



HORIZONS UNLIMITED

Pastor Sarah W. Utterbach
REDEEMING LOVE CHRISTIAN CENTER

Insights For
Each Day

June • July • August 2008



In 1979, I observed in the life of a friend a devotional practice that seemed unusual to me. Every day, she would walk into an open field across the parking lot from her office, then sit down on a rock to pray and write in what appeared to be a notebook or journal. After several weeks of watching this odd ritual, I wondered, What is she writing down? Finally, when the opportunity presented itself, I asked her and she said, "Oh, I'm just writing down what I hear the Spirit of God speak to my heart while I pray."

God speaks to people? I thought.

The concept left me both baffled and intrigued. I determined right then and there that I was going to start taking pen and paper into my times of prayer and devotion. I wanted to know if God would show up and speak to me, too. What I discovered was that not only did God show up to speak to me, but He had been there, waiting for me to listen, all along.

In John 10:27, Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Prompted by this verse, I began to train myself to be able to distinguish the voice of the Lord from all other voices. To know Him became more than a mere suggestion—it became my desire, resulting in a way of life. I no longer want to walk any other way with anyone else. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life I pursue.

The passages in this devotional are drawn from words the Lord has spoken to me in times of daily fellowship with Him. As you begin this devotional, wherever you may start to read, make Jesus your way, your truth, and your life.

Precious Father, please take these words and seal them in the hearts of each reader desiring to have You reveal Yourself to them. May You, precious Holy Spirit, take each entry and expand it and increase it in the hearts of the hungry ones.

I sow this book into the lives of millions to be encouraged long after I am gone, for them to experience You in a very personal way, on a daily basis.

My desired harvest is that lives will be changed, souls will be saved, and that every victim will become victorious.

Give them this day as their daily bread Your words, which will make them free. Feed them, dear Lord, as You did me, a daily supply so that they will return for a new daily requirement to keep us both sustained and maintained for Your glory, in Jesus' Name.

His Joint Heir,
Sarah W. Utterbach

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A ministry of
Sarah W. Utterbach



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All scripture references are taken from *The King James Version*, unless otherwise noted.

A *new* Daily Schedule for



SUNDAY

Sunday Church School9:00 a.m.
Worship Service10:30 a.m.

MONDAY

Bible Class7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY

Bible Class7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Doors open for Prayer6:30 p.m.
Service: School of the Bible7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY

Bible Class7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

Bible Class and Friday Prayer Service ..7:30 p.m.
Youth Fellowship7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

Bible Class and6:00 p.m.
Laying on of Hands for Healing

Holy Ambition Within You Must be Released

Colossians 3:1, 2 (TM)—*So if you are serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from His perspective.*

The power of Christ continues to transform us, as we are being filled with God's Holy Spirit. This transformation begins with the passion we have for Christ, which prompts us to show His compassion to others. It is our passionate hunger for the spiritual, which moves us in holy ambition.

Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world (John 4:4). That truth is the supporting strength of our ambition to move ever onward to deeper depths and higher heights in Him. No matter what may confront or challenge you in this pursuit, do not be hindered; God lives in you by His Spirit. He releases exceedingly more of His grace, enabling you to stand and withstand every onslaught, as He extinguishes all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

In the natural, people with ambition seldom allow anything or anyone to prevent them from their goal. Why then do Christians—who have supernatural power allotted to us in the Spirit, halt and play dead until the storm passes over? Do as Jesus did. Speak to the storms hovering over you and say what His Spirit has taught you to say. Believe in your heart that His victory is yours and keep the pressure on the devil until he either quits or you reach your goal.

As a Christian you are guaranteed persecution, temptation, strife and any other opposition satan can throw at you. But you are also promised both God's ability to equip to withstand, and a sure reward if you endure.

How badly do you want what Calvary provided for you? Move forward as though that is indeed the only thing that is important to you. The Holy ambition within you must be released.

I'm Not Immune, Just Attuned

Part 3

Hebrews 6:17 (CEV)—*So when God wanted to prove for certain that His promise to His people could not be broken, He made a vow.*

Psalms 65:1, NKJV, reads, "Praise awaits you, oh God in Zion; to you our vows will be fulfilled." When God says a thing, because of who He is, He releases it in our direction. Our faith is what takes hold of it to make it a reality in our lives. There is no question that God loves us and will turn heaven upside down to demonstrate that love. Would you be willing to give your beloved child to die for your enemy? Yet He did. There is nothing more God can do to show His care for us. We will not walk this Christian walk void of tribulation, persecution, and attacks from the devil.

Paul wrote that he was exceeding joyful in all his tribulation (2 Corinthians 7:4). Why was he able to say that? Because he understood God's value and that He is a merciful Father that always dispenses comfort when we find ourselves in trouble (2 Corinthians 1:4). The Greek word here for

**Focus on the one that
has given true life
more abundantly.**

tribulation means pressure, affliction, anguish, burned persecution and trouble. Folks, it goes with the territory. What's the alternative? For me there is none. The world has these same things, but without a God to comfort them or deliver them from it. We have the One who provides us with the antidote to endure.

Don't focus on the concerns of this life. Focus on the one that has given true life more abundantly. The enemy knows he can't prevent our victory, so he tries to deceive us from enjoying it. For those of us who are attuned to the Father are not immune to difficulty even as we are victorious in Christ.

I'm Not Immune, Just Attuned

Part 4

Hebrews 6:17 (CEV)—*So when God wanted to prove for certain that His promise to His people could not be broken, He made a vow.*

We often make the mistake of comparing God with men, or worse, limiting God in our lives, based on our experience with humans. God cannot lie, therefore, His promises and vows are two things that can never be changed. He does not accept bribes and is neither impressed nor influenced concerning man. Because He knows what we have need of before we even ask, He tells us what to ask for based on what He has already vowed or promised. It's the same as a teacher preparing a test then telling the students the answer before the test is given. In case you are not aware of this truth, God is our Father and He wants us to succeed in everything we do. He just wants to be the One instructing us in what we should do.

I'm not one prone to cry over spilled milk but I do, however, regret that I wasted so many years of my life looking to be validated by humans. The day I built a bridge and got over people was glorious. I now spend the majority of my life looking for what God has vowed or promised. What gets me so charged and excited is knowing His vows and promises are not just for my stay here in the earth. Knowing what He has in store for me in the hereafter motivates me to do my best, to give my all. Let's get this earth thing done and over so we can get out of here to really begin to live.

I'm not immune to the pits and bumps in the road that try to hinder me. I am, however, attune to each thing that goes "Boo" in the night being allowed by my father to aid in my growth. My prayer is that I always keep the vows and promises I make to Him.

Dominating Concentration

1 Timothy 4:15 (CEV)—*Remember these things and think about them, so everyone can see how well you are doing.*

In Paul's advice to Timothy, he was not encouraging Timothy to focus on or be concerned about those around him. Paul wanted Timothy to be aware of the value of the teaching and good instruction he had received growing up and to be certain he did not deviate from that teaching when sharing with others.

I could not find the word "concentrate" listed in the King James Bible. However, "meditate" was readily mentioned in both the Old and New Testament. We are influenced by what we have allowed to dominate our thoughts. We can determine what dominates our thoughts by what we choose to concentrate on repeatedly.

To meditate means to roll around in your mind what is written in the Word and what is spoken to your heart. Scripture says when we meditate the Word, we make our own way prosperous (Joshua 1:8).

Paul encouraged Timothy to watch how he lived and what he taught. If he were to keep on doing what he meditated on, which was what he knew that worked for him, not only was he to be a good servant of Jesus Christ, but he would save himself and those who heard him (Verses 6 and 16).

The Lord never told us to concentrate on His Word. Meditation is not an exercise of the mind and the spirit dominating our lives for the glory of God. Our minds and our spirit will always agree with what God has said. An unrenewed mind and the flesh (which can never be renewed) cannot agree on Spiritual things. It's not mind over matter, it's meditation of what's on our mind that matters. Never let concentration dominate you. Remember and meditate about what has gotten you to where you are and where you want it to take you.

All of Jesus' Prayers are Answered

John 17:21 (NLT)—*My prayer for all of them is that they will be one, just as you and I are one, Father. That just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me.*

You and I may be challenged by the belief that it is possible to be one with the Father and Jesus, but since this is recorded in red in the Bible, I meet the challenge with "Jesus said it when He prayed for us." Jesus can't lie and every thing He asked of the Father was done, so get used to it. You and I are one with the Father and the Son. Sooner or later the world has to see the manifestation of this, just because Jesus prayed it.

All of Mama's prayers might not get answered. You will never convince me that one single prayer of Jesus' was not answered. Therefore, the sooner I train my mind and my heart to act like the Father and Son, the sooner I will begin to enjoy being a Christian. It's comforting to know they will not leave me alone until I submit to be like them.

I received a phone call early in the morning while I was on vacation from a relative who had not slept all night because another relative had called them with some news they preferred not to hear. I slept just fine because the Holy Spirit had done two things. One was to prepare me for the news that was shared, and two was to bring to my remembrance Jesus' prayer. We may go through life experiencing a few tumbles and bumbles, but none of them will void Jesus' prayer for all of us, which includes the truth that nothing will be able to separate us from God's love (Romans 8:35 (NIV)).

While I don't live in the past, occasionally the Lord permits me to reflect in order to see how far He has brought me. He's not a respecting person. What He did for me he did also for my relatives.

Can You Tell One Skeleton From Another?

John 3:6 (NKJV)—*That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.*

All skeletons look alike. They differ in size, but, because they have been stripped of their flesh, which is what identifies and distinguishes the person, skeletons appear to look alike. As I pondered this truth, the Holy Spirit said to me, "Just as your flesh identifies you with Adam and Eve, as well as your biological parents, why not get rid of your flesh by keeping it under control, so that others may see the real you?" In other words, controlled and managed flesh causes Jesus, who is the skeleton or foundation we are to build on, to be seen. Imagine the day when all believers have controlled their flesh, how much more of Jesus will show forth.

The Message Bible states, "When you look at a baby, it's just that, a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is formed by something you can't see and touch and becomes a living spirit" (John 3:6). I am fully aware that in this earth realm, we need these earth suits to effectively operate for the Kingdom. But, the Lord never gave flesh to allow it to dominate the real person. While flesh or earth suits are needed to house our spirits, our spirit man should always be able to be seen. When we conform to the environment we are sent to change, how will those in need of the change be able to tell that we are different? Just as we can't easily distinguish one skeleton from another, the world can't distinguish a believer from a non-believer who is acting the same, saying the same things, and responding to the same emotions they respond to.

When are you going to set aside your flesh and allow the real person to surface? Today is a good day to begin.

Only the Lord Rescues Me

2 Samuel 4:9 (CEV)—*I swear that only the Lord rescues me when I'm in trouble.*

Never position yourself to be indebted to anyone, especially when what they are supposedly doing for you is wrong. These men expected David to appreciate the fact that they had killed the son of his former enemy. But David assured them that his Lord was the only one he looked to when he was in trouble. God does not use evil or wrong for our benefit, when His plan for us is victory. He does not steal from someone to prosper us. Don't accept another's evil as a personal blessing from the Lord for you. He would not deserve to be God if He operated like that. Our God is able to make all Grace abound toward us (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Recently I returned two items I purchased because they could have proved harmful to me. The sale clerk issued a credit to my account for more than twice what I paid because she misread the sales ticket. It never occurred to me not to bring this to her attention in order to correct her error. I didn't think, "The store can absorb it, they charge too much anyway." No, the Spirit in me led me to fix it immediately for conscience sake. The God I serve does not need to take advantage of anyone's mistake to benefit me. Plus, who is stupid enough to release that kind of spirit in your life?

Remember, what you sow is what you will reap. Examine yourself and look at all the good God is doing for you. Don't blow it over greed or you'll end up losing more than you tried to gain. Honesty and integrity are just a few of the badges we Christians should wear all the time. Those murderers of an innocent man in his own house cost them their body parts as well as their lives. Is anything worth that? Make sure you know and follow the heart of the One you want to respect and reward you. God does.

Focus Your Eyes On Jesus

Psalms 118:5 (CEV)—*When I was really hurting, I prayed to the Lord. He answered my prayer, and took my worries away.*

The Lord not only takes away worries, He removes poverty, petulance and pain.

David wrote, "The Lord is on my side, and I am not afraid of what others can do to me (verse 6). Paul repeated this in Hebrews 13:6, and added, "so that I can say."

What are you saying when you're going through difficulties? You have what you say. I pray we learn the value of decreeing and declaring what we release in the form of words. David further said in Psalms 118:8, "It is better to trust the Lord for protection than to trust anyone else, including strong leaders.

Periodically we have elections in this country. Those elections are supposed to represent the best this country has, "For the people and by the people." Unfortunately many voters are so ill informed as to the history or record of the candidates, they blindly vote for a party instead of the person. How many of us inquire of God who His choice is to provide the best for His people? Most candidates are elected because of what they promise to give or to do for the people. Wake up to the reality that no elected or appointed official has the power to do what they promise without other powers agreeing to it.

Thank God when it comes to our trust in Him, He alone is the candidate for the Congress, the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Supreme Court, and whatever else you can name. He makes our election sure, because "He done be for us, the devil done be against us, and our vote determines which way the 'lection gonna go." I was taught that many years ago, and you don't need a college degree to have it work for you.

Focus your eyes on Jesus. With Him, you win every time, all the time. I speak from experience.

The Power of the Lord

Psalms 118:14 (CEV)—*My power and strength come from the Lord and He has saved me.*

The writer of this Psalm said, “When nations surround me and I was attacked on all sides and they swarmed around like bees, I got rid of them and their fiery stings (verses 10-12).

At times it appears that the enemy attacks nearly cause you to fall, but when you understand where your power and strength come from, you’ll know help is on the way! Is quitting an option? If it is then you are relying on yourself or others to aid you. Why is it so hard for us to see that acting like little children dependent on a reliable parent is how we win? You and I have been given all power over the enemy and his demons. But that means we have what it takes to resist him, not to fight him.

Stop trying to prove your power and strength except in the Lord. We are not wrestling with humans. We may prove superior in that kind of involvement; but the devil and his forces only influence flesh and blood. You still must get to the source, and since his power is not natural, we must see that we can’t fight and win with natural or carnal weapons. When we permit the power and strength of the Lord to influence us in our battle, He saves us. In fact He has already saved us in Christ Jesus, our Hero. Knowledge of this truth allows us to trust in Him for manifested victory to be seen by all.

Who are you looking to for help?

What relief it is to know that the creator of the universe influences me to handle all situations. Who are you looking to for help? Trust me, if it’s not from the Lord, you’ll be disappointed along the way.

Wealth, Long Life, and Honor

Proverbs 22:4 (CEV)—*Respect and serve the Lord!
Your reward will be wealth, a long life, and honor.*

Some of you put in 80 hours a week, which is the reason you have regular doctors' appointments and only a gold watch at the end of your career.

Your boss shows you no respect and even suggests that you should be grateful to have a job. Wealth is an illusive dream, because what you manage to save is eaten up by ungrateful children who think you owe it to them to pay for the college of their choice. Whatever happened to children working their way through school or qualifying for available scholarships? Wealth, long life, and honor belong to those who respect and serve the Lord. It's called a reward. Too often we provide for people who neither respect nor serve us. Something is wrong with that picture.

