

EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

**OUR
CLASSICS**
PRECISELY
TIMED

WITNESS
JUST ASK

WORLD REPORT
GROUNDBREAKING for
NEW HEADQUARTERS

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A young girl from our Cotonou, Benin church. Read about the work in West and Central Africa on page 38.

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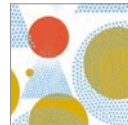
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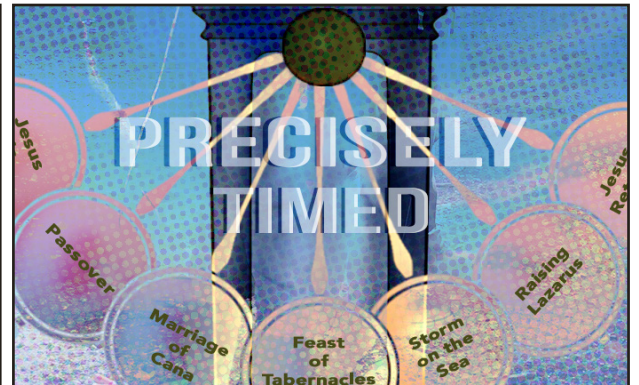


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VIEWPOINT

Over time, the look and format of this publication has changed while the content has remained the same.

BY DARREL LEE

You may have observed that our flagship publication has a new name. However, it is not new at all. The phrase “apostolic faith” was first used by a man named Charles Parham in the late 1800s.

Parham was a preacher and evangelist who was devoutly non-denominational, having left the Methodist Church because they had departed from the holiness teachings, practices, and traditions of their founding. He settled in Topeka, Kansas, in 1878, and traveled from town to town in the Midwest preaching the holiness Gospel he had been taught. His self-proclaimed purpose was to seek restoration of the faith of the Apostles. Later, he came to be known as the father of the “Apostolic Faith Movement.”

Parham established a Bible school in Topeka, and then began printing a magazine in 1899. Its purpose was to declare what he saw as the faith of the Apostles: the tenets and doctrines they preached, experienced, and stood for. Those doctrines included divine healing, justification, entire sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost as received on the day of Pentecost and recorded in Acts 2, accompanied by the initial witness of speaking in tongues. Parham called his magazine “The Apostolic Faith,” and used a portion of Jude 3 as a motto: “Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

Five years later, Parham took the message of this faith to Houston, Texas, where William Seymour heard and embraced it. Early in 1906, Seymour took the same message to Los Angeles, California, and preached on the baptism of the Holy Ghost, though he had not yet experienced his personal Pentecost. When the message was rejected and he was expelled from the church that had invited him to Los Angeles, Seymour accepted an invitation to lead prayer meetings in a home on Bonnie Brae Street.

On April 9, after ten days of prayer and fasting, several received the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Three days later, during a continual outpouring of God’s Spirit, Seymour also received this experience. Word of the revival spread rapidly and within days the crowds that gathered outgrew the house on Bonnie Brae Street, so the meetings were moved to a mission on Azusa Street.

Soon, dramatic conversions and astounding healings were taking place almost daily. Within weeks, a steady stream of seekers was coming from every continent, drawn by the testimony that the Holy Spirit’s power was being poured out.

As interest in the Azusa Street meetings grew, reports were compiled and printed in newspaper form. The first issue was published from Los Angeles in September of 1906, carrying the same title and motto as Parham’s paper, and expounding the same doctrines—those adhered to by the Apostles. Thirteen more issues followed from 1906 to 1908, some with this note: “Published by The Apostolic Faith Movement.”

Many who came to Los Angeles to “experience Pentecost” left bearing the message of that faith wherever they went. Florence Crawford was one of those. After doing some itinerant preaching in Northern California and Salem, Oregon, she was invited to hold meetings in Portland, Oregon. She arrived in Portland just after Christmas in 1906, and for two weeks preached the faith of the Apostles. After several more visits, well documented in the first issues of the Los Angeles based *The Apostolic Faith*, she settled in Portland in 1908. At that point, the Azusa Street ministry transferred to her the responsibility of publishing *The Apostolic Faith*, and she was joined by Clara Lum who had been instrumental in producing those early newspapers.



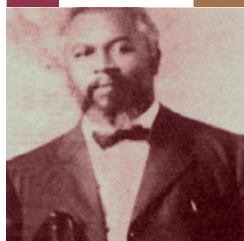
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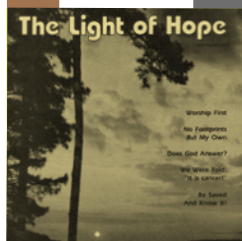
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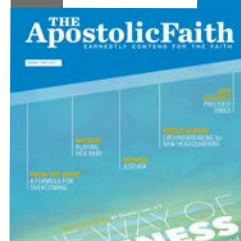
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1. 1899: Charles Parham publishes <i>The Apostolic Faith</i> magazine to declare the doctrines taught and practiced by the Apostles.	2. 1906: William Seymour brings the same message to Los Angeles, California, and many experience a Pentecostal revival in a mission on Azusa Street. The news is published in a paper titled <i>The Apostolic Faith</i> .	3. 1908: Florence Crawford comes from the Azusa meetings to Portland, Oregon, preaching the message of the Apostles, and assumes responsibility for publishing <i>The Apostolic Faith</i> newspaper.	4. 1966 & 1981: The newspaper is renamed <i>The Light of Hope</i> in 1966 and transitions to magazine format in 1981.	5. 1995: The magazine is renamed <i>Higher Way</i> . 6. 2017: The publication returns to the original name of <i>The Apostolic Faith</i> .
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Before long, acquisition of real property required that the group in Portland formally incorporate. That was done, and what began as a faith movement became "The Apostolic Faith Mission of Portland, Oregon." The fourteenth issue of *The Apostolic Faith* newspaper published from Los Angeles included this notice: "For the next issues of this paper address The Apostolic Faith Campmeeting, Portland, Ore."

As reports of the widespread revival continued to come in from around the world, they were published from Portland under the same name and motto as before, and *The Apostolic Faith* newspaper became our organization's flagship publication. The first Portland issue—Volume II, Issue 1—carried the date of July and August, 1908.

Over time, the look and format of this publication has changed while the content has remained the same. In 1966, it was renamed *The Light of Hope*. In 1981 the layout went from newspaper style to that of a magazine, and in 1995 the magazine was renamed *Higher Way*.

Now, it becomes necessary to make another change. Over the past several months, our organization has begun moving toward continuous multi-channel publishing. More and more people are using electronic devices in nearly every aspect of life, and we want to capitalize on the opportunity to reach them as effectively as possible. We have started doing this through a variety of digital channels, including our

mobile-friendly website, an app, social media, and digital subscriptions. In addition to text, we are publishing in audio and video formats. Our goal is to streamline and maximize the manner in which we deliver the Gospel message.

With this new focus, it seemed appropriate to evaluate the name of our flagship publication. The name of Charles Parham's magazine and the newspaper published from Azusa Street perfectly described the movement that endeavored to emulate and declare the faith of the Apostles. As this remains our mission today, that name still reflects who we are and the content of our publication. Therefore, with this issue, we have returned to using *The Apostolic Faith* as the name of our magazine. The content has not changed; we will continue to declare the teachings of the Apostles through the publishing of what happens in our church services and outreach activities. Yet we will strive to reach even more people, having the benefit of digital advances not available to those who came before us.

Just as God blessed the efforts of our predecessors, we depend upon Him to bless the labors of current and future generations until Jesus returns. We thank the Lord for those who have supported the Apostolic Faith organization with their freewill tithes and offerings. It is deeply appreciated, with results continuing to span the globe. Above all, thank you for your prayers as we point readers to Jesus, the Light of the world.

from **THE WORD**

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ne love which is in Chri
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an that neede n not to
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he Lord with all thine
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THE WAY OF HOLINESS

SANCTIFICATION IS BOTH AN INSTANTANEOUS
EXPERIENCE AND A DAILY WALK.

FROM A SERMON BY DARREL LEE



The New Testament church at Thessalonica was established during difficult times. When Paul and Silas first went to that city with the Gospel, there was no greeting committee that we know of except those who opposed the men of God. However, there were some who wanted a way out of sin and they subsequently found deliverance and victory. It was to these people that Paul wrote the epistle of 1 Thessalonians — an epistle that admonishes regarding a way of holiness. In 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 we read, “And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”

These new believers had experienced salvation. In 1 Thessalonians 1:5 we read, “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” Salvation provides assurance that one has passed from death unto life. Verse 6 continues, “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction.” It is clear that salvation was only the beginning; affliction followed. Perhaps it would be nice if we were saved and immediately translated to Heaven, but there is a life to live!

The instruction as to the manner in which the Thessalonian converts were to live was given in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 12: they were to “walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.” We represent the Gospel of Jesus Christ when we are converted, and we too are challenged to walk worthy of that calling—to live holy lives.

There is a distinction between the experience of holiness and the life of holiness. To be established with “hearts unblameable in holiness before God,” we must first experience entire sanctification. Paul spoke of that in 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, where we read, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” He went on to command that his epistle be read to all the brethren. What he had to say was important for all to hear!

The words, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly” remind me of when I was a new convert. I never heard of salvation until after I was saved, nor did I hear of sanctification until I came into Apostolic Faith services after having been saved. During my first camp meeting, a teaching was given on sanctification. More than once during that sermon, the preacher spelled out the word “W-H-O-L-L-Y” letter by letter. I wondered why. Later, I understood that he did so to distinguish “wholly” from “holy,” since the two words sound the same. If the verse were understood as “sanctify you holy,” it would be redundant because the same root word in the Greek is translated both as “sanctify”

Sanctification does more than purify our motives. It also generates pure actions as a result.

