



HORIZONS UNLIMITED

Pastor Sarah W. Utterbach

REDEEMING LOVE CHRISTIAN CENTER

Insights For
Each Day

September • October • November 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

Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory

Luke 15:7—I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

No angel in heaven has ever rejoiced more than I did the Thursday before Christmas of 2007, when a caller identified himself by the name of Slim and proceeded to say, "I was in a gang. I had to murder 25 people. I robbed a bank. I have cars, money, and everything a person could want, but I'm not fulfilled. I believe I need the Lord."

I asked if he was calling to repent and be born again. His response was, "Yes." After explaining what Romans 10:9 and 10 said and asking him a few questions, I was privileged to lead him in prayer to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior and to make Him his Lord.

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I have been blessed with many gifts in my life, but putting them all together would not

have given me the joy I experienced for the next several hours. I spent a large portion of the night praying for him as the Spirit directed. The compassion that rose up in me for this young man was beyond anything I can intelligently explain to anyone else.

Luke 7:47 has been a meaningful scripture for me for more than 30 years. I saw it with different eyes after praying for Slim. My energy, my love, and my commitment to obey God in everything was renewed. Slim's salvation seems like my reward for a lifetime of service to the Lord and His Word.

Don't Get Used to It, Eliminate It

In a Christian DVD we watched, the male homeowner noticed a foul odor every time he entered the house from the fresh air of outside. Finally the wife said, "You'll get used to it after a couple of hours." The Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, "That's what happens to far too many Christians. They permit sin in their home, and instead of getting rid of it, they start to tolerate it. Before you know it, they get used to it so much so that they don't even bother to look for the cause anymore."

Psalm 1:1, 4 and 5 reads, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . The ungodly are not so. The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous."

**Far too many Christians
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tolerate it.**

Another year has been given to us to find the stink in our lives and get rid of it. It may be coming from your relatives or close friends. It may even be in your church, but it still has

to go. This is the year for choices and adjustments. No Christian wants to hurt another person, but if they fail to correct what God is against in their lives it could cause both them and you to perish.

A lady came up to me ten minutes into the New Year and said, "I want a hug. I haven't had one from you in a million years." Since neither of us is a million years old, I corrected her. I know what she meant, but I don't want her to account for her idle words. I'm watching what I say. I hope you are, too.

Still Had the Rule

Genesis 4:7 (NKJV)—*If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.*

How often does God in His mercy warn me of satan's plan, even to the point of giving us the necessary direction as to how to obtain the victory over him?

Cain had murdered his only brother, because his brother was pleasing to God. Never think those closest to you will be overjoyed by your commitment to obey God. Your foes shall be of your own household (Matthew 10:36). But even then Cain still had the rule over sin and satan. Anger, jealousy, spite, and envy are lethal weapons which usually lead to sin in one's life.

Cain could not change what he had done to his brother. However, instead of confessing his sin when God asked of his brother's whereabouts (Genesis 4:9), Cain became arrogant and belligerent in saying, "Am I my brother's keeper? I do not know."

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and envy are lethal
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Like his father, Adam, Cain lied and did not take responsibility for his behavior. It only took one generation to learn to lie. When we offer godly examples to our children, they too can quickly learn the right way. Are they seeing you consistently living for the Lord, or do they see you vacillate between God's opinion and purpose and your own?

What is our impact on the lives of those we say we love? When we live for God before our children from their youth, they will likely choose His way also.

This Was Not an Overnight Relationship

Genesis 5:24 (NKJV)—*And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*

We get very excited about Enoch being taken by God. Why did God take him? According to Scripture, Enoch pleased God for 300 years. To be pleasing to God is an indication that you obeyed Him in every area of your life and that you sought Him diligently and conferred with no one but Him.

Though Enoch had sons and daughters, he didn't permit his relatives to distract him from his full commitment to

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God. God rewarded Enoch by sparing him the pain of death. Of course, all of us would like to have Enoch's experience.

How is *your* walk with God? The term *pleased God* means to gratify entirely, well

please, be fully agreeable and acceptable to Him. I don't believe I qualify. I'm much closer than I once was, but 300 years of consistently walking with God at this level is quite an achievement.

A minister friend of mine told me the Lord spoke to her and said, "You have never obeyed me one full year." While none of us will likely stay here 300 years, can we begin to work on our testimony one year at a time?

It's My Time

The word of the Lord came unto me saying, "The year 2008 will be the greatest year of the Church since the day of Pentecost." Of course, you hear this in your spirit but your head screams, "It can't be so."

Have you ever noticed when God speaks to you, it's never loud or threatening? However, when the adversary talks, it's always loud and wrong.

"My people believe and act like James 1:25 is for them personally, and they are acting like it is so, and I am supporting them in all they do spiritually.

"Did I not say to you 'This was the year of godly choices and spiritual adjustment?' My people are seeing the emptiness of heaping to themselves stuff and things. They are finding fulfillment in what they can do for others that will bring glory to Me.

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"It has always been about benefiting man and bringing glory to God. What appears to have taken so long is being released exponentially. It's My time to do things because I see multitudes desiring to do it My way. I've always known the right things to do and the right way to go. But the distraction and attractions of the world and a spirit of greed began to influence you. Greed is a thing of the past. The need of others is My choice for you. Desire Me and deny self."

Revelation Knowledge: The Key To Being Filled

Every time I speak an additional truth to you and you receive it and act on it, you are being filled with My Spirit. I look forward to the time that you have received so much spiritual revelation concerning who I am and what I say that no word I utter to you will sound foreign to your ears, because you will have moved from hearing with your physical ears to hearing with your heart.

Those with heart ears to hear will begin to act out all that I will say to them. Speaking in tongues and operating in all the other gifts of the Spirit are good, but they always benefit others. Hearing what I reveal to you will start to benefit you in a mighty way, which will result in you being a blessing to others.

The time will come when you will clothe yourself in My Spirit and walk through the remainder of your time in the earth victorious in all things. Will you cease to experience the negatives of this world? No, but their effect on you has already lost its power and the revelation of that truth is manifesting itself in spiritual reality as you continue in your search for all of Me. Oh, how I have waited for this day!

Tradition Is Ignored When The Call Is Heard!

Matthew 4:22 (NKJV)—*And immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.*

Jewish sons did not leave their profession and the house of their father to follow anyone. You will leave anything and anyone, however, when your personal call is heard and received. Jesus simply said, "Follow Me." Andrew and Peter did it. James and John did it, and you must also do it when God's call is heard. A co-pastor of mine said that he left his family and all that was familiar, when he had a spiritual encounter with Jesus. You will, too. So get prepared to make the break.

Think about the man Saul, who later became Paul. He was high man on the totem pole among the Jews. He left family, friends, colleagues, and the traditions he had killed to uphold.

The call of the Lord on your life is stronger than any bloodline connecting you to relatives. Many conclude that a truly called Christian needs to be locked up when they first hear the call. If you have not been called, you will never understand it, and when you have been called, it matters not if anyone else ever understands it. You just know you have to go to grow. Failing to obey the call will stunt your growth. I'm speaking of spiritual maturity, not physical growth.

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I'd rather be a child in spiritual matters than a giant of a person. Nothing exceeds the value of God's call.

A Righteous Diet

Matthew 5:6—Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

When most of us hear of a good restaurant, we will make our way there for a meal even if we are not particularly hungry. Why? Because we enjoy a good and tasty meal.

Consider what is promised to you when you hunger and thirst for righteousness. The Scriptures, which cannot lie, say, "You are blessed."

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We cannot make our blessing happen regardless of how hard we work, save, or how much we accumulate. You may

say, "But I don't know how to hunger and thirst for righteousness." Enter the person of the Holy Spirit. He will help, if you ask Him to create the hunger and thirst in you.

We are trained to seek after the natural things we have been exposed to. Listen to me carefully. I have had them all, and they have no lasting value and lack in fulfillment. When I began my righteous diet, I found myself not only full, I felt at times I would explode from the joy of serving the Lord and seeing Him take care of the other stuff that I once pursued.

This past winter, we had minus two degrees temperature outside. I awakened in a comfortable bed with a one-minute commute to my office because I had listened to the voice of the Lord to move and put the condo I lived in up for sale. It sold for more than twice what was paid for it. I am blessed.

What Is Your Hurry?

Genesis 2:2 (CEV)—*By the seventh day God had finished His work, and so He rested.*

Ask yourself if you are God. Of course, we all know the answer to that question. Yet many try to operate at such a pace, they would give the impression that they think they are God. That little petty stuff we work 60, 80, or 100 hours a week to accomplish is all going to fritter away—and a lot sooner than we think.

Six days is all God needed to create an entire universe. Nothing and no one can alter anything about it without His approval. God definitely has patience. Consider all that He has tolerated from us. Just think, the One who did it all in less than one week waits for centuries for us to imitate Him.

In our impatience, we want everything yesterday.

When we receive a salary increase, do we ask God how we are to apportion it, or do we just plunge into spending it all as soon as we get it? What happened to using your faith to believe for things? When is the last time you inquired of God before you spent the money He blessed you with?

Put your brakes on, and ask the Lord to teach you His pace. Are you prepared to meet a crisis?

Slow down. What is your hurry? When what you want is from God, no one else can have it but you. What happens if unexpected emergencies occur because your spouse or children haven't learned to use their faith as a result of observing your lack of discipline?

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What Difference Does It Make?

1 John 3:1 (MSG)—*What marvelous love the Father has extended to us! Just look at it — we're called children of God! That's who we really are. But that's also why the world doesn't recognize us or take us seriously, because it has no idea who he is or what he's up to.*

While taking my laps around the sanctuary to fulfill my vow and commitment to the Lord to walk 30 minutes, 3 times a week, one of the songs I listen to while walking is *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*. One line says, "look full in His wonderful face." I began to wonder, *What does His face look like?* I heard in my spirit, "He's going to look like you! For every believer who makes it in My kingdom, Jesus will look to that person as though He was a reflection of them."

1 John 3:21, NKJV, reads, "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

What Jesus looks like makes no difference to me. Who He is matters. He has no equal.

I have heard some obviously uninformed people say they did not want to serve Jesus because He is a white man's God. When I sense His pres-

ence so full in my life, I couldn't care whether He was white, red, yellow or polka-dotted. I love to fellowship with and serve Him.

God is a spirit, without color, gender or anything else humans tend to focus on. Read Galatians 5:29. I love Him so much it would not matter what He looked like. I still want to bow in worship to Him for who He is. Jesus is the only One qualified to reconcile me to God. What He looks like makes no difference to me. Who He is matters. He has no equal.

Are You a Hypocrite?

Luke 13:15 (NKJV)—*The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"*

While most of us today don't have any oxen or donkeys, there are other things we permit that are contrary to what is acceptable and pleasing in God's eyes. We wonder why our spouse appears disinterested in what we say and do while others are enamored with us. Could it be because they see us play acting all the time? We sleep in the same bed, eat at the same table and ride together in the same car without so much as "good night" or a "good morning."

Does your spouse get excited and want to participate in anything you plan socially, but reject and refuse any spiritual thing you are impressed to do?

**Stay spiritual, and
God will deal with
the carnal.**

What's the solution? You stay steady and keep doing what God is telling you to do or to say. They will either get in their proper place or lose their place. This is not the day or year when God will continue to allow anything or anyone to hinder His plan for you. Stay spiritual, and God will deal with the carnal.

Jesus loved the Pharisees, but He did not like their double standard. He healed and did good things on the Sabbath, but was criticized by the very people who knew the rules concerning the Sabbath, yet they preferred to water an animal rather than see a person's need met on the Sabbath. God's choice is mercy, not sacrifice.

Know Any More Jokes?

I have long since reconciled myself to the fact that my 401K will one day be used to further the gospel being preached somewhere. What would I do if I retired? I love my job. In fact, I'd do it even if they didn't pay me. One day I sense I'm going to start paying them to let me do what I do best and that is to obey the call of God on my life.

