

# Christian Light Publications

## What Am I Worth?

An old piece of English literature tells the tale of “good” King John and the Abbot of Canterbury. It seems the king was jealous of the abbot’s wealth and station, so one day he called the abbot to give account of himself. “I fear thou workest treason against the Crown with all thy wealth, pomp, and power.”

“O no, my Lord,” said the abbot, “I only spend what is my own.”

“Nevertheless,” said the king, “except thou canst answer me questions three, thy head shall be smitten from thy bodie.”

One of the questions was how much the king was worth, to within one penny. The abbot searched in vain for nigh three weeks for an answer, when one day his simple shepherd noticed his sorrow. Upon inquiry, the shepherd assured the abbot that he, the shepherd, could answer the questions.

Now it so happened that the shepherd bore an uncanny resemblance to the abbot, so on the appointed day, the shepherd, clothed as the abbot, came before the king with this answer.

*For thirty pence our Saviour was sold  
Among the false Jewes, as I have bin told;  
And twenty-nine is the worthe of thee,  
For I thinke thou art one penny worsen than hee.*

The king was so humored by the shepherd’s answer that he “pardoned” the abbot.

Are we surprised at how little we are worth? Or maybe we are not surprised, just troubled, discouraged, defeated, perhaps even haunted by the feeling that we must make something of ourselves. Perhaps it’s a subconscious, deep, altogether controlling force in my life—this need to demonstrate my worth.

What *am* I worth? The Bible graphically gives the answer in Psalm 62:9

*Surely men of low degree are vanity,  
and men of high degree are a lie:  
to be laid in the balance,  
they are altogether lighter than vanity.*

Picture a balance. On one side are placed men of low degree—common, ordinary, insignificant men. To them are added men of high degree—men of stature, power, prestige. On the other side is placed vanity. Watch the balance swing. No, it doesn’t even swing; it goes *plunk*. The men weigh less than vanity.

*Vanity* means “empty, worthless, useless.” All men together, regardless of their importance and worth, are less than worthless. Pretty disheartening, isn’t it?

What am I worth? Certain pieces of furniture, musical instruments, or works of art are worth millions, practically priceless, because of who made them, fashioned them, created them.

Who formed *me*? The omnipotent Creator, Controller, and Sustainer of the universe.

Do we understand? Man, in and of himself, is worthless. But consider man—the handiwork of God; man—redeemed by the blood of Christ; man—adopted into the family of God. That man is of infinite worth.

And *that* worth is not dependent on “achievement.” Whether it seems that everything I touch crumbles, or whether I’m the most respected man in town, it makes no difference. It is irrelevant to my worth.

Ah, what freedom! What release! My value does not depend on my ability to perform. I am who I am because I am a created, redeemed, adopted child of God.

Nothing and nobody can touch that. I am loosed from the bonds of earthly success. I am freed from the fear of what others think of me.

Hallelujah, I’m free!  
I’m free! And of infinite worth! Praise His name!

—John Swartz





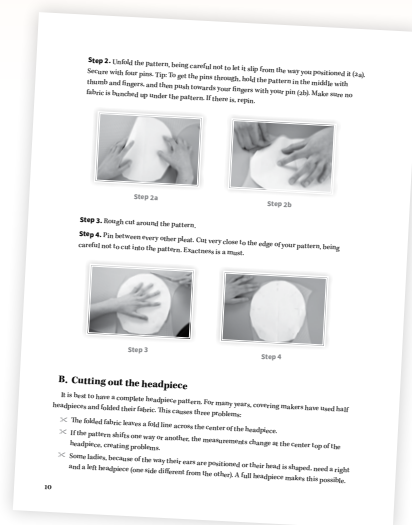


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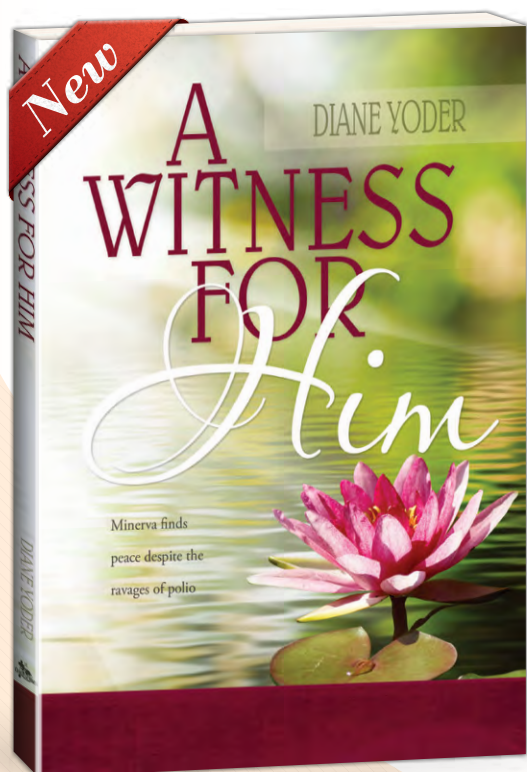
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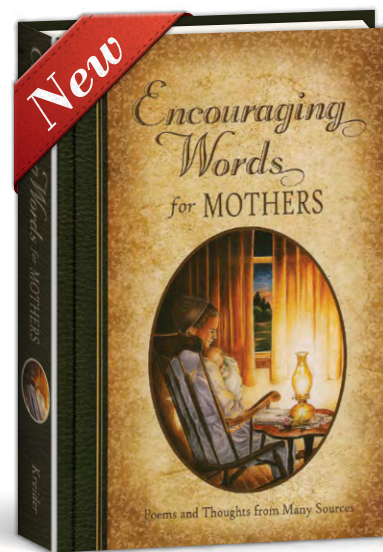


