

# Sowing Seeds of Faith Newsletter

## Straight Arrow Ministries

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[www.straitarrow.net](http://www.straitarrow.net)

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### The Suffering Messiah

*Isaiah 7:14* Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Born of a virgin, He came to bring light to a world lost in darkness. With the legitimacy of His birth in doubt, many mocked and disbelieved. Many rejected Him for not having beauty, form, or comeliness to desire Him. Born of a hated minority, the Messiah proclaimed a kingdom with no end. He was rejected, championing a cause so just and radical that it brought hate and jealousy from the traditional and established religious authorities. -- *Isaiah 53:3*

With the cards stacked against Him, He came as the Word made flesh in the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. Against all odds, He came to proclaim the coming of a new kingdom with power and authority. He was a friend to sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, lepers, the demon-possessed, and those needing healing. However, the religious leaders of the day shunned Him. He fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah with the beating He received at the hands of those who mocked Him.

Enlisting a band of fishermen, misfits, and others, He went forth in the fullness of the Spirit, converting all those the Father drew with the love and power emanating from Him. They were transformed into disciples who went forth as He did, proclaiming, "Not by might nor by power, but by His Spirit."

After three and a half years of ministry, He was sold out and betrayed by one of His disciples as another denied Him.

### Featured Item

The Journey—The Invisible Path



#### From the Foreword by Francis Anuso

For many people, a journey into the Bible is like flying into the Bermuda Triangle, tackling an unsolved mystery, or hopelessly laboring over a puzzling paradox. They throw up their hands in futility, believing the massive book is too big, too old, and too complex to be understood.

But the reality is far less scary.

The Bible is not just the most published book of all time; it is the clearest path to understanding the riddle of life. I remember the days before smartphones when I'd be driving around a city trying to find a person to ask directions, with my hope of getting to the desired location resting on the perceptions of a stranger. I'm so grateful for GPS, Global Positioning Systems.

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## *The Suffering Messiah Continued from Page 1*

Like sheep led to slaughter, the religious leaders of the day stood by while crowning Him with a crown of thorns. Standing silently in their presence, they mocked and spat upon Him. If that was not enough, they beat Him beyond recognition. In their final humiliating act, they sentenced and crucified Him with common thieves. As He hung on the cross, those around Him continued to mock Him. -- *Matthew 27:39-44*

Jesus was able to submit to the process of obedience and the Father's will because He had the complete picture of what was to be accomplished by embracing His cross. As the book of Hebrews says, it was for the joy set before Him that He endured the cross, despising its shame.

Just as Jesus had to take up His cross to fulfill the Father's will, it is with us. We must embrace the cross and all it stands for to achieve the Father's will and purpose for our lives.

**Matthew 10:38-39** *"And He who does not take up His cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.<sup>39</sup> He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.*

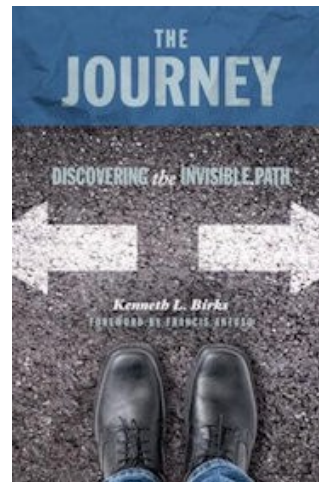
Just as Jesus needed a revelation of the Father's will for Him to embrace His cross, so it is with us. The Father has given us the Holy Spirit to search His heart on our behalf so that we might know His will and purpose for our lives. When we fill our hearts and minds with the revelation of the hope of our calling, it makes it much easier to embrace the cross while fellowshiping in Jesus's sufferings.

**Ephesians 1:17-19** *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,<sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,<sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.*

Let each of us, for the joy set before us, willingly embrace the fellowship of His sufferings as we take up our crosses and follow Him. The rewards will be well worth it.

May God richly bless you as you embrace the cross of Christ by partaking in the fellowship of His sufferings. As you partake of the same cup Jesus shared with His disciples, may you fulfill all He has planned for your life.

## More About Ken's Book



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I'd probably be lost every day of my life without its guidance.

But with this simple tool, I now drive with confidence and even enjoy the ride.