Recently, while walking, I heard "You'll get to retire when I get a day off." I know the voice of God clearly. If ever I heard from Him this was it. I know not to remind God of my age as though He didn't know. Stupid I am not. When He said

I am clueless as to when Jesus is coming. But based on what the Spirit is speaking to me, He is not coming as soon as some of us would like.

that, I became excited and a little sad. Excited because He evidently has additional

work for me to do. Sad, because it would appear that Jesus is not coming just yet. Oh how I long for His appearing to take the church out of here!

When callers to *The Choice Is Yours* share that some minister they heard on the radio was predicting a date when Jesus was returning, I just tell them to forget it. Not even the Son knows when He's coming—only the Father knows. I am clueless as to when He is coming. But based on what the Spirit is speaking to me, He is not coming as soon as some of us would like. Instead of retiring, ask God to refire you to help get the job done. I already know that since He is not getting a day off, I can forget about retiring.

Let's Keep It Simple

John 6:28 (NKJV)—*Then they said unto Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"*

Sadly, far too many Christians want to be pleasing to the Lord by their efforts "for Him." Beloved, He is not impressed with what we do if we fail to obey what He says.

In John 6:29 Jesus tells His disciples, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." That removes all the stress and strain from our service to Him.

When the Lord asked us to begin teaching the Bible seven days a week at RLCC, I was overjoyed. I must admit that when the news was shared, the positive reaction from our leaders and staff was almost more than one had a right to expect. Think about it.

God is not impressed with what we do if we fail to obey what He says.

People who are loyal to their church, and rightfully so, will now have an opportunity to obtain additional teaching from God's Word without missing out on what is happening at their local assembly.

Pastors, as the Lord speaks to your heart, know that you, too, are welcome to attend our services. We know this is supernatural and those with ears to hear will be a part of it without neglecting what God has given them to do. We are beginning to experience a unity in the body of Christ again.

The Beam That Connects the Balances

Matthew 11:30 (NKJV)—“For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Years ago the Lord taught me that burden meant “invoice as with freight.” He told me He wanted His children to carry the invoice and give Him their freight and not vice versa. Today, I was impressed to look up yoke. It means *the beam that connects the balances of a scale*. Jesus is that beam

that connects us to His spiritual world, which is the only way our natural man can live a Christian life in this earthly world.

**Thank God for Jesus. He is
our beam that not only
balances our life but also
keeps us connected to that
which is spiritual.**

God left us here in the earth to affect its inhabitants for Him, while at the same time, not to become influenced and

conformed to their way of doing things. Jesus is all we need to do the work of the kingdom in the earth. It really is easy when we cease to hold on to freight the enemy tries to get us to carry.

We know any invoice that accompanies all freight is lighter than the freight itself. Turn it over to Jesus, and you will smile after a while. Thank God for Jesus. He is our beam that not only balances our life but also keeps us connected to that which is spiritual.

I am so glad to be free of all this world’s stuff. It is my privilege to serve my Lord unentangled.

Left With a Stick, Returned With Two Companies

Genesis 32:10 (NKJV)—*I am not worthy of the least of all mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.*

When Jacob left the security and comfort of his father's estate to flee the wrath of his brother, he only carried with him his staff and a promise from God. It was time to separate himself from his father-in-law because he was aware that Laban's looks were no longer favorable toward him (Genesis 31:2).

You will always know when your season with others is over.

Jacob said to God, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of

my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and your family, and I will deal well with you.' In other words, the Lord will tell you when to go and when to return. When God takes you out with nothing, your faithfulness to Him will always guarantee you both personal increase as well as what is beneficial to mankind.

Jacob returned at God's command with two armies of people and material wealth beyond expectation. How did this happen? He obeyed everything God told him to do, and God caused his increase.

Stop trying to figure out how to get what another has for your personal benefit. Bless and serve others well, and God will see that you receive everything that is due you. It's God's plan and He will fulfill it. You and I can enjoy the residue.

**Bless and serve others well, and
God will see that you receive
everything that is due you.**

His Sons Are Redeemed, Reconciled and Restored

2 Corinthians 5:17—*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

John 1:12 reads, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.” Since we have received Him, He gave us the right to become one of God’s children. We exercised that right and became redeemed from all the past sins, as well as the curse of the law, which included sickness and disease, so that all of Abraham’s blessings are made available to us.

We merely have to believe to receive them and walk a reconciled life in this earth, which Adam had before he

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disobeyed God in the garden and plunged man into temporary darkness until Jesus restored us to the Father through

Himself. We receive the benefits of this life and the life to come when we simply believe in Him.

Believing is taking the key that unlocks all the blessings, benefits and power of heaven for our use to impact the lives of others, which always brings glory to God.

We have tolerated too much of the enemy’s activities in our lives. It’s time to put a stop to it and boldly walk in the fullness of His promises. How do we equip others for their work when we neglect what is ours? We can’t preach it effectively until we live it emphatically.

Sin Takes Away Your Sparkle

Judges 13:24 (AMP)—*And the woman [in due time] bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew and the Lord blessed him.*

Samson's name in Hebrew means *sunlight*. He was born to be a reflection of God's glory. He was a result of a supernatural birth. His mother had been barren (Judges 13:2, 3). An angel visited his mother with clear instruction regarding him. So what happened? Samson, like so many of us, chose to do things his own way without any concern for others involved with him.

Sin, rebellion, and disobedience always carry with them consequences, and will take away from the luster of your God-ordained light.

Although God forgave Samson and his foolish choices, Samson never regained his eyesight and ended up dying with the people he destroyed.

This is not God's best for His children. Sure, Samson made the faith hall of fame (Hebrews 11:32), but he died too soon.

Why is that? Sin, rebellion, and disobedience always carry with them consequences, and will take away from the luster of your God-ordained light.

I recently saw a photograph of one of society's most violent and vicious murderers. That person has become a new creature in Christ and it shows. No amount of makeup or makeover can put that kind of sparkle in your face and eyes. He has been with Jesus.

Your Godly Associates Should Influence You

2 Kings 5:20 (AMP)—*But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold my master spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving from his hands what he brought. But as the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him.*

Gehazi was to Elisha what Elisha had been to Elijah. Look at the difference in the results. Elisha was single-minded in what was of real value to him. Gehazi wanted man-made garments and was greedy for gold. Elisha wanted a double portion of the Spirit's power that he had often seen working through Elijah. Because he desired godly things only, God gave him the desires of his heart.

It is sad when God permits His children to be closely involved with other godly, anointed men and women, but

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instead of taking it as an opportunity to grow spiritually, they allow carnal, non-spiritual things to influence them. As a result, they miss the window of opportunity to not just

be blessed but to be a blessing to others. Instead of taking advantage to learn from their teachers, often they attempt to take advantage of their teachers.

Respect and appreciation of the positive influences in your life will get you your own in God's due season. When you are more interested in being someone's peer than you are his or her apprentice, you short-circuit God's best for you. When you trust and wait on God, He will exalt you in time.

God: My Partner In Battle

Psalm 16:8 (NKJV)—*I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.*

Oh God, help me!" is not some last-minute plea when I find myself in some tight situations. Notice the Psalmist said, "I have set the Lord before me always."

At some point in my life, He became my choice for a life-long companion. I have no need to run looking for God's help when a challenge is looking me square in the face. I am resting in who I have become in Christ Jesus, because I made my choice and settled it years earlier.

Of course, things occur in my life that try to move me, but I say with my mouth, "I shall not be moved." I have decreed it and the subject is settled and established (Job 22:28). I shall have whatsoever I say as

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long as I believe it and permit no doubt in my heart (Mark 11:24). God is not only my partner in battle; He is also my choice in peacetime.

Always is a long time. Think about it! Always includes throughout eternity.

God is at my right hand. That represents the place of power and authority. When the adversary comes, he discovers I am not alone. He then decides I'm no fun to play with.

With Pleasure I Mentally Perceive

Habakkuk 2:3 (NKJV)—*For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.*

On Thanksgiving in 1980, the Lord gave me this scripture in a meeting in New York City. I never had to memorize it. It seemed to have jumped off the page and lodged in my heart. It became the foundation from which RLCC was built and launched.

The vision spoken of here means to contemplate with pleasure what I could perceive or dream. Everything the Lord

God has supported everything He has authorized us to do because we would not compete with others or get ahead of His timing for us.

has asked us to do as a church, we have obeyed it with confidence, because we waited for God's timing and His dream. Failing to wait for God and for His dream could

result in a nightmare for you when you allow your impulses to dictate your service for the Lord.

God has supported everything He has authorized us to do because we would not compete with others or get ahead of His timing for us. It appears at times that we are not doing as much as others. But the Lord adjusted my thinking when He said, "You are only going to get credit for what I told you to do anyway." Now I do my part as directed by Him and enjoy sweet sleep.

God Is a Covenant— Keeping God Forever

1 Kings 8:23—*And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart.*

This was Solomon's prayer of thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness to bless Solomon in all his effort for Him.

I experienced a joy today that I can't explain in English. My heart is full to overflowing.

We deposited and purchased CDs equivalent to 23 weeks of the 80 thousand dollars a week God instructed us to call in about a year ago. The Lord never told us how it would come. He just told us to faithfully call it in. This arrived over and above the money from the people who have provided through tithes and offerings. We did not build a physical altar as a memorial, but we made a deeper commitment of faith in God to perform all that He promises.

God never tells us to do something without a purpose.

God does not lie and cannot fail. He is a covenant-keeping God forever. He never tells us to do something without a purpose, so we are rejoicing with anticipation for what He is about to do. Folks, if God is asking you to do something, just say it and believe it. If you are faithful to obey, you will see the fruit of your words come to pass.

Heavenly Father, once more You have validated our trust in You. You are a covenant-keeping God.

Demon Power Is Limited; God's Power Is Not

Romans 5:20 (MSG)—*All that passing laws against sin did was produce more lawbreakers. But sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call grace.*

There is no question in my mind that demonic activity is increasing worldwide. Rejoice, brothers and sisters, because that assures us that God's goodness and His grace is increasing much more. Another way of saying the above scripture is, "But where sin abounded, grace does much more abound."

Never forget that the devil may be mighty in his doings, but our Heavenly Father is the Almighty and there is no God in all the universe like Him. He does not draw us to follow

Him and then abandon us once we're completely dependent on Him. Those who follow the devil and his ways seem to flourish for a season; then like the summer flower, they fade and go away.

**Do not ever allow yourself
to think that anything or
anyone is bigger or
greater than our God.**

Now I know why I've never liked to receive cut flowers. They, like the devil, don't last, because they have been separated from their source of life.. We can never be separated from our God. Hallelujah! He set it up that way to give us the hope we need for the substance of our faith.

Do not ever allow yourself to think that anything or anyone is bigger or greater than our God. We can sing it, shout it, preach it, and declare it because it is so.

He Will Deliver Thee!

Daniel 6:16—Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

The King was not asking Daniel a question. He was decreeing and declaring something. While he could not prevent Daniel from entering the lions' den because the law of the Medes and the Persians was that no decree nor statute, which the king established, could be changed (verse 15).

Without realizing it, the king made a new law that superceded the previous one,

which made him sore displeased with himself (verse 14). He was specific about who was going to deliver Daniel. He said, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver Thee."

God is always working everything together for our good.

God is always working everything together for our good. Here God was using the king's words to give him loyal permission to spare Daniel.

A similar experience in the book of Esther occurs, though the king could not change the law, Haman tricked him into writing against the Jews. Since the king had given Esther Haman's house at his death, she could make a new law as "she liketh" concerning saving her people, which she did without jeopardizing the king's word (Esther 8:8).

Are We Decreeing and Declaring?

Job 22:28—Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

This is a part of my daily confessions. Since I began declaring this, the illumination of His word in similar areas almost jumps off the pages to me. Scriptures like “The works that I do you shall do and greater works because I go to my Father” (John 14:12).

It’s true the servant is not greater than the Master, but the Master said we’d do greater works than He did—not because we are better or more empowered, but because we are more in numbers. He was limited to the area He lived in. We are

**Check up on what
you’re saying because
that is what you are
going to have.**

all over the world. We won’t do better *quality*, but we will do more in *quantity* if we just believe in Him and follow His lead.

