVD to me. After watching it twice, I bought my own copy to loan to my kids and grandkids.

Several speakers give fresh insights into the nature of the Ark and the flood which you will find intriguing. In addition to an excellent presentation, it provides many facts and figures which will be interesting to you. This should be shown in every high school class, and adult classes as well.

"The challenges ahead of you can only be measured by the ability inside of you."

Zone Leader: 7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones is a field-guide designed to help you navigate change. Resistance and conflict occur anytime change is introduced, and leaders must have the tools and resources necessary to avoid the pitfalls that hinder real success. No matter where you find yourself in the four zones, the tactics discussed in Zone Leader will enhance your ability to lead through each zone. "The challenges ahead of you can only be measured by the ability inside of you. The more you put into developing your leadership, the greater your ability to deal with the challenges you face."

"To get where you're going, you need more than just a destination; you need to know where you are now, and you need a map. To assist you on your journey, this thought-provoking book provides you with all three."

Sheila Heen, Harvard Law Professor and co-author of *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*.

"I wish this book could have been available when I was in both undergraduate and graduate studies. I was struck with how readability and depth worked in concert to clearly address leadership. The zones resonated with my thought processes and lay a logical format for understanding."

Gery Taylor, Executive Vice President, Prosperity Bank



Bob directs the Sunset Academy of Leadership Training. He is a coach, consultant, and full-time speaker, conducting workshops in leadership development. He is dedicated to helping leaders implement positive, transformational change and creating a vision to prepare the next generation of leaders. He lives in Virginia Beach, VA and holds a Doctorate in Intercultural Studies with an emphasis in adult leadership development from the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA.



ZONE LEADER: 7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones

TURNER



ZONE LEADER

7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones

Dr. Bob Turner

Author of *Essential: Building Blocks 4 Life and Leadership*

Foreword by best-selling author, Jeremie Kubicek, co-founder of GIANT Worldwide

An excellent book to read. Available on Amazon.



House Church

Defined: Group that meets for worship in private homes.
Biblical; 5 times mentioned in Bible. (Acts 1:13; I Cor. 16:9; Rom. 16:3; Col. 4:15; Phil 1:2)

Advantages:

- Deeper fellowship. A close loving church.
- Allows participation by each member.
- No overhead. The contribution goes to the needy and other outreach.
- Effective for discipleship growth.
- Accepting- Undenominational.

Visit us Sundays at 5 PM for church, and 6 PM for a meal at 608 Broadway, Mattoon.



How can we help you?

Dr. Don Selvidge, minister, retired Chiropractor
dsivdg@aol.com, 217-962-1764, 217-317-9654

Dr. Nancy Selvidge, homemaker, grandmother
608 Broadway, Mattoon, Il. 61938

- Crisis/ problem counseling
- "Hand Up" ministry
- Christian Movie Night -Bible Study
- Natural Health and Healing

No Charge for any services

Your invitation to

Mission House Church

608 Broadway Ave., Mattoon, IL 61938

"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am in the midst of them."
Matthew 18:20

Call or message 217-962-1764 for questions or assistance.
To receive a free Mission Newsletter email a request to dsivdg@aol.com

Welcome!

Check out our planned giving resources

fostershome.giftlegacy.com



Foster's Home for Children

1779 N Graham St
Stephenville, TX
(254)968-2143

Spots available for new residents, apply to the SOAR Program now!

www.fostershome.org/soar



Safety | Ownership | Advancement | Responsibility

The SOAR program at Foster's Home for Children aims to provide young adults ages 18-22, who have aged out of foster care, a longer runway to successful independence. Our goal is to provide a base of support beneath them as they transition to life on their own.



MAKE IT COUNT



*Sometimes I talk
to myself, and we
both laugh.*

Barry & Ace

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THE BOILING FROG EFFECT

The following two pages are an article from Epoch Times on 4/29/2026. They provide a “truth” that I have long believed, but which was false.

The actual title of the article by Kay Rubacek is “**The AI Warning Is A Myth, The Danger Is Not.**” The last part of the title is left off the second page in favor of readability.

I am accustomed to establishment scientists saying creation of species by evolution is true and that the speed of light is constant. It does not bother me because I know it is not true. I am not fooled.

I was fooled by the boiling frog effect and felt foolish for it. Angry would be another word.

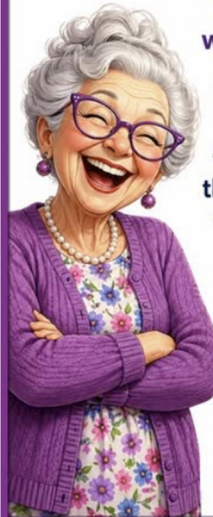
They knew it was false, but no one spoke up. Likely a lot of establishment scientists were fooled also.

I thought you might like to know the truth also.



Your dollar bill isn't paper: It's 75% cotton and 25% linen, with fibers

© 2025 Epoch Times



An 80 year old lady was marrying for the 4th time.
A newspaper asked if she wouldn't mind talking about her **first 3** husbands and what they did for a living.
She smiled and said,
“My first husband was a **banker**, then I married a **circus ringmaster**, next was a **preacher** and now in my **80's**, a funeral director.”
When asked why the **4** men had such **diverse** careers.
She explained,
“I married one for the **money**, 2 for the **show**, 3 to **get ready**, and **4** to go.”