I believe *The Journey* by Ken Birks is your GPS for the Bible. The problem is solved. The riddle is deciphered. Like a trusted guide, Ken makes complex

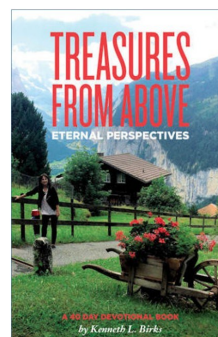
concepts simple and masterfully unpacks the Bible's greatest mysteries. He provides a sure foundation upon which to build a lifetime of insight.

Ken has been a trusted friend and leader in our church for nearly two decades. Beyond our relationship, he has been a pastor and gifted Bible teacher for over thirty years. When I need a scripture explained, I often ask Ken for his wisdom and have never been disappointed.

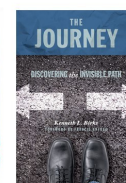
If I were building a house, I'd hire a master builder. If I didn't understand the Bible and wanted a solid foundation for my Christian life, I'd study this book, *The Journey*, and let a master teacher like Ken Birks guide me down the path of life.

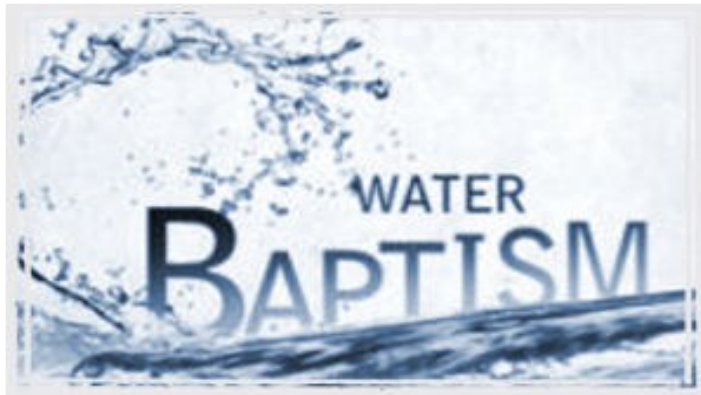
—Francis Anfusio, Founding Pastor, the Rock of Roseville —

To Purchase Ken's Book,  
*"The Journey"* or any of Ken's Books,  
Click Here or on the book image



Booksbyken.com  
For Ken's First Four Books





## Podcast Baptism Feature

This message deals with Seven Reasons to be water baptized.

[Click Here to Watch](#)



## The Suffering Messiah

by Ken Birks

Born of a virgin, He came with doubt now shown.  
Wrongly accused of illegitimacy, He came to His own.  
Like a shining light, He came into the world, giving hope.  
False expectations cast, He came fulfilling His Father's will.  
Rejected and tested by religious leaders, He taught to fulfill.

By mighty healings and miracles, He enraged the wise.  
Setting traps, they couldn't catch Him with their spies.  
From kingdom perspectives, He spoke to those hearing.  
Unprepared, many couldn't hear with hearts spearing.  
In parables, He spoke to hearing hearts preparing.

Riding on a colt, they proclaimed Him the coming King.  
Proclaiming a kingdom from another realm, He challenged.  
With false expectations, they rejected Him as their King.  
In deep sorrow, those closest to Him slept as He distressed.  
Swords and clubs in an hour of darkness, they arrested.

Taken to authorities, falsely accused, disciples fled in fear.  
A friend denying Him, looking on, He saw him so dear.  
As a lamb led to slaughter, they prepared Him for sacrifice.  
With a crown of thorns, a purple robe given, they mocked.  
Sentenced to death, brutally beaten, they were shocked.

With our sins and grief bearing down, He hung on the cross.  
Bleeding, His Father looking away, He became sin for us.  
Crying out, "Why have You forsaken Me?" He lost touch.  
Giving up the ghost, beaten, chastised, crucified, He died.  
After three days freeing us from sin, He rose from the dead.

## About Ken Birks



Ken Birks is an ordained Pastor, Teacher in the Body of Christ. He functions as an elder and one of the teaching pastors at The Rock of Roseville in California. He also serves as a wedding and funeral officiant in the Sacramento region. Prior to this, Ken was the Lead Pastor of Golden Valley Christian Center, a non-denominational, church in Roseville for twelve years. Ken has been married to his wife, Lydia for 45 years. They have two adult children and consider them their highest calling, along with the many teens and children whom they've been foster parents to over the past 40 years plus.