While I was recording this entry, a relative whom I had not seen or heard from called and was sharing that a former husband's relative was living with her who was the only female she ever heard of that did not own a dress or coat. This was not due to anything but the fact that this person refused to work. She refused to wear a coat that a wealthy person had given to her. Her reason was, "It had leather on the collar and cuffs." I asked if she wears shoes made of straw or paper? The response was no, they're made of leather; which meant she was selective about animals being killed to provide for her comfort.

God had no problem killing an innocent animal to cover Adam and Eve. Thousands of animals were sacrificed on the altar "to be pleasing to God." When God offers us wealth, long life, and honor, know it's legitimate and don't look a gift horse in the mouth. Remember: Don't try and tell God how to reward you for your respect and service to Him.

The World's Cares Choke the Word

Mark 4:18, 19 (TM)—*The seed cast in the weeds represents the ones who hear the Kingdom news but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get. The stress strangles what they heard and nothing comes of it.*

When I went on vacation for the first time in my life without anyone but the Lord, it was glorious. I took 3 sets of undergarments, 3 changes of clothes. I wore makeup one day before asking myself who really cared if I had on makeup or not? I ate when I felt like it, ate out if the spirit prompted me to, or ate in. I had no concern for anyone's diet being abused, no conversations or advising anyone. I watched the local news in the morning and before going to bed. What freedom. I read or wrote as long as I was being inspired. I went out or stayed in with no thought of what others wanted to do on their vacation. I had finally learned to vacate. Interestingly enough, I did not feel guilty. In fact I felt relieved. I'm trusting the Lord to allow me to do this again.

It is sad when I observe people who have had special favor with the Lord pursue things that can only bring them pleasure in this life, yet you have made no preparation for the hereafter. Since it's true we can take nothing with us, why are we permitting life's cares to control us? The Word is going forth in abundance, but it is not producing the effect it should, because we're never satisfied with what we have except for a very short period of time. That's because we God-created beings were not made to be content with man-made toys. We strangle, drown and analyze the very thing that comes to propel us into visions of eternity. Someone once said worry is a type of infidelity. The Holy Spirit spoke to me and shared that worry was misdirected energy.

I Have A Dream

Genesis 37:5—*One day Joseph told his brothers what he had dreamed, and they hated him even more.*

All of us dream at times. Sometimes we are comforted by them, at other times we are frightened. Then there are those dreams that leave us confused and baffled as to their meaning.

Did God reveal an earthly event that would occur to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or was Dr. King being allowed to get a glimpse of a future eternal happening? I believe it was the latter. But because Dr. King was so involved in a cause he wanted to believe in for people to experience today, he was inspired to declare his dream on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in the States' Capital in the early sixties. More than fifty years have passed since that speech and we're still waiting to see it fulfilled.

As with the children of Israel coming out of Egypt, there have been some improvements, but we're still a long way from the dream and the Promised Land.

I was a young woman in my twenties when Dr. King became a leader of people — not just people of color, but of every one with a heart to do right. His death, though sad and unnecessary, led to one of the best things that ever happened to me, because it forced me to seek the true savior of all mankind, who had also been cruelly killed, but rose to insure that I would have life and have it more abundantly, both here in this life and hereafter.

The death of Dr. King and the Kennedy brothers' helped me in my search for something definite and permanent. I began to withdraw my confidence in flesh. I began to recognize that although I was an American by birth, I was a Christian by choice. Therefore, whatever happens in this world has a limited affect on me, because as an ambassador for Christ, I am just passing through. I, too, have a dream, and it must come to pass, because it is written for my future.

Faith and Fail Don't Go Together

Luke 22:31, 32—*Simon, Simon, satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you Simon, that your faith may not fail.*

Just as faith and fear cannot operate in unity, faith and fail will never be companions.

Smith Wigglesworth said, "I have never found faith to fail." Faith is available and accessible to all men, but all men do not choose to operate in faith.

I like Mr. Wigglesworth statement, because it's true.

The reason we cannot find faith to fail is because the discovery of what faith is and how it operates insures that you will never fail. Faith nullifies failure and failure is a sure sign that faith is nowhere to be found. Faith leaps over every obstacle and barrier that appears. Faith does not view anything God asks of us as an impossible task. Faith does not hesitate to act on a God ordained directive.

Direction from the Lord almost never comes with the instructions on how to do it. But faith shows you how, when you agree to act and start in the assigned direction. Faith encourages you to keep at it when all the conditions and circumstances around you say "no way."

How can we fail at anything when our steps are ordered by the Lord? God often takes us on some circuitous routes and we may occasionally find ourselves on some strange and unfamiliar streets.

How do we know the difference between whether we made a mistake or God is stretching us? Check for His presence. He always makes the strange and unfamiliar seem comfortable. When you sense Him leading you in that which you have never done before, faith says go, fear says no. Knowing His voice eliminates failure.

**Knowing God's voice
eliminates failure.**

He Exposes Publicly

2 Samuel 12:12 (CEV)—*What you did was in secret, but I will do this in the open for everyone in Israel to see.*

David, like so many of us, committed his sin in secret and thought he escaped home free. Isn't it ludicrous for a child of God to forget that everything we do is observed by our Father? God said through Nathan, the prophet, "I chose you to be the king of Israel. I kept you safe from Saul and even gave you the house and his child. I let you rule Israel and Judah and if that had not been enough I would have given you much more. Why did you disobey me and do such a horrible thing (2 Samuel 12:7-9, CEV).

With all the good David had done to earn the reputation of being the apple of God's eye, his dastardly behavior with Bathsheba, plus having her husband killed, cost his family dearly. Imagine being told you will never live in peace again because of what your parents did. "If anyone loves me, they

**God never exposes us
to embarrass.**

will obey me. Then my Father will love them and we will come together and live in them. But anyone who doesn't love me won't obey me" (John 14:23, 24).

God allows our sins to be exposed publicly because that's the only way we will stop the wrong we do. As long as we sin in secret without confessing it and asking for forgiveness, something remains in us that keeps that thing alive, and we dig ourselves into a deeper hole.

I receive letters from inmates, male and female, praising God for loving them so much that He allowed them to be caught and sentenced. They now see, had they not been arrested, they would have continued down the path of destruction they were on, with no clue as to how and when to exit. God never exposes us to embarrass. He exposes us publicly to give us another chance to return to Him. That's how much He loves us. He will receive us when we repent.

Acknowledge Your Sin and Accept the Consequences

2 Samuel 12:13, 14 (CEV)—*David said, "I have disobeyed the Lord." Yes you have, Nathan answered, "You showed you didn't care what the Lord wanted. He has forgiven you, and you won't die. But your newborn son will."*

Sonograms and ultrasounds provide expectant parents with a great deal of information about their baby, including its gender. We refer to it as "advance medical technology." Surely if God knows the gender of a child, He knows His plan for them.

As believers we are obligated to forgive all sin. However, broken fellowship is not restored until the person who is the offender acknowledges their wrong. Here we see that David's life was spared because he said, "I have disobeyed the Lord." He did not try to act like what he did didn't happen, and attempt to go on with God as before; that's the principal that's necessary to go on with God in fellowship. Our relationship remains intact, because of what Jesus did for us at Calvary and what He is doing for us in His seat at the right hand of the Father. But when we break our fellowship with the Father, only we can restore it. Jesus can get us audience with the Father in His throne room, but He can't obtain the grace we need for the mercy our situation calls for in our behalf. We must come before Him to do so.

Acknowledge your sin, accept the consequences and learn from the situation. Some things we set in motion by our words and our actions. Our actions don't carry the same rules and requirements as our words. Our words are out there and will not return empty or unfruitful until they accomplish what they intended, that is why our words must be guarded. Our actions can be forgiven with our acknowledging them. Our words won't be forgiven until we repent for releasing them in the first place.

All Questions are Gone

John 16:23 (NLT)—*At that time you won't need to ask me for anything. The truth is, you can go directly to the Father and ask Him, and He will grant your request because you use my name.*

The revelation of heaven and eternity is becoming clearer to me each day and it excites me. For years I thought that this verse meant that day was what eternity offered me. Now I see that when I depart this world, awake from the sleep of death, and am escorted by Jesus to heaven to be in the presence of the Father, I will not have any questions to ask. So when can I ask the Father for what I need to know? Now, in this life.

As a new believer, I had many questions of the Father. Today, as I have grown in my fellowship with Him to this point, all questions are gone. I am satisfied to know that He has every area of my life covered. He has charted my course, speaks to the Holy Spirit to keep me informed of what I need to know, when I need to know it. My life with God is

Every question asked is answered in God's timeframe.

so peaceful and secure that I have concluded that trust is merely having "the revelation of who He is and also of

who He says I am." You, too, can experience this peace. It starts by spending more time with Him and in His Words written for all of us in the Bible.

I feel so sorry for people who say they are children of God, yet they are still struggling with questions or looking for answers apart from the Scripture. For me, every question asked is answered in His time frame. Did He not say, "I know what you have need of before you even ask? (Matthew 6:8, NLT) When our desires, cravings, and requirements line up with His will for us, we can truly rest in the prayer He taught His disciples. It begins with "Our Father" (Matthew 6:9).

What Is Written Is Written

John 20:30, 31 (KJV)—*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name.*

The Bible has purpose. Jesus provided far more God revealing signs than are written down in this book. These are written down so you will believe that Jesus is Messiah, the Son of God, and in the act of believing, have real and eternal life in the way He personally reveals it.

Occasionally someone will say to me, “The Bible is not complete. There are books not included and events we don’t know about.” I agree with them, and respond with, “I’m glad there is no more written. I’m challenged to keep up with the part that was revealed.”

No one book could contain all that Jesus did. No one person has lived totally by what He has revealed. Remember, the more you know, the more is expected or required of you. At age 71, I haven’t scratched the surface of what is written, that I already know. Maybe you can handle more. I believe all that I need to live by or am expected to do was revealed already. I’d need another lifetime to do what is already written. Since none of us will be given more time again, I accept that the simplicity of believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing I might have life through His name.

The word “might” here in the Greek is closely kin to “dunamis,” — it means that I have the ability, the power and the strength, to believe who Jesus is, and the power in His name. Do you need to know more than that? I don’t! What is written is written. Mastering it for my personal benefit and the benefit of others will bring glory to God the Father which is all any of us need to know or do. Get on with it.

The Best Medicine in Town

Psalms 119:50 (CEV)—When I am hurting, I find comfort in your promises that lead to life.

All of us have found ourselves hurting at times. It may be for different reasons and when we least expected it. There are times when those closest to you caused the pain. It doesn't matter who or what cause the hurt, hurting is hurting. Wounds caused by an injury are much easier to be healed than one you know you didn't deserve. What's the solution? Find comfort in God's promise that leads to life. The reason we find comfort in the promise that leads to life is failure to be comforted by His Word leads only to death or destruction.

Never permit yourself to meditate on the pain you experience. Always look for a word from the Lord for comfort. How will I know it's a word from the Lord? Does it bring you comfort and reassurance that there really is a light at the end of the tunnel you're in? Or does it incite you to retaliate, or try to get even? Years ago I chose to ignore pain and look to the great pain reliever, His name is Jesus. He can handle what man says is impossible. Look at what the writer said in verse 52. "I find true comfort, Lord, because your laws have stood the test of time."

I know you know that we are not under the law but under grace, but God's words are forever settled in heaven (Psalms 118:89). The thing I like best about relying on God's Word for everything is that it is a

God is the Great Physician . . .

prescription that can be filled in any country or nation. I never have to concern myself with anyone using a substitute or leaving out what's been prescribed.

The promise of God is His Word, whether it's written to be read or it's spoken to me specifically. He is the Great Physician and He knows both what hurts and what heals.

How Soon Do You Say Yes or Okay?

Psalms 119:60—As soon as you command, I do what you say.

God seldom makes a request or a suggestion of me. Somehow I find that I don't have to struggle with His commands. Yes, okay, or all right, just seem to fit. I admit I need a little more grace when a human commands anything of me. I first have to get past their tone, then their status.

One of the reasons I respond favorably to God is that over the years, it did me no good to delay His commands. He doesn't go away, and I find that I don't sleep restfully when I have ignored Him. Sooner or later I'm going to have to do it, so why put myself through a lot of unnecessary loop-de-loops?

One reason it's a good idea to respond quickly to God in a favorable way, is it's a sign to Him of trust and that you really are convinced that as your heavenly Father, He would never ask anything of you that would or could prove harmful to you. When we hesitate to act on a God command, it could signal to God that something or someone is a priority over Him. He does not ever like that. I highly recommend if you have been guilty of this, repent at once and ask Him to please repeat what it was He originally said.

Let's look at it another way. When we obey God's commands at once, we sow the seed for His response to our petitions and supplications. Usually by the time we go to God for something it's because we have exhausted all our human efforts without positive results.

Another way to look at it is, you have said yes, okay, or all right, so much that you don't need to ask for what you want. He looks at your "yes, okay, and all right" deposits, and then just provides what you think, before you get around to asking. It is never to your hurt, harm or disadvantage to do what He asks of you.

Don't Let Jealousy Blind You

Proverbs 27:4 (CEV)—*An angry person is dangerous, but a jealous person is even worse.*

Over the years I have observed angry people and jealous people. The spirit of anger that can attach itself to a person is much easier to deal with than a jealous spirit.

It's sad when you see a person who is unable to enjoy what God has blessed them with because they spend most of their time wanting what you have. When that happens it tells me that the person does not believe that God knows what is best for them, or that they don't believe God cares as much about them. Since God spared not His Son, but along with Him freely gives us all things (Romans 8:32), I never allow a spirit of jealousy to come near me. I truly believe that my Father withholds nothing that He intends for me to have, and if it's mine you can't get it no matter how hard you try. You may do or get a similar thing but you can't have mine, because all I have comes from God.

No matter how you try to conceal a spirit of jealousy it comes through. You can smile all you want but sooner or later the malice, envy, and indignation will surface. Jealousy is a negative spirit but it's still a spirit and people with positive spirits can pick up that counterfeit force with little or no effort.

Check out those around you by your spirit. Inquire of God to reveal others spirit as it relates to you. He will every time if you will listen. When they become potentially dangerous to His plan for you, He'll move them out one way or another. You can pray for an angry person, but a jealous person is hard to reach. The reason is they are willful and covet what another person has. Learn to appreciate who you are and enjoy what you have in order to stay in God's race.

Training Makes the Difference

Hebrews 5:14 (CEV)—*Solid food is for mature people who have been trained to know right from wrong.*

According to Scripture, the mature people are those of full age or full-grown. When I was growing up full-grown people were everywhere. But something happened in the past 30 or 40 years. Mature people are rare to locate these days.

It was a badge of honor to behave in a mature way when I was a child. It was not only expected of you, it was required. Today it appears that people are just growing old. Wisdom, that is free, is as though no one can afford it. Child Protective Services has put a fear that is not normal into parents who are too afraid to properly train their offspring. Even animals in the zoo or the circus must be trained to obey on command. We do a great deal of teaching people and reasoning with them, but what happened to training? Yes, there was some abuse from some adults and that needed to be addressed. But to abandon all the good discipline provides is stupid.