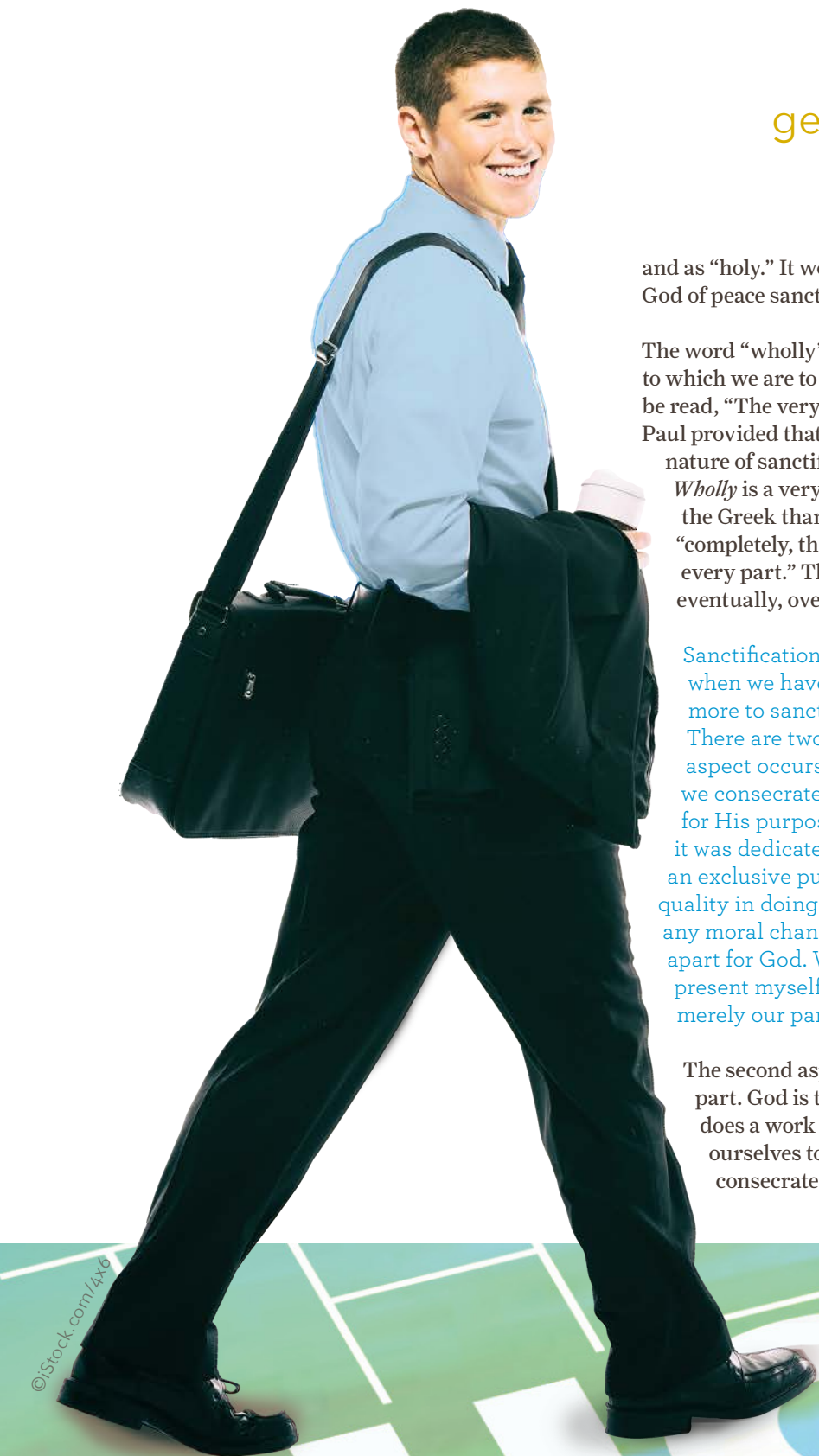
and as “holy.” It would not make sense to read, “The very God of peace sanctify you sanctify” or “holy you holy.”

The word “wholly” means “entirely,” indicating the extent to which we are to be sanctified. So, that phrase could be read, “The very God of peace sanctify you entirely.” Paul provided that description to show the all-inclusive nature of sanctification. It is *entire* sanctification.

Wholly is a very strong word; it is more forceful in the Greek than it is in English. Paul could have said “completely, through and through, all in all, and in every part.” That was in contrast to “almost, nearly, eventually, over time,” or “in the sweet by and by.”

Sanctification is entire in the sense that we know when we have experienced it. However, there is more to sanctification than a one-time experience. There are two aspects to sanctification. The first aspect occurs when we devote ourselves to God—we consecrate ourselves and set ourselves apart for His purposes. We sanctified this building when it was dedicated; we ceremonially set it apart for an exclusive purpose. However, there was no moral quality in doing so to the building, nor do we affect any moral change in our nature when we set ourselves apart for God. While there is value in declaring, “I present myself to You, a living sacrifice,” that is merely our part.

The second aspect of sanctification is the divine part. God is the Sanctifier; He is the One who does a work in our hearts. When we consecrate ourselves to God, He bears witness that our consecrated sacrifice has been accepted. He



We cannot grow carnality out of the heart any more than we can grow weeds out of a garden.

provides the assurance that He has sanctified us. The entire man is devoted to God by a consecration on our part, and then is purified by an act on God's part.

Referring again to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, we see that after experiencing sanctification, we are "preserved" or kept in a purified condition—a condition that God views as blameless or without reproach—until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We experience that purified state before He returns, and if we desire to be kept, He keeps us.

It is helpful to understand what the experience of sanctification is and is not, and what it does and does not do. Sanctification completes what justification began. Justification relates to acts of committed sins. Sanctification relates to the underlying condition from which those acts of sin emerged. Justification forsakes evil and is the result of repentance where we turn away from everything that is bad. Sanctification is the result of consecration where we bring to God everything that He has made good. Justification leaves us forgiven; sanctification leaves us cleansed.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:7 we read, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Sanctification does more than purify our motives. It also generates pure actions as a result. Holiness is "soul health." *Holiness* and *health* come from the same root word in the Greek language. Holiness is to the soul what health is to the body. When you are physically, mentally, and emotionally sound, you feel good. To be holy is to have a sound, moral bearing. It is to be free from the underlying sinful condition with which all were born, as well as from acts of sin.

Paul wanted the Thessalonian Christians to understand that there was a standard of behavior related to holiness.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 we read, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." Paul was speaking here of God-given appetites—the sexual appetite in particular, but that is not the only appetite. For example, in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had an appetite for knowledge. Every part of our humanity needs to be sanctified in order to bring it under subjection to God. We cannot prevent temptation that comes our way from the outside, but we do have a remedy for the inner condition that caused us to sin in the first place. That remedy is entire sanctification.

Sanctification is more than a Bible doctrine. It is more than an academic exercise. Holiness is an experience and a way of living! To be established in holiness, we must first be saved, then experience entire sanctification and continue to walk with God. That walk of holiness is the area where we are to increase and abound and to have our hearts established in a pure, unblameable condition. The experience itself is instantaneous, but it opens into a way of living that goes on throughout life. We do not grow into the experience of entire sanctification. We cannot grow carnality out of the heart any more than we can grow weeds out of a garden. We must experience that purifying flame. However, we do continue to grow and develop and mature thereafter. We must live the rest of life in a manner pleasing to God, and that is why we need to be sanctified.

John Wesley called sanctification "Christian perfection." When we are sanctified, we are not made perfect in the sense that God is perfect, nor in the sense that Adam was perfect before the fall. However, we are made perfect in love, according to the Word of God, and that is the manner in which Wesley described it. We love the Lord our God with all of our

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... such as

heart, soul, mind, and strength. Every decision and every action and reaction is governed by the fact that we want to please God.

If at times we fall short of how God would have us act or react, the evidence of Christian perfection in our lives is that we go before God and say, “Lord, help me to do better next time this trial comes along.” “Falling short” is not committing sin; it is an evidence of humanity. Perhaps you react in a manner that is less patient than it ought to have been, or in a manner that falls short of the way in which you wish you would have reacted. In those times, you go to the Lord and say, “I will circle that mountain again and take it by the grace of God, with Your help.” That is all God requires of us.

It is important to understand the difference between actions that are sin and actions that are rooted in human frailty. We do not want younger ones to feel that they have sinned because they acted their age, for example. As a grandparent, I am around children. I see brothers who quarrel at times though they claim to be saved. They are acting their age. I expect young brothers to disagree a bit. However, I would also expect them to learn to ask forgiveness if they have wronged one another, and to learn and grow from their experiences.

That being said, we do not want to excuse carnality by calling it humanity. If our action or reaction sprang from a carnal nature or a desire to return to sin, then we need to be forgiven and then sanctified. It has been said, “Self dies at sanctification.” Self does not die at sanctification; carnality dies. We still continue to live, with Christ living in us.

Sanctification does not change our personality, though it may temper it. If you were an introvert before you were sanctified, you likely are going to be an introvert after you are sanctified. If you were an extrovert before you were sanctified, you will still be an extrovert after you are sanctified. The old, carnal nature is eradicated, not your personality.

To be established in this way of holiness, you will continue to grow and develop over your lifetime. It is like those who go to the gym and meet with a personal

trainer. If they follow the trainer’s instructions, they will find themselves more physically fit than they were before. So it is in the way of holiness. God is our trainer; He is our instructor. If we follow His instructions and respond to His Spirit as He nudges us and speaks to us through His Word, we will find ourselves spiritually fit and continuing to develop.

That is what we want. That is the holy living that increases and abounds more and more. In time we will be able to look back and see how God has helped us face a situation in a manner that is more pleasing to Him than how we handled that same situation in the past. That is what holiness is. There is the experience of sanctification, but we cannot live on the experience alone. There is a life that follows the experience. The experience may be a hallelujah moment; life is not. However, life is a blessing when we have experienced entire sanctification and continue to follow the Lord.

Have you experienced sanctification? It may not be what some would call a hallelujah moment; it may be a deep, settled peace that comes over you and you realize that it is the Lord visiting you. That is the Lord granting your request and accepting your sacrifice.

If you have experienced sanctification, are you living a sanctified life? If something comes to mind where you recognize that you need to represent the Lord in a more appropriate fashion, come to God and tell Him! Point out what He already knows—where you fell a bit short. He will help you next time when He knows your desire is to please Him.

This Gospel way is a way of holiness. We want others to be able to look at our lives and see that where we go, what we say, and how we conduct ourselves is above reproach. By the grace and help of God, that can be our testimony!