All of Psalm 16 gets me revved up, but verse 8 especially lights the Holy Ghost fire in me. Daily I quote, “I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”

Folks, I decree this and I’m seeing it re-established constantly and consistently in my life. You can also! Check up on what you’re saying because that is what you are going to have. Are you saying what you believe, or are you believing what you say? One will get you the desired victory and freedom; the other will keep you in the bondage you are experiencing.

A Little Sin Will Spoil a Whole Life

1 John 1:9—*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

I have shared with you what the Holy Ghost spoke to me a few years ago. “Sin” means “stop it now.” Sin comes in many forms. It is not always what we call the “biggies.” It can be worry, dependency on medicine instead of on God, or many other things. We need to retrain ourselves to depend only on God.

For instance, I never use an alarm clock to wake me up. If I need to get up at a particular time, I simply tell my body what time I want it to wake up and it obeys me. I never oversleep.

I don’t worry about anything ever. Worry, as far as I am concerned, is a type of sin. I once heard a man of God tell how he told God he could not be a Christian if he could not worry. He said all the illumination he had been getting from God’s word

A little sin will spoil your life because it will begin to eat away at your relationship with Him.

suddenly went dark to him. How are you going to operate in the faith that pleases God and worry at the same time?

Since faith pleases God, worry has to displease Him. Anything that displeases God is sin. A little sin will spoil your life because it will begin to eat away at your relationship with Him. Sin will spoil your life. Stop it now!

Laugh Your Way Through It

Proverbs 17:22—*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: But a broken spirit drieth the bones.*

Now I understand why cartoons and movies have changed so. Years ago I made a choice never to look at violent movies or brutal and sad stories. They affect the marrow in the bones. When God asked me to give up television, plays and movies, I agreed because He knew the industry's plan to go with what the world calls "reality." He wanted to protect my health and teach me to keep a happy heart.

Proverbs 12:25 reads, "Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad." Proverb 15:13

If your body comes under attack, visit a pet store and watch the kittens and the puppies play. You'll laugh until you're healed.

says, "A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance (face) but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken."

If your body comes under attack, visit a pet store and watch the kittens

and the puppies play. You'll laugh until you're healed. Of course, this is only until you learn God's Word on healing. The last thing you want to do when the devil tries to get you to receive his sickness and disease is turn on the TV to watch things that stifle your laughter.

Abbott and Costello's silliness is much better for you than the Three Stooge's violence. Instead of manmade medicine with its cost, go to the zoo and watch the monkeys. Some zoos are free.

Feed your spirit with God's Word and then resist fear by choosing to laugh because your victory is assured through Jesus Christ.

You Can Make Your Own Banquet

Proverbs 15:15—*All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.*

Affliction of your body is of the evil one. Calvary made it possible for you to be free of pain and suffering and remain that way. We must learn to guard our heart, for out of it come the issues of life (Proverbs 4:22).

One of the words for “issues” is “deliverance.” It means “going forth or going out.” It’s not what goes into a man that defiles him, but what proceeds out of him.

Jesus was declaring all food clean when He said whatever enters a man

from the outside cannot defile him because it does not enter his heart but his stomach and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods (Mark 7:18, 19). Not to perceive this is a clear indication of a heart without understanding. A heart void of understanding suggests one is unintelligent, wicked, and foolish at worst.

See *Strong’s Concordance* in the Greek #801. Remove yourself from being around negative people or people who choose to speak or watch things that rob them and you of a joyful heart. Instead of taking medicine, be relieved of aches and pains with God’s Word.

Make your own banquet. Feast only on what makes your heart glad. Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.” Never attend a church where your heart is not made happy by truth. Condemnation is not for the people of God. Make your own banquet. Assemble with happy hearts.

**Make your own banquet.
Feast only on what makes
your heart glad.**

The Right to Yourself: The Essence of Sin

We know the *Do Not's* of the Bible and the Ten Commandments. Every man born in this world and especially in this country knows that murder, adultery, and robbing a bank are wrong.

There are times people allow themselves to be influenced by others and things like drugs and alcohol. Wrong influences lead to a path ending with negative consequences.

There is a sad belief that often says, "I can beat the wheel." Very few ever do. I used to work in a drug rehab center. Never did I ever hear one user say, "I intentionally started using drugs to become an addict." Every one of them thought they could play and not have to pay the piper.

If they understood that Jesus had already paid the price for them to walk in the liberty He provided, they would not foolishly say, "I have a right to do with my body what I want." No, you don't.

Jesus bought us back from the devil as He hung on the tree at Calvary. His desire is for us to willingly submit to His leadings. When we fail to receive Him and to take up our

**You belong to Christ whether
you receive Him or not.**

cross daily and follow Him, we begin to operate in the essence of sin, which is nothing more than

arrogance. It is foolish to believe that you can know more about what you need than God does. That is faulty thinking to believe that you have a right to yourself. You belong to Christ whether you receive Him or not.

Do They See Jesus When They See You?

Acts 1:8—But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth.

That means anywhere and every place I go, Jesus' reflection should be seen in and on me. I can vaguely remember the Sarah that existed before I received the Holy Ghost.

I have always known of what Jesus could do, but because of my own deficiency I never told anyone. Once the Holy Ghost took over my life, I became a walking epistle. Everyone who knew me could see I was different. Sure, I would tell of what Jesus could do, but without one word, my family and friends could see a sermon as I demonstrated the change in my life.

Anyone who is a believer can tell about the activities of Jesus on behalf of others. But He said the Holy Ghost had the power to make us like Him. People will come to Christ faster when they can see you live your sermon than when you preach one. Until we become the message, others will not be convinced of Him.

The best salesman in the world is the one who uses what he sells. When we *become* the fruit of His Spirit, people will know the kind of tree we come from. Do they see Jesus when they see you? They should. The Holy Ghost's power makes it possible.

The best salesman in the world is the one who uses what he sells. When we *become* the fruit of His Spirit, people will know the kind of tree we come from.

The Right Kind of Help

Exodus 18:21 (NKJV)—*Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens.*

When Jethro said this to Moses, he wanted to help with the obvious work Moses was called to do. Many attempt this without doing the previous verse.

Exodus 17:20 says “And you (Moses) shall teach them the statutes and laws and show them the way in which they must walk and what they must do.” This is a very important consideration in the selection of the right kind of help. Many want to be selected for service, but they do not want to want to submit to the requirements for selection.

Are you willing to seek the Word of God first? Are you willing to follow the pastor as he or she follows Christ?

Are you able? Do you fear God? Are you truthful? Do you hate covetousness? Will you accept ruling over ten or fifty or do you want to start with the thousands

and the hundreds? Are you willing to seek the Word of God first? Are you willing to follow the pastor as he or she follows Christ?

You must learn the right way first. How good are you with godly instructions? The right kind of help submits to all of this and is willing to wait for God’s due season to exalt them. Selah.

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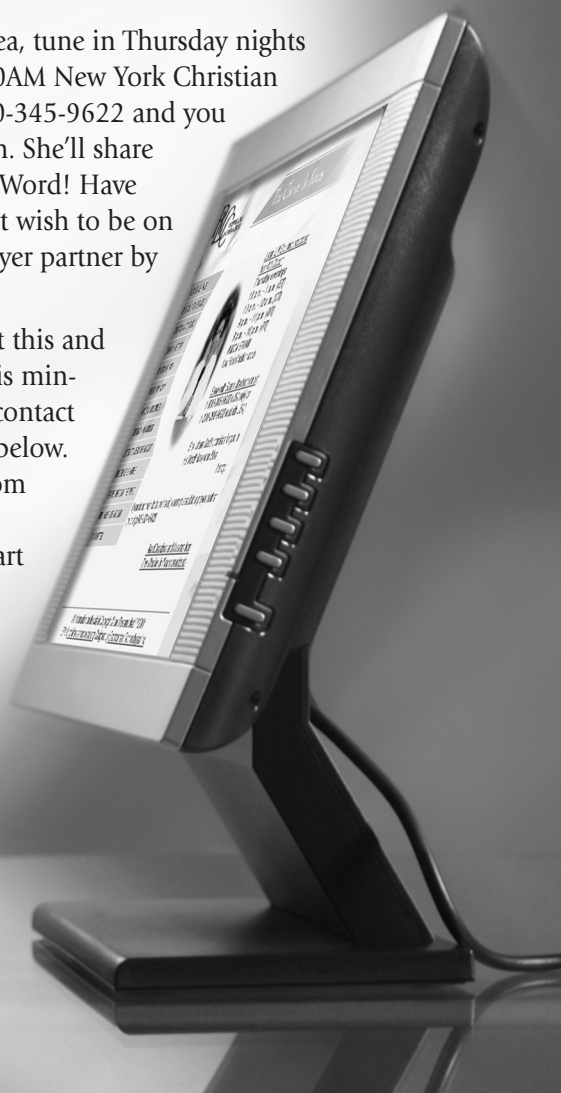
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If God Asks You To Meet a Need, He Will Supply It

Exodus 17:4 (NKJV)—*So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!"*

When you don't know how to meet a need, cry out to God. He will instruct you as to what to do, then tell you how He will go before you to make the provisions (Exodus 17:5, 6). Unless you are on an ego trip (**Edging God**

Out) you can save yourself a lot of grief by consulting with the Lord before you make a move.

You can save yourself a lot of grief by consulting with the Lord before you make a move.

I remember when our church needed a

facility of our own. I refused to run all over looking for a building. I said to my husband, "These are not my people. I did not ask to be their pastor. This was all God's idea, and now He will have to provide a home for them."

After all of his running around with our then-attorney, it was a member who told him of the Coach Light Dinner Theater, which is now the home of RLCC. The Church in the Pocono's came as a result of a member on her way home noticing a "For Sale" sign being put up at the moment she drove by. This was 82 miles from the Nanuet facility.

God gifted me with decorating what He provides. I never look for what He needs or wants. He wanted a church in Nanuet and another in the Pocono's, so I stayed out of His way until He was ready to reveal their locations.

Don't try to help God until He asks for it. After He provides, just be obedient to do what He tells you to do.

Give Caesar What Is His— Just Don't Use God's

Matthew 22:17 (NKJV)—*"Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"*

Because the Pharisees were trying to test the Lord, He called them wicked and hypocrites. There is no question that failing to pay your taxes could result in the tax man not only coming for you, but also he can and will tie up your assets and in some instances confiscate them.

Think about it. The taxman can and will change his rate as he wills. God does not change anything once He declares and establishes it. He has never required more than a dime on every dollar you make. He'll receive whatever you are impressed to do over and above that, but He will always receive it to your

advantage and allow you to measure the amount of His blessings (Luke 6:38).

You don't get one additional thing when your taxes increase. In fact they

don't even ask your permission or how you'd like it spent. God receives from us not to extract from us, but to get more to us.

I owe no man anything but to love him. Since you say you love God, show that love by giving Him what is His and watch His blessing run you down.

I like God's method more. I owe no man anything but to love him. Since you say you love God, show that love by giving Him what is His and watch His blessing run you down. Caesar takes all he can. God wants us to freely give only that which is His unless we want more of what He freely has. You decide.

God and Man Working Together To Win

Exodus 17:11—*And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.*

Joshua is such a model of the right kind of help. Imagine your leader telling you to select men to go fight the enemy while he remained in the safety of the top of the hill (verse 9).

Joshua did as he was told, because he clearly understood his role and support to Moses. Moses was old now, and he could no longer fight alongside of Joshua. However, he could do his part, which was to obey God by taking with him his rod. When Moses' arms grew tired and the human side of him responded, the dropping of his hands gave the enemy the advantage.

It was wisdom to roll a stone in place for Moses to sit on. Then his brother and his friend each assumed the position and responsibility of holding his unsteady hands up. Their

**When you are on a team you
play as a team for the
purpose of each person
doing his part for the whole.**

only interest was to help their side win the fight, not who was assigned to do what.

When your team wins, everyone is a winner. The same is true when your team loses.

It doesn't matter how well you performed. When you are on a team, you play as a team for the purpose of each person doing his part for the whole. Though God was invisible in this fight, it was God who helped Moses' arms to stay up by providing Aaron and Hur.

