The Church Doctor® Report

CHURCH DOCTOR MINISTRIES

Multiplying Hope Through Healthy Churches

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Purpose: To connect with those who have an active relationship with Church Doctor Ministries as peers in ministry, clients, and partners in prayer and support.

The Church Doctor® Report provides a quick read of strategic and influential information.
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The Odyssey of a Book

The other day, someone at church asked me how many books I have written. In truth, I had no clue! I just said, “I don't know—maybe 15 or 20.” I added, “I don't really keep track of that. My focus is to do whatever it takes to help Christians grow spiritually and reach others for Jesus.”

Writing a book, at least for me, is a long, tedious discipline. What “drives” me is not “another book.” My enthusiasm for writing is to multiply what we continue to learn about how to strengthen the mission effectiveness of Christians and their churches. It is such a blessing to see believers—and their churches—become more effective for the Great Commission—to make disciples.

Dr. Kent R. Hunter is the author of numerous books, including the recent release *Life Beyond Ordinary: Invest Yourself in Significance*.

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An Unusual Journey

We are excited to announce our newest book, *Life Beyond Ordinary: Invest Yourself in Significance*. The odyssey of this research is somewhat strange. In truth, the development of this book is the journey of a couple decades—and a surprise discovery!

Here is the backstory—the honest truth! Last spring, I was at home with my wife, Janet, and we experienced a terrible storm that hit our area. I've never seen such an event! The sky turned dark around 4 p.m. There was thunder in the distance. Then came the lightning, and we headed to the basement. We stood about 10 feet away from the windows and watched the most ferocious storm that we've ever seen up close and personal.

We couldn't believe it! Hailstones as big as baseballs began to cover the ground. We

looked out an east window toward our lake. As the hail hit the water, each hailstone made a pillar of splashed water about two to four feet high. We wondered if there would be some damage to our house. We were really glad our cars were in the garage. After the storm passed and the sky cleared, we went outside.

Our house was pockmarked with damage. The shingles on the roof were practically destroyed. Numerous windows were broken, especially on the south and west sides of the house.

We spent several hours picking up glass on the floor. We moved furniture away from the windows and dried up what we could with towels. At this point, you might wonder, “What does this have to do with your new book?”

My Home Office

I do most of my writing in an upstairs office above our garage. The walls are lined with bookshelves—a reflection of my passion to learn all I can about God and churches. My books include volumes of commentaries, *Luther's Works,* and *Harvard Classics*, as well as dozens of Bible versions.

Behind my desk, facing the west window, is a table. At the end of that table is a wooden file cabinet with two drawers. Honestly, I hadn't looked in the top drawer for years, and I couldn't tell you what it contained. Since the windows were broken and there was rainwater everywhere, I needed to move that file cabinet. However, I couldn't move it because it was too heavy. I began emptying the materials that were in the top drawer.

Guess what I discovered? Several decades of book proposals and a few typed manuscripts of books about which I had totally forgotten! Then, it caught my eye: a typed manuscript version of a book with the title *Life Beyond Ordinary*. I was actually surprised to notice my name as the author! I had literally completely forgotten about it.

It was several weeks later that I began to read this unusual discovery from the past. When I finished reading, I asked my wife if she knew about the manuscript. Even though she is the “detail person” of our family, it was unfamiliar to her as well!

Life Beyond Ordinary—the Backstory

After several edits and rewrites, *Life Beyond Ordinary* has just been published. The book focuses on the huge difference between success and significance. As a Christ-follower, you possess incredible power by the grace of God. When you focus on a life of significance, you discover your impact on others.

Transcending *ordinary* provides the revelation that your life has significance—even beyond your life. It is like planting a tree the shade of which you will never experience. In that moment, you transcend *ordinary*. Your life has meaning, even beyond your life. By God's compassionate, miraculous power, you rise above daily difficulties. You live in a new dimension.

When you go through challenges, you learn. The Apostle Paul says, “We also boast of our troubles, because we know that troubles produce endurance, endurance brings God's approval, and his approval creates hope” (Romans 5:3-4). Endurance reflects the power of God. Hope for the future is contagious!

There are desert times in life. These desert times are when you have the opportunity to learn more and experience God at a higher level. In your desert times, God builds character. And you pray for divine courage.

Your spiritual journey is not always smooth or easy. Your spiritual journey with Jesus may include potholes, bumps, and U-turns. Spiritual growth is a work in progress. Everyone experiences times when God is pruning our lives. In John 15:2, Jesus says, “He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit” (GNT).

Many people never leave their driveways because they are waiting for all the lights to turn green. *Life Beyond Ordinary* is a leap of faith, a step into the unknown. This is what the significance journey is all about. A leap of faith, by definition, is an uncomfortable journey. It requires trust in God. You leave the comfort zone of relying upon yourself.

Have you jumped off the cliff for Jesus? The Christian faith moves as a movement when those who trust God produce eternal fruit. If you are connected to Jesus, you have become a partner in His divine enterprise. That is about sharing His love with others. That is not just “success.” That is *significance*. Don't ever underestimate what God can do through you. God uses ordinary people like you and me. We represent the King of the universe!

Afterthought

In 2022, we published a daily devotional book called *An Apple a Day: A Daily Dose for Everyday Faith*. Many of those who purchased that book use the short daily devotions each day. There are 365—one for each day of the year.

I also suspect that some people follow the daily devotions for a year, put the book away, then go on to use something else. However, for me, I realized that would be like saying, “Read the Bible all the way through? I did that once.” However, many of us have read the Bible all the way through many times. I have discovered that, on my third year through the *Apple* devotional book, God surprises me with new insights every time. Why? Perhaps because, as I grow, I'm a different person—and I am facing different circumstances.

Here is the case in point: As *Life Beyond Ordinary* was released and I received my copy, I was on devotion #251 in the *Apple a Day* book. As I turned to that page, I couldn't believe it! The title of that daily devotion is “*Life Beyond Ordinary*.” Is that a “God thing,” or what?