

TREASURES FROM ABOVE

ETERNAL PERSPECTIVES

A 40 DAY DEVOTIONAL BOOK

by Kenneth L. Birks

Treasures From Above

Eternal Perspectives

Daily Christian Devotionals that Inspire Faith
Includes Biblical Devotional Poetry

By Kenneth L. Birks

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*From heaven above, we catch glimpses of His great treasures.
From the Father's generosity, riches pour in good measures.
More valuable than gold, silver, or rubies, He desires to bless.
Like looking for buried treasure, we uncover, seeking Him above
From the Father's great storehouse, we're made rich in His love.*

~

My goal is that you may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that you may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that you may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 2:2-3

Foreword

by Doug Hartline

I sometimes find it hard to believe that I have had the privilege of knowing Ken Birks for two-thirds of my life. Our friendship started when I was a graduate student and I am now retired. One goes through several phases of life in those forty years and in all that time Ken has always been unwavering in his faith and his love of God.

Ken was my pastor for several of these years before God called him into other aspects of ministry, not the least of which is being a Christian author. During his tenure as Senior Pastor of Golden Valley Christian Center, Ken ensured that his congregation was filled with God's Word. Week after week he demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of God's Word that few will ever attain. I suspect that it is this knowledge that enables words to flow so freely from his pen.

Clearly a teacher as much as a pastor, Ken illuminated God's Word through logical and contextual interpretations – a very left-sided aspect of one's brain. Over the years, Ken began to demonstrate that he could not only logically interpret scriptures, but that he possessed a unique gift of poetry that could bring out the beauty in them as well. Rare indeed is the man who can so astutely master and utilize both the logical and the creative sides of his brain for the benefit of those he serves.

Henry Fonda, a famous actor from the golden era of Hollywood, once said of his equally famous friend Jimmy Stewart after looking over his body of work, "Just how and when did you get so gosh darn good?" As I read Ken's latest work, I had those same thoughts. In this new devotional, Ken has transcended from being a good writer to an exceptional one.

When thinking about reading a devotional one has to ask themselves two questions – is it relevant and what is it that makes it stand apart from the myriad of devotionals one can choose from? From my perspective, devotionals can be vital tools in improving upon our quiet time experience with God. They should be able to bring scriptural insight to us. Scripture is far more important than the words of even the most famous of authors for it is Scripture that penetrates our souls with God's wisdom and daily guidance. Ken's work herein ensures that God's Word takes center stage and holds the most important place within it so that it remains both timeless and relevant.

It is the incredible poetry, however, that separates this book and makes it stand apart from the others. Poetry can shine a light on God's Word from a different angle, in a way that helps us to look at it in a much deeper and often more profound way. It provides us with a unique ability to understand and appreciate God's Word in ways we may never have thought of before. We are suddenly confronted with beauty and clarity to our perceptions of our world and God's Kingdom.

Ben Franklin once said You should either write something worth reading or do something worth writing. While one could say Ken has done both in his ministry, I can without hesitation say that he has definitely written something here worth reading. So, I invite you to enter into "Treasures from Above" – let Ken's ability to paint with words reveal the treasures of the Word of God to you in colors you may never have perceived before.

Thank you, Ken, your book is a true gift to the Body of Christ.

Doug Hartline
Information Technology Director,
University of California, Retired

Treasures From Above

By Kenneth L. Birks

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Treasures From Above

Proverbs 3:13-15 *Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; ¹⁴ for her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. ¹⁵ She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you desire cannot compare to her.*

Many spend their whole lives looking for lost treasures, only to come up empty. There's something innate in all of us that desires to find hidden treasures. One of my granddaughter's favorite games to play with me is looking for buried treasure. It just goes to show that even at a young age, there's something in us that delights in looking for buried treasure. The amazing thing is, we have all the treasures we could ever ask for at our disposal. All we have to do is look to the heavens above with a seeking heart.

Proverbs 2:1-6 *My Son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, ² so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; ³ yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek her as silver, and search for her as hidden treasures; ⁵ then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. ⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom; and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

As we give ourselves to the study of God's word while focusing our thoughts on that which is above rather than earthly pleasures, we discover His word is the treasure map to all of the wonderful treasures He has in store for us. As we dig deep into His Word and the revelation of who He is, we discover hidden gems that are much more valuable than gold, silver, rubies, or sapphire. The gems we discover from His treasure house are eternal, lasting throughout eternity.