My mom allowed us to express ourselves, and then she told us what was going to be permitted in her house. Why would you listen to a person who doesn't know yet who they are, and allow what they say to rule the roost?

I remember as a child, I wanted to be around the "old folk." Why? They often knew more than my teachers, and they certainly knew more than my peers. Of course, like you, I thought I was grown. But Mama and the neighbors could tell I had a long way to go, and they didn't make it easy for me. I am what I am today because they did not permit me or anyone else to tell them how to raise the one that God was going to hold them in account for. Luke 16:12, KJV, reads, and if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's; who will give you that which is your own?

Proving one's self should always be a requirement to validate your maturity.

It's My Choice to Obey, Regardless!

Psalms 119:112 (CEV)—*I have made up my mind to obey your laws forever, no matter what.*

That must thrill the heart of our Father God. We know there is no commitment until we make up our minds to be willing to do *anything* to obey Him. Absolutely nothing prevents a made up mind. A made up mind is a settled mind. The winds of change may blow, but our sail and rudder are not affected.

How many times has God attempted to influence our choices because Father knows best? There were times that because our mind was not yet single, because we had not made the choice, we staggered, wavered, and even denied Him. But a made up mind is both ridgedly fixed yet flexible, but only according to what God has spoken. Following Jesus Christ, and the gospel is the most unreasonable thing one can do until your salvation becomes the only reality that matters.

God has given me every desire of my heart, and I am grateful. But the only desire I have left is the hope of seeing Jesus face to face at the end of my days here on earth. In the meantime, because I have seen the fruit of disobedience, and it's ugly, I pray daily for the grace to have the wisdom and strength to do what God is speaking to me, just the way He wants to do it.

Why do I need an opinion or a plan? God sees the whole picture. He knows the whole story. He has my back, my front, my everything. Once I began to yield to Him is not when He began to order my steps. God began to order my steps when I became wise enough to recognize that nothing else but His plan will work for me. It became my choice to obey even when I didn't understand what was going on. In most instances the understanding came once I elected to obey.

Do you really think you can run your life better than God? Read the 42nd Chapter of Job. Then answer God's question, "Where were you?"

We're Not Under the Curse of the Law

2 Samuel 21:1 (CEV)—*While David was king, there were three years in a row when Israel could not grow enough food. So David asked the Lord for help, and the Lord answered, Saul and his family are guilty of murder, because he had the Gibeonites killed.*

I truly believe that we have been delivered from the curse of the law because we are under grace, because the Word of God says so.. However, I am not as certain concerning our vows.

Israel had promised they would not kill the Gibeonites, because God wanted Israel and Judah to control *all* the land, not just the portion God promised to give them (verse 2). The Gibeonites were descendants of the Amorites. They were not Israelites and their land was not covered under the Covenant.

Greed and ambition can hinder the flow of God's blessings. This is why it is so important to have the right leader and not to follow after people who will not follow God.

Check out what is happening in your life and surroundings with God. If you are not experiencing His life more abundantly, someone may have set in motion some negative principles that you are unaware of. Why not inquire of the Lord if there is anything you need to know in order to make right any wrong that someone else did that could be affecting what is happening in your life. Though I may be innocent, I'd rather pay for someone else's mistake or greed than to have the fact that they violated a principle that will continue to negatively affect me.

When a vow is made, it must be kept. When it's violated, it must be made right. I prefer not to reap what someone else sowed when I can get it fixed. Joshua had to pay with the loss of life when Achan disobeyed God. Ask Him, He will tell you what's wrong or if this is just a season you're going through as a part of your training.

Not Muscular Power or Physical Stamina

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV)—So he answered and said unto me “this is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel. Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.

I have seen empires and edifices that were magnificent in structure and appearance, fall or fail. God is not looking to build temples that only reflect muscle power or physical stamina. Any workmen can pull that off. God wants to build His temple in the weakest of vessels. He wants to dwell

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on human hearts that are both humble and hungry, willing to be led by His Spirit. He wants vessels who will pursue His heart and His desire for the good of mankind.

We must learn our value to God, not to

draw attention to ourselves, but to focus on Jesus and all He represents to the Father. Millions if not billions of dollars have been spent and wasted on structures that only glorified men. Our mission is not to attract attention to natural achievements, but to equip God's people to be able to stand and endure adversity.

So what if you get the world to come see your property? How many are transformed by what you teach and preach about Jesus? My desire is to become so sensitive to His Spirit and His life that everything else will fade in comparison.

Family Reunions

Proverbs 17:1 (NLT)—*Better a dry crust of bread eaten in peace, than a house filled with feasting and conflict.*

Before I got delivered from entertaining, I used to prepare feasts and banquets for 65 to 72 people on major holidays. I found myself spending so much of my time and energy settling disputes and discussions among immature Christians that I was drained when they went home. One day the light came on and I asked myself why I felt the need to be in their company? Then I realized that I did it mostly for my husband's entertainment, who by the way felt little or no need to confront or correct them. The Lord set me free by saying, "I sent them to you for you to train them, not to play with them."

I began to realize that I enjoyed being alone with God more than with unspiritual crowds. My family never had annual reunions, but the years I

did attend many holiday gatherings were more than enough for me. There are people who say they love each other and that blood is thicker than water. But I learned from Jesus who my real family is, and His love flowed through our veins towards one another.

Fast or eat dry bread, rather than expose yourself to people who don't build you up or encourage you.

Folks, stop feeling guilty about not wanting to be around relatives who are clueless about God's peace. Instead, spend that time alone with Him praying for them. Fast or eat dry bread, rather than expose yourself to people who don't build you up or encourage you and comfort you spiritually.

When the Light Comes On

Psalms 119:130 (CEV)—*Understanding your word brings light to the minds of ordinary people.*

This is good news. I never understood the cartoons that would show a light bulb coming on in the head of a person, until I read this verse. Like me, you too may lack a formal education. Don't despair, no university or institution of higher learning can teach you to understand the Word of God. They can teach you about God, but only the Spirit of God within can teach you what God is about.

Schools will provide you with information concerning God. The Holy Spirit will provide insight, inspiration and revelation concerning God, which only He can teach. When you train yourself to listen to the Holy Spirit you will obtain the how-to application of the information. That is when the light comes on, because understanding has entered in.

I am not suggesting for a moment that you not obtain an education. Education is not wrong. It just does not offer you the nuts and bolts of who God is and what He is all about. An educated person should not become impressed with his or her education, and remain ordinary in their mind and pleasing in God's eyes by still seeking Him first, acknowledging Him in all their ways, and recognizing that without Jesus they are nothing, and with Him nothing is impossible to them. The preaching of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing because satan has blinded their eyes, but to those of us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Ordinary people understand about being saved. They know it's a process and not just the one-time experience of being born again. Those without the light see themselves as "entitled," which means nothing to God without understanding of who He is and what He says.

Trusted and True

Psalms 119:160 (CEV)—*All you say can be trusted.
Your teachings are true and will last forever.*

We've all been lied to, left hanging in the balance and disappointed in what occurred with someone we wanted to believe in. At times, we have been the guilty party, but what has that to do with God? Every word He speaks to us can be trusted; yet at times we find ourselves in a tizzy, because He is the last one we turn to when we need help, companionship, or wisdom. Not only are His teachings true, they don't fade after a period of use. He and His teachings are timeless.

Do you allow yourself the luxury of dependency on Him? He'll never fail you disappoint you, or let you down. One of the reasons we experience disappointment is because we look to receive from humans what only God can and will give. One of the reasons for that is because there is nothing selfish in Him. People don't intend to let us down, but they are unable to handle the stress we put on them. God and God alone is equipped to deal with our labor and heavy burdens.

Don't cause another to sin because you place them in areas they were never intended to be in. I often hear the statement, "I have to take care of my family. I need to prepare for their future." This usually results in working two jobs or lots of overtime, which means the time needed to train them to depend on God is lacking. The head of a home should work to provide for his household until they have been taught that God is their source and supply. We seldom require our youth to use their faith to believe for their desires and pleasures. Are you teaching them to tithe on their allowance, their salary, or the special occasion money they receive? The principles and laws of God work for all that work them, no age limits required!

Where Is the Knowledge and Good Sense?

Proverbs 1:4—From these an ordinary person can learn to be smart and young people can gain knowledge and good sense.

If you begin to read and meditate on one chapter of Proverbs a day for a month, in one year you will have fed these wise sayings into your spirit twelve times. For nearly 35 years I have done this. That means I've read and fed on the book of Proverbs at least 420 times. It has taken me from just being an ordinary person to being an ordinary person with some wisdom.

The Serenity Prayer became appealing to me when I was 12 years old. I have learned there are things I can fix, and things that will never change no matter how much courage I apply. The Spirit taught me, with the help of God, to fix the fixable stuff, and forget all the others. That began a quest for wisdom for me.

Good sense is the opposite of what we are seeing in our youth today. In the hope to be fashionable, they are becoming men and women of folly. Their manners are lacking, and their street clothing is indiscrete because they were never taught to use any restraint. They wear caps in restaurants and rake their food into their mouths. Whatever happened concerning holding a fork the same way you do a pencil, as opposed to holding it the way a toddler does before they are taught properly?

It's true none of these things will keep you from getting to know Jesus. But rebellion to correction will affect your spiritual development. You can either be identified as a fool or a wise man. Proverbs 15:14 reads, "The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly." Ecclesiastes 10:1 says, "As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly (foolishness) outweighs wisdom and honor." It does not eliminate it; it just outweighs it. Return to balancing the scale by discovering good sense again.

How Would You Wear A Lovely Hat and a Pretty Necklace?

Proverbs 1:8, 9 (CEV)—*My child, obey the teaching of your parents, and wear their teachings as you would a lovely hat or a pretty necklace.*

I suppose this would require us to first recognize who our parent is. Since most reading this entry are born again, I believe I can safely say that God is our Father. He is the Head over all things and has made us partakers together with Jesus to His nature.

Secondly, it helps to have an appreciation of a lovely hat and a pretty necklace. You'll never display what you are ashamed of. Think about the gospel. Paul says "I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 8:16).

The Contemporary English Version of that verse reads, "I am proud of the good news! It is God's powerful way of saving all people who have faith whether they are Jews or Gentiles." There was a time a lovely hat or a pretty necklace was proudly displayed for all to see. What is being displayed now? A day when people observe you and your Christianity? We don't just have salvation. We are to show it off to all watching us.

Are we obeying our Father's teaching? Do you just have a robe of righteousness, or are you wearing it wherever you go? We cannot show it without first obeying His teaching it. Our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). All of us have become like one who is unclean and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags.

What makes us unclean are our iniquities, corruption, universal sin and frailties. But thank God we don't have to abstain from anything godly. In fact when we are guilty of these things, because we have a lawyer at the right hand of the Father interceding for us, we acknowledge our sins, and ask for forgiveness with a sincere heart, and proceed with showing off our lovely hat and our pretty necklace.

Point of Contact

Luke 1:45 (NIV)—*Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.*

Some whom I respect the most in the ministry have used the term “Point of Contact” in getting people to release their faith to receive their healing and the blessings of the Lord in their lives. As I began to meditate on that, the Spirit had me look up the words contact, then release.

I discovered the word contact is not in the King James Version of the Bible. I asked the Lord what did that mean and why have thousands received as a result of contact with a thing? The response was;

“It was not what they came in contact with; it was that they chose to believe or release their faith to receive what I had already spoken to them either in my Word or through the inward witness. Mary believed what the Lord had spoken; she did not touch anything nor did anyone touch her. This is true of Sarah, Abraham, Paul, and anyone who has chosen to believe My words. Though thousands of people have been blessed and were able to release their faith to receive when they were introduced to a “point of contact” or hands were laid on them, it “grieves me,” saith the Lord, that people won’t just take me at my word. They say I can’t lie and that by my words I created the world, but they need to use one of their five physical senses to simply believe me. I had faith in my spoken word to create the world and all it’s inhabitants. I had no point of contact because there was nothing to contact until I created it. I believed in my spoken word; you should also.”

Everything God created is good and nothing is to be reputed of it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the Word of God, and prayer (1 Timothy 4:4). This is not just speaking of what you eat. The principle works on everything. Believing in God’s Word is your point of contact to release your faith to receive.

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Ordinary People

2 Timothy 2:20 (CEV)—*In a large house some dishes are made of gold and silver, while others are made of wood or clay. Some of these are special and some are not.*

A popular song out many years ago said, "God uses ordinary people." Ordinary is not a word God uses to describe His people. In fact it's only shown one time in the Bible in Ezekiel 16:27, when He was berating Jerusalem for her unfaithfulness to Him. He referred to her food as ordinary.

As I began to meditate on this word, I realized that once I became a vessel or container submitted to serve in the Master's house, that choice took me from being one of the cheap utensils, for everyday use, to an expensive one, used for special occasions. When I keep myself pure, I become a utensil God can use for His purpose. My life will be clean, and I will be ready for the Master to use for every good work (2 Timothy 2:20, 21 (NLT)).

Before we received Christ we were ordinary. Now, we are special, being used of God to reach the ordinary, in order to change them to valuable utensils fit for the Master's use.

Stop being afraid to act like you are a treasure for God's use. That is not thinking more highly of yourself than you ought to; it is recognizing who you really are. Decree and declare your worth. Know the moment you were saved and turned from evil and wickedness, you became somebody. But God's truth stands firm, like a foundation stone, with this inscription: The Lord knows who are His and those who claim they belong to the Lord must turn away from all wickedness (2 Timothy 2:19).

Have you left your former life behind to follow Him? Rejoice! You are no longer ordinary. In a wealthy home there are utensils of gold, silver, wood, and clay, but the Master only uses His expensive stuff for His special guests. The heathen are His special guests. His workers are different in order to attract them.

He Prepared Before He Appointed

2 Chronicles 32:5b, 6 (CEV)—*He gave orders to make a large supply of weapons and shields, and he appointed army commanders over the troops. Then he gathered the troops together in the open area in front of the city gate and “said to them”...*

A good leader always prepares what is needed for the various battles or tasks he or she will assign. There is a lot said in these verses. Since we know in the last days that evil will occur, why are we off-guard when it comes? It's called lack of preparation.

I recently taught a message entitled, “We’re so earthly minded, we’ve no heavenly good.” As Christians, we’re going through each day the same as the world. Our affection, ambition, and attitude seem to be on “what’s in it for me now?” We are clueless concerning our life after earth.

King Hezekiah was wise enough to require the shields and weapons to be made prior to appointing commanders over the troops. He understood when he gathered the troops together for his pep talk, to not be concerned about King Sennacherib, that his message would be more acceptable if his commanders would have the weapons to hand out to his soldiers before anyone could tell them to “be brave and confident.”

They did not have the Holy Ghost or renewed minds, yet they only understood carnal weapons were needed to fight with. Thank God, Jesus changed all of that for us. What He has prepared for us are weapons mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds.

The Holy Ghost speaks to us daily words that are needed to encourage our hearts to not fear nor lose confidence in His spoken and written word as we are about to do battle in the spirit realm. He prepared for us what is needed before He adopted us. Let's do battle.

You Will Be A Success

1 Kings 2:3 (CEV)—*Do what the Lord your God commands and follow His teaching. Obey everything written in the Law of Moses. Then you will be a success, no matter what you do or where you go.*

This was David's instruction to Solomon, prior to his falling asleep. As you can see it was conditional, which God's promises are to you and me if we choose to walk in His fullness. New Testament Christian's are not under Moses' laws as Israel was. We might want to write it this way for us. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death."

