

Religion



Face to Face
Patty LaRoche
www.fstribune.com

Fortunately, unfortunately

“The amount of good things in your life depends on your ability to notice them.” - Anonymous

In the theater classes I teach, we are working on a new Improvisational Acting activity. The students line up across the front of the room, and starting with Student #1, he/she starts a sentence with “Fortunately.” “Fortunately, I passed Calculus.” “Fortunately, I just bought my first car.” “Fortunately, I’m not grounded this week.” Whatever comes to mind.

Then the next student starts a sentence with “Unfortunately” and must choose a sentence that counters whatever Student #1 has said. “Unfortunately, passing that one test did not bring my grade to passing.” “Unfortunately, the engine caught fire the first day I drove it.” “Unfortunately, I’m only ungrounded to babysit my little brother and sister.”

Student #3 must add to the story, this time with a “Fortunately.” On it goes until we go through the line a couple of times.

There are two reasons I chose this activity: (1) It teaches students Improvisational skills like keeping

dialogue going and thinking on their feet, and (2) They are forced to consider both sides, especially the positive one (which seems more difficult for them).

This started when I began noticing far too much negative thinking as my students answered a Roll Call question. Last Tuesday was a perfect example. “What is the best thing about living in America?” was the question (a far different one from the usual, “What’s your favorite dessert?”). Most students couldn’t think of anything, and those who did, answered with, “Well, it certainly isn’t the government” or “Maybe chocolate?” or “Absolutely nothing.”

I took a few seconds to respond. “Nothing? I’m confused. You are sitting in a desk, getting an education paid for by other people. Did any of you sleep in a cardboard box in an alleyway last night? None of you are starving, and if you are, you know where to find snacks in my desk drawer. Clearly, you all have clothes on. You girls will be allowed to drive and get a job, choose your own husband and speak your mind. You all can

protest peacefully if you want something changed, and you say, “Absolutely nothing?”

No one responded. Since Covid, there has been an increasing sense of hopelessness and negativity. Even my students who attend a weekly church group exhibit a pessimism I did not see when I taught 13 years ago. I have to remind them to say “thank you” when I hand them a pencil or a brownie, and if I don’t, I wait for one of them to thank me and then announce to the whole class, “Thank you, “Roni,” for saying thank you.

In the Old Testament, we read that Jeremiah, the “weeping prophet,” watched as his nation, Israel, deteriorated. They were captured, the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, and he felt hopeless. Sometimes, I feel like weeping over the state of our country, and especially the mess we are handing off to our children and grandchildren. I remind myself that God has a plan. In spite of our sinful nature, He offers us a way out. And do we deserve it? Absolutely not. If there is anything we need to notice, that truth alone should negate our pessimism



Is God dead?
Ty Kerley
www.fstribune.com

Non-Christian sources

Throughout history, critics of Jesus have questioned who He was and whether He ever existed. Over the next few weeks, we will examine several independent, reliable, non-biblical sources from the first century AD to argue for the historicity of the existence of a man named Jesus of Nazareth. These sources stand as reliable accounts in rebuttal to the claim that there is insufficient independent evidence to substantiate His existence.

We begin with Tacitus. Cornelius Tacitus (AD 55-120) was a Roman leader and historian who began his career as a senator under Vespasian, finally culminating in his appointment to proconsul of Asia. As a historian, Tacitus’s most popular works were The Annals, which cover the period from Augustus’s death in AD 14 to Nero’s death in AD 68, and The Histories, which cover the period from Nero’s death to the death of Domitian in AD 96. In The Annals, Tacitus writes of the Christians:

Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite torture on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our Procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment,

again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much for the crime of firing the city, as of hatred of mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with skins of beast they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or doomed to flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

This passage provides evidence that Tacitus himself believed that Jesus of Nazareth was a real person. In addition, there are other essential aspects to glean from the Tacitus material. Resurrection scholar Josh McDowell notes that Tacitus “provides from historical evidence that Christians in Rome, only thirty years after the death of Christ, were being killed for their convictions that Jesus was a real person, he lived, died, and rose again on their behalf.”