As seen from the above Scripture, the fear of God is the key to unlocking these treasures once they are found. When we embrace the fear of God, we gain an understanding of all that He possesses. Therefore, we should seek it with all of our hearts. In writing to the church at Colosse, Paul encouraged them to attain to all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We will never know what treasures await us until we seek the Lord with the same enthusiasm as we would looking for earthen treasures.

As we continue to seek God and walk on the path, He's laid before us, He brings people into our lives who have hidden gems. Many times, these are the gems that hold the keys to further unlocking our destiny and purpose. Sometimes, these people aren't the kind of people we would normally associate with. But God sees something in them we don't understand. He considers them gems that are hidden until we discover them through a bond of fellowship.

We have much to discover as we give ourselves to the mysteries of His word and Spirit. Let us go forth with hearts captivated by the discovery all that the Holy Spirit desires to reveal in us as He searches out the heart of the Father.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I lift my heart with a desire to know You and Your Word in a way that helps me to comprehend the great treasures that await me. Help me to value what's eternal more than that which is temporal. Help me to dig deep into Your Word that I may know you more intimately. Teach me to fear Your great name so that I will have a greater understanding of Your eternal love that flows freely from Your magnificent treasure chest.

Poem: Treasures From Above

From heaven above, we catch glimpses of His great treasures.
From the Father's generosity, riches pour in good measures.
More valuable than gold, silver, or rubies, He desires to bless.
Like looking for buried treasure, we uncover, seeking Him above.
From the Father's great storehouse, we're made rich in His love.

His Word a treasure map, all that's His, He no longer conceals.
Discovering His fortune, we're given to the study of His Word.
Gaining understanding, we delight in revelation from above.
Treasuring His commands, our ears incline to His wisdom.
With wisdom and understanding, greater knowledge is gained.

Searching for gems, fearing God, we discover in our endeavors.
Fearing God, His locked treasures reveal more and more.
With His fear found, we gain greater insight into His treasures.
Sensing their value increasing, we dig deeper into who He is.
Gold, silver, rubies, or sapphires not comparing, we dig deeper.

Looking for gems, our need for others is discovered.
With earthen vessels filled, we find one another.
Drawing from others in humility, gems we uncover.
Knitted in love, we attain to all riches in full assurance.
With the command to love, treasures come in abundance.

Enlightened, we gaze into the Father's treasure chest.
More than anything, the Spirit desires to reveal the Father's best.
Desiring to reveal riches, He discloses all that the Father has.
Given to the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, inheritance unveils.
Giving ourselves freely to His Spirit, He faithfully unearths.

In all that's revealed, we taste of treasures declared.
Given to what's not seen, we aim for what's prepared.
Until then and beyond, treasures flow from His heart, above
With wealth attained from His treasures, His love is unending.
Throughout eternity, His treasures are never-ending.

Scriptures to Meditate Upon

*Job 28:12-28, 2 Corinthians 4:7, Proverbs 2:1-6, Colossians 2:2-3, 1 Corinthians 2:9-10
Proverbs: 3:13-15, Ephesians 1:17-18.*

May God bless you richly, today, as you seek to find all that's been hidden away for your discovery.

The Father's Way

John 14:2 *"In My Father's house are many mansions, (dwellings) if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know the way, you know."*

Many roads lead to spirituality, but there is only one way that leads to the Father above, who shows the way to the eternal home that His Son, Jesus, is preparing for us.

Whether we know Christ as our Lord and Savior or not, we are all spiritual beings with an inherent spirituality about us. Satan, himself, is a spiritual being. At one time he was one of the highest archangels, who was closest to the Father. The question is, whose voice are you following? There are many voices of spirituality clamoring for our attention, but there is only one voice that will lead us to the Father's way.

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* He also said, *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me."* When Jesus spoke to the Pharisees, who had lost their way, He said, *"You are of your father, the devil, who speaks lies from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."*

Let us not be like the Pharisees who lost their way and fell into the devil's ploys. Instead, let us be like the sheep who consistently hear their Master's voice. To continually hear the voice of our Shepherd requires a humble and contrite heart. Otherwise, we open ourselves up to the many deceiving voices that come from the father of lies.

Isaiah 66:2 *"For all these things My hand has made, and all those things exist," Says the Lord. "But on this one will I look: On Him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word."*

There are two things mentioned in the aforementioned passage that are necessary if we are to find the Father's way and remain on it. The first is that of having a humble and contrite heart. The second is having awesome respect and love for His word that causes us to tremble at it.