There are still laws or rules we must obey in order to experience victory in whatever we do or wherever we go. While having money can be a good thing, it's still the lowest form

Never allow yourself to be duped into thinking more money will make you successful.

or power, and it has one purpose, which is to exchange it for something you want more than the money. You can't eat it, sleep

with it, wear it, and without faith it can't get you healed. With enough money you may be able to afford a little comfort or relief when you're under attack, but it cannot make you well or happy.

Never allow yourself to be duped into thinking more money will make you successful. A successful person is a happy person, with or without finances.

Today, if you are not happy in Jesus, money will not change that. You will be a success *if*.... Without obedience to the requirements of the Lord you will never be successful. To think otherwise means you are either deceiving yourself, or have been deceived by a false teacher.

Success is not about what you have; it's about who you have, and who has you, to the glory of God.

You Will Pay for Cursing God's Anointed

1 Kings 2:8, 9 (TM)—*You will have to deal with Shimei, son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bohurim, who cursed me viciously when I was on my way to Mahanaim. Later when he welcomed me back at the Jordan, I promised under God "I won't put you to death." But neither should you treat him as if nothing ever happened. You're wise; you know how to handle these things. You'll know what to do to make him pay before he dies.*

Shimei was bold and foolish to curse David and his troops when he thought they would not return alive from battle. He tried to clean up his act when David returned and because David promised before God not to kill him he thought, "There will be no consequences to my crime against God's anointed."

All violation of God's word carries with it consequences. Solomon acting in the spirit of his father David agreed to allow him to live, providing he followed Solomon's instructions to the tee.

Shimei became so infuriated with a wayward disobedient runaway servant, he went after him without counting the cost. Going after his servant would mean he'd have to go outside the area of safety to a forbidden place to seek revenge. Solomon heard about it and made him pay with his life. Actually Solomon did not kill him. He allowed his own words to condemn himself.

Watch what you vow. Furthermore, watch your lack of self-control that will blind you to your commitment and the Spirit if getting even. It matters not how long it takes or how it gets done, trust me, you will pay for all the wrong you do as well as be rewarded for your good.

You and I can't balance our scales, God can and does. Guard your mouth, because the life and death of your enemies, as well as yourself, are in the power of the tongue.

The Temple of God Will be Built

1 Kings 5:3, 4—*Remember how my father David wanted to build a temple where the Lord his God could be worshiped? But enemies kept attacking my father's kingdom and he never had the chance. Now, thanks to the Lord God there is peace in my kingdom and no trouble or threat of war anywhere.*

As I read these verses, a desire to use a few different words helped me to see what happened to the ministry the Lord called my late husband Clinton and me to.

One of the reasons I was attracted to Clinton was because he loved and talked constantly about Jesus. When we were called to pastor, Clinton had a real desire to obey God and build a work for Him. But satan kept up an attack of illness for 25 of our 32 years together. Clinton was robbed of his opportunity to fulfill all that was on his heart for the Lord. But there is peace at RLCC, thanks to the Lord's teaching. He sent two fine men to support what He called us to do and there is no trouble or threat anywhere. I no longer have to look over my shoulder to see how to prevent a takeover.

I will always hate sickness, because I personally observed how it can rob a person of their ambition for the Lord.

Never allow sickness to get a foothold in your life.

Folks, don't tolerate sickness in or around you for a second. Never allow it to get a foothold in your life.

Release your faith in God's

Word concerning healing if no one ever agrees with you. Look only to Jesus as your physician and healer, otherwise, satan will take advantage of your lack of trust in the Lord.

Jesus will even heal a sinner at first to get him or her to believe. However, when you neither give Him credit for your recovery nor refuse to serve him, He'll just allow you to follow your own pursuits, while He sadly watches your demise. But always remember, the temple of God will be built with or without you. He'll simply find a replacement for you.

An Open Door

Revelation 3:8—I know everything you have done and I have placed before you an open door that no one can close. You were not very strong, but you obeyed my message and did not deny that you are my followers.

This tells whether you get to run with the big guys or never qualify for life's race at all.

The Holy One says, when He opens a door, no one can shut it. Believing that should be enough to make you willing to stay on the straight and narrow. Examine yourself and make whatever necessary corrections are needed to position you to walk with the Lord.

The door He has opened for you is already based on His observation of your words, deeds, and actions. He said, "No one can close it," but that

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when He opens a door,
no one can shut it.**

does not say that you will go through it. It says it's open before you, and it will always remain open for you to pass through. He already knows of your frailty and strength deficiency. Obviously it was not anything you did except obey His message, and acknowledge Him as your leader.

What are you waiting for? Use your faith to cross the threshold of life, and never look back to see who's coming with you. Ones' you would love to take along may not be ready yet, but that doesn't give you the right to delay your passage once He has opened the door.

Of course you can pray for them to also obey and refuse to deny Him. But you must enter in with or without them. He knows how you feel. He had no proof that anyone would ever believe in Him, but He had to walk through life's door to physical death in order for us to have access to the Father. He is not asking you to die for Him. He only wants you to die to the things that hinder your life with Him. The door is open.

Unless You Disobey

1 Kings 9:6, 7 (CEV)—*But if any of you descendants disobey my commands and start worshiping foreign gods, I will no longer let my people Israel live in this land I gave them. I will desert the temple where I said I would be worshiped. Then people everywhere will think this nation is only a joke and will make fun of it.*

When God appeared to Solomon the second time, it was to confirm Solomon's prayer and request. Then God let him know that His intention was to be worshiped in the temple Solomon had built. God stated that He would "Keep His promise, providing the people obeyed His laws and teachings." He has not changed today.

I am told that there are so-called churches that no longer believe the church is relevant today. Others no longer have altar calls, and the list goes on. This brings me to prayer for them, because they are the very ones that need what churches should be teaching. I have found nowhere in any of my Bibles that the power and

You and I will never outgrow God and His Word.

purpose of the Church will change until the saints are caught away at the appearing of Christ. Every word of God is spoken for us, inspired and recorded for our maturity. When obeyed, it leads us gently, but firmly through life, it's fires of adversity, and ultimate victory in every area of life.

You and I will never outgrow God and His Word. My desire daily is to continue in my worship of the Lord, be it from a cathedral or a storefront. We are in the process of remodeling areas of our church that we believe the Lord has instructed us to do. We know God lives in us, but because he has instructed us to assemble together, from all accounts concerning what I read, His places of worship were always extravagant, but were not wasteful. Since He expects me to upgrade the assembly, why not upgrade the place of this worship then, me?

Stir Up the Gift In You

2 Timothy 1:6 (KJV)—*Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

We have always used this scripture in regards to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, I believe there is more to it. We became sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:26). Scripture further reads, "but the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:15 (NIV)).

The Holy Spirit's gifts are many and without measure (1 Cor. 2:4 and Romans 12:4, KJV).

Adam was God's gift to the world to begin mankind, but because of his trespass, he brought universal condemnation. But God sending Jesus, His only Son to shed His blood to eliminate, eradicate and erase, what Adam caused, He brought or became the gift of universal grace.

There is no question that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are needed in the earth to benefit mankind. But the greatest gift is Jesus, who then directs the Holy Spirit action to provide what each of us needs in our lives as we walk with the Lord.

The Holy Spirit's gifts are many and without measure (1 Corinthians 2:4 and Romans 12:4, KJV). But there is just one gift from God for us, the man Christ Jesus. As we cultivate the relationship we have with the gift, He then will determine what gifts we should operate in.

Never make the mistake of desiring the gifts more than the gift. But to every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Ephesians 4:7). That the portion of Him given to us is not limited, therefore as His body we are not limited in our zeal and personal work on behalf of others. Learn to cultivate the relationship.

Character of Service Rendered

Acts 11:25, 26 (NLT)—*Then Barnabas went on to Tarsus to find Saul. When he had found him, he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching great numbers of people. (It was there at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians.)*

Did you notice it said numbers, not number? Great numbers of people came to Christ as a result of Barnabas and Saul taking a whole year to instruct the people concerning Christ.

When you have been called into service for the Lord, your entire thought-life must be centered on Him and His work. How many of us are so Christ centered that we would even consider taking a year of our lives to introduce and instruct others about Jesus? When we are anointed and appointed to His service, He in us should cause us to bring the crippled to Him at all cost (Mark 2:3).

While assisting others to know Him, don't forget your own relatives, Andrew didn't (John 1:41, 42). Where would we be today if Andrew never brought Peter to Christ? We would not have 1 and 2 Peter. We would not know how he broke tradition to lead Cornelius to the Lord (Acts 10:9-34).

Phillip found his friend, Nathaniel, and told him of the one Phillip knew about (John 1:45). What are you doing with the gift you have received? James 5:20, says this, "Remember this; whosoever turns a sinner from the error of his way, will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins."

It would appear that God has prospered us so much that we have become more focused on what He has provided for us that we work so hard to maintain, that we have forgotten our real purpose and His plan, which is to always be conscious of Him on the inside of us to do what Jesus died to accomplish.

Don't Believe Your Own Press

2 Chronicles 10:10 (CEV)—*His younger adviser's said: "Here's what we think you should say to them: "Compared to me, my father was weak."*

I don't even know if Rehoboam believed this. But scripture says, "Rehoboam ignored the advice of the older advisors. He spoke bluntly and told them exactly what his own advisors had suggested (2 Chronicles 10:13, 14).

While old age does not always guarantee wisdom, neither does youth. That is why the Holy Spirit was given to us. He can be consulted and followed all the time because He has no hidden agendas.

We once had an advisor that was always trying to increase out salary. We were quite comfortable and satisfied with our income, because God had not limited our income to our salary. We did not get a green light to receive more salary, so we kept saying no. The Spirit began to reveal to us the reason the person wanted to give us more in our salary was so they could suggest a raise for themselves. After all, how would we be able to say no to them when they had been responsible for us having bigger salaries?

When Rehoboam's friends from childhood suggested he say, "Compared to me, my father was weak," was an indication that although they were already his officials, they wanted more. Listening to his friends cost him dearly. Old wisdom is not always bad. Life has a wonderful way of making us smarter.

Friends who have little life exposure may mean well, but they haven't been around enough years to replace one of the best teachers or advisors you'll ever have, and that is "life" itself. At some point, it is wise to let your words be right, since one day you will give an account for them. Please don't believe your own press.

Smart Cookie

2 Chronicles 9:2 (CEV)—*The Queen of Sheba heard how famous Solomon was, so she went to Jerusalem to test him with difficult questions. She took along several of her officials, and she loaded her camels with gifts of spices, jewels and gold. When she arrived she and Solomon talked about everything she could think of.*

I'm not sure how this lady got to be queen, since no king was mentioned in relationship to her. But she was a "smart cookie." First she recognized that her position did not mean she knew everything. When she heard about Solomon, she agreed to meet him for herself, as opposed to accepting someone else's experience.

She thought about what she wanted to know and did not assume Solomon would know what concerned her. She was neither envious nor was she feeling inferior to him because he had the answers to her questions. She was smart enough to see that what had been told her was only a portion of the total truth. An additional piece is that she gave his God credit, not for just making Solomon so wise, but God's main purpose was His love for the people of that country.

**God's love for His creation
is always the reason for
making you successful.**

God's love for His creation is always the reason for making you successful. You and I get blessed in the process of Him demonstrating His love to and for others. Don't ever think you are blessed because you are special. Your success is a reward for the privilege of being used by God. Aside from recognizing why God made Solomon king, she came with gifts that represented the best of her country.

Many seek to exploit your God-given wisdom yet never show their appreciation by supporting what God is doing through you. This lady not only walked away with Solomon's wisdom, she returned home blessed with more.

Full Pantries Often Hinder Your Faith

Part I

Deuteronomy 6:10-12 (TM)—When God your God, ushers you into the land he promised through your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you, you are going to walk into large cities you didn't build, well-furnished houses you didn't buy, come upon wells you didn't dig, vineyards and olive orchards you didn't plant. When you take it all in and settle down, pleased and content, make sure you don't forget how you got there. God brought you out of slavery in Egypt.

God is certainly not opposed to His children prospering. He delights to do for us. He is just against anything stealing our affection, attention, and attitude, from reverencing Him. While this message was clearly intended for the Children of Israel, the principle also works for us.

In Christ Jesus, God has provided for us all we will ever need. He is grieved when we turn to other things or other people. One of the things we must be conscious to avoid is seeing ourselves as the source of what we have. You, like I, may have a good job with a good salary, along with good credit. But never make the mistake of thinking we are the source of our blessings. It's God,

**Learn the difference
between being on a mission
and being on assignment.**

God, and more of God. As long as we acknowledge Him in all our ways and thank Him in all things, and stay humble before Him, treating others as we would want to be treated, He will probably support our efforts. His promise to the children of Abraham was that they would possess things that they did build.

Never forget how you got where you are, or the importance of living life is to be pleasing to the Lord in all you do. Learn the difference between being on a mission and being on assignment.

Full Pantries Often Hinder Your Faith

Part 2

Deuteronomy 6:10-12 (TM)—When God your God, ushers you into the land he promised through your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you, you are going to walk into large cities you didn't build, well-furnished houses you didn't buy, come upon wells you didn't dig, vineyards and olive orchards you didn't plant. When you take it all in and settle down, pleased and content, make sure you don't forget how you got there. God brought you out of slavery in Egypt.

It is so sad to observe Christians refusing to continue in the spiritual devotion that brought them to the place where they are.. The only television I watch is the weather channel. Occasionally the program Storm Stories is shown, and I see people who never darken the door of a church praying, and calling on God to save them and deliver them from their dilemma. He does, and as soon as they are out of immediate danger, they resume their former lifestyle.

I am not surprised. It's when I see people who profess to love the Lord doing the same things that I'm surprised. I hear of Christians who stay home from church while on vacation because they "need a break from church."

Imagine God saying He needs a break from us and our disobedience. I stopped using the phrase "Give me a break," because the Lord said to me one day, "I don't have any breaks to give you. Would you like me to allow the devil to break you?"

I've observed former substance abuser's that were homeless and now homeowners, that choose to work on Sundays to maintain what they said God blessed them with. Some of us are not mature enough to handle His abundance. Full pantries can hinder your faith. When you don't have, you'll usually seek out the Lord. But how soon you forget when you tap into His flow. Don't be deceived; it will only last as long as you are pleasing to Him and His purpose.

How Quickly We Forget

2 Chronicles 14:11 (NLT)—*Then Asa cried out to the Lord his God, "O Lord, no one but you can help the powerless against the mighty! Help us, O Lord our God, for we trust in you alone. It is in your name that we have come against this vast horde. O Lord, you are our God; do not let mere men prevail against you!"*

Asa had an army of slightly less than half the size of his enemy, Zerah, when Judah came under attack. Because Asa's army was made up of courageous fighting men, and his trust in God, Israel won the battle over the largest army in its history (verse 8). With that in mind, can you explain why having lived in peace with his enemies for years, he chose in his latter years to call on another king, instead of his God, to aid him against a smaller army (chapter 16:2)?

It would appear that we do the same thing today. How quickly we forget how we once trusted in God and the name of His Son Jesus to get us through and over, when the odds were totally against us.