However, resurrection skeptic G. A. Wells has mounted one of the most publicized criticisms of Tacitus’s work regarding its confirmation of Jesus as a real historical person. Wells (1926-2017), was a professor of German at Birkbeck University in London and spent much of his career challenging the historicity of Jesus. As one might expect, Wells states that this passage from Tacitus “has no historical value.” He argues that Tacitus is not a reliable and accurate source and maintains that he just accepted from Christians that Jesus was crucified by Pontius Pilate under the reign of Tiberius. By doing this, Wells contends that Tacitus is unreliable and undisciplined as a historian. Wells, however, may not be correct in his assessment of Tacitus.

To answer the question of

Tacitus’s reliability and discipline, we look to several sources to establish his reputation as an accurate historian. Ronald Syme, one of the foremost Tacitean scholars, wrote that one of Tacitus’s qualities was his distrust of source information in general. Tacitus was no stranger to “industrious investigation, and his diligence was exemplary.” Michael Grant writes that Tacitus “was careful to contrast what had been handed down orally with literary tradition . . . There is no doubt that Tacitus took great care in selecting his material.” Herbert Benario states that Tacitus “chose judiciously among sources, totally dependent upon none, and very often, at critical points, ignored the consensus of his predecessors to impose his own viewpoint and his own judgment.” McDowell writes, “Tacitus is universally considered the most reliable of historians . . . a great honesty in the examination of Documents.” In light of these scholar’s praise of Tacitus as a reliable historical source, Wells’s criticism seems unwarranted.

So it is that Tacitus seems to pass the test for reliability and discipline in his role as an ancient Roman historian. Nonetheless, the critical skepticism is far from over. Wells accuses Tacitus of Christian bias and suggests his use of certain pro-Christian words and phrases proves it. Join us again next time as we continue to look at what this Roman historian has to say about a man named Jesus, who lived in the first century and was crucified by the Romans. All of this and more as we move closer to answering the question: is God dead?

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Ty B. Kerley, DMin., is an ordained minister who teaches Christian apologetics and relief preaches in Southern Oklahoma. Dr. Kerley and his wife, Vicki, are members of the Waurika church of Christ and live in Ardmore, Okla. You can contact him at drkerley@isGoddead.com.

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LEGAL PUBLICATION

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF BOURBON COUNTY, KANSAS

In the Matter of the Estate of
CLARICE RUSSELL, also known as
CLARICE E. RUSSELL, Deceased Case No. BB-2026 PR 000012

NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that on March 24, 2026, a Petition was filed in this Court by Curtis Russell, the Successor Trustee of the decedent’s Trust, one of the heirs and the alternative Executor named in the Last Will and Testament dated April 22, 2008 of Clarice Russell also known as Clarice E. Russell” deceased, praying the Will filed with the Petition be admitted to probate and record; Curtis Russell be appointed as Executor and be granted Letters Testamentary.

You are required to file your written defenses thereto on or before April 23, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. in the District Court of Bourbon County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

All creditors are notified to exhibit their demands against the Estate within four months from the date of the first publication of this notice, as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred.

CURTIS RUSSELL, Petitioner

NUSS & FARMER, P.A.
P.O. Box 630
Fort Scott, Kansas 66701
(620) 223-0150
Attorneys for Petitioner

Publication Dates: March 28, April 4 and 11, 2026

LEGAL PUBLICATION

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF BOURBON COUNTY, KANSAS
CIVIL DEPARTMENT

BOKF, N.A.)
Plaintiff,)
vs.) Case No. BB-2025-CV-000073
Moriah Dawn Greer; Brandon Reed) Court Number:
Greer, Sr.; United States of America,) Pursuant to K.S.A. Chapter 60
Secretary of Housing and Urban)
Development; John Doe (Tenant/)
Occupant); Mary Doe (Tenant/)
Occupant))
Defendants.)