Are you doing your part? Let the fighters fight, and let the leaders lead. Will you support your leader by holding up his or her hand?

Transaction of Will

2 Timothy 4:6 (NIV)—*For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure.*

When Paul shared this with Timothy, he was preparing his spiritual son to carry on after Paul's death. I believe there is a place in God where you and I can die to self and all we thought important to us personally.

God once permitted me to go through an experience that taught me to find my value to Him. I learned my own commitment to His service and expectations.

I had to die to my will and become willing to pay the price of being

alone without knowing a day of loneliness. I have some of the most beautiful praise and worship music, along with many anointed messages on my iPod, and for them I am grateful. But a time came when I only wanted to hear the voice of the Lord speaking to me directly. For weeks, I was able to rejoice, praying in tongues and listening to what He was saying to me.

I don't sense that the time for my physical departure has come yet. However, I am ready whenever He's ready. I have crucified my flesh. I have died to sin. My affection is set on things above. In other words, there has been both a transaction and a transition of my will. I am prepared to do and say whatever is pleasing to the Lord. What else is there to live for?

I have crucified my flesh. I have died to sin. My affection is on things above. In other words, there has been both a transaction and a transition of my will.

It's a New Day!

Joshua 10:14—*And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.*

This may have been the case concerning Joshua speaking to the sun and the moon, the day they stood still and stayed in place when he spoke. But a new day has come when the children of God are beginning to walk in their authority. They are speaking what is needed for them to experience liberty and to live a life of victory, as they should.

Joshua did not ask for God's assistance here. He said to the sun and the moon what he needed of them to win the

A new day has come when the children of God are beginning to walk in their authority. They are speaking what is needed for them to experience liberty and to live a life of victory, as they should.

battle he was fighting at that time. It's time for us to begin to thank God for who He has made us to be. I believe that is what Joshua

did before he spoke to the sun and the moon. What is proceeding from your mouth? Speak what you need for whatever your situation or circumstance may be.

God wants us to establish such a relationship with Him that we know beforehand what we can have. The supernatural happens for us when we decree and declare it!

Folks, it's a new day and God is supporting us in it. It's not a new way. Joshua did it already. It's new for us.

Let It Be Known This Day That Thou Art God

1 Kings 18:36—And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

God is once again about to reveal Himself in and through His people to distinguish and determine those who are His and those who are not. The body of Christ is allowing their denominations to fall by the wayside, and beginning to accept the teaching of the Bible as the way to go.

One lady I know of went to her priest and told him she had seen some things in the Bible that she never knew and asked, "Why have you not taught this to me?" The bondage of fear is broken over God's people. They want to know truth.

In John 8:31 and 32, Jesus told those who believed on Him, "If you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

This was not just meant for the Jews; it is for everyone, regardless of race, religion, or anything else that seeks to divide us.

Unity of spirit and one God is our war cry. Our God will be known this day that He is the only God and Jesus is the only way to Him.

Many, like myself, were not taught enough of anything to require it to be rooted out. We are like blank pages. As a result, the Holy Spirit can write His truth on our hearts, which makes us free.

You Can't Outsource the Holy Ghost

Greed has caused an unprecedented number of once proud U.S. manufacturers to have their products made in other countries because the labor is so cheap—but, I'm sorry to say, so is the quality of what is being made. It's been subtle, but our standards and expectations for quality are almost non-existent anymore.

We don't make many purchases anymore with the expectation for it to be an heirloom for those we love. "Give it to me yesterday and replace it when it no longer functions" is the prevailing attitude of today's buyers. We spend *more* for things that don't last beyond

**Our God, His Son, and
His Spirit, cannot be
outsourced, duplicated
or substituted.**

the warranty. Forget about using our faith to believe God to heal us, fix that which is broken, or to provide for our every need.

In many instances, we act as though our God is no

more than a figurehead we acknowledge occasionally. Our God, His Son, and His Spirit, cannot be outsourced, duplicated, or substituted. They are still the original and have no intention of changing. They neither tarnish, corrode, nor wear out.

I'm so glad I was introduced to and provided with the real thing. The churches I grew up in were merely religious social clubs. We did a lot of fun things, but we were spiritually deprived people. God help all the Christian leaders who have neglected to equip the saints to do warfare with the devil. James 3:1 says, "There is a greater condemnation on them." They need your prayers.

The Darkness of Disobedience

Ephesians 2:2 (AMP)—In which at one time you walked [habitually]. You were following the course and fashion of this world [were under the sway of the tendency of this present age], following the prince of the power of the air. [You were obedient to and under the control of] the [demon] spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience [the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God].

We didn't even know just how much darkness we were in before we permitted the light of God's Word to enter in to lead the way. We all once lived and conducted ourselves in the passions of our flesh.

It is so important to recognize that without self-discipline, as orchestrated by the Holy Ghost, we could once again find our

behavior governed by our corrupt, sensual nature. To obey the impulses of the flesh and the thoughts of the mind is to yield to cravings dictated by our senses and our dark imaginings (verse 3).

In discovering the purpose of God for my life, the light came on. Constant feeding on His Word keeps the illumination coming.

In discovering the purpose of God for my life, the light came on. Constant feeding on His Word keeps the illumination coming. I even enjoy traveling in my car more from dawn on because I don't enjoy darkness of any kind. Darkness may help develop pictures, but it will never aid the people of God in finding their way.

Are You Religiously Content or Spiritually Enlightened?

Luke 19:43, 44 (NIV)—*"The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."*

Have you ever returned home, only to find that you had a surprise visit from someone you would love to have seen?

While we should be able to sense the return of the Lord, He said He would be coming unannounced for His people.

So the message should be, "Stay ready!"

We have become so religiously content that we're imitating the world's way of doing things.

The visitation of the Lord for His Church reminds me of when our schoolteachers wanted more money. Parents did not want to pay additional

tuition. We chose to close the school rather than to take more money intended for the spreading of the Gospel to keep the school open. Some parents still owe the ministry back tuition and they wonder why they aren't getting ahead in both the natural and the spiritual.

In that situation, all of us missed a window of opportunity to impact the lives of our young people. Look around at the churches today. We have become so religiously content that we're imitating the world's way of doing things.

When you become spiritually enlightened, you can't settle for a social gospel or user-friendly worship of the Almighty.

When God Says 'No'

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV)—*For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

The promises of God are always yes. However, when we fail to say "amen" or "so be it" to what has already been said, God will say "no." As a believer, where do I get the audacity to say no to what God has already said yes to?

As a believer, where do I get the audacity to say no to what God has already said yes to?

I was once told by the Lord not to pray for someone. I did not understand that, but I obeyed. The person died, and the devil tried to tell me if I had prayed, death would not have occurred. I knew what God said to me, so I would not receive the condemnation satan tried to give me.

I continued to believe the Lord, and finally He began to speak to me and say, *"If you had prayed as in the past, I would have had to heal him. But because he would not keep his faith activated to maintain his healing, and permitted himself to doubt My Word and to drift over into disobedience, I did not want your faith to become affected by his continual unbelief. I said, 'No prayer.' My promises were still yes, but he did not believe Me. He did not believe that in My Son, Jesus, every promise to His Body was settled with amen to that promise. Unless and until My people conclude My promises with 'so be it,' they fail to operate their faith. 'So be it' is the same as saying 'according to your faith be it unto you.'*

"I carry some for a while, but after you have experienced My promises, I expect you to believe Me."

Why Do You Want To Be Healed?

Matthew 20:32 (NKJV)—*So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"*

Notice, Jesus did not ask, "What do you want Me to do to you?" They responded spiritually. They did not ask Him to heal them of their physical blindness. They requested that their eyes be opened!

That is what is needed in the Church today. Eyes need to be opened to what is important to God. Most of us have the optical organs intact, but do not know that our spiritual eyes need to be opened. There is none so blind as one who will not see. Instead of praying and seeking the Lord to open their eyes as to how best to be able to follow Him, prayer lines are filled with people who want eyesight to see things that will hinder them from seeing Him better.

There is none so blind as one who will not see.

Of the many healings in the New Testament, it is recorded that those who were healed then followed Him. That is not the case in

the Church today. The Lord demonstrated His compassion to both covenant and non-covenant people. Covenant people of the Old Testament understood. They left Egypt whole, with not one feeble one among them.

Compassion was demonstrated in the New Testament to attract people to Christ in order to imitate and follow Him. Because the Lord has chosen to have mercy and pity on whom He will (Romans 9:15), our prayer should be for Him to open our spiritual eyes in order to better see Him and to follow Him.

And Moses Blessed Them

Exodus 39:43 (NKJV)—*Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses blessed them.*

Obeying what God commands carries with it a tangible blessing. When God commands a thing, He is not suggesting, requesting, or implying it to be done. He is charging you or bidding you to do it the way He said it is to be done.

I've always sought to do everything I put my hands to with excellence. Whether

God charged me or bid me to do it or not, I want it done right; I want it done well.

There was a term I used in the business world that I've carried over into my spiritual dealings. It's called, "First time final." When you do something right the first time, there is no need to repeat and review. I call it "pride of authorship." This is a standard you set for yourself.

Exodus 39:43 says, "And Moses blessed them." How many blessings have we missed because of our failure to do a thing right and as unto the Lord?

Money can never be the reason for excellence on your part. Money is a reward, not a motivation. Do it right the first time, and you will be blessed.

Money can never ever be the reason for excellence on your part. Money is a reward, not a motivation.

God Never Insists on Obedience

Exodus 40:32 (NKJV)—*Whenever they went into the tabernacle of meeting, and when they came near the altar, they washed, as the LORD commanded Moses.*

One of the truths we must embrace is that Christians, under grace, have been liberated through Jesus from ceremonies and rituals, which the children of Israel were and are still required to do, unless or until they receive Jesus as their Messiah.

God very clearly wrote what we are to do. However, at no time does He make us do it. We must obey Him out of our love and respect for who He is.

God loves us enough to share with us the consequences of disobedience.

If the Lord *made* us do what He has charged us to do, everyone would be saved, healed mentally and physically, and prosperous in every area of life. You and I know that, unfortunately, this is not the

case. It should be, but it is not at this point.

If God insisted that we receive His truth and then did what was necessary to ensure we do it, He would have mechanical robots for children and not people who obey because of their appreciation of Him.

Of course, He loves us enough to share with us the consequences of disobedience. The Holy Spirit would have to fail at His job, which will never happen, if He did not tell us the truth concerning consequences. In this dispensation of grace, we lie when we say “we didn’t know.” We just have to stop trying to take the wheel and follow as the Lord directs.

Truth or Consequences

When I was much younger, there was a program called *Truth or Consequences*. Many of us gambled on not ever having to deal with the consequences when we did not embrace the truth. In life, however, there is no such choice. We act as though we can reject truth without consequences. The truth is, failure to receive God's truth will result in consequences. There is no getting around it.

The truth is, failure to receive God's truth will result in consequences. There is no getting around it.

We need to teach and preach more on what the consequences are for disobedience. I believe we could eliminate many of the "semi luxury hotels" we call prisons if instead of experiencing the consequences of our actions, we stopped being rewarded for our behavior. Some, not all, of the repeaters in the penal system return because they live better in jail than they do in the street, without the responsibility and stress of working for the comforts they enjoy.

Somehow, we need to be able to distinguish between a repentant heart and a hardcore, rebellious person. Yes, Jesus died for mankind, but He still gave us the Holy Spirit to be able to discern good from evil. Instead, we operate in prejudice and personal preference, which never exercise fairness.

Crime has increased because lawbreakers have lost their respect for the lawmakers. The law book written to govern my life is the Bible. I know who wrote it.

Tradition Charges the Innocent and Frees the Guilty

Matthew 27:15 (NKJV)—*Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished.*

The sad thing about tradition, and what has become the custom, is that fairness and truth are often set aside for what is popular.

A word of the Lord came unto Pilate through his own wife to “have nothing to do with that just Man.” Influenced by the opinion of the crowd against Jesus due to envy, Pilate set

free a notorious criminal, Barabbas.