God doesn't change. How do we lose our faith and confidence in the one who can never fail us? The scripture says, "The Lord defeated the Ethiopians in the presence of Asa and the army of Judah (14:11). The Message Bible reads, "Then Asa prayed to God saying, Oh God, you aren't impressed by numbers or intimidated by a show of force once you decide to help."

How do we show God our confidence in Him and at the same time not take Him for granted? Perhaps living in peace too long affects our sound judgment and weakens our resolve.

God sent His prophet to Asa to rebuke his behavior, and Asa made things worse by imprisoning the prophet. He further compounded his action by abusing God's people. When we fail to acknowledge and repent for our wrongs, a downhill spiral begins that results not only in our defeat but at times even death.

Never forget who God is and what He has done for you.

Hard Heads and Adulterers Lose Everything

Proverbs 5:10 (CEV)—*Strangers will get your money and everything else you have worked for.*

Proverbs 5:15 (CEV)—*You should be faithful to your wife, just as you take water from your own well.*

It pays to pay attention to those sent by God to instruct you. He will allow you to be disgraced in front of everyone. Failure to give the Lord Jesus credit for what He has done in both your body and your life could result in your death.

I heard my late instructor tell when a certain family member was a baby Christian, first saved and indwelt by the Spirit, he was able to use his faith to get her healed. Several years later a disease with the same name, but a different manifestation occurred in her body, which resulted in her death.

What happened? After the first victory, she did nothing to learn the Word concerning healing for herself and God did not allow him to pray for her the second time. She was destroyed for lack of knowledge. I don't know what she had, but I know she didn't take it with her, so someone else benefited from what she had accumulated, even if they were relatives. Some of us allow ourselves to get too busy acquiring stuff that we neglect to get the "stuff" we need to be useful to God. His Word, hidden in our hearts concerning His benefits, has to be the most important knowledge we can acquire in life for life.

Never assume because Super-Saint prayed for you and you were healed or blessed in the area you needed it most, that you have no responsibility in the maintaining of what you received. That person may not be around when you are in need the next time, and even if they are, God may not allow them to assist you. Don't be a hard head. Learn for yourself.

Watch Whom You Embrace

Matthew 8:12 (CEV)—*But the one who should have been in the kingdom will be thrown out into the dark. They will cry and grit their teeth in pain.*

While on vacation, a former member showed up at RLCC for service, though the service was not on the usual night because of a major holiday. I was told this person was greeted and warmly embraced by others in the congregation. I don't have a problem with that except they chose to attend when I was away and on a different than normal night. The reason I am wondering if it was deliberate on their part to come when I wasn't there is because someone had to tell them of the change. My concern is the person did not leave RLCC in a favorable light, and has not yet chosen to apologize nor repent for the unkind, harsh and disrespectful words spoken to me in the presence of other pastors.

Because the members of RLCC are taught to walk in love towards everyone, the fact that the person was embraced would not have been foreign. However, I wonder if they knew the spirit displayed towards their pastors, would their response have been that of welcome.

**Ask God and He will
tell you the truth.**

When the prodigal returned home, his father greeted him warmly because he had repented and apologized for his former behavior. Isn't it high time we mature to the point of being sensitive to what and whom the Lord wants us to embrace? He is not happy when wolves invade attired in sheep's clothing.

Watch whom you embrace. Discern the Spirit to see if it's of God. You may not have been told the facts concerning a situation, but the Holy Ghost knows everything. Ask Him and He will tell you the truth. Be not deceived. God is not mocked.

Adversity Visits: The Lord Comforts

Matthew 8:24 (CEV)—...*a terrible storm suddenly struck the lake and waves started splashing into their boat. Jesus was sound asleep...*

Do you remember when all was going well in your life and nothing was going wrong for you, and suddenly the least expected was in your face? Always remember, you are still in control; therefore, you should not allow anything or anyone to disrupt your sleep.

God has blessed RLCC with a wonderful congregation that accepts their pastors as people like they are, and the most important thing they can learn is that Jesus promised to never leave them or forsake them (Hebrews 13:5). I feel sad for both the members and pastors who don't understand their roles.

It is not unusual or abnormal for babies to depend on others to assist them. However grownups are to train themselves to exercise the Word for themselves. Pastors, you only cripple the people assigned to you if you have a need to keep them dependent on you.

When adversity pays you a visit, look for the Lord in the midst of it, to comfort you.

There was no need to wake Jesus up because of the sudden storm. He had already said they

were going to the other side. When the Master says a thing, we need no further instructions. He says what He means, and He means what He says, period. How could they believe that Jesus was going to drown? That is not what He said His death would be like; neither did the Old Testament prophets say it.

Very seldom does adversity announce it is about to pay you a visit, so when it shows, look for the Lord in the midst of it — not to deliver you, but to comfort you while you confront the adversary.

Where Is Your Loyalty? Part I

Luke 9:62 (TM)—*Jesus said "No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's Kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day."*

Luke's rendering of this encounter tells of three who would be followers of Jesus. One said he wanted to volunteer for service. Jesus made it plain to him by asking "Are you ready to rough it?" Then told him they were not staying at the best inns.

When people tell me that they just want to serve the Lord, I often tell them that there is a lot more to that than what they see on the surface. When you are called, you can expect the Lord to support you, but He supports you where He needs you. He will never forsake His righteous ones and your family will be fed. But it may not always be that you'll be working from the Waldorf Astoria or eating in the Bull and Bear Room.

I'm not quite sure when you volunteer to serve the Lord what you are entitled to. I was called to the ministry. Even then, my late husband Clinton and I found ourselves one time in an ant-infested bed in a trailer in Oklahoma while we were on a mission for the Lord. We never complained; we simply left the trailer and got in our car to sleep that night. We have been passed around among church members homes like we were bars of soap in order to prove the pastor had no favorites. We were called so we took the bitter with the sweet.

Paul said in whatever state you find yourself therewith be content. We learned some of the greatest lessons ever during these times. Most of all we learned to look for God in everything. Additionally we learned how to minister to the servants of the Lord and not just minister to the Lord. We learned that God was observing how we were treated. Because we did not grumble or complain but we were loyal to Him, He rewarded us in due season.

Where Is Your Loyalty?

Part II

Luke 9:62 (NKJV)—*But Jesus said to him, “No one having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.”*

Jesus asked the second follower to “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” Jesus’ reply to him was “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the Kingdom of God.”

Let me be the first to tell you if you do what Jesus said you will lose your popularity with friends and relatives. Once you have settled your call and become convinced that Jesus knew what He was talking about, you can make the right choice. If you are dealing with saved people they’ll build a bridge and get over it. If they are not saved, the best you can do is steel yourself and trust that one day they, too, will get saved and understand nothing compares to obeying the Lord, even if it means violating tradition, culture and habits.

Aaron wasn’t even allowed to mourn for his two sons when they were killed for profaning the Lord’s fire. When you read the account of Aaron’s sons’ deaths in Leviticus 10, you will discover that Moses warned Aaron and his two remaining sons not to mourn for Nadab and Abihu (verse 6) but the rest of their relatives could mourn for them. Bottom line, when you have been called into the service of the Lord you cannot neglect the Lord’s work to bury the dead.

When the anointing of God is upon you, you can’t participate in what is normal or traditional for others. I suppose you can attend funerals unless God has told you not to. For me, I am certain that I am never to fail to follow the Spirit of the Lord, or fail to minister to people in need to attend a funeral. I’m not trying to be contrary, but my call is different and I can’t afford disobedience.

Where Is Your Loyalty? Part III

Luke 9:62 (NIV)—*Jesus replied; No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the Kingdom of God.*

This third would-be follower of Jesus had a desire to follow Jesus but he wanted to say goodbye to his family.

One of the first lessons the Lord taught me was how to distinguish between my relatives and my family. The Word of God helped me with that. When Jesus was teaching, scripture says, "His mother and His brothers showed up, but could not get through to Him because of the crowd." He was given the message, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside waiting to see you. He replied, "My mother and brothers are the ones who hear and do God's Word. Obedience is thicker than blood (Luke 8:19-21, the Message Bible)."

Another translation said, "These are my family." The Lord spoke to me and said the people connected to you by natural blood are your relatives. Those connected to you by Jesus' blood are your family. You don't choose your relatives but you can your family. Don't expect your blood relatives or your friends to understand that, especially if they are not born again. Notice the scripture in Luke 9:62 does not say if you put your hand to the plough and "turn back" you're not fit for the Kingdom. It says "look back."

I want to serve the Lord more than I want to eat when I'm hungry. In light of this scripture, I don't want the spirit of Lot's wife to fall on me. She was told not to look back when the angel was leading them from the devastation going on in Sodom and Gomorrah. She did not obey and chose to take one last look. On the spot, she became a statue of salt. She became something stationary. That's what a pillar means.

Well, without intentionally upsetting my relatives, I'd rather be on the move with Jesus than to lose my effectiveness because of them. Hopefully, one day they will get the picture.

Are You Remembering What Was Said?

2 Chronicles 18:27 (CEV)—*Micaiah said, "If you do come back I was wrong about what the Lord wanted me to say." Then he told the crowd, "Don't forget what I said!"*

There is a difference in lying and being mistaken in what you share. Ahab's prophet yielded to a lying spirit because they wanted to keep their king happy. They even had the messenger sent to bring Micaiah back to them, and whispered that he should go along with the crowd (verse 12).

Micaiah's response was, "I'll say whatever the Living Lord my God tells me to say" (verse 13).

When you are the called of God, you can't lie without it being obvious to others. While I was not asked to lie about the word I received from the Lord, He had spoken to my heart at that time regarding our need for a building. The vision is yet for an appointed time. It will speak and it will not lie, though it tarry, wait for it (Habakkuk 2:3).

My late husband Clinton strongly suggested that I refrain from sharing it at each service because the people needed a facility to worship in right now, not later. This was back in 1982. Because I did not want to cause strife in my home, and I wanted to be a submissive wife, I decided to refrain from quoting this to the congregation and would just ponder it in my heart. The very next service, in all sincerity I was not going to say what I knew God had placed in my heart. But at pastoral comment time, when I opened my mouth Habakkuk 2:3 came out. That's when I began to learn that submission to a spouse does not supercede obedience to God.

After twenty-three years of being in this building, debt free for twelve years, I shudder to think where we'd be had the Holy Ghost not prompted me to speak out what I had received from the Lord. He was just giving me another chance to *obey* Him.

Never hold back what God gives you to say. You'll know soon enough it was the Lord.

When Your Time Is Up, It's Up. Just Be Ready.

2 Chronicles 18:33 (CEV)—*However, during the fighting a soldier shot an arrow without even aiming and it hit Ahab between two pieces of his armour. He shouted to his chariot driver "I've been hit, get me out of here."*

It did Ahab no good to disguise himself. God had spoken his demise. Jehosaphat in his royal attire simply prayed and God simply made the soldiers stop that chased him thinking he was Ahab (verse 31). The late great heavyweight champion boxer Joe Louis said concerning his opponent, "You can run but you can't hide." When God calls your name or rings your bell, it doesn't matter where you are, who you're with, or what you are doing, when it's over, it's over. This is why it is so important to live for the Lord at all times. You will give an account for every word you speak and every deed you do.

Notice this soldier was not even shooting at Ahab, nor did Ahab's armour protect him. Preachers with armour bearers will not be able to hide behind anything but their righteousness. Non-preachers with bodyguards, you can forget it also. Your trust and my trust must be in God. Watch with whom you align yourself.

Because Jehosaphat had agreed to allow his son to marry Ahab's daughter he felt obligated to support his son's father-in-law, even though he had no quarrel with the king of Syria himself.

What's the message to you and me? Why are we joining others in *their* fight when we have chosen to let God fight *our* battles and win over any enemy who thinks he can attack us and win? When your children make choices to involve themselves with people you barely know, there is nothing in the rule book (the Bible) that says you must be responsible to or for their in-laws. Supporting in-laws God has not assigned to your life could contribute to you becoming an outlaw. Check everything and everyone out with God.

Does the Scale Balance In Your Favor?

2 Chronicles 19:1 (TM)—*But Jehosaphat, King of Judah, got home safe and sound. Jehu, son of Hanani the seer confronted King Jehosaphat, "You have no business helping evil, cozying up to God-haters. Because you did this God is good and angry with you. But you're not all bad, you made a clean sweep of the polluting sex and religion shrines, and you were single minded in seeking God."*

Jehosaphat nearly missed it. All the good he had done did not prevent God from getting angry with him because he agreed to involve himself with a "God-hater" without first conferring with the Lord. How many of us do similar things?

If you are a believer and you have close or distant relatives who hate God, you'd better make sure God will use you to reach them for Him. Otherwise, put distance between yourself and them. Don't let satan trick you by telling you, "You are not walking in love" because you don't fellowship any longer with former friends and relatives. What does satan know about love? If God tells you to, and they are in need of help, (and I don't mean financial,) give them natural assistance, while at the same time you are giving them His Word. If they refuse to respect your God while wanting your help, don't fail to let them know you are a Christian and you don't care to talk about anything but your Lord. You may only get to sow some seed, but never miss an opportunity to share Jesus with others.

Whatever you do don't make God angry with you by not introducing His Son to whomever, wherever you can. Keep God's scale balancing in your favor. Jesus is coming soon. You and I don't want to give an account for why we neglected to share Him with another. If you have to put up with them, they should have to put up with your Jesus.

Exercising Our Authority

Matthew 9:6-8 (CEV)—*“But I will show you that the Son of man has the right to forgive sins here on the earth.”*

Jesus said to the man, “Get up! Pick up your mat and go home.” The man got up and went home. When the crowds saw this, they were afraid and praised God for giving such authority to people.

First, Jesus saw the faith of the man and his friends. Secondly, He spoke words of comfort to the man to play his part in all of this. Thirdly, because of his faith he was told his sins were forgiven.

Jesus perceived the hearts of the religious leaders and asked a question as to which was easier to tell him to get up and walk or demonstrate the Son of man’s right to forgive sin in the earth.

Since Jesus had rights in the earth as the Son of man, so do we. Confident of His rights in the earth, He then gave a command. The man did just as he was instructed and the people saw and became afraid. They then praised God for His work through a man.

Stop talking about what you want to do in Jesus’ name and begin doing it.

As the Body of Christ matures concerning who they are and their authority, they will not hesitate to speak out anywhere they see faith. Once we get over our concern for our reputation and take a bold step to exercise the authority given to us by speaking out what is needed, we will see it come to pass as the person in need does his part.

Isn’t it time the people get to see what God has authorized you to do? Their flesh may become frightened for the moment, but that does not stop God from doing what pleases Him. As long as you give God the glory, He can trust you with His authority. Stop talking about what you want to do in Jesus’ name and begin doing it.

Your Deeds and Actions Must Agree

Matthew 9:20 (CEV)—*A woman who had been bleeding for 12 years came up behind Him and barely touched His clothes. She had said to herself, "If I can touch His clothes, I will get well."*

Sometimes it pays to make our confession to ourselves, and then talk to others after we have received. I suppose prayer partners are useful, but if you don't really believe, they can't help you a bit.