♡
↳ Gramma's Funnies & Inspiration ◁





This AI Warning Is a Myth.

By Kay Rubacek



You know this story. Drop a frog into boiling water, and it will scramble out immediately. But place that same frog in cool water, heat

it slowly, and, degree by degree, it will never notice the danger until it is too late.

Most of us accept this without question. The problem is that the story is not true.

It traces back to a German physiologist named Friedrich Goltz, who, in 1869, conducted a series of experiments with a rather unusual purpose: to determine whether the soul resided in the brain or the spinal cord. He removed portions of a frog's brain and observed what the animal could no longer do without it. He found that a frog without its brain would sit placidly in slowly heating water and not attempt to escape. However, a normal frog, with its brain intact, would feel the rising temperature and get out.

That finding was passed around over the decades that followed, stripped of its context, and reshaped into the cautionary tale that we now all repeat. Later biologists confirmed the original finding: A frog in cold water will jump out before it gets too hot.

The frog that stays in hot water is the one that can no longer think for itself.

We have been repeating that story for more than 150 years as settled truth, because it felt right, without ever stopping to ask whether it was actually true. We accepted a false warning about the danger of not noticing gradual change, without noticing that the warning itself was false.

That should give us pause on its own. But this month, it became more than an interesting historical footnote when a team of researchers from Carnegie Mel-

lon University, the University of Oxford, MIT, and UCLA published a landmark study on how artificial intelligence (AI) is affecting human cognition. The findings are fascinating, but the metaphor they chose caught many people's attention. They wrote about the boiling frog.

Scientists studying the effects of AI on the human mind described how the human cost of using AI could be "analogous to the 'boiling frog' effect, where each incremental act feels costless, until the cumulative effect becomes overwhelming to address."

They were describing something that doesn't arrive in a single dramatic moment, but degree by degree, use by use, in the ordinary decisions of ordinary days.

Whether knowingly or not, they used a story about an animal that only stops trying to escape once you remove its ability to think.

In their study, the researchers gave participants a series of mathematical reasoning and reading comprehension problems to solve. One group had access to an AI assistant throughout. The other worked alone. Then, without warning, the AI was removed, and everyone was tested independently on the same problems.

The AI group performed significantly worse. That result, perhaps, is not surprising. What is surprising is this: Every participant in the experiment had a skip button. There was no penalty for using it, no reward for pushing through. The choice to try or to give up was entirely their own.

The AI group chose to skip at nearly double the rate.

This was not an inability to solve the problems. It was an unwillingness to try. After just 10 minutes of having an AI system handle every moment of difficulty, something had changed in the participants' choices. The researchers



give a name to what was lost: “desirable difficulties.” It is a term from cognitive science that describes the productive struggle that, in the moment, creates a challenge and, over time, is the process by which human beings learn, grow, and develop capabilities.

The discomfort of not knowing, the resistance of a hard problem, the effort required to work through something without being handed the answer—these are not obstacles to learning. They are learning. And AI, which is designed to be maximally helpful in the immediate moment, removes them every single time.

The concerning part is not that AI makes people less capable in any permanent or measurable sense; it is that it makes people less willing to try. It erodes the willingness to push through a challenge—the very foundation on which intelligence is built and maintained. A person who never lifts anything heavy does not lose the biological capacity for strength overnight.

The frog that stays in hot water is the one that can no longer think for itself.

This is what the researchers meant when they invoked the boiling frog metaphor. They were not predicting any single catastrophic failure. They were observing an accumulation of small human surrenders.

There is a generation growing up right now and living this on a daily basis. A recent Gallup poll found that 42 percent of Gen Z respondents believe that AI is harming their ability to think carefully and will make it harder for them to learn in the future.

These are children and young adults, still with developing human brains, forming their cognitive habits, their tolerance for difficulty, and their relationship with struggle, inside an environment that has been optimized to remove all of those things for them as efficiently as possible. The researchers warned explicitly of the risk of creating a generation that has lost the disposition to struggle productively without technological support. That is not a distant possibility. It is a trajectory in motion.

The irony at the center of all of this is that we have spent 150 years repeating a false story about how humans fail to notice gradual danger. We have repeated it uncritically, without checking, because it felt familiar and instinctively correct. Now the scientists documenting the most significant gradual cognitive shift of our time have reached for that same false story to name what they are seeing.

It’s time to rewrite the boiling frog story.

The frog with a functioning brain gets out of the water before it gets too hot. That capacity to feel the rising temperature, to recognize what is happening, and to choose to respond is not a small thing. It is, in the context of this moment, very nearly everything.

The question worth asking is not whether we are using AI. Most people already are, and that will not change. The question is how we respond to the rising temperature.

Kay Rubacek is an award-winning educator, filmmaker, author, and mother. Detained in a Chinese prison in 2001 for her human-rights advocacy, she has since dedicated her work to exposing the systems and ideologies that diminish human life and human sovereignty. She has been a contributor to The Epoch Times since 2010.