■ *Rev. Darrel Lee is Superintendent General of the Apostolic Faith work and pastor of the headquarters church in Portland, Oregon.*

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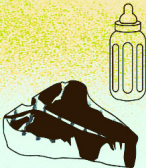



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1 CORINTHIANS 1-4

PART 1 OF AN ONGOING STUDY ON 1 CORINTHIANS

O OVERVIEW

PURPOSE		SETTING	KEY PEOPLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Paul's intent in writing to the Corinthian church was to expose evil that persistently threatened to destroy Christianity.▶ The Gospel was applied to a host of issues, including		<ul style="list-style-type: none">immorality, marriage and adultery, intellectualism, public worship, and spiritual gifts.▶ The Christian church there was primarily made up of gentiles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Corinth was a seaport city in southern Greece, and a major trade center. Its people were immoral and full of idolatry.▶ The letter was written around A.D. 55.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Author: The Apostle Paul▶ Timothy, members of Chloe's household			

POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM 1 CORINTHIANS 1-4						
Division in the church. (1:12)	God's wisdom is foolishness to man. (1:25)	We have the mind of Christ. (2:16)	Milk vs. Meat. (3:2)	Works will be tried by fire. (3:13)	We are the temple of God. (3:16)	A mark of Paul's apostleship. (4:9)
						

B BACKGROUND

Corinth was one of the most prosperous Greek cities in Paul's time. It was known for its decadence and wickedness to the extent that a Greek verb *Corinthianize* meant "to practice sexual immorality; to debauch." Its geographical location made it easy for all manner of religions and cults to integrate into the Corinthian society, and the Apostle Paul saw this cross-section of life as a great evangelistic opportunity; he and his contemporaries planted a church in the wicked environment. While there were some Jewish believers in the church, it was made up mostly of Gentiles who had left their pagan lives to follow Christ. Paul would later

find it necessary to remind the saints there of their deliverance from sinful behaviors and customs, and to encourage them in the Gospel.

After Paul left Corinth, many problems surfaced, and division spread among the believers. Soon, reports of these problems came to Paul, and a delegation of Corinthians brought a letter from the church requesting his guidance on a number of issues. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians was a response to those questions.

Paul began his letter by addressing their need for unity. Various church members had become more attached to certain leaders than to Christ, so Paul reminded his readers that the Cross of Jesus Christ must be the foundation of His Church. The Corinthians needed to be careful to keep their focus on Jesus.

The preaching of the Cross of Jesus will not be acceptable to the expectations of the unconverted mind. This is true for every generation and society. Paul focused on two groups of people, the Jews and the Greeks (Gentiles), and indicated that the Cross was “unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness” (1 Corinthians 1:23).

The Jews’ expected that their Messiah would be the one who would deliver them from the Roman government. They looked for a deliverer who would restore David’s throne and bring glory back to Israel as a nation. They also expected the Messiah to be accompanied by marvelous signs and wonders. Thus, they looked for direct evidence that Jesus was the Messiah, not just another great rabbi. Jesus’ execution as a common criminal on a cross dashed their hopes of both political restoration and miraculous evidence.

Additionally, the Jews held to the Old Testament idea that God blessed with material prosperity those with whom He was pleased, and sent judgment, such as illness and death, to those who disobeyed His laws. Only those who were cursed of God were crucified (Deuteronomy 21:23). Crucifixion was such a horrible and shameful death that it was illegal to crucify a Roman citizen. This instrument of execution was not discussed in polite conversation. Therefore, to preach that such a criminal was the Messiah was a great stumbling block, despite prophecies such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 which indicated the Savior would die just such a death.

The Greeks desired intellectual achievements. Their focus was on logic and rational evidence. They did not believe in bodily resurrection and, therefore, considered death to be the ultimate defeat. A savior dying on a cross—the instrument of death reserved for murderers—was even more ridiculous. They saw such a savior as weak compared to their mythological gods.

Corinth was filled with philosophers and teachers who gained followers through eloquent speech and wisdom acquired through intellectual exercises. In order to keep worldly knowledge subordinate to the Gospel, Paul chose to preach only “Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2) to the Corinthians, although considering his Gamalielite education, he was no doubt

capable of brilliant speech and argument. Paul realized that nothing but the direction of the Spirit and the power of God could convince anyone of the reality of the Cross and its meaning to mankind. He suppressed his natural abilities and gifts in order to be certain the Spirit of God was leading in his ministry. He wanted people to follow God and His message, not the messenger, as there would always be someone who could argue more eloquently to turn hearts away from the Gospel. In order for God’s power to work, he knew his words had to be guided by the Spirit.

Those Spirit-directed words, then, had to be received by the spiritual man (see verses 9 and 10). The Gospel is not understood with intellect or human wisdom. The natural man, guided by logic and emotions, cannot understand spiritual things. In the natural, the Cross is foolishness. Similarly, the carnal man, guided by bodily appetites, cannot understand the spiritual. One cannot receive the message of the Cross in its entirety if distracted and focused on physical appetites. The spiritual man, however, who has experienced God’s revelation, can learn and grow as the Spirit guides him. Paul encouraged the Corinthian church to focus on such learning and growth.

Chapters 3 and 4 are Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthian brethren to put aside frivolous differences. Some factions within the church seemingly enjoyed Paul’s simple approach to preaching the Gospel, while others preferred a more philosophical approach. Some believed that liberty in Christ meant freedom from the Jewish customs regarding food, while others felt that all these rules must be followed strictly.

The influences of society had made their way into the church, and were contradictory to Paul’s message. Greek architecture was a source of pride for many of these people, and Paul chose the building analogy to demonstrate the need for the various strengths and gifts within the Corinthian body to complete the Gospel structure.

The Corinthians also saw debate as a means to test and stretch the intellect. Paul warned them about such practices by telling them in verse 19 of chapter 3, “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.” Paul recognized the danger of becoming vain and full of self. In light of Paul’s teaching of “dying daily,” the Corinthian believers needed to be careful about exalting each other or themselves in their own wisdom.

A

APPLICATION

Focus Verse: 1 Corinthians 1:10

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

Several years ago, I visited two small churches near Mexicali, Mexico. In addition to organizing Bible school activities for the children of the *barrio* where one church was located and building an addition to their church building, the group I was with had the opportunity to worship with both congregations. At each service, we heard Psalm 133:1, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” and we found that it was true! We visitors were very different from our hosts. We spoke different languages, wore contrasting styles of clothes, ate dissimilar foods, and lived in opposite circumstances. Yet, none of these things mattered to us. We were all “brethren” in Jesus Christ. Our focus was on Him. As we worshiped Him, the Holy Spirit was with us. We were one congregation praising our God together.

A few months later, a visiting minister came to our church in Los Angeles, California. He, too, read that verse in Psalms. Once again, we felt the Holy Spirit working among us, and our hearts were unified. As the service came to an end and the Holy Spirit drew us, we flocked to the altars of prayer. Before we knew what had happened, three or four hours had passed, and we were still grouped around the altar benches and sitting in the front pews of the sanctuary. None of us wanted to leave! Instead, after we had finished praying, people began to testify of the wonderful things God was doing in their lives. Between testimonies we would sing. The singing brought praise. Then we would start to pray, and the cycle would begin again. Because there were no divisions among us, God had liberty to work in our

hearts and lives. All who were there felt His sweet and wonderful Spirit.

The common thread in both of these experiences was the unity among those who had gathered to worship Jesus. Diversities of race, nationality, age, language, or socioeconomic status, did not hinder our worship. We knew that before the Throne of God we were all equal. Our love for Jesus Christ created a bond between us that could not be broken by earthly differences. As we looked to Jesus, the Holy Spirit had the freedom to work among us, changing us into His likeness and bringing our lives into the center of His will.

Once I became aware of God’s desire for us to be unified, and of the way He moves among us when we are unified, I began to be more conscious of my own attitudes when attending church. Now when I go to pray, I check myself. Am I in one accord with the brothers and sisters around me? Is my heart where God would have it to be? Am I doing anything in my life that might cause strife? I listen to the Spirit’s voice, and make changes as He shows them to me. Sometimes at the altar, I hear others praying near me, and I find myself agreeing with their prayers. I begin to pray along with them, and I feel God’s presence in a special way. When I am bound in unity to God and to fellow Christians, my life becomes a tool that God can use, and He causes me and the people around me to grow in Him.

Paul wanted this same kind of unity to exist in the church at Corinth. He knew that they needed to overcome their differences and put their focus on God.

A Heart of **MERCY**

A BLESSING AWAITS THOSE WHO HAVE
EXPERIENCED GOD'S MERCY AND
EXTEND IT TO OTHERS.

FROM A SERMON BY JOHN BAROS

The Sermon on the Mount begins with what is known as the Beatitudes. These are a list of blessings that result from having proper attitudes of the heart. We might think of them as the “be attitudes”; attitudes that we should have as believers. They were pronounced for the children of God, so we are meant to experience them.

By naming the blessings that come from possessing certain characteristics, the Beatitudes give insight into the character of God. They also reveal how the followers of Christ are to behave. By developing these characteristics, we can enhance our relationship with God and with one another.

One of these characteristics is mercy. The blessing for extending it is found in Matthew 5:7, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.” As with the other Beatitudes, we may possess a measure of this characteristic before salvation—we may be able to do some merciful acts on our own. However, it is God’s Spirit within us which gives the power to extend unconditional mercy, no matter the circumstance, as Stephen did to those who were in the act of stoning him (Acts 7:60). To be truly merciful, God must transform us into merciful people. This work begins at salvation, but then it is up to us to nurture this attitude and develop it in order to obtain the blessing. We must apply ourselves to being merciful.

In taking a closer look at mercy in general, and God’s mercy specifically—how it is obtained and how it

transforms the recipient—we will gain insight into the blessing of mercy for ourselves and others.

WHAT IS MERCY?

When we consider what mercy is in a general sense, we might contrast it with justice. Justice is when someone receives what they deserve. Mercy is when someone receives or extends leniency. Another definition for *mercy* is “compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm.” A judge would show mercy by giving someone a lighter sentence than is warranted. One example is that of a mother who pled earnestly with a judge to show mercy to her son, whom she knew was guilty. When the judge refused to lighten the sentence, saying the son did not deserve it, the mother replied, “But Sir, if he deserved it, it wouldn’t be mercy.”

WHAT IS GOD’S MERCY?

Forgiveness is a form of mercy, because justice demands that there be a punishment for wrongdoing. Justice was satisfied and mercy was extended at the Cross. In Ezekiel 18:20 we read that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” God’s holy and just nature could not allow evil to go unpunished; justice had to be satisfied for the sins of mankind. However, instead of allowing sinners to die an eternal death, God’s love stepped in. God is infinitely loving and merciful; those attributes are part of His nature. So what did He



do? He extended mercy to the whole world by sending His Son to die for humanity. Mercy and compassion were the driving force behind Christ's coming to this world, His death, and His resurrection. Titus 3:5 says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." We are saved by His mercy, not by our good deeds. We can never earn salvation, nor can we deserve His mercy.

