

ENDORSEMENTS

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by Dillon Burroughs

NOT IN MY TOWN: EXPOSING AND ENDING
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN-DAY SLAVERY,
with coauthor Charles Powell (includes DVD)

A ONE-YEAR DEVOTIONAL JOURNEY

THIRST NO MORE

DILLON
BURROUGHS

*“Whoever drinks the water
I give them will never thirst.”*

—Jesus (John 4:13)

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DEDICATION

I dedicate *Thirst No More* to my father.

His life encouraged my writing though he never lived to see my published works. He believed in me before a single word had been written. Even before I could recite the alphabet, his steady hand held mine through days of joy and pain. When he faced certain pain in his years with cancer, he smiled through tears to encourage us to stay strong in the Lord. Years after his departure, I find his memory deep within me as one who pointed me toward the heavenly Father. Without his influence, I may have never met the One who gives eternal life; now I know my father and I are separated only in this life, to be rejoined in eternity. Until then, I press on, knowing the same encouragement that touched my life may touch others today. There is a sense in which every word I write continues his life until we meet again in eternity.

Thank you, Dad!
Looking forward to seeing you again.

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INTRODUCTION

*"I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God
who is sending a love letter to the world."*

—Mother Teresa

Words matter. Jesus called Himself "the Word." Light was created when God spoke words. The Bible is called the Word of God. My personal journey with words began early. At the age of 6, I read my first book. At 18, my local paper printed my first article. But it was not until more recently I discovered the power of words in my relationship with God and in service of God.

To mark the new millennium in 2000, I made a personal goal to journal my time with God each day. Little did I know that five years later I would have two boxes of notebooks filled with thousands of prayers, thoughts, and reflections from those times of refreshing. In fact, I continued to journal from that day until well into the days my writing became my vocation. The daily habit stopped only because my words had transitioned from a conversation between God and me to articles and books beginning to touch others around the world.

In the midst of writing for others, my publishing achieved some degree of what this world

would call “success.” I spoke across the country on issues of faith; interviews of my publications reached into the hundreds, ranging from local AM radio stations to major headline television news. Some books would be called “best sellers.” Others would win awards. More importantly, many lives were being changed, including mine. Friends would contact me from South Africa, Egypt, Canada, Germany, India, New Zealand, and other far-reaching locations to share where they had found my writings or spoken to others using them. Even “secret believers” among people hostile to Christianity began to share how my words were encouraging their walk with Christ. I felt overwhelmed by both the response and the dedication involved to continue helping others.

Over time, God has chosen to open opportunities to return to my first love of writing meditations of my love for Christ. After years of prayer and seeking the appropriate moment, my dear friend and publisher Andrea Mullins has agreed to publish these writings in this book, *Thirst No More*.

The focus in this title is twofold. First, I seek to highlight the words of Jesus presented in the Four Gospels. As He taught, those who drink from the Living Water will thirst no more (John 4:14). Second, I have sought to use this privilege to help

those less privileged. One in eight people on our planet lack access to clean drinking water. My friends at Living Water International are working to change this crisis. Through clean water initiatives, lives are being saved every day in the name of Jesus, our Living Water. A portion of this book's proceeds is being donated to their efforts. You can read more about their work and how to help in the back of this book or at www.water.cc.

Before you plunge in, let me also share my desire for this book—changed lives changing lives. To my knowledge, I know of no devotional book that seeks to connect its readers in daily community. *Thirst No More* seeks to be the first. Each day (beginning January 1, 2012), we will experience the privilege to journey together each day at www.ThirstNoMoreBook.com. I encourage you to share your thoughts and to encourage others who share along the way.

For those like myself who prefer to read on screens or on the go, this book is also available as an ebook and can be read from your computer, ereader, or mobile device. Whether you read it on a screen or in print, you can submit your thoughts to the community from any online device, allowing us to share our daily experiences along the journey from wherever God speaks to you.

Finally, please know I pray for you and all of my readers every day. Your intimacy with Christ is my great pleasure. May you truly experience a life in which you thirst no more because our Lord has become your Living Water. May God shine His grace upon you as we share these words together.

JANUARY 1

“Jesus the Messiah the son of David.”

—Matthew 1:1

Genealogies appear mundane. Unimportant. Trivial. But the family line of Jesus is anything but insignificant. The opening words of the first Gospel unearth two critical traits of the coming King.

