

In Other Words...

A RESEARCH SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATORS

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ABORTION: 2025 saw the passing of Dr. Emile Baulieu, best known for his 1982 invention of the mifepristone pill, which now contributes to more abortions than abortive surgical procedures. He died at his home in Paris on May 30, 2025 at the age of 98. He founded the Institut Baulieu in France and their website posted this statement after his death: “His research was guided by his attachment to the progress made possible by science, his commitment to women’s freedom, and his desire to *enable everyone to live better, longer lives.*” (italics added). It’s a tragic, incongruent, yet prevalent worldview to believe abortion improves lives. *Beaumont Enterprise*, 6/1/2025, p.A2

FOCUS: James Clear, speaker and author of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Atomic Habits*, offers the following hack for focus: “A simple filter for managing your time: You’re not focused enough unless you’re mourning some of the things you’re saying no to.” *TheBriefing.net*, 2/9/24

GOALS: We know about New Year’s resolutions, but might not recall that January 17th is “Ditch New Year’s Resolution Day.” It’s the official day when the “fresh start effect” dissipates and the majority of resolutions get kicked to the curb. Research reveals there is hope though. A major contributor to failure is unrealistic expectations...grandiose goals. Success is actually connected to smaller ideals that can be achieved and then built upon. The title of this news article summarizes it well, “A Slightly Better You in the New Year.” *Wall Street Journal*, 12/31/25, p.A15

HABITS: The 10th richest man in the world, Warren Buffett, quietly stepped down from his position as CEO of Berkshire Hathaway just before fireworks kicked off 2026. At the age of 95, Buffett handed over the reins to his successor, Greg Abel, on December 31, 2025 after guiding the company for six decades. The Oracle of Omaha’s net worth is about \$150 billion and he’s often used a modified quote from others: “Chains of habit are too light to be felt until they are too heavy to be broken.” That statement has a unique way of relating to both positive and negative actions so it’s a pearl of wisdom for either progress or prevention. *Wall Street Journal*, 1/2/26, p.A1

PRAYER: December 28, 2025 marked the 50th anniversary of Roger Staubach’s “Hail Mary” pass. On December 28, 1975, the Dallas Cowboys were playing the Vikings in the first round of the NFL playoffs in Minnesota. It was 25-degrees and the Cowboys were losing 14 to 10 with 32 seconds left. They were 50 yards from the end zone on 4th down and 16 yards to go...with no time outs...when Staubach heaved a 55-yard pass downfield. Drew Pearson was tightly covered by Nate Wright but somehow caught the ball at the 5-yard-line and waltzed in for a touchdown. In response to reporters after the game, Staubach said, “I guess you’d call it a ‘Hail Mary’ pass. You throw it up and pray he catches it.” Those two words became a common cultural phrase to describe “a last-ditch effort,” as the Urban Dictionary defines it, and it goes on to reference that play in 1975. Last-ditch efforts have their place and sometimes they can’t be avoided, but thankfully prayer is designed for far more than our final hope. And a side-bar anecdote...Viking fans haven’t forgotten that pass between those two Hall of Famers. Pearson hailed a cab at the Twin City airport years later on a day when the wind chill was minus 56. When the driver recognized him, he threw Pearson and his bags out and drove off. *Beaumont Enterprise*, 12/13/25, p.B1

PRIORITIES: Bestselling author & organizational psychologist Adam Grant says, “Achieving your goals is not about being more efficient in your tasks. It’s about being more selective in your

commitments. More free time in the future is an illusion. You won't be less busy—you'll just be busy with new priorities. If it's not an enthusiastic yes, it's a no." *X, Adam Grant, 4/18/2023*

RESPONSIBILITY: Mel Robbins' book, *The Let Them Theory*, debuted in December 2024 and spent most of 2025 as the #1 non-fiction bestseller. The book's premise basically encourages people to quit trying to control others and start taking control of your own life. Robbins wouldn't work well as your revival speaker but she does have a testimony of overcoming. Of her experience in 2009, at the age of 41, she said, "Never in a million years did I think at the age of 41 that I would be struggling with drinking, ready to kill my husband, just unable to get out of bed." She took responsibility for her well-being and now regularly reminds her massive podcast audience (200 million downloads in 2025) of her mantra, "No one is coming to save you." *Time, 11/11/24, p.48*

SCRIPTURE: Merriam-Webster chose "slop" as the Word of the Year for 2025. It's defined as "digital content of low quality." Greg Barlow, the dictionary's president, said, "All that stuff was dumped on our screens and the Word of the Year captured it in just four letters." Let's back off the slop this year and focus on divine nutrition from God's Word. *USA Today, 12/19/25, p.A4*

STRENGTHS: Country music legend Reba McEntire shared a vignette from her childhood that's a helpful insight for us all. She was barrel racing in rodeos and playing basketball but only sang occasionally. Her dad then changed the trajectory of her life by asking a simple question, "Reba, why do you want to do something you're not good at?" He explained, "You're OK at basketball. You're OK at running barrels. But you've got that voice, you need to be practicing that." Capitalizing on our strengths should be a very high priority. *Wall Street Journal, 12/20/25, p.D3*

THOUGHTS: Jennie Allen wrote a *New York Times* bestseller about the power of our thoughts from a Christian perspective, *Get Out of Your Head* (2020). In an interview about her book, she reminded readers of some thought-provoking data: "Science says that 85% of our thoughts are negative, and 95% of our thoughts are repetitive from the day before." This puts us in a death spiral of negative thinking. To right the ship of our mind, we must take every thought captive (2 Cor 10:5) and guard our hearts (Prov 4:23). *Today's Christian Living, September 2020, p.6*

TIME: Time doesn't appear to be a concern in cricket matches, but the historic rule book says otherwise. Part 10 of rule 42 states, "The wasting of time shall be deemed unfair." Most of us don't watch cricket and couldn't even explain the game, but it does provide a good rule. Treasure time as a gift and deem it unfair to waste it. *When The Game Is Over, John Ortberg, 2007, p.111*

EVERYDAY HUMOR

AMBITION: In a special feature about vacationing in America, Susan said, "I haven't been everywhere, but it's on my list." That's ambitious ambition! *Reader's Digest, June 2017, p.68*

EXERCISE: Ellen asked and answered her own question: "Does exercise help my brain make better decisions? Yes, I just ran a mile and decided, never again!" *AARP Bulletin, Nov 2024, p.46*

HEALTH: Mark Twain asserted, "The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd druther not." *Mark Twain, Harnsberger, 2009, p.84*

OPPORTUNITY: Owen's 4-year-old grandson looked up and said, "Papa, you're old but at least you're not dead yet." Carpe diem while you're not yet dead. *Reader's Digest, Feb 2021, p.112*

WEIGHT: Julie's husband was concerned about looking heavier so he asked her, "Do you think my chin is getting fat?" She smiled and replied, "Which one?" *Reader's Digest, June 2020, p.39*

IN OTHER WORDS... is a research service produced by Dr. Raymond McHenry, Pastor of the Westgate Memorial Baptist Church in Beaumont, Texas. This service began in 1991 and offers 1) a free monthly email of intriguing facts, quotes, humor, and spiritual illustrations from a wide variety of sources and 2) a book with over 4,000 entries. Start a free subscription and/or purchase a book at iows.net. All content is copyrighted.