HOW MERCY IS RECEIVED

Though God's mercy is offered freely to all, we must do something to receive it. The prophet Joel gave us a picture of how it is obtained. He wrote, "And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13). The key words in this verse are "rend your heart" and "turn." We can receive God's forgiveness if we come before Him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, recognizing our spiritual poverty and that we are bankrupt without God. We could never pay the debt that is owed to God, but He made a way so that we do not have to. Because He was moved with compassion,

He sent His Son to die for us. To obtain mercy, we must come before God, recognizing that our own sins nailed Jesus to the Cross. We must tell God how sorry we are and repent, turning away from our sins, and turning toward God. When we do this with an honest heart, because God is merciful, He cannot help but forgive.

We see God's mercy demonstrated and received in the Book of Jonah concerning the city of Nineveh. God sent Jonah to declare judgment. In response to the message, the people of Nineveh began to fast and pray, turning from their evil ways. God saw their honest hearts, their true repentance, and as a result, He showed them mercy, sparing them.

THE EFFECTS OF GOD'S MERCY ON A LIFE

When God's mercy results in salvation, it produces a transformation. There is no more powerful prayer than the one found in Luke 18:13, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Two men went to the Temple to pray. The first was a Pharisee, a religious man, but he was more concerned about what other people were doing than his own condition. He said, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican" (verse 11). The other



man, the publican (tax collector), stood afar off, and “would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” He did not try to defend himself, because he knew he was guilty. He had sinned against God, and he recognized his need for mercy.

Conviction is a blessing, because it helps us realize and dread that justice is deserved. It brings us to the place where we can say as this publican did, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” When we rend our hearts and tell God we are sorry, confessing our sins, He extends mercy and forgives us. Of the two men, the publican “went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (verse 14). God’s mercy instantly transformed this man. He came to the Temple guilty and condemned, and he went home justified. Similarly, this is where our relationship with God begins.

When we receive God’s grace and mercy at salvation, we are changed. We go from death to life, from being selfish to selfless, from being prideful and harmful to being meek and gentle. God also makes us merciful people. He gives us a heart that loves mercy.

An example of one who was instantly transformed by God’s mercy is Zacchaeus, whose account is found in Luke 19. Before Zacchaeus met Jesus, he was a wicked, crooked man. As a tax collector, he was known to have cheated and robbed people. He was someone to avoid. According to those around him, he was the last person Jesus should have been seen with. Though Jesus knew what kind of man he was, Scripture tells us that when He came to the tree where Zacchaeus had climbed, he said, “Zacchaeus, make haste, and come

down; for to day I must abide at thy house” (verse 5). Zacchaeus sensed mercy. He “made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully” (verse 6). When we receive mercy, it causes us to have a sense of gratitude and appreciation for what God has done. Zacchaeus experienced this. Immediately, he said he would pay back much more than what he had wrongly taken. He became merciful. He went from taking advantage of people, destroying lives, and being deceitful, to wanting to repay, repair, and restore. That is what God’s mercy does in one’s heart. It transforms even the unmerciful like Zacchaeus into someone who loves mercy.

To love mercy as God does, we must have a heart that is transformed. Colossians 3:12 says “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.” God can make us the compassionate and merciful people He intends us to be. This is not something we can accomplish in our own strength.

GOD’S MERCY MANIFESTED THROUGH US

Not only is God merciful, but He expects His people to be merciful, too. As Christians, we are called to extend mercy to others. God’s Word is clear that it is the merciful who will obtain mercy. A portion of the Lord’s Prayer, found in Matthew 6, addresses this. It says, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (verse 12). It also says, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (verses 14-15). God’s forgiveness and mercy are extended to us on the condition that we extend them to others.

There is more to extending mercy than committing random acts of kindness. Micah 6:8 says, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee . . .” God does not ask much of us in comparison to the grace and the mercy He has extended to us, but He does ask something of us: “What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” We are to *love* mercy. Everyone loves to receive mercy, but God wants us to love *giving* mercy. When we are merciful, the love of Jesus shines through us to humanity.

To the Jewish people, the word “mercy” signified two things: almsgiving and pardon from injuries. Jesus taught both: giving and forgiving. When someone wrongs us, there is an opportunity to exhibit mercy, because we are under no obligation to forgive. The temptation might be to show justice or give the person what they deserve, but our attitude should be one of mercy. God works through people who are merciful.

Paul said in Romans 12:17-19, “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” Let God be the avenger; He will handle the situation in the best way possible. Our desire never should be for God to punish someone. Instead, it should be to see everyone experience God’s mercy. Continuing with verse 20, Paul explained how: “Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.” This is not speaking of a desire to see an adversary punished. Rather, it shows hope that God will use the mercy we show to produce a purifying effect in the hearts of our enemies.

Where else do we extend mercy? The Bible is very practical. We extend mercy to the poor who are in need by sharing our possessions with them. We show mercy to the ignorant by instructing them, to the careless by warning them, and to the inconsiderate by being patient. Smile at the person who is unfriendly. Forgive the frustrating driver on the road. Bear each other’s idiosyncrasies.

Mercy, however, is not to excuse or accommodate sin. We live in an age where society promotes tolerance of everything except holy and righteous living. Being merciful and compassionate does not mean having no position regarding what is right and wrong. It doesn’t mean that we pretend sin is not present or that we accept sin. In John 8:3-11 the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus who had been taken in adultery. “When they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?” Justice would demand that the woman be punished, and the punishment was stoning. However, Jesus responded with, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”

We often see the faults of others more readily than we see our own. The men were each convicted of their own sins, and so dropped their stones and left. Jesus then said to the woman, “Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?” She answered, “No man, Lord.” And He told her, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” Jesus had mercy on this woman and forgave her with the direction that she go and sin no more. Likewise, we are to be compassionate, but we are not called to compromise our integrity. We stand for righteousness and holiness.

RECEIVE THE BLESSING

God wants to bless us with His mercy, and He wants to see that mercy extended through us to our loved ones, our church family, our business associates, our neighbors, and our fellow students. It begins with us experiencing God’s mercy, and continues with our determination to treat people better than they deserve. If we do this, God will bless us, and make us a blessing to others.

- *Rev. John Baros is pastor of the Apostolic Faith Church in Roseburg, Oregon.*

A Formula for **OVERCOMING**

FROM A SERMON BY JOHN MUSGRAVE

The Book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John while he was in exile on the island of Patmos around A.D. 95. Throughout the Book, it is apparent that the Lord looks at the Church and wants His people to have victory. He wants us to be overcomers.

John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, when he saw the glorified, risen Christ and received of Him messages for seven churches in Asia—Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Those messages are recorded in Revelation, chapters 2-3. Each follows the same basic structure and includes a praise and/or criticism of the church being addressed and, if applicable, a reproof and warning with instructions for correction. Encouragement is also given, and a reward is promised to those who overcome.

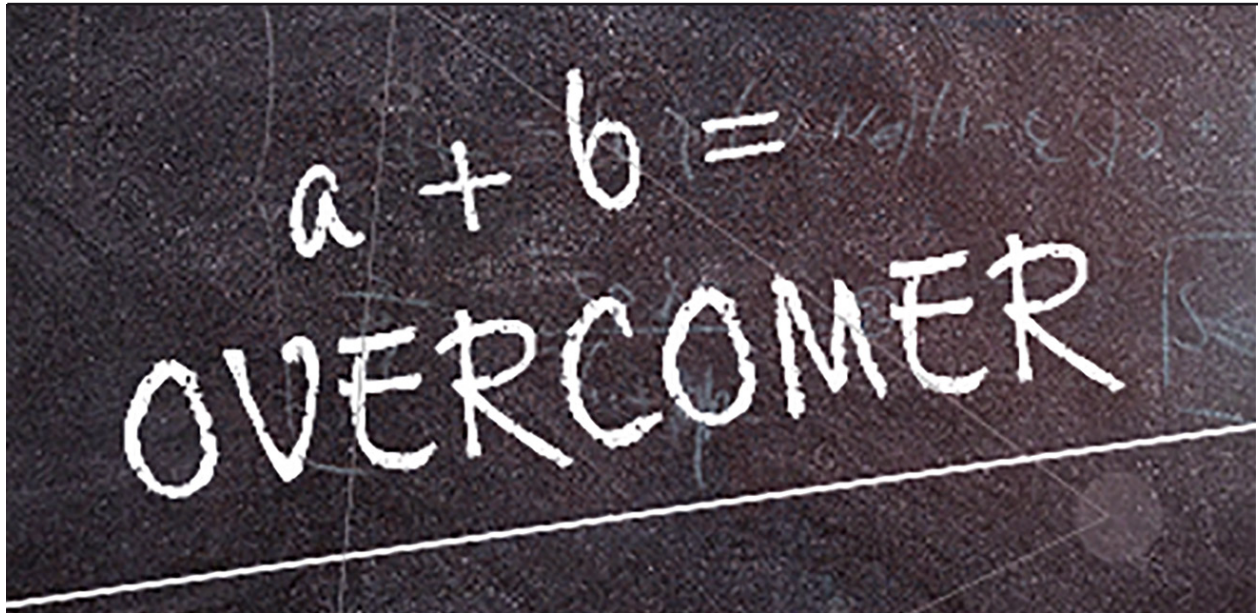
The messages to the churches tell us that God has an intimate relationship with the Body of Christ, and that He is watching and looking for a Church without spot or wrinkle—one that is holy and without blemish. For example, in the message to the church in Sardis, we learn that their works were not found to be perfect before God. This confirms that our Lord is watching, and it tells us that holiness is what He is looking for when He looks into the Church.

The seven messages generally have been viewed in three different ways. Some interpret them in a strictly literal sense as pertaining specifically to the seven locations addressed. Some view them as representing seven different periods of the historical Church. Others view them as highlighting various conditions

found in churches of every era. However, each message closes with the admonition, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 2:7). No matter how we view the messages, they are applicable today if we wish to be overcomers.

In Revelation 12:11 we find the formula for how to overcome: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." To get the right results from any formula, all the elements must be present and the formula must be followed correctly. Years ago I worked at a feed plant in Montana. One day we were making a batch of pellets for cattle. We combined the ingredients and then put the mixture through a pelleting mill. As the batter came out and fell onto a die similar to a table, rollers went over it, pushing the ingredients through holes in the die. Below that was a cutting blade, which was designed to slice the extruded material into pellets. However, on that day, the pellet material was not holding together. Only crumbles were coming through the holes in the die. We adjusted the pellet mill, the amount of molasses, and the steam, but still there were only crumbles. What came out would have made good chicken feed, but it was not acceptable for cattle. We had a problem, so we looked again at the ingredients and found that we had omitted the bentonite, which is a binding agent. When making the big pellets needed for cattle—ones that are three-quarters to one inch around—a binding agent is needed. We had forgotten that ingredient. To be an overcomer, we must follow the formula using all of the ingredients.