As a pastor I encourage people to include me in on their confession if they perceive that my faith joined with theirs will enhance what they are praying about. Nothing excites me more than to receive a praise report concerning one I taught who acted on what was shared. Ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of the prayers or petitions I have prayed reflected my faith to act on what I had been taught and watched God do what He does best. Each manifestation I receive from the Lord strengthens my faith to believe Him even more. I practice solo prayers for me because I want to know I can reach Him when others are nowhere to be found.

The woman who came to Jesus spoke her faith, acted on what she said and received what she had said. Jesus just confirmed the accuracy of what she had already received. Verse 22 reads, Jesus turned, He saw the woman and said, "Don't worry! You are now well because of your faith." At that moment she was healed. She was not healed when she said, "I will get well when I touch His clothes." She set the boundaries her faith would work in, and got what she said and did. She could have touched Him without saying, and she could have said with touching him, and continued to bleed. But she operated a law or principle that always works. She used creative words and put action to those words and received a healing explosion.

What are you hearing about Him? He wants to confirm what you are willing to believe and act on.

Provision Is Provided Because God Loves You

Matthew 6:8 (KJV)—*Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*

In 1988, we became the owners in a time-share at the *Trapp Family Lodge* in Stowe, Vermont. My husband was alive then and we always took family and friends with us. They always assisted with the loading and unloading of the car's contents.

November of 2007 was the first time I visited the house alone. I had allowed others to use it since Clinton fell asleep in Jesus. But on that particular occasion I wanted a full week alone with the Lord, which meant taking the necessary provisions to be able to stay inside. The lodge never had bellmen. Owners unloaded and loaded their vehicles for the 18 years I had visited. I don't recall asking the Father specifically for help for this trip. I just believe that he knows what I wanted to do for the week, which was to spend time uninterrupted with Him.

I prayed in tongues and worshipped Him during the 6-hour trip.

Arriving at the lodge to

pick up my house keys, I asked if there was someone to assist me with anything. I was told, "By all means. By the time you get down to the house a bellman will be there to assist you." Not only did he bring in everything I had, I asked if he was available to fill the woodbin for my fireplace. He did and the Lord told me what to give him as a reward.

I was free to begin to pray because God not only provided for my need; He provided the seed to sow in this young man's life. .

God not only provided for my need; He provided the seed . . .

All of Hell's Forces Cannot Stop the Church

Matthew 16:18 (KJV)—*And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

It would appear in the natural that many churches are experiencing dwindling attendance, and it's true. However, that is not an indication that God has abandoned His plan for the church through His Son Jesus Christ. He is just purging, pruning, polishing, perfecting, and purifying. He is equipping the people who remain and work in their ministry for the time when the hungry multitude show up.

One convert who hears and answers God's call annually would be sufficient for God to have called RLCC into existence.

There will be no time to get ready. So pastors, use this precious time available to you to train your congregation for the One coming. The people will come and the

money will come. Get out of debt and stay out. Use your faith in His promises to support His work in His way, and you'll never be in lack.

Like many of you, I used to think that God was impressed with numbers. He desires for all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth. Some assemblies are called to a salvation ministry.

One convert who hears and answers God's call annually would be sufficient for God to have called RLCC into existence.

How do you know that one annual convert won't turn out to do more for the kingdom than even Billy Graham? Do your part and rest assured that all of hell's forces cannot stop the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Living Versus Existing

1 John 3:3 (TM)—*All of us who look forward to His coming stay ready, with the purity of Jesus' life as a model for our own.*

As much as we would like to take people by the hand and lead them through life, we can't. God holds each of us responsible for our actions. We can either act on His word and walk in victory, even as we pass through adversity, or we can ignore truth and try to excuse and justify what we do. But we still have to give an account of all our deeds done in the body, be they good or evil.

When I was first introduced to truth in God's word, I wanted to know it was so. I said to the person that taught me, "Point me in the direction I need to go, don't hold my hand. Just point me in the direction and I'll find the way." I did not know the person of the Holy Spirit or His job and responsibility to the church, but I wanted to know for myself that God was who the Bible says He is.

Thank God for Jesus and the Holy Spirit who created in me a hungry heart that still today is not satisfied. Daily, I want more of Jesus and of the Holy Spirit who leads me and guides me in to all truth and shows me things to come. I took responsibility for my growth and for my lack of it and God helped me.

Stop blaming the preacher and other Christians for your failure to act on what you are

taught. When I acted on truth taught I began to live. Less than that is merely existing. The newest saint on the block is made free the moment he acts on the word of the Lord. I'd rather be wrong trying to take action than to merely exist while remaining passive and in doubt.

Daily, I want more of Jesus and the Holy Spirit who leads me and guides me in to all truth and shows me things to come.

Spiritual Paralysis Is Doubt

As I look back to 1977 when I was seriously exposed to God's word, I see many who started with me are either dead or no longer serving the Lord. What happened? I had a desire to do things God's way while others talked about how hard it was. It wasn't hard, it was different. The more I chose to please God and leave people to Him, the easier it became. Matthew 11:28-30 in the Message Bible reads, "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me. Watch how I do it. Learn the

**Every influence and attraction
loses its power the moment
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unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

I was practically born on the second row of a church. I can-

not recall a day when I didn't know about Jesus. I did not see anyone living what they were preaching; yet I knew the Bible was right, therefore, everyone else had to be wrong. It was a while before I had the spiritual courage to cut ties and be willing to sacrifice pleasures I had grown to enjoy in my flesh. When I compared the pleasures of the flesh with the spirit of Christ in me, Jesus won hands down. I've never used drugs, so I'm unfamiliar with that kind of high. But I have been so caught up in spiritual things that I lost the desire for anything except the supernatural.

Every influence and attraction loses its power the moment you decide to be led by the spirit and set your affection on things above. Forget the appeals of the world and paralyze the devil by simply believing the Lord and His word.

Permanently Linked to the Lord

Romans 8:35—*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

The devil cares less what you have, or even what you believe, as long as you don't say it or act on it. He knows a Christian is expected to have some things. The blessings of Abraham are ours when we accept Calvary's redemptive power.

When I discovered that I was permanently attached to the Lord I saw a picture of a cracked eggshell with the eggs in a bowl, and someone was trying to separate the yolk from the egg white. The harder they tried, the more the two blended. The result was scrambled eggs. Once the blend occurs there is no separating the yolk from the white part.

Why should I be in bondage to what the Holy Spirit had freed me from?

In the beginning of my Christian walk I allowed the yolk of my life to stay separate and apart from the white of the Holy Spirit. When I discovered they were intended to blend together, I yielded to His dominating spirit by acknowledging that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made me free from the law of sin and death. Why should I be in bondage to what He had freed me from? I learned to crucify my flesh and submit to His spirit in me. You and I are more than adopted. We are reborn into His life. He is not just a guardian, He is mine, I am His, and my acting on that reaffirms our covenant.

Pray for Grace to Endure

Mark 24:13—*But he who endures to the end shall be saved.*

Only God knew and understood the horrible things mankind would be exposed to in the end times. He revealed it to Jesus who spent a great deal of time sharing it with His body (Mark 24:1-51).

The Lord is not asking us to endure in order to see how much we can put up with. He's teaching us the importance of being faithful to the end, which will guarantee our total victory over every enemy force.

The Lord is not asking us to endure to see how much we can put up with.

There are a number of definitions for the word endure, but the one which explains the word in this verse means to "hold one's ground in conflict, bear up against adversity, hold out under stress, stand firm, persevere under pressure, and wait calmly and courageously."

It is active energetic resistance to defeat, not patience or passive resignation to fate, that allows calm and brave endurance. The only way I know to walk through resistance is with prayer and confession of God's promises. We need to learn to rejoice, because it's a part of the precursor of the end times. During life's difficulties, we as believers are to give more attention to spreading the gospel.

Enduring is more than working on our testimony. It is accepting God's grace to further demonstrate that Jesus has already overcome the devil, and we believe and confess it for all the world to see.

Turn Your Life Around

...by submitting your life to Jesus Christ. If you do not recall making a confession of Jesus as your Savior and Lord, we invite you to say the following prayer. Confessing the prayer marks the beginning of a new life or being "born again" as Jesus explains in John 3:3-6.

Father in Heaven,

I believe that You are God and that Jesus is Your Son. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and that after three days, He arose from the dead. Today I make a quality choice to turn from my past ways. Jesus, I ask You to please forgive me of my sins and I invite you to come into my heart to be Savior and Lord of my life. Make something new of me. Create in me a hunger for Your Word. By Your Spirit lead me to a church where I may gather together with other believers and be taught Your promises and principles accurately and uncompromisingly. I want to fully understand my responsibility and authority as Your child. Thank You for salvation and for the promise of abundant life—spiritually, physically, economically, and socially. Father, I purpose to give Your name the praise, honor, and glory with my words and with my life, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Amen.

Note: If you prayed the preceding prayer, welcome to the family of God! We invite you to contact us so that we can mail you a memento of this important step. We're waiting to hear from you!

Rebellion and Disrespect

2 Kings 2:23—Elisha turned, took one look at them, and cursed them in the name of God. Two bears charged out of the underbrush and knocked them about, ripping them limb from limb, forty-two children in all.

The Gospel teaches us who are followers of Jesus to ask God to bless anyone who curses us and pray for everyone who is cruel to us. Why are we to do this? Because it helps to identify us as true children of God. Thank God for the Spirit of Christ in us, which constrains us from doing what Elisha did. This is why we needed the Holy Ghost. Old Testament prophets could bless or curse you. New testament people have a new commandment, which is to love one another as Christ loves us (John 13:34).

**Rebellion and disrespect
never attract
God's best for us.**

Remember, it's always your flesh that wants to retaliate, but since it's dead in Christ, don't allow it to resurrect itself because

of failure to release the love of God that is in your heart.

Luke 6:22 in CEV reads, "God will bless you when others hate you and won't have anything to do with you. God will bless you when people insult you and say cruel things about you. They do that because you are a follower of Jesus."

This is not a new thing happening to you and me. Verse 34, says, "Long ago people did this to the prophets. So when this happens to you, be happy and jump for joy. You will have a great reward in heaven." You can either seek temporary satisfaction in the flesh here or you can receive your reward in heaven. Rebellion and disrespect never attract God's best for us. The choice is yours.

They Have to Go, So You Can Grow!

2 Kings 2:9—And it came to pass when they had gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

Jesus rebuked Peter for not discerning that He would one day have to leave the disciples and return to His Father. Elisha had closely watched as he followed Elijah and also knew that he was to leave him that day, as did the other prophets at Bethel and Jericho (Kings 2:2, 4).

The thing that impressed me was as fond as Elisha was of Elijah, he did not get emotional about his departure. God had prepared him for that. He did not ask Elijah not to go, or say please don't leave me. He so respected what he had observed Elijah do under God's power that he just wanted to continue the work in a greater measure.

I pray God will help us to see that the reason why He permits some to depart from us both in life and in death is for us to be in a position to obey God more and better.

Church, some things and some people have to go so you

can grow. Too often they become enablers, or idols. Either way, they can hinder God's plans for you.

**Some things and some people
have to go so you can grow.**

In recent years I've discovered that several remaining spouses only attended church because of their dead spouse. I strongly suggest you keep your focus on the Head of the church. He's not going anywhere. His blessings to you are not because of your mate. He made you heirs together in Christ.

He Never Said You'd Like It

Psalms 104:24 (CEV)—*They would not trust you Lord, and they did not like the Promised Land.*

He provides liberty for His people. He never once told them they had to like where they were being led to go. He only shared with them what would be made available to and for them.

Very few things have changed. We still like to choose where we will live, seldom remembering to say thank you for not being homeless. We ask God for a job and because we didn't receive what we are qualified to perform, we start to murmur and complain, not remembering the percentage of unemployment in the nation. Why would God want us to work at what we have already perfected? He wants to stretch

**All things were created for
God's pleasure and if what you
are doing is pleasing to Him
that should bring you pleasure.**

us so that He can get the glory. It's hard to brag about what you don't know how to do, but see it being done through you anyway.

Here's a little free advice: learn to look for God in all you do

and perhaps He'll reveal to you why He needed you there in the first place. Since when do we have to like everything God asks us to do? He promised to work all things together for the good of all those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

When are you going to get it? All things were created for His pleasure and if what you are doing is pleasing to Him that should bring you pleasure.

Some of the greatest blessings in my life were God's choices for me, because He knew I was not smart enough to see what He had in mind for my good.

The Value of Wisdom

Proverbs 3:14 (CEV)—*Wisdom is worth more than silver, it makes you much richer than gold.*

Silver and gold are here today and gone tomorrow. They both are dependent on what value man places on them for the day. Wisdom, however, is from God, and its value never changes. Its value is more precious than jewels and nothing you or I will ever want can compare with her.

God blesses everyone who has wisdom. In her right hand wisdom holds a long life and in her left hand are wealth and honor. I'm grateful for these, but the real joy is not in what wisdom has provided for me but it is in the lives of the people I am going to impact using only God's wisdom.

The Choice Is Yours broadcast that I host weekly is live, with no prearranged script, or people planted to call in. I never know from

week to week or caller-to-caller what will be next. I spend a large portion of the day preparing myself to hear clearly the voice of the Lord. I take the position that it is His program and His people, and He has been the one supporting it for 15-plus years. I never intentionally mean to offend anyone, but obeying Him does at times rub others the wrong way.

God knows how much I value wisdom and it appears that He trusts me to impart it to others in some unusual ways at times. He has taught me to value wisdom, and wisdom has taught me to trust Him.

God blesses everyone who has wisdom. In her right hand wisdom holds a long life and in her left hand are wealth and honor.

Spiritual Refining Process

1 Peter 4:12 (NLT)—*Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trial you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.*

When you know you are living a holy life unto the Lord, you can arm yourself with the same attitude that Christ had when He submitted Himself to suffer death on a cross. The strange occurrences in our lives are foreign and unholy, which means you are to operate your authority over the foreign and to correct the unholy.

**Becoming born again
should begin your spiritual
refining process.**

Becoming born again should begin your spiritual refining process. Our spirit man, the invisible part the real us is refined, spiritually, instantly. But, because we have lived in

these natural tents of our flesh for so long, there is a process we must experience in order for the life of Christ in us to be made manifest.

You often hear me speak of "tradition culture and habits." We have yielded our flesh to these for training for so long they have become strongholds, hindering our progress in God's glorious plan for our lives. In order to break these strongholds we must suffer or experience a degree of pain as the spiritual refining process takes place. We do not suffer for Christ, we suffer with Him. We are partakers of Christ suffering (1 Peter 4:13).

The CEV translation of verses 12 and 13 reads, "Dear friends, don't be surprised or shocked that you are going through testing that is like walking through fire. Be glad for the chance to suffer as Christ suffered. It will prepare you for being spiritually refined in the process."

God Never Makes Last Minute Decisions

Hebrews 4:3 (NLT)—*For only we who believe can enter His place of rest. As for those who didn't believe, God said "In my anger I made a vow; they will never enter my place of rest." even though His place of rest has been ready since He made the world.*

I am continually amazed that ministers still preach a gospel that leads people to think God is going to do an additional thing for them, as though their prayers and tears will move God. The Psalmist wrote "You are wonderful and everyone watches you store up blessings for all who honor and trust you. You are their shelter from harmful plots, and you are their protection from vicious gossip."

Pleasing the Lord is what gets us the desires of our heart.