**The only tradition I permit
in my life now is to be debt-
free and to strive to love
everyone as Jesus did.**

You don’t get to be notorious by one incident or an accident. I know of notorious criminals whom Jesus has

touched and changed their lives. Today they are joyously serving Him. But He did not do it at the expense of the innocent. Pilate was only able to set Barabbas free. Jesus makes *you* free. The difference is, one is released from a man-made cell and the other is released from himself.

Although I’ve never spent a night in a jail cell, (not because I was always innocent—I just did not get caught and charged), I had many days in a self-made prison because I had not yet been delivered from the traditions I allowed in my life.

The only tradition I permit in my life now is to be debt-free and to strive to love everyone as Jesus did. I don’t want that gooey, mushy kind of emotion I once called love anymore. It’s painful and it doesn’t last.

Stretch Forth Your Hand

Luke 6:10 (NIV)—He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored.

Do you have a word from the Lord commanding you to do what is seemingly the impossible? Do it now! If you get an audible voice spoken down in your spirit or a still, small voice on the inside of you, great. But don't let that be the only way you will receive from the Lord.

I have discovered that I can simply believe what He inspired to be written and get the same results. Faith to obey is the key to what you need in the natural. The man with the withered hand had to attempt the impossible at the word of the Lord. When he did, what couldn't happen, did happen.

Dream the impossible dream and begin to act like it is so. When you do, you'll see your dream inspired by God's Word coming true.

You can't stretch forth a withered hand on your own, but you can do it by faith and watch the manifestation occur. It does not matter what you need. Dream the impossible dream and begin to act like it is so. When you do, you'll see your dream inspired by God's Word coming true. Just don't utter what others have said about your situation—only believe.

But if what He says to you is received today by faith, what do you have to lose? Stretch forth your faith.

You Are Only As Good As Your Faith

It always amuses me that people will board a plane with no proof that a pilot is in the cockpit, take a seat, strap themselves in securely and not only expect to take off, but to reach their faraway destination and land safely. Yet they are challenged by the idea to trust God for what He has promised them in His Word.

I believe I can fly a plane. So can you. It's in the area of landing safely where we'd need some training and experience. In checking the record, I have lots of training and experience in trusting God to have me exactly where He wants me to be any and all the time.

Why am I so convinced of this? Because He said my steps are ordered by the Lord (Psalm 27:23). I like the NIV version of this. It reads, "If the Lord delights in a man's way, He makes his steps firm." We just need to make it our priority to learn what makes God happy. In case you didn't know, without faith it is impossible to please God.

You are only as good as your faith, because God does not look for anything else in us. When we have faith in Him, we are obedient to all His words. No one will have to prompt you to give or serve, worship or trust.

Since you and I can't prove to anyone we are saved, why can't we receive and take whatever else He has said? It's all by faith. I don't have to prove it. I just have to believe it. You too.

We Always Have A Way Out

2 Corinthians 4:8 (MSG)—*We've been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we're not demoralized; we're not sure what to do, but we are sure that God knows what to do.*

We're much harder on ourselves than the Lord is. That's because we would like to see ourselves as perfect, never making the same mistakes we see in others. The Lord sees all of our weaknesses, faults and failures. But I have found that He accepts and uses us anyway. He knows when we need to sleep and when we need to pray (Matthew 10: 26-45).

Some information was recently shared with me that I really had no need to know. Inwardly, I made a vow to never repeat it. I did good for several days. Suddenly, one day I heard myself saying it to others that had no need to know it. I cannot tell you the condemnation I heaped on myself. The devil had me for a moment thinking, "You blew it now! Jesus cannot trust you to keep your vows."

I was at a loss and allowed a moment of despair to enter. Yet the Holy Ghost is so kind. He reminded me of John 1: 9 and told me simply to repent and not to be so confident that I can't miss it anymore. I repented for both repeating what I heard and for being so spiritually cocky.

The very next day the Lord awakened me with eleven entries for the magazine. I had not lost it. But because He forgave me immediately, like He did His twelve disciples who failed to stay awake (Matthew 26:46), I know now I need to ask His help daily.

Bridle Your Tongue

James 1:26 (NIV)—*If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.*

Have you ever been hit between the eyes with the Word of God? This verse clobbered me real good. The Lord spoke to me several years ago about significantly cutting down my time socializing with people, and I did. Now I understand why. He knew I needed additional discipline in learning to control my tongue. He wanted me to learn how to be with people and yet not take on things they speak around me and repeat them.

Today I get it! He gave me the formula I am to use without having to isolate myself totally. He said when something is spoken in my hearing that I do not need to know, at that very moment I hear it, I need to ask the Holy Ghost to help me to never utter it. He also said to do it out loud so that both the devil and the person that shared it will know that I am serious about my relationship with the Lord. It is not worthless and unprofitable to do so; plus, it will help the other person to learn to watch what he or she is saying.

We have no real idea how our so-called innocent conversations can be used to contaminate others. All words have creative or destructive power. There are no courses in learning to bridle our tongues. It is a discipline of the fruit of the Holy Spirit that we can request from Him. Class has begun.

Are You Waiting To Be Convinced by God?

Ephesians 4:22 (NLT)—*Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.*

God never tries to convince anyone to obey Him or to admit that He is right. He lets His Word speak for itself. Think about it. Since God cannot lie, He never makes a mistake. His Word has the power in it to make itself reproduce.

God is not like your buddy, with whom you can either choose to agree or to disagree or ignore. When God speaks, every believing ear hears and wants to obey. Uncontrolled and undisciplined flesh defies everything that is good and godly. We are foolish enough to say at times, "Well, God knows my heart." He sure does, and His Son declares that every kind of evil has its root in the heart of a man.

Of course, we know that the Lord is not speaking of a renewed heart that is continually being renewed. Ephesians 4:23 tells us that to renew anything, especially our minds, means a complete makeover has to occur.

When we are told to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, it is another way of saying, "Think and act like God." This means we need to regain our senses and recover ourselves from the drunkenness of rebellion and unbelief.

Romans 12:2 reads, "We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds." That's an ongoing process. When we become renewed in the spirit of our minds, we have taken steps towards the renewing process.

How To Know When Someone Is Anointed

Hebrews 1:9 (NLT)—*"You love justice and hate evil. Therefore, O God, your God has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else."*

This was speaking of Jesus, God's Son, regarding His superiority to angels. This verse answered several questions I had as I observed gifted and talented people who seemed at times to have an anointing on them.

Jesus always loved what was right and hated what was wrong. Humans don't always do that. Too often we cover up and overlook, especially with our loved ones, what is wrong,

**I don't want to lose the
anointing on my life
because of wrong choices.**

instead of hating it. We justify it by saying, "I don't condone it, but I'm not going to permit it to come between my child and me, or my spouse and me."

Jesus said in Matthew 10:37, (MSG), "If you prefer father or mother over me you don't deserve Me. If you prefer son or daughter over me you don't deserve Me." Jesus kept His anointing all the time because He was single-minded in His love for His Father and hated everything (not everyone) that was displeasing to God.

Jesus further said, "If you don't go all the way with Me through thick and thin, you don't deserve Me" (verse 38).

I don't want to lose the anointing on my life because of wrong choices.

Wrong Choices Could Cost Your Anointing

Acts 15:7 (NIV)—*After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them, "Brothers, you that know some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe.*

A heated discussion occurred concerning whether or not the Gentiles needed to be circumcised to be accepted. Peter knew first hand that this was not God's requirement (read Acts 10) and he was motivated in his spirit to say so. I believe had he not stood strong with the truth of the matter, he would have lost his anointing. The reason he was sent to Cornelius' house, although his ministry was to the Jews, was Peter would need to be as adamant with his brothers (the Jews) as God had been with him.

God had to make it clear to Peter what He wanted. The Gentiles were convinced to believe when Peter came with the message of the Gospel. They knew he had violated the customs and traditions of his people to come to them.

We wonder why we don't seem to have the illumination we once had. Could it be that God has spoken a specific assignment to you, and because the person with whom He told you to speak is not of your denomination and persuasion, you failed to obey?

**Discrimination and prejudice
are still in the Church . . .**

Discrimination and prejudice are still in the Church because some have not yet embraced other brothers or sisters. Do you still have a preference for the music played? The race card can be played from both sides. Make the right choice. Your anointing is too valuable.

Divine Helper

Acts 26:22 (NIV)—But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen.

Don't be surprised that when you share what was written, some will accuse you of being out of your mind and try to have you declared insane.

While Festus the governor might not have known about

**Paul understood that he
had Divine help all along.**

God, Paul was convinced that King Agrippa knew and believed the prophets.

Paul understood that he had divine help all along and there was no need to change his message. He knew what he had to say was for the great and the small.

When TV was still a part of my life, I would be so grieved that when a famous talk show host asked many of the top Christian leaders certain questions (such as who is going to heaven or hell) they would beat around the bush and never give him a straight answer. Were they afraid of who he is? Why couldn't they see the man is hungry for truth? Whether he accepts it or not is none of their business. God gave them a chance to testify of Him and His Son.

When the king chided Paul's attempt to persuade him, Paul gave him a great answer. Paul's only concern was for those who heard him to become like him. He was only impressed with the Divine Helper who never left him.

How Could I Have Known?

I was awakened this morning by the sound of white-capped waves roaring in the Atlantic Ocean, which was the total opposite of the previous day when the ocean was so calm it appeared you could walk on it for a leisurely stroll. The overcast sky with its thick clouds was also different. Yesterday and the day before had bright sunshine and warm temperatures.

Watching the weather from my hotel room caused me to reflect on my life, which has somewhat reflected a weather pattern. You never know what tomorrow will be. You take what comes and adjust accordingly.

My past 71 years have brought with them so many twists and turns and abrupt changes, that years ago I stopped trying to predict the next event.

When I released myself to the Lord's leadings, I had no idea that most of the time I'd be running to keep pace with Him. Not one day has been the same. The joy, the laughter, the stretching, the chastisements, the seemingly unbearable pain of death, the ecstasy of birth, the long nights and the fruitful days have occurred in ways I did not know was possible. But because of His plan and intended purpose, I am where He wants me to be, and I'm happy about it.

I do not know what tomorrow will bring or require, but I have today, with its many mysteries still to be unfolded. I am excited to make the adjustment. All of them will work to make me a better witness and reflection of Him.

Boundaries Are for Our Benefit

Psalm 24:1—*The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*

This is one of the most secure and comforting scriptures in the Bible. But the next verse really got my full attention. "For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods" (Psalm 24:2).

The word "established" means *to make it firm*. Do you know anything that is more fluid and mobile than water, which you are made of? As I am sitting watching the Atlantic Ocean rip and roar with fury, one could question, "How can anything be built on that kind of movement?" I admit I do not understand the science of it but I choose to believe in the firmness of it because God said it is so.

Thank God for His established boundaries.

With all its intense fury the water bursts onto the sand—but only so far. Then it retreats, ever so calmly.

There is a purpose for this. How many of us have experienced seemingly oceans of fury occurring all at once in our lives, only to have the God of the whole earth take charge of His inhabitants and cause them to go away quietly, not able to overcome us? How does this work? Psalm 115:16 says God kept the heavens for Himself, but the earth hath He given to the children of men.

The earth is in the shape it is in because of the words that have proceeded from our lips. Thank God for His established boundaries. Each one is for our benefit and not our restraint. Praise God!

Every Knee Will Bow, Left and Right

Matthew 27:29—And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

The Roman soldiers intended to mock, jeer, and deride Jesus, when in fact they were fulfilling prophecy of Isaiah 45:23 (NKJV), which says, "I have sworn by myself: The word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return that to me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath."

The soldiers were accustomed to bowing one knee to their kings and governors. This showed a sign of recognition and respect. But Jesus said through the prophet Isaiah that every knee would bow. If you have two, both knees will bow. When both knees are bowed, it does not indicate merely recognition and respect; it means worship.

When Daniel learned of the decree signed by the king to feed any person to the lions who worshiped any god except the king for 30 days, he went home, opened his window, and bowed his knees in worship to his God, the only God, which was his habit and custom (Daniel 6:10).