The word *overcome* means "to conquer or defeat, to prevail over, or to overpower or overwhelm."



This definition indicates that we have an adversary. God's Word clearly defines who that adversary is. In Revelation 12:9 we read, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

When I started working at the feed plant, I was replacing a foreman who had been terminated. One of my subordinates was that man's good friend, and he actively did what he could to make my work more difficult. I am certain he wanted my dismissal, and perhaps he wanted my job. At the very least, he would have liked for his friend to be hired back. He was my adversary; he opposed me. That is one of the definitions of an adversary—a person who opposes.

Other dictionary definitions for the word *adversary* are "The Adversary," "The Devil," and "Satan." As an adversary, the devil wants more than your job; he wants to destroy you. He wants your soul, he wants my soul, and he wants them to end in a lost eternity. We are given this warning of him in 1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." This is why we need to have the right formula. This is why we need to be overcomers.

Looking back at John's formula, we see that the "blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 12:11) is the first and most important element by which we overcome. We are sinners by birth and by choice. On our own, we cannot change our condition. However, Satan's defeat was accomplished on the Cross at Calvary when Jesus gave His life as the sacrifice for our sins. John wrote in Revelation 1:5, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the

dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." When we repent of our sins, looking to Jesus as our sacrifice, His Blood cleanses us from sins—we are washed in the Blood of the Lamb. There is no other way to receive salvation. There is no substitute ingredient for that.

The Apostle Peter presented the same thought in 1 Peter 1:18-19, where we read, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." We need to be washed in the Blood of the Lamb if we are to be overcomers.

We also overcome by the word of our testimony; that is the second element in overcoming. This means being a faithful witness to the work and the grace of God. If you have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb and have had that Blood applied to your heart, you have a wonderful and a powerful testimony. In Psalm 107:2 we find, "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." This verse gives us the definition of an overcomer, and also presents a responsibility.

A few years ago I was called to jury duty and was selected for a criminal trial. During the trial, several witnesses were brought in to testify. Each one was asked to give the details of a crime which had been committed at their place of work on a certain day. At the close of their testimonies, this final question was asked: "Is the person who committed the crime present in the courtroom today?" One by one, each witness pointed to

the defendant. That was a powerful testimony! People can and will debate religion. They will debate the validity of the Bible. They will debate what constitutes salvation. They will debate how we should serve God. However, they cannot debate our personal testimonies.

Opportunities to present a personal testimony come about in many ways. In 1 Peter 3:15 we are told to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” Several years ago a medical examiner gave me a test necessary for obtaining a life insurance policy. This person took my blood pressure and a blood sample. Then he asked me some questions. One was, “Do you smoke?” I answered, “No.” The next question was “Have you ever smoked?” I said, “Yes.” Then I was asked, “When did you quit?” I responded, “January 4, 1984.” I remember wondering at that time if he had ever received an answer as direct as that. The examiner went on to ask, “Do you drink alcohol or use drugs?” I answered no to both. Then he asked, “Have you ever?” I said, “Yes.” The next question was, “When did you quit?” To which my answer was, “January 4, 1984.” Your personal testimony is real! It cannot be refuted if it is a testimony born by the Blood of Jesus. The power of that Blood makes a change in one’s heart and life in a moment of time. When this happens, you will know it.

We overcome by not loving our lives “unto the death”—we do not love our lives so much that we are afraid of death. From the first martyr, Stephen, to this present day, countless Christians have sealed their testimonies by paying the ultimate price for their faith. However, in a country that does not persecute Christians or threaten our lives because of our faith, how do we fulfill this requirement? This is an ingredient in being an overcomer, so it is important. Our Lord told His disciples in Matthew 16:24-25, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” Our hearts and our lives must be consecrated fully to God and His service.

After the Children of Israel were delivered from bondage in Egypt, they were given a warning not to forget God. We can apply that warning to our nations, and to our lives today. It is found in Deuteronomy 8:11-14, “Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and

all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God.” Paul wrote also in 2 Timothy 3:1-4, “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” We must be careful to maintain our testimonies, and keep God first in our lives.

In reading through the seven messages to the churches in Asia, we find that there are eternal benefits to being an overcomer. Revelation 22:14 says, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.” The Tree of Life was in the midst of the Garden of Eden, and Adam and Eve had access to it before the fall. Then, when sin entered into the world, access was taken away. As overcomers, we once more will have access to the Tree of Life, which is eternal life, in Heaven. Another benefit is we will be clothed with white raiment as part of the pure Bride of Christ. We will sit down with Christ, to reign and rule with Him, even as He overcame and sat down next to His Father on His throne. Overcomers will rejoice with the hosts of Heaven throughout eternity, because they overcame the adversary.

A final admonition was given to each of the seven churches: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches” (Revelation 2:7). The Holy Spirit is continually calling after hearts. He wants you and me to be full overcomers. He wants us to enjoy the blessings and the benefits of salvation. Part of the message to the church of Laodicea was, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock” (Revelation 3:20). What do you normally do when someone comes to your door and knocks? If you want to see the one who is knocking, you open the door. If you are hopeful he or she will go away, you ignore the knocking. The remainder of that verse says, “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” The Lord is knocking at hearts’ doors today, and He does not want to go away. He wants each of us to be full overcomers, enjoying victory.

If you have not answered Christ’s knock, you can today. You can have the Blood applied to your life. Jesus will give you a testimony and a life worth living. Will you let Him in today?

- *Rev. John Musgrave is Corporate Treasurer of the Apostolic Faith work, and a minister at the church in Portland, Oregon.*

YOUR **NOTES**

What did you take away from the articles you read?

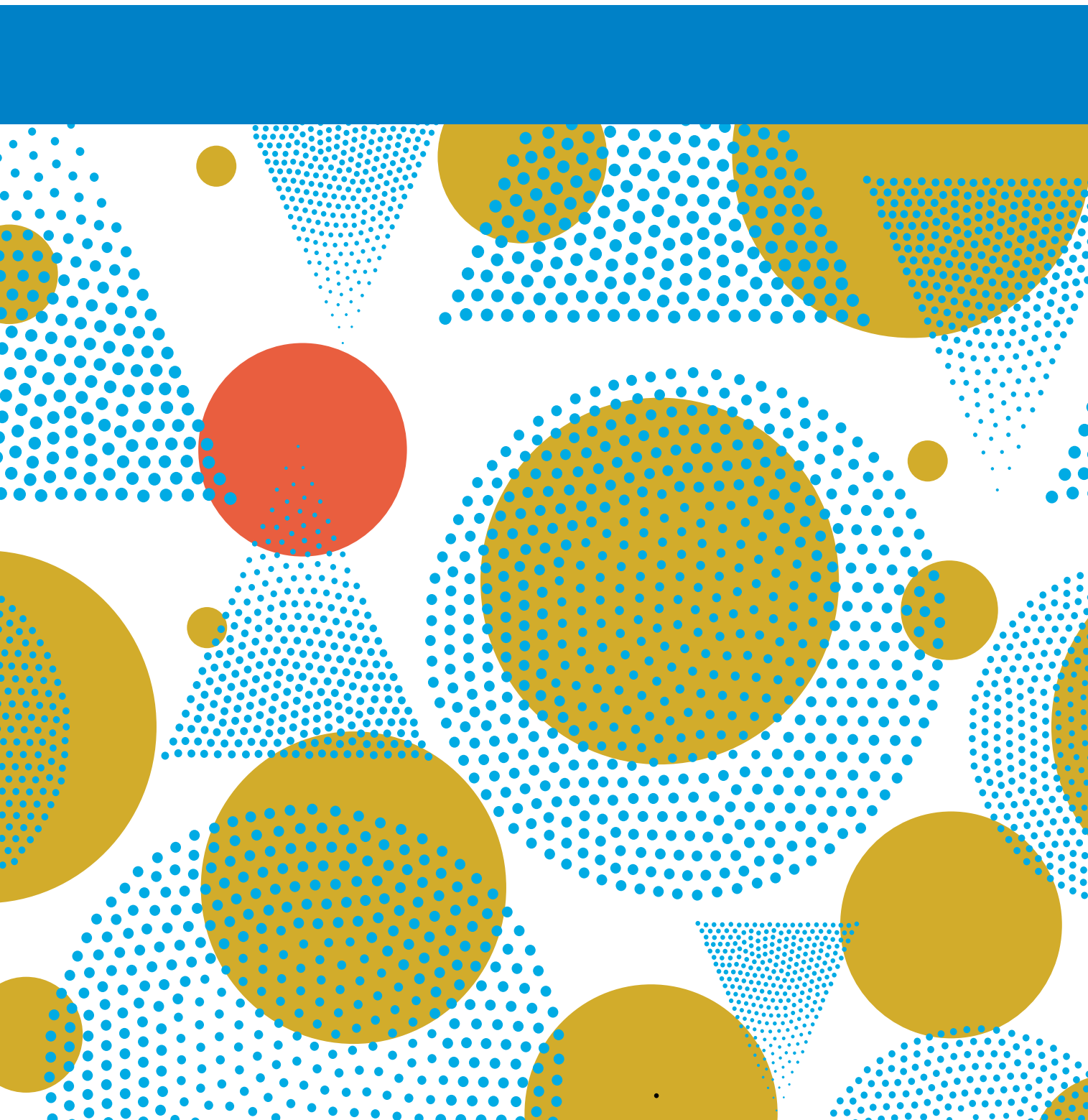
The Way of Holiness

1 Corinthians 1-4

A Heart of Mercy

A Formula for Overcoming

WITNESS



PLAYING HER PART

Serving God as a musician is one of the joys of this mother's life.



BY KRISTI RILER

It was my privilege to be born into a Christian home. My mom was raised in the Apostolic Faith Church, where my grandfather was a pastor. She loved the Lord as a child and was saved at a young age. My dad's mother also loved God and raised my dad and his siblings the best that she knew how. When he was grown, he was invited to special services at the Apostolic Faith Church in Puyallup, Washington. There he heard the Gospel in more fullness and soon gave his heart to the Lord. A few years later, my parents met and then were married on Valentine's Day in 1970. I was born in November of 1971. My brother, Robbie, was born in February of 1975, and my sister, Andria (Ondi), in May of 1977.

My parents were very involved in the activities at church. My dad was a minister for many years and eventually became a pastor. My parents taught Sunday school and helped with youth activities, and my mom was also in the choir and orchestra. As I grew up, I saw their example and knew that I, too, wanted to serve the Lord with whatever talents He gave me. On my sixth birthday, I had my first piano lesson and loved it! I was excited to learn and couldn't wait to be able to play in church someday.