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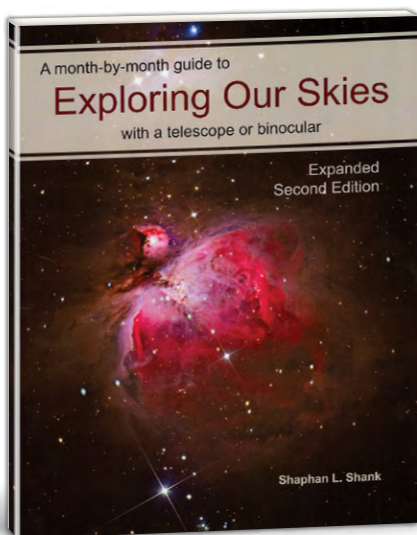


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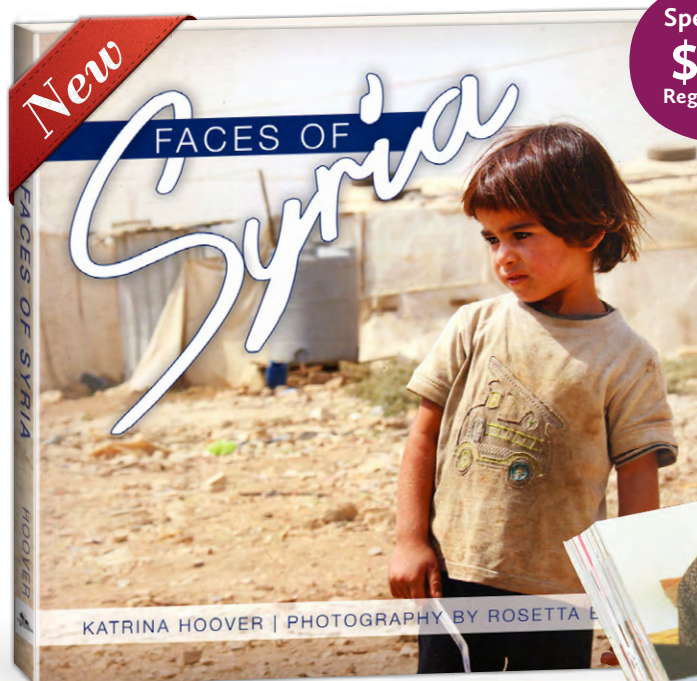
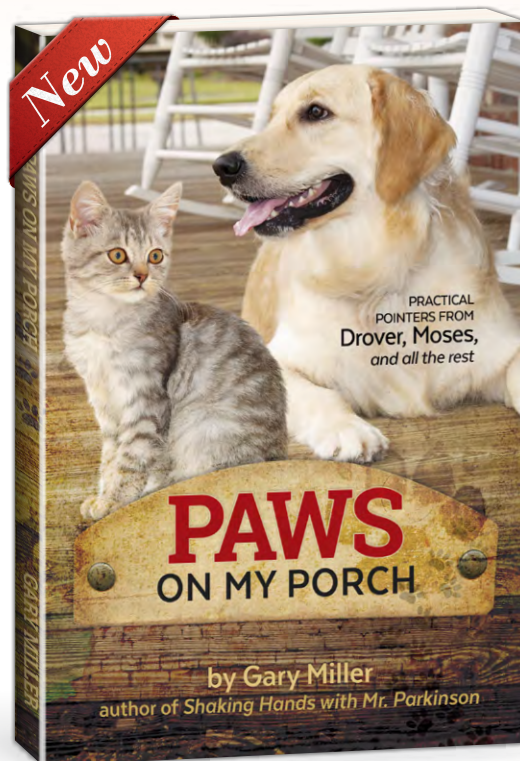
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*Gary Miller*

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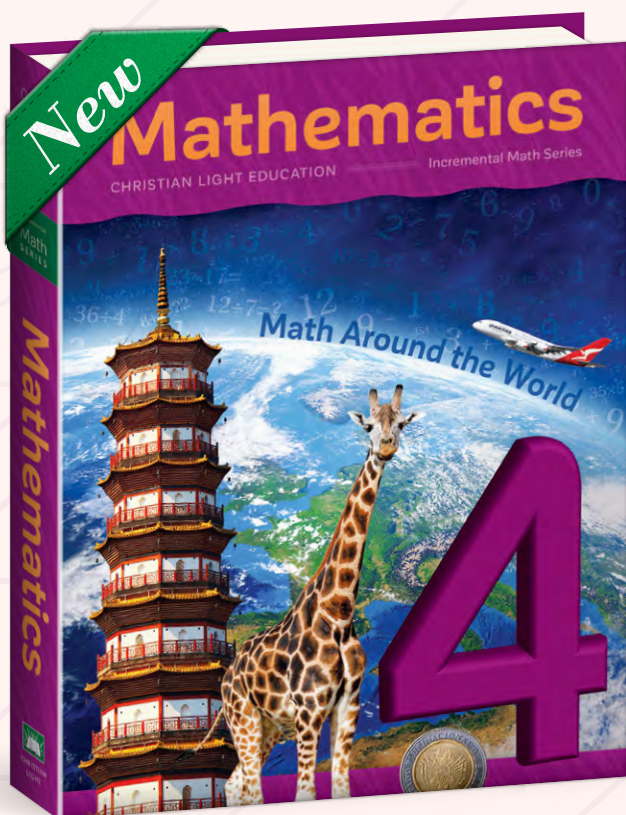


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