First, Jesus is called Messiah. Messiah was the term for the Coming One foretold of by the prophets. He would right every injustice. Second, Jesus is called the son of David. Only a man descended from David could fulfill the prophecies of Messiah. Only a king descended from the royal Jewish lineage could rule from the throne of David in Jerusalem.

Jesus came from heaven to earth. King was a step down for Him. Yet He came to fulfill God's Word, to live God's plan, and to show God's love, to me and to you.

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JANUARY 2

“He will save his people from their sins.”

—Matthew 1:21

The name “Jesus” is a variant of Joshua, meaning “God saves.” His name included His mission. From before His birth, His purpose had been foretold.

We, too, have been providentially created with a unique purpose. In one sense, we exist to further the purpose of Jesus, to point people to the saving power of Christ. Yet each of us has our own specific vocation, a sacred journey prepared by the Creator of the universe. How can we discover this purpose? The more closely we listen to Jesus, the more clearly we hear His voice. The more closely we sit in His presence, the more clearly we see Him and His plans for us. He longs to share His life with and through our lives today.

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JANUARY 3

“They will call him Immanuel.”

—Matthew 1:23

Immanuel. The Hebrew word means “God with us.” The eternal Creator of the universe stepped out of eternity past and into space and time. The designer of human anatomy limited Himself to a human body to one day allow that same body to be beaten and bruised on our behalf.

Ancient words often leave us confused. *Immanuel* should not be among them. Immanuel is the clearest expression of love available, for it communicates Someone greater coming to someone lower for the purpose of love. When God came to us, He revealed His love. When we share in life “with” others, we too reveal His love to them. *God with us* becomes *God in us* and through us as we share this unparalleled love.

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JANUARY 4

“Where is the one?”

—Matthew 2:2

In some unknown manner, the Magi observed a new king had been born. To honor this Ruler, they sought Him. Their journey would be long, but their destination would be worthy. In their effort, these Magi spoke to many in their travels, asking, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?”

Seeking requires a journey. A search requires a journey. These ancient leaders leave us a pattern to follow yet today. To find the Lord, we must look for Him. To honor Him, we must humble ourselves before Him. When we find our King, we bring Him our gifts. We offer Him our worship. We declare Him as the destination of our journey. He alone is worthy. What is it you bring to the King?

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JANUARY 5

“In Bethlehem in Judea.”

—Matthew 2:5

The Jewish leaders already knew where the Messiah would be born. Why? Ancient prophecies from the Jewish prophets revealed the location—Bethlehem. In fact, these priests sat only a few miles from where Jesus was born. Yet they missed His coming. Instead, non-Jewish Magi from the East were the ones to seek Him, traveling for weeks to greet His arrival.

Jesus is not a mystery, but He reveals Himself to those who seek Him. Many sit in pews for years and never truly seek Him. Others have never entered a cathedral yet have called out to His Name. Those who seek Him find Him. He is near. We only need to reach out to find Him. He will reveal Himself to us when we do.

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JANUARY 6

“They bowed down and worshiped him.”

—Matthew 2:11

The Magi traveled hundreds of miles in search of one child. They consulted the king and religious teachers in pursuit of this King of the Jews. Further, they did not come empty-handed. Their gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—represented a tremendous commitment.

In comparison, the locals had given the family of Jesus only a manger for a delivery room. The occupying ruler sought to kill the Child. Only shepherds and a few others recognized this baby for who He truly was. When the Magi found the Child at the end of their journey, they did not retell the difficulties of their trip, but rather bowed and worshiped. Only the King mattered. When we experience Christ, all that matters at that instant is Him. Worship Christ.

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JANUARY 7

“Out of Egypt I called my son.”

—Matthew 2:15

Jesus was not only born in an unfamiliar town; He was temporarily raised in foreign territory. In modern terms, Jesus was an immigrant. Many Jews lived in Egypt at this point in history; Jesus and his family were among them. Often belittled by the locals, Jesus was likely mocked and made fun of from His earliest human memories.

This was no mistake; it was a deliberate aspect of God’s plan. Jesus endured suffering to fulfill prophecy, suffering that included being the end of racial slurs and immigrant mockery. He knew how it felt to feel small and insignificant despite His position as Lord. When we feel unimportant, we must recall Jesus knows our hurt. He has been there and loves us with perfect, unending love.