NOTICE OF SALE

Under and by virtue of an Order of Sale issued to me by the Clerk of the District Court of Bourbon County, Kansas, the undersigned Sheriff of Bourbon County, Kansas, will offer for sale at public auction and sell to the highest bidder for cash in hand, at the Front Door of the Courthouse at Fort Scott Bourbon County, Kansas, on April 17, 2026, at 10:00 AM, the following real estate:

A tract of land in the South Half (S 1/2) of the Southeast Quarter (SE 1/4) of Section 9, Township 25 South, Range 24 East of the 6th P.M., Bourbon County, Kansas described as follows: to-wit: Beginning 1581.5 feet West of the Southeast corner of said Quarter Section, thence North 300.0 feet, thence West 175.0 feet, thence North 1020.0 feet, thence West 883.5 feet, thence South 1320.0 feet, thence east 1058.5 feet to point of beginning. LESS Beginning at a point on the one quarter Section line and 1140.0 feet North of the Southwest corner, Southeast Quarter (SE 1/4) of Section 9, Township 25 South, Range 24 East of the 6th P.M. Bourbon County, Kansas, thence East parallel to the Section line 883.5 feet, thence North 180.0 feet, thence West 883.5 feet, thence South on the one-quarter section line to the place of beginning, being a tract of land in the Southwest Quarter (SW 1/4) of the Southeast Quarter (SE 1/4) of Section 9, Township 25 South, Range 24 East of the 6th P.M., Bourbon County, Kansas, commonly known as 1817 Osage Rd, Fort Scott, KS 66701 (the “Property”)

to satisfy the judgment in the above-entitled case. The sale is to be made without appraisal and subject to the redemption period as provided by law, and further subject to the approval of the Court. For more information, visit www.Southlaw.com

William K. Martin, Sheriff
Bourbon County, Kansas

Prepared By: SouthLaw, P.C.
Linda Tarpley (KS #22357)
13160 Foster, Suite 100 • Overland Park, KS 66213-2660
(913) 663-7600 • (913) 663-7899 (Fax)
Attorneys for Plaintiff
(253590)
Publication Dates: March 21, 28 and April 4, 2026

LEGAL PUBLICATION

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF BOURBON COUNTY, KANSAS
JUVENILE DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF

L.A.S.,	Case No. BB-2026-JC-000016
Year of Birth 2021	A minor child
L.M.S.,	Case No. BB-2026-JC-000017
Year of Birth 2023	A minor child
G.J.H.,	Case No. BB-2026-JC-000018
Year of Birth 2024	A minor child

NOTICE OF HEARING-Publication
Pursuant to K.S.A. 38-2237

T0: Unknown father, and all other persons who are or may be concerned

You are hereby notified that a petition has been filed in this court alleging that the child named above is a Child in Need of Care. The Court may find that the parents are unfit by reason or conduct or condition which renders the parents unable to care properly for a child, the conduct or condition is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, the parental rights of the parent should be terminated, and a permanent custodian should be appointed for the child.

A hearing on the petition is scheduled for the 23rd day of April, 2026, at 3:45 PM. At the hearing the Court may issue orders relating to the care, custody and control of the child. The hearing will determine if the parents should be deprived of their parental rights and the right to custody of the child.

The parent(s), and any other person having legal custody are required to appear before this Court on the date and time shown, or to file your written response to the petition with the Clerk of the District Court prior to that time. Failure to respond or to appear before the Court at the time shown will not prevent the Court from entering judgment as requested in the petition, finding that the child is a Child in Need of Care, removing the child from the custody of parent, parents or any other present legal custodian until further order of the Court, or finding the parents unfit, and entering an order permanently terminating the parents’ parental rights.

An attorney has been appointed as guardian *ad litem* for the child: Gilbert E. Gregory, Attorney at Law, 124 S. Main St., Fort Scott, KS 66701; (620) 223-5025. You have the right to appear before the Court and be heard personally, either with or without an attorney. The Court will appoint an attorney for any parent who desires an attorney but is financially unable to hire one. The Court may order one or both parents to pay child support.

Date and time of hearing: April 23, 2026, at 3:45 PM

Place of hearing: Bourbon County Courthouse, 210 S. National Ave., Fort Scott, KS 66701.

THIS NOTICE IS EFFECTIVE AS OF THE DATE AND TIME SHOWN ON THE ELECTRONIC FILE STAMP BY DISTRICT COURT CLERK.

Publication Dates: March 21 and 28, 2026