Paul said in Ephesians 3:14, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Living for the Lord requires us to exhibit faith at all times. Adversity is just another opportunity to demonstrate your faith in your God. I willingly bow both knees in worship to Him. Get used to the idea that one day so will you. You may bow one knee to a king or queen. You will bow both knees to the Savior of the world.

Ignorance Only Delays Your Guilt

Leviticus 5:3 (NKJV)—Or if he touches human uncleanness—whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes it, then he shall be guilty.

But I didn't know," is often what I hear in order to avoid correcting a wrong done. For years, I was involved in a denomination where the leadership never touched on the Epistles. They would occasionally skim over the book of Acts. God was very gracious to me in my ignorance of His letters to and for the Church. Shame on you, pastor, for limiting your parishioners to the Gospels. When we told our denomination, "We had to go, to grow" it was not meant to make light of what was taught us. We never intended to hurt anyone or to cast a cloud over what they shared. In fact, my husband did not know he was prophesying when he said it. It really just came out in what we coined "A holy blurt."

Though the instructions in Leviticus were given to the Jews, the principle works for everyone. The more I read the New Testament, the more things I discovered I needed to make right.

I remember attending a funeral one day and finding myself saying to a fellow minister, "I apologize for being a distraction to you and ask you to please forgive me." He nearly became a second corpse, but I was made free. I sensed that in order for me to move out in the things of God without baggage, I needed to do this. I went to him privately. Saying it publicly would have hurt innocent people. Never release your conscience at the cost of others that have no need to know.

Helping To Make the Wise, Wiser

Proverbs 9:9 (NKJV)—*Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.*

When the word came to begin daily classes at RLCC, it certainly was not because we had nothing to do for the Kingdom. All of our schedules were already full.

However, I've learned not to question or try to explain my way out of a God assignment.

God has been preparing me for some time for this season. In the natural, it looked impossible. Yet the excitement of watching God do it is beyond words. Before He weaned me from TV, I devoted at least two to three hours nightly to the idiot box, coming away aggravated, agitated, angry, and depressed—certainly not fulfilled.

As we begin to give instruction to wise men and women, we, the instructors, will also become wiser. I wish I could explain in English what I am sensing in my spirit concerning the return of Jesus and our responsibility to equip the saints for the additional work that will need to be done (Ephesians 4:11).

I used to be a social butterfly. I have no time for natural socializing anymore. But I have lots of time to minister to another brother or sister struggling with choices in their lives.

The just shall live by faith, but they live by faith better after hearing what God has done in our walk with Him. Ultimately, it's between you and God. We can help.

Come On Over And Help Us

Acts 16:9—And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

I have not found anywhere in the New Testament that this particular man ever got involved in Paul's work there. There is a possibility that Aristarchus of Macedonia may have been the man in the vision (see Acts 27:2).

Paul was not looking to establish a friendship with anyone there. His focus was just to obey the leading of the Spirit that

forbade him to go into Phrygia, Mysia, and the region of Galatea. Verse 10 says he went into Macedonia assuredly, or being satisfied that the Lord had called him to

Always obey the prompting in your spirit, even if adversity greets you upon arrival.

do this. When you are sure of the Lord, everything and everybody else will simply need to adjust.

Always obey the prompting in your spirit, even if adversity greets you upon arrival. Paul did not question the Lord's leading. He and Silas ended up in the jail at Philippe, but they never lost their joy. As a result of their loud praying and singing, the prisoners heard them. Suddenly, a great earthquake caused the very foundation of the prison to shake until every door was opened and every band on the prisoners was loosed. They knew God was in control. The jailer and his family got saved, and a church began.

We don't need to know the name of the man in the vision. Each person did his part.

It's His Mercy

Leviticus 10:3 (NKJV)—*And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.'" So Aaron held his peace.*

Our children sometimes do things that put us in a position to choose between them and God. Always choose God. Aaron had four sons. Two of them put fire in their sensor and offered profane fire before the Lord that He had not commanded, and it cost them their lives. Aaron was not permitted to remove his priestly clothes or leave his assignment in the tabernacle to mourn for them, lest he die.

While we don't have to make those kind of choices today, we still need to settle the matter in our hearts that we will never stop

Never allow anything in life or death to cause you to prefer anyone over the Lord.

serving the Lord or neglect what He has told us to do to bury our dead.

Jesus said let the dead bury the dead. Whenever we turn from what God has commanded us to do, it is an indication that we don't regard Him as holy. When we choose Him over friends and relatives, He is glorified. He said, "Before all the people I must be glorified." Are you honoring God in your choices? It's because of His mercy and the sacrifice of His Son's shed blood that we are not consumed.

Never allow anything in life or death to cause you to prefer anyone over the Lord. Guilt is never from God. Don't give in to it.

Everyone Is Looking for You

Mark 1:37 (NKJV)—*When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."*

Jesus was not impressed that the people in Capernaum were looking for Him. After performing many miracles, healing the sick, and casting out many demons, He went to rest and rose early to confer with His Father as to His assignment for the day.

Some of us would have immediately returned to where we had such great success the day before. But Jesus said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also. Because for this purpose I have come forth."

Too often we try to retain for our exclusive benefit and pleasure a move of God in our midst. Instead of searching for a repeat of what He has already done in our midst, why not just thank Him and believe what He has preached?

I have noticed that every time Jesus has shown up and begun a great work in an assembly, it dwindled after a while. This occurs when more focus is given to the happenings than to the One who made them happen.

Once you allow flesh to enter, the Spirit will always exit. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you retain what was preached in your hearing; then seek His direction on how to train others to keep the momentum going in the Spirit.

Jesus is not abandoning you, but He is moving to the next place in order to manifest His love and compassion. Stop emphasizing and looking for His power only. It's His love and mercy, after all, that activate and release His power.

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!

Faith Is

Hebrews 11:1 (AMP)—*NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].*

For years I have enjoyed the *Amplified* version of this verse, coupled with a statement the Holy Spirit awakened me with one Saturday morning, which said, "Faith is acting on the invisible and the impossible just because it is written, believing God cannot lie."

The world is always looking for proof or evidence to testify that something is in fact real. Faith is the only proof we need to validate that which we believe exists.

Year ago, I decided not to be foolish enough to try and prove that I was saved or indwelt by the Holy Ghost. How

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do you explain what you have elected to believe? You don't. Actually, you don't have to explain anything you believe.

The fact is, no one can disprove what you and I believe. The fact that we believe a thing is sufficient to have it evidenced in our lives on a consistent basis.

God and Jesus are invisible, yet nothing in my life is more real than they are. If you don't already believe that, you need to. Ask the Lord's help. He delights in helping people with their believing.

Hear and Accept

Mark 4:20 (NKJV)—*"But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."*

In order to bear fruit, one must hear, gain understanding, receive it with gladness, endure tribulation, and allow oneself to become rooted. Unfortunately, too many Christians allow themselves to stumble or to be offended and to move from where God planted them. Without becoming rooted, there will be no growth. Sure, you can keep changing churches until you find one preaching what tickles your ears, but are you maturing spiritually?

If you are in a church where you are not being pinched or prodded to do better, you are in a dangerous place. The message of the Kingdom is supposed to disturb you. I am not talking about condemnation, but of conviction. The difference between the two is this:

Condemnation leaves

you without hope of restoration of your covenant; conviction sets a standard for you to strive to reach.

When the Word is heard and received, you are able to see beyond the limitations of your eyes and understand beyond what you hear.

When you hear and receive the Word, you are able to see beyond the limitations of your eyes and understand beyond what you hear. What you hear and accept should always turn you toward the light and life of the Lord.

Ask for His help today. He wants you so much; His desire is to forgive you.

Running Water

Leviticus 15:13 (NKJV)—*"And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes, and bathe his body in running water; then he shall be clean."*

When this commandment or requirement was given, the people were not privileged to have access to modern plumbing as we are. I sense that the Lord wanted them to understand the price of being unclean and for those associated with them to know that contamination could affect

Today we have Jesus, the living Word, and the Holy Ghost as our "running water" to cleanse us of any sin we fall into.

them. Since they had no inside bathrooms to go and take a shower, if they found running water, it was with a great deal of effort.

Today we have Jesus, the living Word, and

the Holy Ghost as our "running water" to cleanse us of any sin we fall into. His grace and presence in our lives is not a license to sin. He is there to keep us free from sin's influence. However, if we miss it anyway, it is not difficult or impossible to recover (1 John 1:9).

God will at times ask you to allow Him to stretch you by suggesting that you do something that you would rather not do. But in order to take you to the next level, He knows you need to do it; otherwise, your failure to respond in full could make you unclean. Obedience to His Word will keep you clean.

Longing for What Is Forbidden

Romans 1:26 (KJV)—*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.*

Passions out of control are not normal and must be dealt with aggressively. Leviticus 18:22 NKJV reads, "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination." Abomination means *disgusting*. God never made a mistake, nor does He make anything or anyone and then call them "disgusting."

What has happened? Men and women have from the beginning of time yielded to their passions (lust) and then tried to justify it by saying, "God made me this way."

Scripture says, "And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust toward

**A consequence is due
when men or women
find themselves doing
disgusting things.**

another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet (Romans 1:27 KJV).

What that means is that a consequence is due when men or women find themselves doing disgusting things. You can profess love for God all you want, but if your actions prove otherwise, there will be consequences.

There is nothing disgusting about God's love for you. The fact that He does not swat you like a bug for your behavior towards Him demonstrates that He loves you—regardless.

The Holy Ghost Reveals, Not Conceals

Mark 4:22 (NKJV)—*For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light.*

One Sunday, as we were leaving the Poconos Church, we received a phone call stating that some of the regular Nanuet attendees at the Poconos could not find their car keys. We knew the keys had to be there because they drove out there. We could have gotten in the flesh and turned around to go back. Then the Holy Ghost reminded me of

this scripture. I said it out loud, the other pastors agreed with me, and we kept driving towards home. After a short period of time the call came that the keys were found.

Of course, they had prayed also. In discussing the event the next day, we found that one of them had received the

same scripture at the same time. That's the way God works. You can trust the Lord to share with you the precise scripture to use for your situation.

Pastors and parents often find themselves having to make choices concerning their congregations and their children. Why not make godly choices? There was nothing our physical presence would have accomplished had we turned around and gone back. Oh, how the devil would have loved that! It would have indicated that our trust was not in the Lord to resolve the situation.

The Holy Ghost is great at doing His job. He just needs people to release Him to do what He does best, which is to glorify the Lord.

Pastors and parents often find themselves having to make choices concerning their congregations and their children. Why not make godly choices?

Do You Need To Know?

Mark 4:26, 27 (NKJV)—*And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how."*

Although the sower does not know how the seed became a sprout, it does not stop him from harvesting the ripened sprout (verses 28, 29). We waste a lot of precious energy and time trying to figure God out! What difference does it make when God arranges a due harvest for us? Learn to rest in Him and His Word.

He is never late nor behind in what He has promised us. I have as much excitement in knowing that I have done the Lord's will as I have in receiving the harvest He provides.

I have as much excitement in knowing that I have done the Lord's will as I have in receiving the harvest He provides.

Forget it—you can't beat God giving. Just make sure you are as obedient

to the seedtime and harvest principle as He is. He gives us the seed to sow and then produces what to me seems like an unlimited harvest. If that's not stacking the deck in our favor, I don't know what is.

When I used to work at one of the major corporations, we had restricted information that was only available to those with a *need to know*. Jesus knows all things, and I am one of His authorized representatives. I believe He will tell us what we need to know when we need to know it.

Jesus Said, 'Let Us Cross Over'

Mark 4:35 (NKJV)—*On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."*

Once Jesus has given an order, nothing in the universe can hinder it from occurring. Since it was evening, Jesus chose to take a nap, which is what the disciples should have done also. It made no difference whether He was resting on a pillow in the stern or standing at the bow; Jesus had already spoken, "Let us go to the other side."

He had no intention of going to the other side without His disciples. That's what they should have spoken to the windstorm and the waves. But Scripture records that when they woke Jesus up, He said, "How is it that you have no faith?" That is quite an indictment against them. Exceeding fear (verse 41) is big, large, great, loud, and mighty.