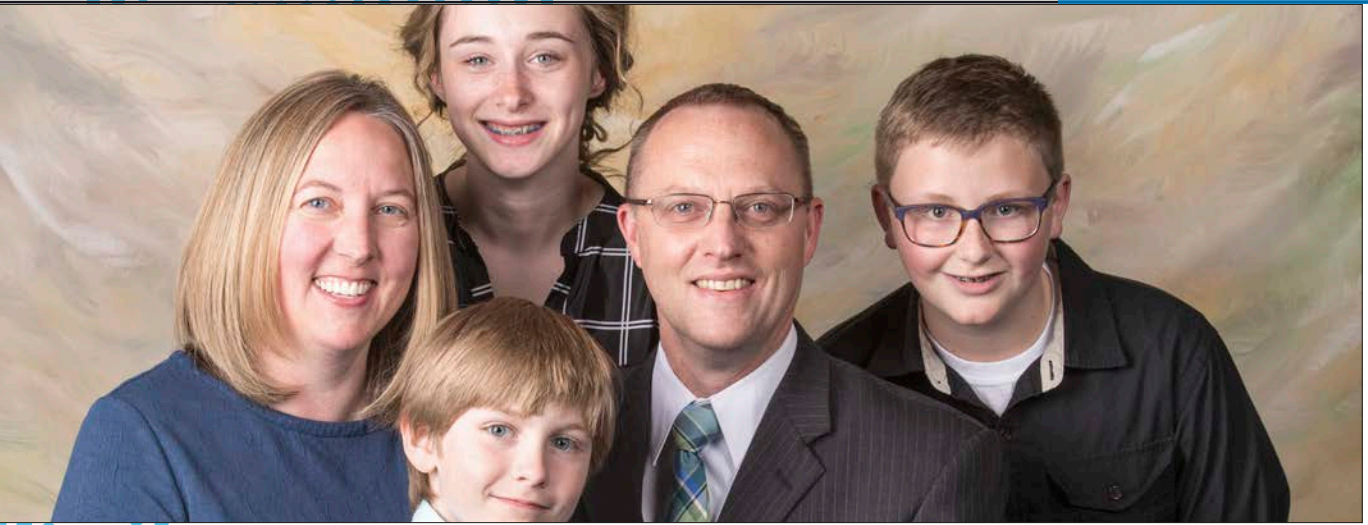
It was just a few months later, on Easter Sunday morning, that I knelt at an altar of prayer in our church in Chehalis, Washington, and gave my heart to Jesus. My parents had been faithful to read the Bible and pray with my siblings and me, and we learned that Jesus died for us and how much He loves us. I remember picturing Jesus on the Cross and truly realizing what He did for me. Being so young, I didn't have a lot of sin in my life, but I told Jesus

I was sorry for anything I had done to hurt Him and that I wanted to serve Him, and He saved me right then. Later, God sanctified me and filled me with His precious Holy Spirit. Those three experiences are such an important foundation for a Christian and that is certainly what has helped keep me on the right path.

During the fourth grade I started playing flute and found that I loved it as much as piano. Before long, it was my privilege to play in the church orchestra and also solos and in instrumental groups. Then at the age of thirteen, I was asked to play piano for a regular church service for the first time. I was so excited! To this day, I consider it a privilege to play instruments and sing in church as my service to the Lord.

After graduating from high school in 1990, I got a job in Portland, Oregon. At eighteen years of age, it was a big move for me, coming from such a small town to the big city. I was careful to pray about my decisions and I thought I knew the plans the Lord had for me. I loved Jesus and always wanted His will in my life no matter what my own desires were—that is still how I feel today. Through some difficult circumstances, I learned to lean on the Lord and dove into the Bible like never before! It was a time of spiritual maturing.

It was during this time that I met a young man named Gary. He played saxophone and I played piano in a small ensemble at church. We laughed a lot and enjoyed spending time together preparing the music. Music was a huge part of his life, too, and we became good friends. I could tell there was something special about Gary and there was no doubt in my mind that God came first in his life. We learned »



Kristi with her family in 2016.

Bible verses and prayed together, which is the best way to start a relationship! It wasn't long before we realized this was more than just a friendship, and we were married on July 31, 1993.

Soon after Gary and I were married, my brother Robbie died in a skiing accident, just two days before his nineteenth birthday. Thankfully, he was saved and ready for Heaven, but even knowing that, it was an extremely difficult time in our lives. As newlyweds, it could have torn us apart. However, God held us close as we went through it together, and we grew spiritually as we looked for Scriptures to help us continue on. Robbie's favorite hymn was "It Is Well with My Soul," and every time I think of those words, my prayer is to always have that peace in my heart and to be able to say that it is well with my soul.

In 1997, God opened the door for us to relocate to Chehalis, where Gary would teach band at the same middle school I had attended as a child. God made it plain that we were to move, and everything fell into place so fast that it almost seemed unreal. A job opened up for me and God provided a house for us to buy right away. It can be very exciting to trust in the Lord and let Him do the leading. We never know what blessings are around the next corner!

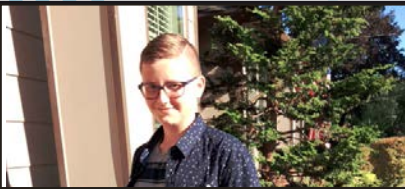
Once settled in Chehalis, we longed to start a family of our own but that did not happen. Again, we had to put our hands in the Lord's and ask for His direction. After many classes and much waiting and prayer, in January of 2001, we received a phone call while I was at work about an eleven-month-old girl who needed a home. We loved Amanda the moment we laid eyes on her, and hoped that we would be her forever family. There were a lot of unknowns with her case, but one thing I *did* know was that I was going to continue to ask for God's will in everything—not my own.

Later that year we got a call about a baby who was only three days old and needed a home where he might be adopted. With prayerful hearts and great anticipation, we picked up a beautiful baby boy the following day. We had absolutely nothing for a baby so we stopped at a consignment store and bought whatever we thought we might need. It was a whirlwind experience, but our hearts were overflowing with love for that little guy. About nine months later Ethan's adoption was finalized, and the following December, our daughter's was as well.

Over the next five years we opened our hearts and our home to two more children whom we loved dearly but were not able to adopt. In June of 2007, we received a call about a



Amanda



Ethan



Jaron

There were many uncertainties before each child was adopted, but God was with us through it all.

one-month-old baby boy who needed a home. We were so excited! We went to meet him and fell in love once again. How could we love another child so much? We brought Jaron home and his adoption was finalized in December, the quickest one yet! There were many uncertainties before each child was adopted, but God was with us through it all and we have been blessed with three precious gifts from above.

God gave us sixteen wonderful years in Chehalis before He called us to move back to Portland where Gary would be the music leader at our headquarters church. God placed people in Gary's life who found him a teaching position that would work with his church schedule. Then last year, Gary was hired as the band director at the very high school where our own teenagers attend! What a blessing that is.

Moving back to Portland was like coming home for Gary because he grew up here, but for the rest of us, it was a bit more of an adjustment, and

we are thankful to all who prayed for us as we made the transition. For the most part I have been able to be a stay-at-home-mom, something I only dreamed would be possible, and have helped out at the church office which has been such a blessing to me. God has been so good to us.

As Gary and I continue to serve the Lord together and raise our children in the Gospel, my constant desire is to stay close to the Lord, seek His will in my life, and serve Him with my whole heart. When I look back on my life and reflect on all that God has brought me through, I know that whatever the future holds, He will never leave me or forsake me.

■ **Kristi Riler attends the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon. She is an accomplished pianist and flautist, choir and orchestra member, and participates in musical groups. Her husband is the Director of Music and is also on the ministerial staff.**

Kristi playing her flute in a church service in Portland, Oregon.



I'VE GOT IT!

BY NOLAN ROBY



Top to bottom: Nolan (middle) ready to serve at mealtime in the Portland camp meeting restaurant; With his wife, Joan, in 1976; As a child (leaning against the tire) with his parents and three siblings in 1939.

Tracing my “roots” back to 1907, my mother’s parents came to Ellis Island, New York, from Italy, eventually settling in the little coal-mining town of Centerville, Iowa. My mother was raised in a denomination where she was not introduced to the Christian faith and salvation from sin. My father’s family was originally from England, and he had no real understanding of salvation either. My parents were simple farm folk when the Lord enlightened them and showed them a better way of life.

My father had been unable to lay aside some habits that he knew were wrong. He used to say that one of his hands was yellow from smoking tobacco. He would throw his cigarettes away with the resolve to quit, and then end up on his hands and knees looking in the bushes for what he had tossed out. He was bound by the tobacco habit.

In the early 1930s, a man came to Centerville who had visited the West Coast, and he had, among his belongings, some Apostolic Faith Church literature. My father was working on a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project—a government program that put the unemployed to work constructing roads, bridges, parks, and public buildings. One day he was telling his woes to a fellow worker, and that man said he knew someone who had tracts that told how to be delivered from sinful habits. He gave my father a tract entitled, “Can a Christian Use Tobacco?” It said God could deliver the individual who prayed.

My father had only a seventh grade education, but he had a lot of common

His declaration after receiving salvation marked a milestone that he looks back on many decades later.

sense. When he read that a man could be set free if he would just get honest with God, he gave his heart to the Lord, and God did deliver him. My mother watched his life, and after a time she also gave her life to God, so I was born into a Christian home. My folks corresponded with the Apostolic Faith ministry in Portland, Oregon, and in 1943, our family moved to Medford, Oregon, to be part of this fellowship. What a wonderful beginning it was for me!

We were a poor family, and when we first moved, we lived out in an orchard for three months during the harvest time. I remember the first night we went into the church in Medford. My older brother and I were just barefooted boys. We knelt at the altar of prayer, and I saw the most beautiful sight in the world: dozens of people who were rejoicing in their connection with God. I had never seen a prayer service like that, but it did not trouble me. Rather, the smiles on their faces made an impression on me. Something said to my six-year-old heart, "These people are truly happy."

From then on, I had the privilege of sitting under the sound of the Gospel and seeing the changes God made in hearts and lives. One man named Willard was known in the town because of his problems with alcohol. He came to the altar and prayed, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," and the Lord saved that man in a moment and changed his life. As I observed such events, the Spirit of God spoke to my heart.

My mother and father prayed for their children. There were four of us boys, and Mother would stay on her knees until all of us were home and in bed asleep. Because of my parents' prayers, I knew what it meant to be under conviction. Sometimes I wished for a few days off from that guilt, but they kept praying.