God's storing up His blessings does not remotely suggest that He is withholding anything to dispense to us at a later time.

From the foundation of the earth everything needed for His children was done. He's just waiting for our faith to reach a level of boldness to receive what He has already provided.

How do I get mine, you may ask? By believing Him and His word, you will come to a place of rest, although unbelief will always block your entrance. God does not tell us to believe when we can see it. He tells us to believe so we can see. He tells us to believe everything that pertains to life and godliness is ours because He said it (2 Peter 1:3).

Everything that relates to or belongs to God is ours as we purpose to please Him. Pleasing the Lord is what grants us the desires of our heart. When we please Him we only want what He wants for us. To desire anything not on His agenda for us is lustful.

Don't Forget God— You'll Need Him Again

Job 35:9, 10 (TM)—When times get bad people cry out for help. They cry for relief from being kicked around, but never give God a thought when things go well.

No parents are pleased when their children only acknowledge them when they are constantly pouring out to them. In that regard, God is no different. Not one of us can afford to go one second of our lives without the Lord in the lead. Why then does it take a disaster for us to express our love and admiration to Him?

I'll let you in on a discovery I made. Expressions of love and appreciation to Him when nothing is needed or wanted keep a continual flow going from Him to me. Constantly

Try to imagine what life would be like without the light of God's word showing you the way.

saying "thank you" for past intervention has paid off beyond anything I would have imagined.

Elihu in his third speech to Job was not totally accurate in everything he said to Job, but he was on target here.

Take a few moments right now, and reflect on where you were when God began to enlighten and illumine Himself to you. Try to imagine what life would be like without the light of His Word showing you the way. How often do you say thank you just because? Or is your only form of communication with Him a long list of petitions and requests? When you favorably respond to God's gifts to you, petitions and requests become only what you'd like Him to do for others.

Never ignore God. Trust me, you'll need Him again.

Prisoners of Suffering and Pain

Job 36:8, 9 (NLT)—If troubles come upon them they are enslaved and afflicted. He takes the trouble to show them the reason. He shows them their sins, for they have behaved proudly.

Thank God for Calvary. Old Testament people believed that anything occurring in your life that was not considered a blessing was directly related to sin in your life. Once I learned what really happened at the Cross, and all of the provisions God made for me through Christ who took care of the sin situation as well as my health and wealth, I stopped beating myself up looking for what I did wrong.

Folks, we have both an adversary and an advocate. They never trade places with each other. My adversary at times is permitted to cause me unpleasant moments in my flesh. But because I know who my advocate is, I know the devil cannot do anything to me that my advocate and I can't handle (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Like the song says, "I thank God for the mountain. I thank God for the valley, and the storms He's brought me through. If I never had a problem, I wouldn't know that God could solve them. I'd never know what faith in His word would do."

Suffering with Jesus is encouraged. Suffering from pain is unacceptable to me. Therefore, I speak to all pain reminding it that it's trespassing illegally and I will not receive it now or ever. Don't get taken in because of your age. I have not found anywhere in the Bible that pain comes with age.

Suffering from pain is unacceptable to me. Therefore, I speak to all pain reminding it that it's trespassing illegally and I will not receive it now or ever.

God's Power Is Unlimited

Job 36:22, 23 (CEV)—*God's power is unlimited. He needs no teachers to guide and correct Him.*

Never let anyone tell you about your God. God is my Father and His love is what makes His power unlimited. He needs no teacher to guide and correct Him. We do, which is why the person of the Holy Spirit was given to us. God does not judge my sins. His Son's Word will judge them on judgment day. In the meantime, the Holy Ghost quickens my spirit when I miss it and reminds me of scripture to use to get me back on course. In fact, the Holy Ghost attempts to

**The power of God at work in us
is not just His strength.
It's His love, which is the greatest
strength in the universe.**

prevent my wrong words and deeds to avoid before I miss it. I thank God He does pick me up, but He tried to keep me from falling in the first place.

God said through Paul, He would do exceedingly, abundantly, above all we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us (Ephesians 3:20). Why? Because He is able to do it.

The power of God at work in us is not merely His strength; His power is His love, which is the greatest strength in the universe. Exercising God's love is far superior to exercising His strength. Adrenaline can cause you to exhibit supernatural strength. Exercising His love is greater than that. It keeps us out of hell and raises the dead. We were once dead in our sins and God so loved the world He gave. Imitate your Father God.

Greed, Immorality or Indecent

Ephesians 5:5 (CEV)—Being greedy, indecent, or immoral is just another way of worshiping idols. You can be sure that people who behave in this way will never be part of the Kingdom that belongs to Christ and to God.

Since God is the chief ruler or sovereign, who's domain is ruled by Him with us as His under-rulers, He is observing us in all we do. He does this to determine what part of His dominion He can trust us with. Failure to be content with what He provides for us often leads us to taking what belongs to others for our satisfaction.

Our plan ought to be for an immortal life, not a life of immorality. A life of immorality is carnality out of control.

**Life is bringing glory to God
in all we do and say.**

Women used to work at being or looking feminine. Today, the world, and far too many Christians, are aiming to look sexy, when in reality they are permitting themselves to look indecent. What idol are they worshiping? Self! Self is the number one enemy of the Believer. When we die to self and mortify the deeds of the flesh, we locate the path to life. The purpose of life is to do more than inhale and exhale. The true purpose of life is to bring glory to God in all we do and say.

When others look at us, do they see Christ or us? Paul tra-
vailed in the spirit until Christ was formed in the Church. Galatians 4:8, 9, NLT, reads, "Before you gentiles knew God, you were slaves to god's that don't even exist. Now that you have found God, I should say, now that God has found you, why do you want to go back again and become slaves once more to the weak and useless spiritual power of this world?"

Stand fast in the liberty that has made you free.

God Understands the Power of Spoken Words

Job 38:3-11 (CEV)—When the ocean was born I set its boundaries and wrapped it in blankets of thick fog. Then I built a wall around it, locked the gates, and said your powerful waves stop here. They can go no farther.

The ocean is powerful in force but it has God-made boundaries. God established its boundaries when He spoke to it. When God speaks, every living thing must obey. When you know your God and His Word, you can stop a Tsunami from occurring where you are with words.

I often slip away to rest at a favorite spot facing the Atlantic Ocean. I've been there when the ocean was calm and when the ocean roared and surged. It is exciting to observe that water and its vastness can't do what it wants. There seems to be no end to it in three directions. The huge waves come in fiercely at times, but can only come up so far on the beach before retreating. The God I serve puts everything in order according to His perfect will. He spoke the limits of the ocean, today the ocean still obeys, then we have a right to believe (Psalms 91:10) because we obeyed (verse 9).

A plague is an afflictive evil. The Message Bible reads, "Yea,

**The God I serve has put
everything in order according
to His will and His way.**

because God is your refuge, and the high God your very own home, evil can't get close to you, and harm can't get through the door. He ordered His

angels to guard you wherever you go (Psalms 91:8, 9).

This is not just talking about illness. It refers to any and everything that is contrary in your life. Israel received probation and health through keeping the law and through Abraham's blessing. How much more these are ours under grace, and the reality of the blessings of Abraham coming on me through Christ Jesus? What words are you speaking?

Out of a Storm

Job 38:1 (TM)—*From out of a storm the Lord said to Job.*

Much like Job, at times we find ourselves neck-deep in negatives. What are we saying during these times? Are we sharing what we are experiencing or are we attacking the only one in a position to rescue us?

God had enough of the words of Job and his friends. Verse 2 reads, "Why do you talk so much when you know so little?" That verse has helped me over the years to avoid speaking negatively to others as much as possible when I find it hard to sing and say "It is well." When others around are essential to what God has you doing, abstain from talking about the bad and the ugly and force yourself to only speak the good. It will not only make a difference in your attitude, it will forever change your circumstances.

Because we don't always yield to God's presence in everything, the God of peace may have to get our attention by speaking to us out of a storm. Are you going through a storm right now? Don't focus your attention on the storm or its size. Listen to hear God's voice speak a personal message to you. Talking too much, unless we're speaking to the situation, can cement you deeper in the muck and mire.

Why rehearse what you are experiencing with others without saying what God has said about your deliverance. You do not have to wait for the deliverance to manifest before you speak it. Decree and declare your victory because God has promised it.

Stop casting your pearls before swine. They will have no appreciation or respect for the jewels of your word.

Stop casting your pearls before swine. They will have no appreciation or respect for the treasure of your words.

What Are You Good At?

Job 30:18 (NLT)—*But whenever she jumps up to run, she passes the swiftest horse with its rider.*

An ostrich is not a very good example of a caring parent, yet God still allows her to conceive. In fact, scripture says, “God has deprived her of wisdom and gives her no understanding (verse 17). An ostrich has no emotions for her eggs, but she is good at what she does. In fact, no one can do it better.

You may lack the formal education and opportunities of others, but as a believer, Jesus has been made unto you wisdom, righteousness, and satisfaction (1 Corinthians 1:30). Stop looking at what you can’t do and see yourself able to do all things through Christ who strengthens you (Philippians 4:13).

**Stop looking at what you
can't do and see yourself able
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Christ who strengthens you**

God has never assigned an ostrich to go into all the world and preach the gospel. But He assigned us. It’s okay to recognize the butterflies in your

stomach, just don’t allow them to dominate you. We would not treat our young as an ostrich does, because God has not deprived us of His wisdom. He has commanded us to go in His might and strength.

I once saw a DVD of a group of ladies living in shacks in a rural town in the south. Someone saw a photograph of one of their quilts on a line in the background, and what had been their hobby became their ticket to abundance. So get up and run. Outrun everything and everyone around you, because you have Jesus and His Holy Spirit as your partners.

There's Trouble and Then There Is Serious Trouble

Psalms 107:6 (CEV)—You were in serious trouble but you prayed to the Lord and He rescued you.

This statement appears four different times in this Psalm. I believe this repetition is to emphasize how serious God is about coming to your aid in the “nick of time.” It appears that we wait until we find ourselves in desperate situations before we call out to God. Often He rescues us at the last minute whenever we humble ourselves and cry out to Him. He comes when we are half starved, parched with thirst and on the brink of exhaustion (Psalms 107:4, 5). He shows up when we’ve worked like slaves and spiritually speaking we are in the deepest darkness we have ever experienced (Psalms 107:12, 14). When

the pain is so severe we lost our appetite for food, He heals us by the power of His

Word and saves us

from destruction. When life’s storms toss us up and down until our countenance is sad, our courage leaves us, when all strength seems to have gone from us and we stagger as though we are drunk, He speaks peace to our storms and calms our sea of fear.

**God is there for us, waiting to
hear our cry for help.**

It matters not to God if it’s trouble, or serious trouble. He’s there for us, waiting to hear our cry for help. God does not get us into trouble, we arrange that. But it sure is comforting to know that He will step into the midst of our trouble with us if that is what it takes to bring us out for our benefit and for His glory.

Stop trying to endure when help is available now to deliver you. He’ll tell you when to endure.

You Don't Need A Money Management Person

Proverbs 6:6, 7 (NLT)—*Take a lesson from the ants you lazy bones. Learn from their ways and be wise! Even though they have no prince, governor or ruler to make them work.*

Our problem is that we think our harvest will last always. Everyone should understand that harvest is a seasonal thing and eating or spending all your seed gathered during harvest will result in you having nothing to plant to insure you have another harvest.

Years ago I realized the government took their tax from my gross, so I chose to tithe to the Lord's work off the same

**Joseph stored up Egypt's grain
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gross. I then decided to tithe to myself off the same gross and trained myself to live on the remainder. This way if God asked me to sow more than my tithe I was able to do so. It

did not take me long to learn God was not out to extract from me. He was trying to get more to me. Ants don't need to be told when picnic season is over. They can see that the visitors at the beach or in the park are few and far between.

I enjoy shopping as much as anyone. However, I use God's wisdom when I do so. First, I usually ask His permission. Then I check to see if I can pay it in full when the statement comes in. I never eat or spend my last seed. Joseph stored up Egypt's grain because God showed him that there would be lean years following the abundance.

Are you paying attention or are you blinded by your desires. You don't need a money manager. You need discipline. Aren't you wiser than the ant?

What A Way to Start the Day

In 1989, Clinton and I bought two time-shares in Stowe, Vermont. We paid them off the following year. We enjoyed many relaxing years there, but because they did not have Bellman service, I was considering selling them. The first time I came to Stowe alone was in 2007. I brought no family and no friends. It was just me and the Lord.

I brought food enough to not have to leave the house if I desired, and was thrilled to know they now had bellmen to assist me.

After a weekend of burning logs, writing for *Horizons Unlimited* and praying, I called for the fireplace to be cleaned out. The young

man arrived around 9:30 a.m. which was about the time I was partaking of the communion ele-

You and I just need to be sensitive to the sinners around us, and be about our Father's business.

ments. In my spirit I heard, "Ask him about his spiritual state." When I did, he sort of laughed and shared that his dad and mom were Christians but he was not. I told him he only had two choices — heaven or hell — and asked him would he not like to know he was going to heaven one day? He answered in the affirmative. I told him Christ had already reconciled him to God and he just needed to ratify that by believing by confessing Jesus as Savior, Lord and soon coming King. I knew the Lord had instructed me to stay in and spend the week in His presence, but He never told me He would not bring hungry souls for me to lead to Him.

You and I just need to be sensitive to the sinners around us, and be about our Father's business no matter where we are. What a way to start the day.

Do They Hear You When You're Not Around?

Proverbs 6:20, 21 (CEV)—*Obey the teaching of your parents. Always keep it in mind and never forget it.*

Maybe your natural parents did not share spiritual things with you, but perhaps your pastor did. I cannot tell you of the number of people who have told me that I or my late husband said something in a message that they never forgot. Years passed and they discovered that the truth of this

**Train them in truth and
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you are not around.**

teaching was still guiding them when they walked, protecting them as they slept and speaking to them when they were awake.

Sometimes I don't remember the message or the people that are reminding me of it. What does that matter if I said what the Lord told me to say? I didn't need it, His people did.

I used to think one of my sons was clueless as to what we were preaching until Clinton and I overheard a phone conversation he was having with a friend. He was sharing verbatim the messages we had preached. That is when we released him to the care and keeping of the Lord.

Pastors, don't let the message you preach or teach draw the people to you. Keep pointing them to Jesus by sharing His gospel, which is all they'll need to remember when the rubber meets their road. God will see to it that they remember the truth you shared with them. It will make them free and victorious when most needed. Train them in truth and trust the training when you are not around.

God Allows, He Does Not Cause

Romans 1:26 (CEV)—*God let them follow their own evil desires.*

Romans 1:24 (CEV)—*...God let these people go their own way.*

Romans 1:28 (CEV)—*...He let their useless minds rule over them.*

God created us all the same. He has allowed all of us to be exposed to nature and natural laws, but when we choose to ignore Him, His eternal power and character (which cannot be seen) is revealed through what He has already made. Those who know and recognize Him but fail to honor or thank Him (verse 21) will have no excuse in the day of judgment. Scripture says their thoughts are useless and their stupid minds are in the dark (verse 21).

When God permits you to go your own way, you do what you want to do and your thoughts, which are filthy, make you do shameful things with your bodies. Don't exchange the truth about God for a lie.