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JANUARY 8

“He went and lived in a town called Nazareth.”

—Matthew 2:23

Nazareth was a small town. Scholars estimate fewer than 300 people called Nazareth home at the time Jesus lived there. In obscurity, the Son of God learned to read, to build, to work with his hands. The few friends His age would likely have wrestled with the young Jesus without knowing the significance of moment. His parents would pray to God with the Son of God in their presence.

Much of life appears mundane at the time. Yet in God’s providence every moment includes significant details arranged by His divine hand. A meal is not only a meal; a conversation is far more than its words. Take time to be aware of God in the quiet moments. Worship Him.

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JANUARY 9

*“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven
has come near.”*

—Matthew 3:2

John began his message with one word—*repent*. To repent means to turn, to change. Why repent? “For the kingdom of heaven has come near.” The arrival of Jesus marked the next step in God’s plan. To prepare, John called his hearers to change and prepare for action.

To follow Jesus today also requires repentance. We cannot truly follow Him without an unreserved change of perspective from self to service. Only when we become servants of Christ have our hearts adjusted to the proper attitude. Only then are we prepared for the work of the kingdom of heaven. Do not stop with faith in Christ. Continue with change in Christ. Then you will be prepared for coming kingdom of heaven.

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JANUARY 10

“John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair.”

—Matthew 3:4

John did not fit in with his culture. In fact, his clothing stood out so much that Scripture highlights his fashion choice: “John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist.” Yet people came to him from the entire region to the Jordan River. Why? To be baptized.

Why did many flock to John for baptism? He offered confession of sins. We may not like to admit it, but we deeply desire to confess our wrongdoings. In speaking our flaws, we relieve ourselves from a burden of secret lusts. Let us confess our sins to our Master today, and to another person if necessary. Let us confess our sins, repent, and seek the Coming One this day.

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JANUARY 11

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

—Matthew 3:8

John’s harshest words were spoken to religious leaders. They knew the promises of God, yet refused to conform to His ways. In response, John commanded them to “produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

This same original word for “fruit” can also be understood as “results.” The challenge was to live what they claimed to believe. This message convicts us still. We may believe the right things, but do we live the results of these beliefs? If not, we are in the same situation as the religious experts of John’s time. Our transformation must be the same as well—produce fruit. Let us live what we say we believe. Only then are we “keeping with repentance,” changing in light of the hope within us.

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JANUARY 12

*“After me comes one who is
more powerful than I.”*

—Matthew 3:11

Humility is a mark of genuine faith. John knew his role and clearly communicated that there was one “more powerful than I.” John baptized with water; Jesus would share the Holy Spirit. We are servants of our Master’s will; Jesus is our source of power. Any time we attempt efforts in our mere humanness, we lack the essential empowerment to accomplish the task.

Scripture is clear that apart from God, we can do nothing. Yet with God, all things are possible. This contrast should humble us, just as it did in John’s life, to speak what God wants us to speak; to serve only as He would bid us to serve. In humility, we find our true calling and our greatest honor.

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JANUARY 13

“Jesus came . . . to be baptized by John.”

—Matthew 3:13

Jesus approached baptism with the same humility He gave to other pursuits. But John knew he did not deserve to baptize Jesus. To baptize the Messiah appeared inappropriate; to Jesus, baptism stood as essential for Him.

Why was Jesus baptized? Much can be said, but one reason was “to fulfill all righteousness.” Baptism was part of God’s plan; it was right; it was necessary.

Today many view baptism as either the door to Christianity or merely a symbol. The true answer, however, lies mysteriously in between. Baptism is the mark of our repentance, a sign of our allegiance to a kingdom not of this world. Jesus leads this kingdom, a movement calls each of us to embrace and serve. Only through such humility can we please our King.

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JANUARY 14

"This is my Son, whom I love."

—Matthew 3:17

God is love. He loves us. He also displays love toward Himself between the persons in the Godhead. In a manner without comparison, God the Father declared His love for God the Son in the presence of God the Spirit. All of Trinity revealed itself at the starting point of Christ's public ministry.

Included in this unique allegiance of love is a pattern for us to reflect. If God the Father can openly voice His love for Jesus, should we not do the same? It takes a certain level of effort to communicate love to Jesus in private; it takes a higher effort to speak our love of Christ to a watching world. Speak your love of Christ to others today.

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