## Website Features — Resources from [kenbirks.com](http://kenbirks.com)



### Perspectives Manuals Available from Straight Arrow Ministries

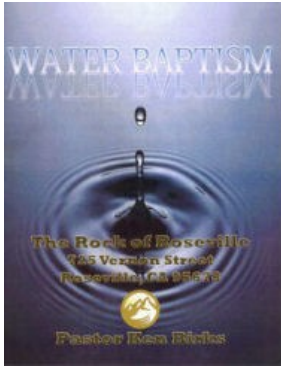
These courses feature lessons designed to give you a Biblical foundation and a deeper understanding of Biblical truths that will strengthen your Christian foundation in Christ.

They are designed with three things in mind - building a doctrinal foundation, developing godly character in your life and helping you discover and seize the destiny and purpose God has for your life.



**Both Manuals are available in Teacher and Student Editions**  
[Click Here or on the Graphic images for More Info and Pricing](#)

## Resources from Straight Arrow Ministries



### Bible Study — Seven Reasons to be Water Baptized

For the Complete and Thorough Study on the Subject,  
Please Click the Link Below

#### Download the Water Baptism Study in PDF

Water baptism is a vital part of the Christian experience, as we will see in this study. In fact, it is a necessary part of the spiritual foundation being built in our lives. It is much more than a Christian ritual. Like everything else in the Christian life, we must apply faith in it in order to experience what God has truly purposed for the Christian in water baptism.

#### 1. Jesus commanded us to.

First of all, Jesus commanded it, and if we knew nothing more than this, this would be reason enough. It really should be our very first step of obedience. It's the first thing Jesus wants from us after receiving Him into our lives. (Matthew 28:18-19)

#### 2. Baptism Is a Necessary Part of Our Spiritual Foundation. (Hebrews 6:1-2, 1 Peter 2:5, 1 Corinthians 3:11-17.)

#### 3. Water Baptism Breaks the Bondage of Sin in our Lives.

*Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

**The word "remission" here is a strong word that encompasses more than forgiveness. It also means deliverance.**

Remission Definition-Greek: aphasis, af'-es-is; freedom; (fig.) pardon:--deliverance, forgiveness, liberty, remission. Jesus Used This Word When He Talked Proclaiming Liberty. (Luke 4:18)

#### The Old Testament Type of Israel Leaving Egypt.

As the Children of Israel left Egypt, they came up against the Red Sea, which is a type of Christian Baptism. The Children of Israel passed over on dry land. The Egyptians tried to follow them and were all drowned in the process. They were utterly destroyed. The children of Israel were no longer in bondage to the Egyptians. God had truly delivered them. In water baptism, God wants to destroy our old nature and set us at liberty as well from our past.

#### 4. In Baptism We Identify With Christ in His Death, Burial & Resurrection. (Romans 6:3)

One of the most important things that we as Christians must do is change our identity. We can no longer identify with the world and all of its lusts and pride. We must totally identify with Christ and all that He desires to do in our lives. We begin this process by identifying with Him in His death.

#### 5. Our Old Nature Is Crucified With Him. (Romans 6:4-6)

Water baptism confirms the fact that our old nature (the sinful nature) has been destroyed just as the Egyptians were destroyed in the Red Sea. We are no longer slaves to sin just as the Israelites were no longer slaves to Egypt. God delivered them, and God delivers you from your bondage to sin. (Romans 6:11, Galatians 2:20.)

#### 6. In Water Baptism Our New Nature Comes Forth. (Romans 6:5-6)

#### 7. God promises to bless everywhere His Name is recorded

Exodus 20:24b In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you.

#### Concluding Thoughts.

God instituted water baptism as an essential part of our spiritual foundation. If you have not been water baptized, you need to be. The Bible's final encouragement to you is: *"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord."* (Acts 22:16)

**This is a Very Short Abbreviated Lesson on the Water Baptism.**

**Please Download the Complete Ebook Lesson by Clicking the Link or Image Above.**