Women want sex with other women, which is not natural. Men behave in the same way. They stop wanting sex with women but instead they direct their strong sexual desires toward other men. The Bible said they did shameful things with each other and what has happened to them is punishment for their foolish deeds.

**God loves the homosexual
and the lesbian, but He
hates their sin.**

Mother used to say, "You can't do wrong and get by." God loves the homosexual and the lesbian, but He hates their sin. Homosexuals and lesbians, today is your day to ask God's help in turning your life, thoughts and body around. If you don't, you will pay the price and no one will be able to help you. The choice really is yours. Do it God's way or miss out.

You Can't Possess Until You Overcome

Numbers 13:30—*And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.*

There are times you have to follow your heart and not the crowd around you. Like Caleb, you may have a different spirit, one to fully follow everything the Lord asks of you, and those around you have not yet learned how to not look at what their eyes behold (Numbers 14:26). In order to overcome you must face that which comes. The only way to overcome is to acknowledge that a thing has come, then ask God's help to get you over it.

When you fail to recognize who you are in Christ Jesus, and see every circumstance as an opportunity to prove how big your God is, you will allow it to hinder you and possibly prevent you from possessing what God has both promised and planned for you. Until you face your giants of fear and doubt, with God's faith

God will never ask you to do what He is unwilling to support you in.

to do what He told you to do, you'll never possess all He has for you.

God will never ask you to do what He is unwilling to support and enable you to do. That's not an impossible expectation. Good. No word of God is void of power when you mix faith with it. Elizabeth, an old woman, conceived and so did a virgin who had never known sex with a man (Luke 1:36, 37). Jesus said nothing shall be impossible to you, even with mustard seed size faith (Matthew 10:20).

Will you believe today? To possess God's promise you must come over to God's ways.

Praying in Tongues Builds My Spirit Man

Romans 8:26—Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

For 30-plus years I have been indwelt with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues. I do not neglect praying in tongues, especially on long trips. I also pray in my understanding daily. Recently, I sensed that my daily praying with my understanding is missing an ingredient.

After you pray for those in authority, the church, the body of Christ, family and friends, where do you go from there? I believe the

Holy Spirit illumined to me the purpose for paying in tongues. He said praying in tongues will change my spirit man, so when I've covered all the bases in my understanding, God often wants me to go deeper without repetition of words. But I was not to worry or fret because after praying for all I know to pray about, the spirit of God is right there to take over, allowing prayer to be made about things I don't even know need prayer, because He is praying in and through us about what is God's will for mankind.

Yield yourselves to praying in tongues, knowing that you don't have to know what's being prayed about.

The Message Bible calls it wordless signs and aching groans (verse 27). Never dread praying because you run out of things to say too soon. Yield yourselves to praying in tongues, knowing that you don't have to know what's being prayed about. When your spirit is charged up, your spirit man has everything covered and under control. Build up your spirit by regularly praying in tongues.

Chance Doesn't Stand A Chance

Psalm 37:23 (KJV)—*The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way.*

Psalm 37:23 (NLT)—*The steps of the godly are directed by the Lord. He delights in every detail of their lives.*

Why play Russian roulette with your life? Turn it over to Jesus and be assured that wherever you are is where you're supposed to be. Strange turns may appear in the road that you often don't understand. Go with God anyway. People can't inject themselves into your life without God's approval. You know when those around you are of the Lord, even if they would not have been your selection.

Circumstances and conditions never catch God by surprise. We only need to guard what God tells us to guard. I

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can't imagine Him ordering any of my steps that are not for me to advance on. I used to feel guilty that I seldom found myself groaning in travail and pain over

things. I thought it meant I was not as spiritual as others. Unless your assignment is that of an intercessor, you may never find yourself travailing or groaning in prayer. Pray anyway. However, when you are getting results from your praying, rest in what He has called you to do. Nothing gets past God that He wants to address. The Holy Spirit knows whose assignment it is to pray. Relax and let the Holy Spirit bring to your heart who is in need of His power. Choose not to take a chance. Follow His order for your steps.

My Calling Is His Command

Romans 16:1—I commend unto you Phebe our sister,
which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea.

I so often hear people say, "This is my calling, or that is my calling." When I became a servant *to* the Lord I also became a servant *for* the Lord. Therefore I'll do whatever He asks me to do. I'll go wherever He asks me to go and I'll be whatever he wants me to be.

For this season of my life, I believe He has called me to Nanuet, New York. In fact He told me that when I wanted to divide my time

between Nanuet and where I could see a great need. He said to me, "A need is not a call. If you stay faithful to where I've called you in Nanuet,

I'll show you how to meet the need in other places." In fact He said, "I've called you to Nanuet."

**I'll go where He asks me to go
and I'll be whatever
he wants me to be.**

From Nanuet, God has met the need of thousands through the *Horizons Unlimited* publication, and *The Choice Is Yours* broadcast. His horizons *are* unlimited and all His decisions concerning His people are already made. We simply must choose today what He decided yesterday, and then we'll walk in His benefits tomorrow. I'm called to go wherever His Spirit directs me. I wear this world as a loose garment, which allows me to be free to move on with Him, totally detached from anything and anyone.

Thank God for all the comforts and conveniences He has provided. But I thank Him more that I can walk away from it all, because my calling is His command.

Take Up Your Cross Daily and Follow Me

Luke 9:23—*And He said to them all, If any man will Come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

Jesus was very serious about this commitment. He was not speaking merely of a 24-hour period. He was speaking of forever. The reason He said *daily* was because He knew

**You cannot take up
your cross until you
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deny yourself.**

many had good intentions, but He also knew that each day would present opportunities for each of us to throw in the towels and determine it's too long, ad it's too hard.

The Message Bible says,
"If you don't go all the way with me through thick and thin, you don't deserve me. If your first concern is to look after yourself, you'll never find yourself. But if you forget about yourself and look to me, you will find both yourself and me" (Matthew 10:38, 39).

We are intimately linked in this harvest work. Start where He tells you. Verse 42 reads, "This is a large work I've called you into, but don't be overwhelmed by it. It's best to start small. Give a cool cup of water to someone who is thirsty for instance. The smallest act of giving or receiving makes you a true apprentice." You cannot take up your cross until you are prepared to deny yourself. You won't lose out on a thing.

Jesus will always take the lead where His body is concerned. He only follows the Father. Make the choice to pick up your cross and follow Him.

Rejected Revelation Leads to Condemnation

Proverbs 3:5, 6—Trust in the Lord with all thine heart: and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

We have known and believed this scripture for years. Recently, when one of our Sunday School instructors was teaching on the subject “Kingdom of God Realities,” he shared how Adam’s disobedience affected the revelation knowledge he once had with God. I heard in my spirit, “When you reject revelation you fall into condemnation and that will cause you to begin leaning to your own understanding, or rejecting revelation will cause you to lean to your own understanding, which will result in condemnation. Failing to trust whole-heartedly in the Lord is to say, “I can handle the present situation better than you God, so I’ll do it my way.”

Failing to trust whole-heartedly in the Lord is to say, “I can handle the present situation better than you God, so I’ll do it my way.”

1 Corinthians 11:28 tells us to examine ourselves so we can properly discern the Lord’s body before we partake of the Communion elements, and judge ourselves so we will not be judged.

When we lean to our own understanding, God will have to condemn us, with the world, because that’s what they do all the time. But then they don’t have a God like yours that they can trust.

You Established the Boundaries!

Genesis 28:3—And God almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people.

We all know how Jacob deceived his brother Esau and cheated him out of his rights.

Like so many, Isaac relied on his physical senses instead of trusting his spirit. Isaac was old and his eyesight was dim, so he could not see.

Genesis 28:21 says that Isaac wanted to feel his son in order to determine which son he was about to bless. He

**... our five physical
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should have been suspicious because the voice was Jacob's, but the hands felt like Esau's, so he blessed him.

Scripture said he discerned him not. Isaac even went so far as to call his son near to him

so he could smell him. Again, relying on a physical sense, which confirmed for Isaac that this had to be his firstborn.

Saints, our five physical senses often deceive us, which is why we must trust the spirit within us and no one else.

Isaac did not want to believe that his wife, whom he once loved dearly, would join in a conspiracy to deceive him, but the moment they took sides loving their sons, the bond they once had was broken.

Once he blessed Jacob, he was blessed. Even he knew not to curse him for his behavior, because he'd call a curse down on himself (Genesis 27:29). Who are you trusting that's no longer trustworthy?

Jesus, The Last Adam; Not the Second

1 Corinthians 15:45—*And so it is written. The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

One of our deacons, while teaching Sunday Church School shared the revelation that Jesus was never called the second Adam, but He was called the last Adam. Because I had often referred to Him as the second Adam, I researched this further. It was true. I wonder why I concluded that He was the second Adam?

The Holy Ghost had me to keep reading. At verse 47 I had my answer. The first man is of the earth. The second man is the Lord, from heaven. It is certainly implied that He was the second Adam, but He was never called that.

**There is a big difference
in being *set* free and
being *made* free.**

Hebrews 9:28 implies a similar idea. But truth is truth, and we need to know for ourselves what scripture is saying instead of regurgitating others words.

Many well meaning people quote scripture incorrectly. Jesus said, "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free (John 8:32). Most people quote that as "truth will *set* you free. There is a big difference in being *set* free and being *made* free. If you are incarcerated, anyone with a key to your unit can set you free to once again live in the world outside. However, when you have Jesus as your savior and choose to make Him your Lord, He will *make* you free from the inside out, though your circumstances haven't changed.

I Live to Obey You

Psalms 119:88 (CEV)—*Show that you love me and let me live to obey all your commands.*

What are you living for? You are really growing when all you want to live for is to obey the Lord's words.

I hear people say "I want to live to see my children graduate from college. I want to see my grandchildren grow up. I want to travel to exotic places when I retire." The list goes on and on.

I want to live to obey all that God requires of me. I've traveled. I've seen my children and grandchildren grow up. I

**A daily trip with the Lord
anywhere he takes me is much
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cannot think of anything I thought would make me happy that hasn't been realized in my life.

What I discovered was what Psalms 119:92 says, "If I had not found happiness in obeying your law, I

would have died in misery." This has led me to vow to the Lord (verse 93), "I won't ever forget your teachings because you give me new life by following you."

A daily trip with the Lord anywhere He takes me is much more enjoyable than being with my favorite people in my favorite place. When you put all your eggs in God's basket, you will never be disappointed. I've seen the choices of godly people's children nearly rip out the hearts of their parents. This is not all bad, because when they get over the pain, they adjust their affection from themselves to God's word and vow never to put any confidence in any flesh, but become eager to do what God wants of them and commit to learn what pleases Him.

He Is Our Example

Hebrews 2:18 (CEV)—*And now that Jesus has suffered and was tempted, He can help anyone else who is tempted.*

I have no excuse for failure. I do not have to yield to the world's temptations. Lack is not allowed in my vocabulary. Because of verse 14, which reads, "We are people of flesh and blood. That is why Jesus became one of us. He died to destroy the devil who had power over death."

It is so sad to see so many defeated Christians because they do not understand that satan only has deception. He has lost all his power because of the death of Jesus. Won't you see that Jesus died so that we could live? The truth that Jesus provides for us will always eliminate, eradicate and erase the devil's deception. It is fear of death or what others will think of you or say about you that keeps you from making Godly choices?

It is fear of death or what others will think of you or say about you that keeps you from making Godly choices?

Who's your judge and who will reward you? Other believers are meant to be a blessing in your life, but if they are not trusting God and encouraging you to trust God, they are a hindrance and an anti-Christ.

Make your choice today to look only to Jesus as the example you should follow. I work at not being a stumbling block to others and most of the time I succeed. But only follow me as I follow Christ. He has done all that He needed to do to make us victorious in the earth. His next act is to come for a victorious people.

Must and Most

Ezekiel 43:10 (CEV)—*The people of Israel must suffer shame for sinning against me. So tell them about my holy temple. Let them think about it.*

Ezekiel 43:12 (CEV)—*The temple area on my holy mountain must be kept sacred! This is the most important law about the temple."*

We know these verses refer to Israel and the law that governed them. What makes us think that the grace of God has exempted us from obeying what is pleasing to God? We are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17).

Since God was not pleased with Israel's actions to keep the physical temple area sacred and must suffer shame. How much more is He expecting of us to keep His spiritual tem-

We need to stop justifying sin in our own lives, or in the lives of those we love.

ple holy, because we have His word, His grace, the Holy spirit and the name of Jesus to aid us?

If the physical temple area was the most important law that must be kept, then how can we, as believers, celebrate sin and expect to be pleasing to the holy God? Scripture says that "together we are God's temple and He will destroy anyone who destroys His temple (1 Corinthians 3:17)."

When God says the words *must* and *most*, He means it. We need to stop justifying sin in our own lives, or in the lives of those we love. Instead, teach them to take responsibility for their sin, repent not just with their lips, but with their whole heart, by showing God proper respect by being willing to suffer shame and refuse to celebrate our sin.

Only A Glorified Body

Ezekiel 43:10 (CEV)—*I the Lord said: I, the Lord came through this gate, so it must remain closed forever! No one must ever use it.*

On my many trips to Israel, I always visited the sight of the eastern gate, bricked up solid, and was told that when Jesus returns with his saints, He is going to touch down on the Mount of Olives and enter Jerusalem through this gate, and the world will know who He is and those with Him.

God required the gate to be closed forever. He never required it to be boarded up. Man boarded it up thinking that this would prevent Messiah from entering through this gate, which is the entrance predicted that He would use. They thought if He does not enter through the eastern gate, it would prove He was not the Messiah. What they fail to realize is that He and His people will have glorified bodies and nothing can prevent a glorified body from passing through anything. Did He not pass through the walls to sup with His disciples after He had ascended to His Father to deposit his blood in the Holiest of Holy?

What a glorious day that will be. Because God came through the eastern gate and commanded that it remain closed forever and that no one use it, this will not prevent Jesus and those who are like God from going through — bricks or no bricks. This excites me to want to live like Him more and more, so that I will be able to follow Him through.

Still Used; But Not for God's Purpose

Ezekiel 44a:12 (CEV)—*But because these Levites served the people of Israel when they worshiped idols, I the Lord God promise that the Levites will be punished.*

They did not stop the Israelites from sinning. Being chosen by God to teach His people to serve Him is quite a responsible position to be in. This is why there will be a greater condemnation for teachers that fail to tell the people what thus saith the Lord, they will be judged more strictly (James 3:1).

Ezekiel 44:13, CEV, reads, "I will no longer let the Levites serve as my priests or come near anything sacred to me. They must suffer shame and disgrace for their disgusting sins." They were still used, but not for God's original purpose. This group of priests now must be responsible for all the hard work done in the temple.

But look at the priests that were the descendants of Zadok (verse 15). Because

There may come a day when everyone around you may turn from serving the Lord. What will you do?

Zadok's descendants were faithful to God even when their relatives turned from Him, they were to continue to be used of God in their original responsibility. Read the rules for Priests. There may come a day when everyone around you may turn from serving the Lord. What will you do? When God assigns us to do His will, His way, we are never relieved of that. He may have to find a replacement for us in the performance, because we didn't do it, because His will must be fulfilled. But we will still be held responsible before Him for failing to obey Him. I don't want someone else to do what He gave me to do.

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