The year I was a junior in high school, a young man from the church bought a 1952 Chevy two-door coupe. He called me and said, "Would you like to go for a ride?" Looking back now, I realize he was befriending me. The Lord was using him to help draw me into the Gospel. Before long I told two of my friends from the church, "I am under Holy Ghost conviction, and I have a feeling I am going to be getting saved." They said, "That's all right with us!" I was glad they understood.

On January 6, 1953, I went forward to the altar of prayer and knelt across from my Sunday school teacher. In just a few moments of honesty, I opened my heart to the Lord, and He made a wonderful change in my life. He put a peace in my heart that only He can give, one that passes all understanding. I looked my teacher in the eye and said, "I've got it." God gave me something in my heart that I knew was real. »



Top: Nolan preaching in a Portland church service.
Bottom: The Robys at a recent Portland camp meeting.

The heavens opened upon my young heart and the Spirit of God flooded my room. It was my first time to have such an encounter with the Holy Spirit.

That night I did not wait for my father to take me home. Instead I ran to our house and told my mother, who had not been able to attend the service, that God had saved me. Before that day, the enemy of my soul had said to me, "If you get salvation, you will never keep it," so I went upstairs and put an X on the calendar in my room. The next day when I came home from school, I knelt down beside my bed and thanked God for a whole day of victory. Then I put another X on the calendar. For two solid weeks I marked that calendar. Then I looked at those marks and used some logic, saying to myself, "If God can keep me for two weeks, He can keep me the rest of my life." That was true, and it has proved out.

God helped me to continue seeking after Him. Having lived in a home where the doctrines of the Bible were upheld, and having attended Sunday school for several years, I was no stranger to the doctrine of entire sanctification. The Sunday after I was saved, my heart was wanting more of God. That evening the invitation song at the end of the sermon asked, "Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid? Your heart does the Spirit control?" As I knelt to pray, my heart was open to God and I consecrated all of myself the best I knew how. The Spirit of God witnessed to my heart that God had indeed heard my prayer, and I knew that I was sanctified. Others around me were also blessed that night as we prayed.

A few weeks later, my heart was hungry for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. At the end of every service, I prayed when the invitation was given. One evening the Lord helped my faith by the testimony of a lady who said that after being saved and sanctified, God baptized her with the Holy Ghost two months and two days after she was saved. As I heard that, faith sprang up in my heart. I thought, Could it be that God would baptize me with the Holy Ghost two months and two days after I was saved?

Not long after that evening, I went home after church to an empty room adjacent to my bedroom and opened the Bible to the

second chapter of Acts. As I read that chapter and the next, my heart was so hungry for more of God and I prayed, "What can I do?" It seemed there was no reply, so I went to my bedroom and laid down. Then the heavens opened upon my young heart and the Spirit of God flooded my room. It was my first time to have such an encounter with the Holy Spirit. I began to laugh and so put a pillow over my face to stifle the sound. The next morning I told my father what had happened, and he said to just keep my heart open to God and He would be faithful. As you might guess, two months and two days after I was saved, God came down and filled my soul with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and I spoke as the Spirit bore witness in a language unknown to me.

As I continued in the Gospel, I married a young woman who also had chosen to serve God. She was one of nine children, and she testifies that there was a "security blanket" over their home—early in the morning, she would hear her father down in the living room praying for his children. One Sunday afternoon when she was thirteen years old, she and a friend came to church on roller skates. She prayed that day, giving her life to the Lord, and He saved her. Although she did not have deep sins in her life because she had been sheltered from those things, the Lord really made a change in her heart.

My wife and I settled down and had a family of two boys. We were both Sunday school teachers and active in many other areas of the church. Early in my Christian walk, I had tried to take up the trombone and be in the church music, but then, in time, I laid it aside.

One day our older son became very ill with convulsions. As my wife and I prayed, I told the Lord, "If You heal our boy, I will do anything." The Lord was listening. Our son got better, but God did not forget my prayer. Later as I was doing night custodial work in a banking institution, God's Spirit spoke to my heart, "Nolan, where art thou?" I simply looked up and said, "Lord, I will play the trombone." The days that followed were busy as I took my trombone out of the closet and

We just tried to follow the Lord, being faithful in the little things, and keeping our consecrations intact, and God began to give us opportunities to put some of those commitments into action.



Sitting with ministers at a Portland church service.

began taking lessons, and then began playing in the church orchestra, which I did for eleven years.

After marrying, I had many thoughts about our usefulness in the service of God, but I never shared my deepest contemplations with anyone, not even my wife. After I began to play the trombone, I tried to continue keeping myself yielded to the Lord, and God began to open doors. In time our pastor called me aside and asked about my consecrations. I told him I wanted to do all that God had called me to do. The subject of preaching came up, and I said that I felt God had been speaking to me about that for awhile, but I did not want to tell anyone in case I had it wrong. That night, five years after we were married, I shared with my wife. She, like Mary of old, "pondered these things in her heart" as we continued to serve God together. So my "call to preach" had no lightning bolt or exceptional manifestation. We just tried to follow the Lord, being faithful in the little things, and keeping our consecrations intact, and God began to give us opportunities to put some of those commitments into action.

God was always there to help in any situation. Once while working in an office building in the dark of the night, I inadvertently stepped into an elevator shaft. As I looked up after landing at the bottom, I sent up a prayer to God. To this day I do not know how I got out, and miraculously

without a scratch. Although the shaft was only at the first floor level, I never should have escaped without injury.

The Lord has healed as well. On one occasion as a boy, I was so very sick and writhing in pain. I called my father to my bedroom to pray, and when he did, I was healed instantly. Another time, while traveling with our family, I was sitting in the front seat of the car next

to my mother. She became deathly sick. I was not saved yet at the time, but I put my head between my knees and prayed a silent prayer, and God instantly healed her. As an older man, I have twice been diagnosed with life-threatening issues, but after prayer and exhaustive tests, the doctors sent me home with a clean bill of health.

Over the years, God has given my wife and me many privileges. In 1976, we were asked to move to Dallas, Oregon, to pastor the church there. Subsequently, we had the privilege to pastor in Tacoma and Seattle, Washington, and Roseburg and Grants Pass, Oregon.

Joan and I have been married over sixty years and have children and grandchildren. God has been more than faithful. I was a teenager, then a middle-aged person. Now I'm at that age when people say, "How are you feeling?" But the Gospel is still thrilling to me, and my heart nearly bursts with praise and glory to God. There has been one blessing after another, and there is the hope of a great eternity with the Lord.

■ **Rev. Nolan Roby began preaching in 1962 and served as the pastor of the Apostolic Faith Churches in Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, and Roseburg, Dallas, and Grants Pass, Oregon. He retired from pastoring in 2002 and recently he and his wife moved to Portland, Oregon, where he serves on the ministerial staff.**

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EVIDENCE



[• Donna Copko •]



The Lord is great. I praise Him for all He has done. I am so glad that I was raised in a Christian home, but that is not what makes someone a Christian. Each individual must ask the Lord to be their Savior. As a young girl, I claimed to be saved, but the Lord kept asking me questions like, "When were you saved?" I couldn't pinpoint a time that I was saved, and that bothered me. I would wake up in the night crying, because I knew the Lord would return soon and I was not ready. Finally, when I was eleven, I humbled myself before the Lord, admitting that I was a sinner. I asked Him to forgive my sins, and in a moment of time He put such joy in my heart, and I felt different inside.

The Lord has been with me since then, leading every step of the way. Our God is an awesome, awesome God, and I praise Him.



[• Duane Wilson •]



Thirty-three years ago I dialed a wrong number and a lady answered and said, "Jesus loves you." I was beaten down by life, and bound and shackled by sin. I didn't see a way out, but God was very faithful. He directed me to a brother in this church, Phillip Burnette. I gave him a ride to church, and when we entered, he asked, "Where are you going to sit?" I said, "Halfway." He said, "If you are going to go halfway, go on down to the front." I am thankful that I did. I heard the songs of Zion and the testimonies. Then the Word of God was preached, and the question was asked, "Who are you serving?" God knows how to speak to people. I knew I was not serving God and that I wasn't doing things right. When the altar call went forth, I went down and cried from the very depths of my heart, "God, do something for me." The Lord did not disappoint; He put my life back together. I am glad I can stand before the redeemed and say that the Lord is good!



[• Josh Friesen •]



I'm so thankful for all the Lord has done for me. I started high school recently, and the Lord has been with me every single day. Last Sunday, I was kind of stressed about some things, but I thought I shouldn't be, because the Lord is all that matters. Shortly after that, I did my devotions and then turned on some Christian music, and the Lord just met me in my room. He filled me with such peace and joy. It was amazing.



[• Ethel Hodson •]



Sixty-nine years ago, God saved my dad, a drunken gambler who had left his family on the East Coast three years earlier. God had led him across the country to where he could hear an outdoor church service. The church workers told him God could save him and change him, giving him a different life. He prayed and God did just that.

My dad contacted us, and after nine months my mom was willing to bring our family out here to Portland to be reunited with him. I did not want to come because I had just finished high school and had been offered a scholarship to a teacher's college. However, my mom said Dad would want to see me and she would need help with my younger siblings, so I came. After we were here, God talked to my heart, making me willing to pray, and He saved me.

Later, I married a young man who had come back to the faith of his childhood. We raised five children together and now have grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Four years ago God took my husband Home, but God is with me. I turn to Him and He is there and answers every need.



[• Arthur Ruiz •]



God is everything to me; He is my Father, my Friend, and my Savior. I was born and raised in this Gospel, but proximity to the truth did not prevent me from experiencing the world, and for many years I turned my back on the Lord. God was faithful, though, and He cornered me up one day. Through a simple prayer in one of those very early five a.m. services we have in the Philippines at Christmas time, He saved me. I surrendered all to Him, and from that moment on, I have had praise and thanksgiving in my heart.

Years have passed, and I cannot say it has always been easy, but God has always been there. He is with me wherever I go. I live in the Philippines and could feel the Spirit of the Lord there. Now, visiting Portland, I feel that same sweet Spirit.

Though there are many inspiring things in my life right now, I am most inspired to serve God. I want to give Him my all.



[• Matt Hanson •]



I grew up in a home where we went to church for one hour each week, and then did the best we could. I never knew if my best was good enough to make it to Heaven. I would try to live right, but didn't have victory, so then I would go to confession and say, "Oh, and I did all these bad things." I thought that was all there was to religion, but God showed me I could have a personal relationship with Him and an assurance of Heaven. I gave my life to Him, and He saved me.