Knowing the Father's thoughts and ways are much higher than ours, we must humbly submit to the Father of spirits and live. By dying to pride and ego, we must humble ourselves in His presence. In doing so, we open our senses to hear the voice of the Shepherd as He speaks words of comfort while showing the way to His great treasure house in the heavens above.

The Father's way demands that we embrace the cross of Christ and all that it entails. At the entrance to the path leading to the Father's eternal home is a cross that must be picked up and carried before entry is allowed. As the apostle Paul said, this is something we do daily. We must now lose ourselves in Christ by embracing the cross.

Matthew 16:24-25 *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whosoever desires to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."*

As we esteem His word more than our necessary food in the same way that Job did, we hold fast to the path that leads to our eternal home. By trembling and clinging to His Word, the Father's way is continually made clear. As His word becomes a lamp unto our feet, our path is made bright to follow. This is what allows us not to be led astray by the many voices of the world that are continually clamoring and competing for our attention. We must be like David who rejoiced in His word, knowing it would lead to great treasures.

***Psalm 119:162** I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure.*

Prayer

Father God, I come to You in humility asking for help to keep me, all the days of my life, on the path that leads to the eternal home You have prepared for me. Help me to stay humble and contrite in all that I do. Keep me as the apple of Your eye as I submit all my ways unto You.

Poem: The Father's Way

Father God, the creator of all that exists, provides a way.
With many roads touted, the Father's way is easily missed.
Any old road will get you there; many try to say.
With a narrow path to the Father's way, few find the way.
Lost in blindness, multitudes turn to the devil's highway.

The Father's heart is to draw all to Jesus, the only way in sight.
Discovering the Father's way, they come, humble and contrite.
Clinging to His word, pride destroyed, the path becomes bright.
The proud, blinded by their desires, He sees from a distance.
Blinded by self-will, they cannot be drawn, standing in resistance.

As a mediator between God and man, came Jesus, man, and God.
Coming as God in the flesh, a ransom for our sin, He gave His life.
Without sin, becoming sin, we become righteous by His blood.
At the cross with His shed blood, a way to the Father is cleared.
Making atonement, Jesus, the perfect Lamb was slaughtered.

As life of the flesh is in the blood, atonement had to be blood.
As Scripture says, "There's no remission without bloodshed."
The perfect sacrifice, completed, the Father's way was paved.
Unless the sacrifice is received and believed, many are misled.
For the way paved, the Father gave His Son for all to be saved.

To all who come, the way is made available through His Son.
Jesus, the only door to the Father above is available to everyone.
Coming to Jesus, all who follow embrace His cross, wholeheartedly.
Becoming the author of salvation, all who obey pass by the sentry.
Cleansed from all guilt and condemnation, the way clears for entry.

Scriptures to Meditate Upon

*John 14:6, Ezekiel 28:12-19, Isaiah 14:12-15, John 8:44, 10:27-28, Hebrews 12:9,
James 4:6-10, Isaiah 55:8-9, 1 Corinthians 15:31, Job 23:11-12.*

~

May God bless you richly as you hold firmly to the path of life that leads to your eternal home that's filled with treasures beyond comprehension.

Waiting on the Lord—It's Implications

Isaiah 40:31 *But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up, with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

Do we understand the term, "Waiting on the Lord?" The passage from the book of Isaiah, the prophet, gives us a tremendous promise when we learn what it means to wait on the Lord. Do you need your strength renewed? Do you often get weary in well-doing? Do you desire to soar in the spirit? As you learn what it means to wait on the Lord, these promises await you.

To wait on the Lord involves prayer, but it is much more than offering up our petitions before God. It is as much or more about listening to Him with a prayerful spirit. We are encouraged in Scripture to acknowledge Him in all of our ways, which involves keeping our mind stayed on the Lord throughout the day. This is how we pray without ceasing. We must continually lean upon Him in all things.

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths.*

By acknowledging Him in everything we do, we offer Him, even the most menial of tasks. By doing so, we are more in tune to hear Him as He speaks into our spirits as we go about our daily tasks. In doing this, we sense the Lord involved in our daily lives with our spirits engaged and energized, causing us to run the race without getting weary.