Failing to take Jesus at His Word is tantamount to having no faith.

If you have exceeding "fear," it means you have permitted yourself to become frightened,

alarmed, and in terror of a liar, a defeated foe whose power has already been stripped from him by One who has already overcome him.

Excuse me, what is your problem? This is how so many Christians miss it. Failing to take Jesus at His Word is tantamount to having no faith. The disciples traveled with Jesus personally, observing the many extraordinary things that He had done. They had seen first hand the power of His Words.

Take Jesus at His Word when you encounter a storm in your life. He's already told you that you're crossing over to the other side. So believe Him and just rest.

Too Big for Your Britches

2 Samuel 24:10—*And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people.*

Too big for your britches" is an expression my mother used when I got a little too cocky. Sometimes we receive such wonderful blessings and success from the Lord that we start to believe our own press. Thank God, we have a heart that knows when to smite us.

To recognize that we have acted foolishly is a good sign. It means we are eligible for forgiveness, if we humbly ask for it. I am much harder on myself than God ever is. When my heart condemns me, it hurts—really hurts. The Lord's rebuke is firm but fair. He never reminds me of my past. The devil, on the other hand, wants me to never forget my past, and he brings things to my remembrance I can hardly believe I once did. But the Lord instantly comforts me and helps me to get back in the saddle of His plan for me.

Unbelievers trust in numbers. Believers trust in the Almighty, in spite of their numbers.

David forgot that his trust must be in the Lord and not in the number of his fighting troops. Unbelievers trust in numbers. Believers trust in the Almighty, in spite of their numbers. When we start to get too big for our britches, we could use a little humility. We must ask the Lord to help us to decrease in our assessment of ourselves, so that we can clearly see that all our boasting should be in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:31.) When we fail to examine ourselves, God will allow a pin to prick our balloon.

A member of RLCC shared this one Sunday: "Submit, obey, and walk in love until His further plan is revealed to you." Amen.

Keep

1 Corinthians 9:27—*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

Paul lets us know that it is our responsibility to become approved. A castaway is unapproved, a reject, worthless and a reprobate. *Keep* is a four-letter word, but it's not foul, profane, or dirty. In fact, athletes who do not keep the rules and citizens who break the law become disqualified and often pay a price they cannot afford.

We need to train ourselves to deny ourselves and to practice self-control.

**Some of us are not keeping
our bodies as though they
belong to God.**

Why? A cartoon was shared with me that showed a doctor talking to a patient. The caption was,

"Which is better, one hour of exercise, or 24 hours in a hospital bed, or dead?"

Some of us are not keeping our bodies as though they belong to God. If we were asked to baby-sit someone's child for the day and kept that child the way we keep God's temples, we'd get arrested.

The Greek word for "keep" means to *maintain*. We are to preserve, watch, and receive this body. It is on loan to us for use here in the earth.

Don't preach to me about sin when you are unapproved, rejected, and worthless. Show me your product before you try to sell me a bill of goods.

Are You Journeying With the Lord?

Numbers 9:18 (NKJV)—*At the command of the LORD the children of Israel would journey, and at the command of the LORD they would camp.*

It did not matter whether the cloud continued long days (verse 19) or only overnight, they kept the charge of the Lord. It will be glorious for the Church when we mature to the point of staying steady with God, regardless.

Verse 22 tells us that whether it was for two days, a month, or a year, when the cloud remained above the tabernacle, the children of Israel remained encamped. They moved, or remained, based on what God did. Over the last thirty-plus years, I have seen more “church hopping” than I did in the first fifty years of my life. No one gets rooted and grounded anymore because they won’t remain where God planted them.

**Allow yourself to grow roots so
God can then give you wings.**

When I was a child, preachers stayed with their congregations until they died or failed morally. There was another church (same denomination) on the next corner, and several others within a two-minute walk from where I attended. It never occurred to anyone to quit our church to attend another. Oh, you might leave because you decided not to go anymore. But if you ever decided to return, you came back to your “home church.” Our churches even had the same name, except for the first word. We were *First Calvary* and the neighbor was *New Calvary*. We spoke to each other as we passed, but to fellowship with each other was an unwritten no-no.

Be planted by the command of the Lord, then get grounded. Allow yourself to grow roots so God can then give you wings.

Strict Discipline

Mark 9:50 (NKJV)—*"Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another."*

Salvation is more than an exodus from sin. It is the beginning of strict discipline to prevent reverting to our old life. We should always pray. But our prayer closet is not just a room we retreat to. It's a life we move into based on obeying what's required of us.

Sacrifice is not just setting aside the wrong and the bad we encounter in our new life. It's about giving up things we value and treasure to the One who provided it all in the first place.

Anyone can be influenced to give up sin once they are saved. It is, however, a sacrifice to give up those things you've dreamed about owning or doing since you were a child. For

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me, sin was easy to give up. I didn't like it that much in the first place. However, giving up my personal toys was differ-

ent. It took a little more of God's grace to help me let them go. But when I realized that I really was not entitled to them, and the only reason I had the kind of job that allowed me to afford them was because of God's goodness and mercy, letting go got easier.

Until you understand that all you have comes from the Lord, you will try to justify holding on to it. Once you acknowledge Him as your source, you will try to beat Him giving and it starts to be fun. Obedience is fun; hoarding is not.

Are You Going Also?

John 6:67—*Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?*

Walking with the Lord and working for Him are not the same. While many are not in overt sin, they are missing the directive to “follow Him” because they decided that *doing* is better than the *discipline* of walking with Him.

Stop trying to make a relationship with Him. Obey what you are asked to do, and then rest in your devotion to Him. Often we fail to walk with Him due to peer pressure. Loyalty to Him *and* to your peers seldom works. We must arrive at the understanding that He is our lifeline to peace, health, and abundance, according to Him. He is all we need. He never leaves or forsakes us.

Because walking with Him requires commitment and responsibility, at times we walk away. Song of Solomon 5:16 reads, “He is altogether lovely.” Nothing we gain compares to knowing Him. He never has or will turn from us, because He understands our value to Him. How is it we lack the ability to understand His value to us?

Oswald Chambers said, “Pentecost did not teach the disciples anything; it made them the incarnate of what they preached.” The test of our loyalty to God is to wait for the vision that carries.

The song writer wrote, “Where do I go but to the Lord?” Every step we take should be bringing us closer to His divine plan for our lives as we become more of His reflection to others for His glory.

Yield

Romans 6:13 (AMP) *Do not continue offering or yielding your bodily members [and faculties] to sin as instruments (tools) of wickedness. But offer and yield yourselves to God as though you have been raised from the dead to [perpetual] life, and your bodily members [and faculties] to God, presenting them as implements of righteousness.*

I love the New American Standard Bible Version of Romans 6:16, "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"

According to the laws of the land, the Emancipation Proclamation set us free from slavery. But failing to enforce that law in our lives is an indication that some choose to remain in bondage.

I can choose what I will yield to. If I don't back up what I say with the right choice, I am still a slave.

Man can write laws to free our bodies, but only submission to

the Lord's words can make us free in our flesh and in our spirit. Though my flesh is not yet redeemed, it still has to yield to what I say or do. Since lust says, "I must have it at once," I can deceive myself by saying I won't do that again. But finding myself doing what I said no to strongly suggests addiction, or slavery.

I can choose what I will yield to. If I don't back up what I say with the right choice, I am still a slave.

Ashamed

Luke 9:26—*For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.*

When Jesus made this statement in Luke, He used the word *ashamed*, which I don't believe the other writers picked up. Why should we feel ashamed for anything relating to Jesus?

Two other words, *abashed* and *confused*, express the meaning of ashamed. I'll let you in on something I consider valuable. The reason we cannot be ashamed of Jesus and His Word is so He will not have to feel ashamed that He died for us when He comes into His glory .

Jesus did the hard part. All we have to do is to tell of our relationship and the effect of His words in our lives. He did the suffering and the agony. We have the joy of bragging on Him.

Jesus did the suffering and the agony. We have the joy of bragging on Him.

I am grateful that He made me a bold child, but even if I had been the biggest wimp on the block and every bone in my body was shy, His grace is sufficient to aid me in speaking out for Him.

I am to tell everyone I meet who He is and what He has said. He will never have to be ashamed of me because, with His grace working in me, I'll never be ashamed of Him or His words.

The Savior Forgives, The Son Frees

John 4:42 (CEV)—*They told the woman, "We no longer have faith in Jesus just because of what you told us. We have heard Him ourselves, and we are certain that He is the Savior of the world!"*

John 8:36 (CEV) reads, "If the Son gives you freedom, you are free!" Jesus' love for His Father submitted Himself to be sacrificed for all the sins of all people.

Everyone has access to the Father now because of Calvary. I am sad to say that unfortunately not everyone will receive

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that free gift and some will be lost forever. However, when we receive Him, we then are in position to learn of Him, act

on what we learn, and then walk in a life of victory over every adversity.

If you continue in His Word, you will know the truth and the truth will make you free (John 8:31, 32). Our participation was not needed when He agreed to hang on Calvary's tree in order for us to once again have access to His Father. We do have to receive Him to affirm that access. Once we are affirmed in our covenant with the Father, our role is to demonstrate the devil's defeat in our lives.

Remember, the Savior forgives and restores us to our Creator. The Son's truth makes and keeps us free.

Since I Did Not Know How To Find Out the Truth

Acts 25:20 (CEV)—Since I did not know how to find out the truth about all of this, I asked Paul if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and be put on trial there.

Paul was on trial because he insisted on proving that the man Jesus, whom the Jews said was dead, was indeed alive (Acts 25:19). The new governor, Festus, was perplexed as to how to come up with the truth about this because he had not yet accepted Him by faith.

This is one of the reasons it is so important for us to preach the Gospel to all creatures. Jesus can never be received where He is not preached (Romans 10:14). However, when you have received Jesus Christ by faith, no one can convince you He is dead.

The only way I know to find out the truth as to whether He is dead or alive is this: Once you hear about Him, choose to receive Him. It is foolish to try to convince anyone that your Lord is alive. He never told us to try to convince anyone. He said to preach about Him and to live your life as an example of His and that would make disciples of them.

I have never been more excited about being a pastor than I am in these days. Real pastors don't just have the title; they have the passion and the power to boldly proclaim Jesus to all. It's sad to see that so many are sitting in churches under men and women who only know how to excite their emotions, but fail to train them in the truth of who Jesus is.

Will the world find out the truth that Jesus, who was dead, is now alive? Preach the Gospel!

I've Settled It; You, Oh Lord, Are My Choice

Psalm 119:12 (CEV)—*I praise you LORD! Teach me your laws.*

Until we have renewed our mind and dedicate our bodies to do what is pleasing to the Lord, we could be subject to influences that are not necessarily of the Lord. Psalm 119:72 (CEV) says, "I would rather obey you than have a thousand pieces of silver and gold." Verse 111 (CEV) says, "They will always be my most prized possession."

It has to be settled that the Lord and His words are your true treasure. Nothing offered to you or experienced by you will alter that.

I did a little skit in a recent message with several people from the congregation representing fear, lack, doubt, unbelief, rebellion, and the lust of other things. They hovered over me at the same time with locked arms, trying to prevent me from overcoming them to reach my Bible, which was being held by a lady in the congregation. They were not allowed to touch me, so I merely spoke to them with the authority from Jesus to overcome. My faith-filled words caused them to unlock their arms, which then allowed me to pass through them to possess what was my most valued possession.

The reason God's Word is my most valued possession is because it is the source of my joy. Why would you not protect and pursue that which brings you joy? The joy of the Lord is your strength. Settle it once and for all. The Lord is your choice, and everything and everyone must adjust accordingly.

I Live To Obey You

Psalm 119:88 (CEV)—*Show that you love me and let me live, so that I may obey all of 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." And 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 cannot think of anything I thought would make me happy without it being realized in my life.

What I discovered was what Psalm 119:92 (CEV) 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 them."

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 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 them to God's Word, and vow never to put any confidence in any flesh. Instead, they become eager to do what God wants of them and commit to learn what pleases Him.