Many times, we get so bogged down with the daily minutia that we forget the Holy Spirit is there as our helper. Jesus relied entirely on the Holy Spirit and His communication with the Father, even during intense times of ministry. He didn't allow the tyranny of the moment to steal from Him what the Father's purpose was. We see this during one of His ministry times in Capernaum, where He'd healed Peter's mother-in-law, which followed an extensive time of ministry of casting out demons and healing many who were sick with various diseases. The whole city was gathered at the door. Following this anointed time, Jesus slipped out to pray and be alone with His Heavenly Father.

The next morning the disciples went looking for Him because everyone was waiting for Him to return to minister some more. When the disciples found Him, they said, "*Everyone is looking for you.*" Jesus' response was, "*Let us go to the next towns, that I may preach there also because for this purpose I have come forth.*" After spending time in prayer and communication with His Father, His spirit was refreshed with His vision and purpose renewed.

In the same way that Jesus' vision and purpose were renewed daily, so the Holy Spirit desires to renew our vision and purpose every day as we spend time waiting in His presence. May God the Father fill you with insight and purpose as you wait on Him by acknowledging and committing all your ways unto Him each day. He desires to breathe upon you as He renews your strength daily.

Prayer

Lord, I pray that you fill my mind and spirit with Your wisdom and knowledge of who You are. Fill my heart with Your desires towards me so that I may have the mind of Christ as I go about my day. Open the eyes of my understanding and enlighten me to know what is the hope of Your calling. Help me to understand the exceeding greatness of Your power as I commit my day unto You. Renew my strength and cause me to soar like the eagles as I wait upon You

Poem: Waiting on the Lord

Waiting on the Lord, our lamps are kept fully lit.
With strength and vitality, we press on to outwit.
Into realms unknown, He takes us, entirely abandoned.
Mounting upon the wings of an eagle, we don't faint.
Led by the Spirit, we're free to soar without constraint.

With hearts of expectation, we embrace all that is decreed.
As the Father's heart is searched, He reveals what's needed.
With divine nature imparted, perspectives in life change.
Waiting on the Lord, He generously pours into our hearts.
As divine nature reveals, greatness is known in all parts.

By believing and confessing, faith arises, meeting expectations.
Acknowledging God in all our ways, He directs our aspirations.
Fully convinced of His promises, we wait on Him who performs.
Trusting in Him, we wait as He brings to pass hidden desires.
In submission, paths are made straight for what He requires.

With an ear to His voice, we listen and wait as He instructs.
Presenting our prayers and petitions, He listens and conducts.
Praying without ceasing, our hearts and minds stay on Him.
With a still small voice, He whispers as we hear His secrets.
Obediently responding, we go from faith to faith as zealots.

Waiting patiently, gifts arrive for serving and ministry.
Attentive to the needs of others, we wait in symmetry.
Setting selfish ambitions aside, we minister, accordingly.
In serving and waiting, grace flows in new dimensions.
Soaring to new heights, we wait on Him who strengthens.

Scriptures to Meditate Upon

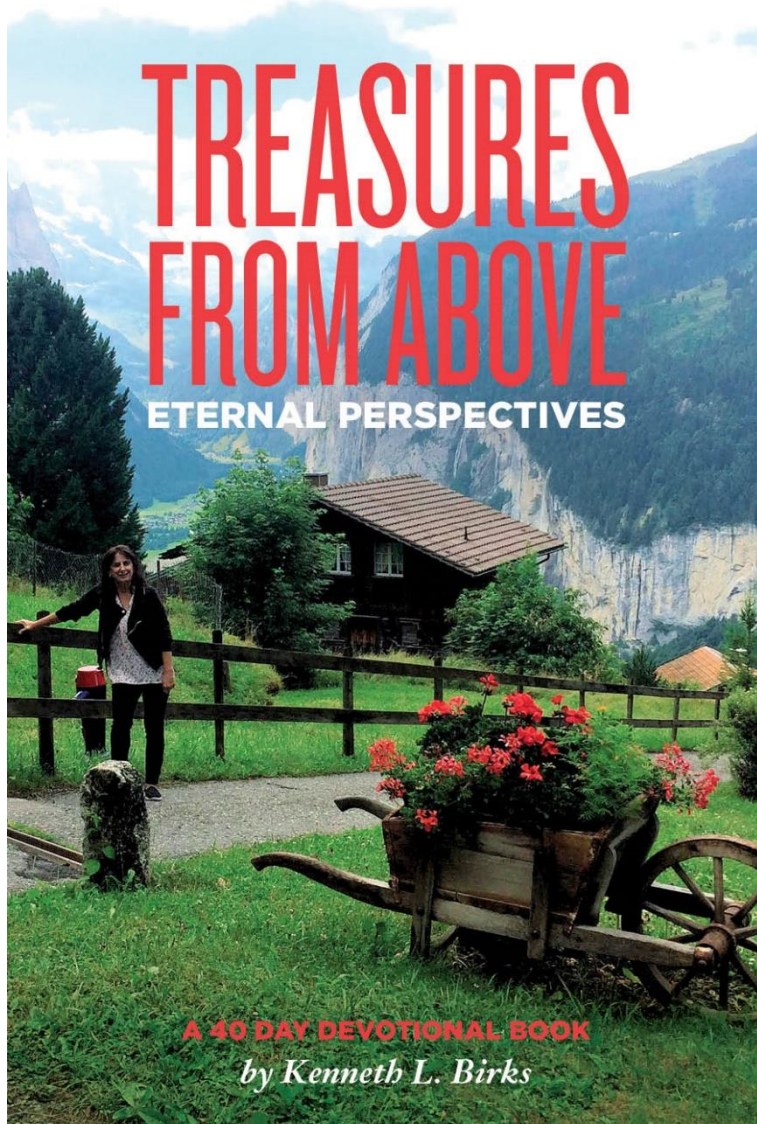
Isaiah 40:31, 1 Corinthians 2-9-11, Mark 1:35-39, Proverbs 29:18, Romans 8:14, 2 Peter 1:2-3, Romans 4:20-22.

~

May God's most precious blessing be upon you as you learn to soar like eagles. May He increase you daily as you give ear to His voice.

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About the Author



Ken Birks is an author and ordained Pastor/Teacher in the Body of Christ. He has functioned as an elder, one of the staff pastors, and a Bible teacher at The Rock of Roseville in California for the past 20 years. He is presently semi-retired with a writing ministry and serves as a wedding officiant in the Sacramento region. Prior to this, Ken was the Senior Pastor of Golden Valley Christian Center, a Spirit-filled, non-denominational, church in Roseville for twelve years.

Ken attended and graduated from the Charismatic Bible College of Anchorage where he came into the relationship with Apostle Dick Benjamin, who was then the Sr. Pastor of Abbott Loop Christian Center (ALCC) in Anchorage, Alaska.

Aside from The Lord Jesus Christ, the core of Ken's spiritual being and the person he's become is a direct result from the influence and teaching he's received from Dick Benjamin for more than 25 years."

Other influences have been Bob Mumford from Life Changers and, in the past 18 years, Pastor Francis Anfuso of The Rock of Roseville.

Ken has been married to his wife, Lydia for 40 years, plus. They have two adult children and consider them their highest calling, along with the many teens and children to whom they've been foster or surrogate parents to over the past 25 years.

Ken also has an internet ministry called "Sowing Seeds of Faith" located at kenbirks.com. Sowing Seeds of Faith reaches over 7,500 unique visitors a month with free Bible studies, devotional poetry, sermon outlines, audio, and video messages, podcasts, and other Bible study materials to help equip saints for the work of the ministry

Other Books by Kenneth L. Birks

Prophetic Purposes and the Zeal of the Lord

Do you believe world-wide revival is possible? Try to imagine what it will be like when the Church rises in the glory spoken of by Isaiah, the prophet. Just as God in His sovereignty brought forth the Messiah according to the timing of Daniel's prophecy, He will bring forth the prophetic purpose of a world-wide revival according to His timing. God's people, who have been planted in every city, village, town, and countryside throughout the world will stand up as the vast army just as Ezekiel prophesied. His prophetic purpose will be fulfilled. As the Lord breathes on the dry bones prophesied by the prophet, Ezekiel, His glory will fill all in all just as Paul prophesied to the Ephesians. This book explores and instructs how to be ready for this prophecy and others that must be fulfilled before the coming of Christ to set up His eternal kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

The Adventures of Space and Hobo

The Adventures of Space and Hobo tells the story of Ken's nomadic life after Vietnam. It explores the on-the-ground confusion and chaos of the Vietnam War and its effects on a generation, and those who served. Named "Space" by a new friend, Hobo, Ken, and his traveling companion hit the road to partake of all the possibilities of that generation in search of adventure and uncharted experiences. The story takes us step by step along the path of the awakening of a lost soul, on his way to finding an understanding of himself, his path, and the meaning of his life.