**A daily trip with the Lord
anywhere He takes me is
much more enjoyable than
being with my favorite people
in my favorite place.**

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. Why? Because of this verse and that of verse 14 (CEV), 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's 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. Jesus died so that we could live. The truth that Jesus provides for us will always eliminate the devil's deception. It is fear of death or what

Make your choice today to look only to Jesus as the example you should follow.

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.

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. 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.

Heed the Warning and Pay Attention

Ezekiel 33:2, 3 (CEV)—Ezekiel, son of man, warn your people by saying: Someday, I, the LORD, may send an enemy to invade a country. And suppose its people choose someone to stand watch and to sound a warning signal when the enemy is seen coming.

Since in the Old Testament God may have sent an enemy to invade a country, it was up to the people there to select someone to stand watch by sounding a warning signal when the enemy was seen approaching. If they chose to ignore the warning sound, they were killed in battle and it was their fault, because they could have escaped had they paid attention (Ezekiel 33:4, 5). If the person responsible for watching and warning failed to execute his or her responsibility, the enemy still came to attack and kill—but only the sinful people of that country.

God used the prophet to stand watch and warn His people for Him. Since God finds no delight in the death of His people, He will punish those appointed to speak for Him. It grieves my heart when Christians are planted in a church whose pastor preaches a social gospel instead of the Word of God.

Most of the callers to *The Choice Is Yours* belong to a church, but there is little evidence of their spiritual maturity. Many of them are hungry for truth, which they are not getting to help them in their day-to-day issues. *The Choice Is Yours* is to be a supplement for their growth, not a revelation. My role is to confirm what their pastor has said.

Pastor, what are *you* saying?

Past Performance Will Not Get It for You

Ezekiel 33:12 (CEV)—Tell them that when good people start sinning, all the good they did in the past cannot save them from being punished. And remind them that when wicked people stop sinning, their past sins will be completely forgiven, and they won't be punished.

Though God does not change, He allows for His creation to change, and He judges them accordingly. You may have once been the chief of sinners, but God will accept you on His terms, clean you up, and point you to the right way of doing what pleases Him.

Conversely, you may have dotted every “I” and crossed every “T” in living a holy, sanctified, set-apart life—and then, for whatever reason, chosen to go the way of the devil. Your past performance will profit you nothing. In fact, you would have been better off not having known His truth then to have known it and then rejected it.

To willfully reject Christ is to crucify Him again.

God had one cross for Christ, and one Christ for the sins of mankind. To willfully reject Christ is to crucify Him again. God will never permit that. Once was enough for His Son to suffer the ugliness of man's sin, sickness, and disease. All the curses intended for you and me were placed on Him with the understanding that the blessings of Abraham were now available to us just by believing.

Spiritual death, poverty, and sickness are curses that we have been redeemed from. Eternal life, abundance, physical health, and peace of mind are a portion of the blessings that are now yours and mine—not because of our performance, but because of what Jesus Christ has done.

Success Is Not Contentment

Joshua 1:8 (NKJV)—*This Book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

Success is mentioned only one time in the Bible and God was very clear as to how to attain it. It means to make or to act intelligently, to consider to be an expert in His Word, instruct, teach, have understanding, wisdom, behave wisely and to guide wittingly.

This is obviously not the world's definition of success, which is why they are never content with what they have or who they are. One of the meanings for success according to the dictionary is "The gaining of wealth, fame and rank, etc."

Success is not contentment, but contentment is success.

Anyone who has experienced these can and will tell you they provide no contentment in this life, nor in the one to come.

I believe the reason God only mentioned success one time in the Bible is because He knows there is only one way to His success, which is the only way to be content.

Paul said he was never in need, for he had learned to be content with whatever he had (Philippians 4:11, NLT). He admonished the Church, "Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have, for He will never fail or abandon you" (Hebrews 13:5).

To be content is to be satisfied with what is sufficient. Success is not contentment, but contentment is success.

The Impossible Is God's Hallmark

Luke 1:37 (NLT)—*"For nothing is impossible with God."*

The angel came to reassure Mary that what was being told to her was as truthful as what had happened to her barren, old cousin Elizabeth.

While we don't have dialogue today with angels, the Holy Spirit is giving witness to us concerning what Jesus said about even the smallest amount of faith that is spoken. He said if we said to a mountain, "Move from here to there," it would move. **There is nothing we are unable to do with the smallest degree of faith.**

Nothing is impossible (Matthew 17:20). There is nothing we are unable to do with the smallest degree of faith.

We spend a great deal of time, energy, and even finances building our bodies and developing our minds because we think doing so shows that we are not weak in these areas, while we pay little if any attention to our faith. Our bodies will one day decay, and our minds must be renewed with faith in God's Word as its instructor.

The impossible becoming possible is the hallmark of God's genuineness and backs up our faith. Where faith of any kind exists, you exercise it by speaking it out. When you do, you will always have the desired results.

God always backs up faith because faith pleases Him. He is also pleased by the foolishness of the Gospel preached to save those who believe. It always works for those willing to believe.

Your Gentleness Has Made Me Great

Psalm 18:35 (NKJV)—*You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great.*

I grieve for the so-called “self-made” people of the world. When you make yourself what you are, you have to maintain yourself. When the Lord makes you great, you can rest in Him to keep you when you have no natural strength or ability to keep yourself.

When you become great according to the Lord’s plan for you, you increase in whatever respect you need it. He brings you into abundance and gives you authority. You continue to be enlarged and excel exceedingly, to have more in number and to multiply in the process of time.

I have no need for personal greatness. I am a reflection of you, Lord, and all that you are.

Life in the Lord is so much better. It is His divine modesty, humility, and goodness that work for my benefit so I may impact others. *I have no need for personal greatness. I am a reflection of You, Lord, and all that You are.*

Being rough, tough, and gruff does not make you or me great. The Lord in His gentleness and meekness does it best. When was the last time you have offered praise for what God has and is doing in your life? Self-made people do not have the security of the Lord’s salvation shield to protect them.

Protection and Power

Psalm 46:1—*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

Once we understand the importance of being totally dependent on the Almighty for our protection and power, nothing will cause us to be fearful and weak. Our faith will be unaffected by the things that occur in the world in any form.

We find the word *protection* in the *King James Version* of the Bible one time. Our God was mocking those who depended on anyone but Him to assist them. When you have been given authority, you conduct yourself in such a way that

**As Christians, Jesus gave us
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reflects the power that backs up that authority. A traffic light has authority, as does a police

officer, to stop or direct traffic. People adhere to them because they understand that there is a power source behind them. No traffic light or police officer can stop traffic by themselves, but the power backing them and their authority can stop vehicles and pedestrians.

As Christians, Jesus gave us authority over every demonic force in the universe. In our flesh we can't prevent their activity, but He is the power behind that delegated authority. Using His name always puts the devil on the run because He is our covering of protection. His power backs us.

Morality and Spiritual Life Cannot Take a Holiday

There can be no high places in our lives where God does not have access.

Since it is established that we are already holy people born of a holy God, why is it that we are still challenged in our walk with God?

As I look around, it appears that we are not submitted to or committed to God, His Word, and His ways. It seems we avoid as much as possible the word *submit*, because we fail to understand the power that backs us when we submit.

The feuds and struggles that exist among us are the result of the passions that are ever at war in our nature within us (James 4:4). Unfaithful people don't seem to know that those determined to be friends with the world take their stand as God's enemy (1 John 2:15-17).

Vacations are not allowed in the Kingdom of God. Our morality and spiritual life must remain consistent. Just as with Israel, high places were to be torn down and worship of anything and anyone other than the most high God was unacceptable. The crown and garland we're after will never fade or wither.

Are you submitted to God? You will never be able to resist the devil and his crowd efficiently until you first submit yourself to God. We are made a pattern and model for God's flock to follow, as we follow Christ. Come with me.

When the Breeze Blows

Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NKJV)—He who observes the wind will not sow, And he who observes the clouds will not reap.

The blowing of the wind teaches us so many lessons. Though it is invisible, God often controls it to show us His plans.

I am not a sailor, nor have I ever been on a sailboat, but I have observed them at times. It's amazing to watch the speed of a sailboat when the sail is hoisted in the presence of the wind. In our lives, the season of blowing winds is God's opportunity to move us more rapidly along our journey, whether on land or sea.

Like so many things God has created that we fail to comprehend, He uses the same principle for different purposes. The wind at sea is never to be ignored, but to be embraced by every sea-faring sailor. The same wind on land is not to hinder us, but to be used for our prosperity.

Don't wait for the market to dictate your financial growth. To sow your seed in the morning means to sow in your youth. Don't observe the wind if God has spoken to you. Hoist your sail by investing in God's work, regardless of the lack of a current breeze blowing.

He is preparing you to be ready to sail when the wind comes. If you lift your sail only when the breeze occurs, there is no faith in that. Be ready to move with God when He releases His wind. Listen for His breath.

Be Afraid To Be Afraid

Matthew 10:28 (NKJV)—*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Jesus was always teaching us the fear of God. He knew clearly that in order to please God, it was important to rid ourselves of the fear of man. Fear of man is bondage and torment, but fear of God is reverence and trust of His omnipotence, always working on our behalf.

Fear is defined as panic that grips a person, causing him to run away alarmed, frightened and scared. We are never to be dismayed, intimidated, anxious, and apprehensive. Fear of another human is destructive. Always remember that we need not concern ourselves with the thought of being exposed, for there is nothing covered that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be made known (Matthew 10:26).

Revere God and trust Him by confessing or talking to Him about everything. Experience His grace to acknowledge it before men; then the fear of man and what he can do will disappear. Fear of man brings a snare, but trust in God's Spirit indwelling you makes you fearless (1 Timothy 1:7).

A great leader once said, "The only thing to fear is fear itself." We need to train ourselves not to be afraid. A reverential trust in God will build our faith and encourage us to speak out what He tells us and to perform the seemingly impossible. He will help you, for He is the God of the impossible.

Train Me to Pray

Matthew 6:5 (NKJV)—*"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward."*

Most of us heard the Lord's Prayer, in Matthew 6:6-13, as young children. We were even taught to memorize it. However, training to pray is quite different. We are not as those of the Old Covenant who focused on external practice of devotion to be seen of men. Jesus presented prayer as a devotion to God. Effective prayer expresses a heart full of sincerity and trust before God in honesty and truth. After all,

Effective prayer to God is never defined by length of time or eloquence of the utterance.

God knows the whole story anyway.

Prayer is not to be a recital, with you telling God your problems.

Instead, you should say, "I

have confidence in You to let me know Your solution in Your timeframe." Prayer may be defined as joining forces with God the Father, fellowshiping with Him, and then carrying out His will upon the earth. Effective prayer to God is never defined by length of time or eloquence of the utterance.

If called to do so, one should always be prepared to pray publicly. However, failing to talk with God privately interrupts your sincerity and honesty with Him. Watch for hypocrisy in your communication from your heart. Be sincere so He will listen to your words.

Christian Activities

Galatians 6:7—*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

My late husband had an expression he often quoted, which said, "If the devil can't keep you from coming in the front door, he will push you out the back one." I've not been able to improve on that because it's true.

Since *the Kingdom of God is within you* (Luke 17), there is no room for the world's compromising. The compromise in some of today's teaching is a device of the devil to deceive us. The devices lure us to join in the invisible forces seeking to dethrone Jesus in the hearts of people who often profess Him while failing to practice His rules of life and work.

Be on the alert for false teaching that says there is no devil or a place called hell, and that sin is merely a defect in men and women. After all, such teachings insist Jesus talked about the fatherhood of God, universal brotherhood, and kindness and nobility of man. Such teaching is a doctrine of devils because it disregards man's need to repent from sin.

If we neglect to seek God's wisdom concerning everything Christian or religious, carnal wisdom attempts to replace Jesus in our heart and to remove His absolute authority and truth as God's standard for His people.

Jesus teaches that we have two choices in life, but only one way to His Father's love and protection. Never allow the so-called Christian activities to blind you from the necessity of being prepared for satan's onslaught. Jesus is real, and Jesus is coming. Know the greatness is in you.

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