The Journey – Discovering the Invisible Path

The Journey gives you a glimpse into the path God has purposed for your life. Whether you're just starting on your journey, anywhere in the middle, or you're detoured and have lost your way, this practical guidebook will shine the light on the invisible path that not only leads to God's goodness and experiencing His kingdom within but also to the greatest adventure of your life.

Quote from Francis Anfuso – "Ken makes complex concepts simple and masterfully unpacks the Bible's greatest mysteries. He provides a sure foundation upon which to build a lifetime of insight."

For more information on these books and other materials by Ken Birks, please visit www.booksbyken

Workbooks by Kenneth L Birks

Biblical Perspectives Course



This course features lessons that are designed to give you a solid Biblical foundation in the elementary truths of God's Word. The lessons have three things in mind—building a doctrinal foundation, developing godly character, and helping you discover and find the destiny and purpose God has for your life. Please see the following website for more information and Lesson Titles:

www.kenbirks.com/perspectives-both/

More Biblical Perspectives Course



This course features lessons focused on three major areas of our Christian growth - doctrine, character, and destiny.

These lessons are designed to give you the Biblical understanding that will strengthen your Christian foundation and take you on a deeper walk with God.

Please see the following website for more information and lesson titles:

www.kenbirks.com/perspectives-both/

Small-Group Lesson Guides

25 Lessons to help you discover Jesus in your midst during small group Bible studies.

Please see the following website for complete information and titles:

www.kenbirks.com/discipleship/lesson-guides.htm

Reviews and References

Dr. Jay Zinn, Founder, and Author of The Discipleship Group, a national and international program for developing and equipping disciples to become disciple-makers.

“There are few authors who can take theology and turn it into a devotional series of divine, inspiring nuggets and poetry. Ken Birks is such an author who penetrates your heart and soul to want to know God better. I highly recommend his 40 Day Devotional book—Treasures From Above.”

—Dr. Jay Zinn



Jim Feeney, Ph.D., Former Sr. Pastor and "Owner and Webmaster at Pentecostal Bible Studies and Free Pentecostal Sermon Central"

“I've known Pastor Ken Birks for several decades. He and I have worked in various ministerial capacities in the same family of churches. Ken is held in extremely high esteem among our many pastoral colleagues. He is a minister with a strong grasp of the Word of God, a broad variety of administrative skills, a heart for souls, a proven experiential familiarity with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and an unwavering commitment to the

work of the Lord”

John Dubler, Senior Pastor of Good Shepherd Bible Chapel

"Ken Birks is an extremely effective teacher of the Scriptures. He combines a healthy respect for the Word with enthusiasm and personal experiences that match what he is teaching. Ken is a man of unimpeachable integrity and his longevity in the Body of Christ as a pastor gives credence to the message of hope and encouragement that he brings to all.”

Nicole Larsen, Poet/Writer

I have never met anyone with the holistic view of scripture that Ken has. As an avid devotional reader, I have never read one that ties scripture and poetry into daily readings to make something beautiful. I liken his poetry to Robert Frost, who has the canny ability to take everyday circumstances and translate them into something transcendent. Ken has the talent to interpret God's word in a way that is understandable but preserves the complexity of truth. Often it is hard for me to transform scripture into prayer, but the daily prayers within truly help me connect the dots. I also have the honor of walking with Ken in my daily life as a close family friend. He sincerely walks in the truth he teaches. I recommend this for anyone who wants to see God's word from the multiple angles of teaching and poetry.



Doug Hartline

When thinking about reading a devotional one has to ask themselves two questions – is it relevant and what is it that that makes it stand apart from the myriad of devotionals one can choose from? From my perspective, devotionals can be vital tools in improving upon our quiet time experience with God. They should be able to bring scriptural insight to us. Scripture is far more important than the words of even the most famous of authors for it is Scripture that penetrates our souls with God’s wisdom and daily

guidance. Ken's work herein ensures that God's Word takes center stage and holds the most important place within it so that it remains both timeless and relevant.

It is the incredible poetry, however, that separates this book and makes it stand apart from the others. Poetry can shine a light on God's Word from a different angle, in a way that helps us to look at it in a much deeper and often more profound way. It provides us with a unique ability to understand and appreciate God's Word in ways we may never have thought of before. We are suddenly confronted with beauty and clarity to our perceptions of our world and God's Kingdom.

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