One of my favorite songs is "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms." We can lean on Jesus, and He will hold us up. This world has so many terrible things in it that when we open our eyes, we see darkness, but we can look to the Light. When we see Jesus, we see victory, peace, and contentment—things the world doesn't have. I am thankful I can lean on the Lord every day.

JUST ASK

A PERSONAL
REFLECTION FROM
DAVE GREEN

"Just Ask." That sounds simple, doesn't it? Recently, a couple of incidents—an email exchange and a remarkable statistic—prompted me to reflect on this common phrase and some spiritual applications from God's Word.

As a building contractor, I periodically am involved in dealing with local bureaucracies to secure permits for construction projects. Awhile back, after submitting materials for a preliminary hearing before a planning board, I received an email stating that the meeting would be postponed due to a lack of quorum. It had been made clear that the process I was undertaking had timeframe benchmarks to keep it from expiring, so I emailed back mentioning my assumption that an extension would be granted since the delay was beyond my control. The response was that I needed to formally request an extension to my application due to the meeting cancellation. Just ask! Since my intentions were clear, I engaged in a little involuntary eye rolling, but of course I complied. After all, how hard is it to ask?

In the spiritual realm, God certainly is aware of our needs and easily can anticipate our desires. However, He still instructs us to ask. Great benefits are promised, but it seems God is looking for some careful consideration on our part regarding asking.

Ask Unselfishly

When Solomon became king over Israel, God recognized his humility and, in 1 Kings 3:5, instructed him to "ask what I shall give thee." Imagine—a blank check from the

Creator of everything! God knew the young king could be trusted to ask unselfishly, and he did: he requested wisdom to rightly judge the people of Israel. In response, God promised not only to grant Solomon wisdom in unequalled measure, but also the riches and honor he had *not* asked for.

James 4:3 cautions us not to "ask amiss." That would surely include prayers motivated by selfishness. However, when we pray unselfishly, out of hearts that are motivated by love for God and a desire for His kingdom to be advanced, He not only answers our prayers but may choose to bless us in other ways as well.

Ask Properly

An infant's only way to express his or her needs is to fret and cry, and as parents, we learn to interpret that method of communication and respond accordingly. As our children develop verbal skills though, we want them to learn that crying for what they want (or saying "gimme"!) is not the appropriate way to voice requests. Then we begin the process of reminding our children, "How do you ask?" as a means of teaching them to ask properly.

Our heavenly Father is no less patient with His children. Yes, there may be times as Christians when we feel deep needs we cannot express in words, and Romans 8:26 tells

us that the Holy Spirit will intercede for us with “groanings which cannot be uttered.” However, when we can enunciate our requests, there are Scriptural criteria for how to ask properly.

Matthew 21:22 instructs us to ask believing; similarly, James 1:6 says to ask in faith. Summoning faith at times may require reflection on past answers to prayer we or others have experienced, or searching the Scriptures for encouragement to believe. For example, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used the example of a son making request of an earthly father, and said how much more our heavenly Father would give good things to them that ask Him (Matthew 7:9-11).

John 14:13 mentions asking in Jesus’ name. Jesus paid the price for our redemption and He is our advocate to God the Father, but our prayers must align with His heart and purpose in order for us to truly pray in His name.

In 1 John 5:14 we find we should ask according to God’s will. This obviously requires us to acknowledge that God knows what is best for us, and to subordinate our own desires and preferred outcomes to His perfect will.

Other aspects of asking properly are asking in harmony with God (John 15:7), and in agreement with fellow believers (Matthew 18:19). Yes, God does expect more than a “gimme,” but He will certainly reward us graciously when we learn to ask properly.

Ask Honestly

When Jesus walked this earth, He was asked many things, but frequently the questions posed to Him came from those trying to entrap Him or undermine His teachings. On more than one occasion, the religious rulers challenged Jesus to show them a sign even though the miracles He had done in the area were numerous. Jesus, recognizing their wrong motives, responded that no sign would be given. Wrong motives clearly are a “deal breaker.”

God will respond to an honest query even when it is posed in a moment of confusion or weakness. When John the Baptist sent disciples from his prison cell to inquire of Jesus if He truly was the Messiah, they were told to share with John what they had seen and heard: “The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached” (Luke 7:22). All these were signs of the coming Messiah foretold long before by the Prophet Isaiah, thus providing proof beyond doubt in answer to John’s honest query.

Ask Boldly

The Lord does not want us to be fearful or reluctant to bring an honest request to Him. Scripture relates occasions when the disciples did not understand some of Jesus’ teachings but were fearful to ask Him (see Mark 9:32 and Luke 9:45). Certainly Jesus was aware of His followers’ internal questions, but because they failed to ask, they missed out on clarification that He gladly would have given. Hebrews 4:16 challenges us to “come boldly unto the throne of grace,” and we are assured of a positive response if we do.

Ask Thoughtfully

In Mark 10:37, two of Jesus’ disciples requested a position of status in His coming kingdom. Jesus’ response was, “Ye know not what ye ask.” They did not really understand the implications of their request. We sometimes hear the expression, “Be careful what you ask for!” God will not give us a harmful result if we make an ignorant request, but He does expect us to learn and be thoughtful in the petitions we bring before Him.

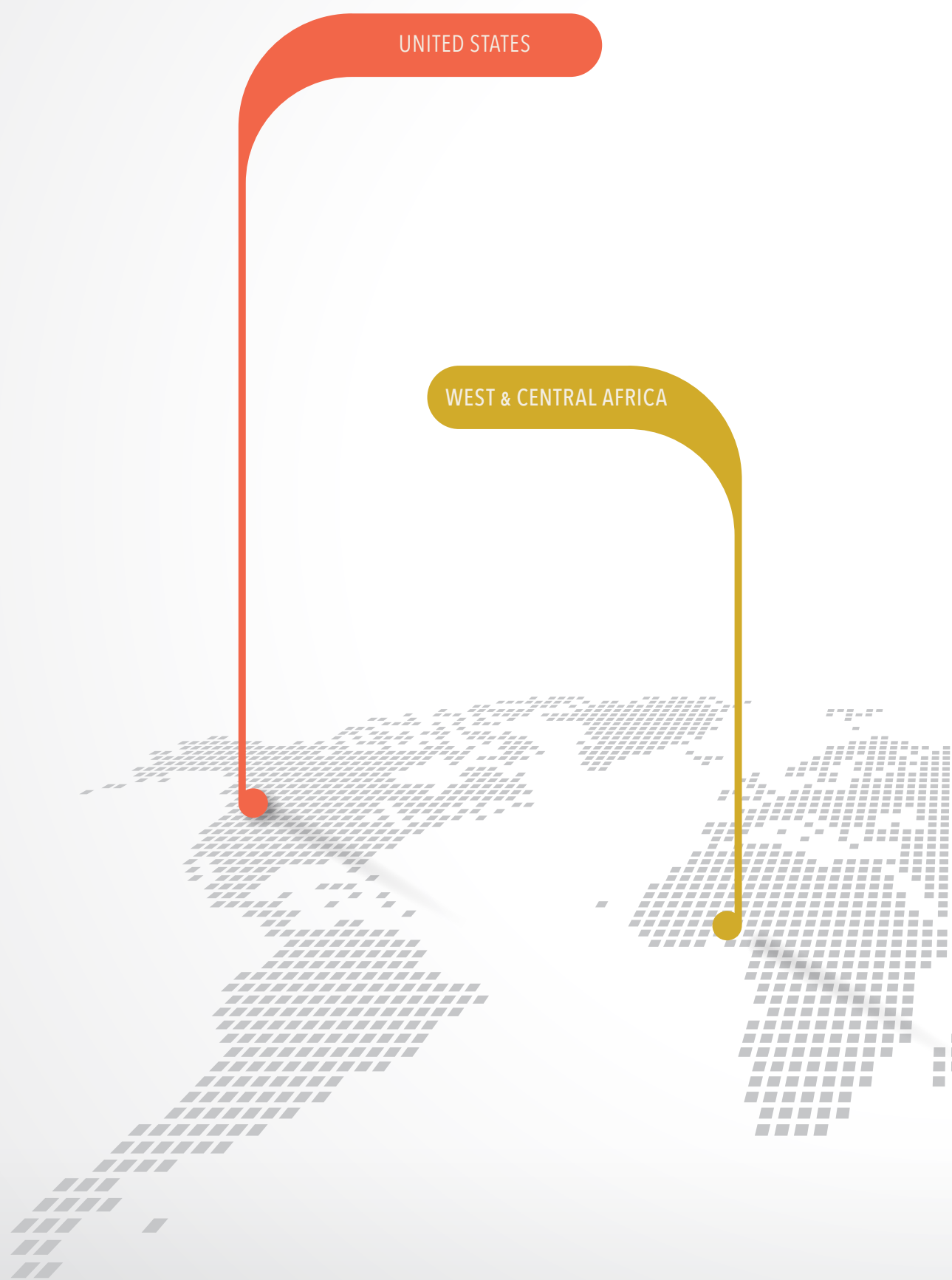
Ask Expectantly

Jesus’ simple statement in Matthew 7:7 was, “Ask, and it shall be given you.” In fact, when we read the entire verse and the one following, we see that Jesus repeated the message six times: “Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Six times! What do you think Jesus was trying to teach? Surely, the lesson was that God answers prayer. If we ask, God will answer.

The other incident that brought the topic of asking to my attention was a remarkable statistic shared by a financial adviser on a radio program. He stated that 80% of credit card holders had never asked the issuer to lower the interest rate on their card, and that all of those who *did* ask had their request granted. The card issuers know that everyone would like to have a lower interest rate—that goes without saying! However, that rate reduction is not granted unless one asks.

As we strive to ask in accordance with the instructions in God’s Word, we can expect results—for indeed, that is His promise!

■ *Dave Green is a building contractor and a member of the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon.*



WORLD REPORT

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GROUNDBREAKING

FOR A NEW INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OFFICE

October 8, 2016, marked a significant event for the Apostolic Faith Church—the groundbreaking for a new international headquarters office on the Portland campground. After a fire in February of 2014 severely damaged the chapel east of the tabernacle, the decision was made to rebuild the structure as a new world headquarters that will house the administrative and operational functions of the Apostolic Faith work. That project is now officially underway.

Over recent months, the damaged building was removed, the former basement filled in, and the site leveled. As congregation members gathered at the site on the morning of the groundbreaking ceremony, many paused to look at the architect's rendition of the proposed ten thousand square foot structure which was posted nearby, and the outline of the building perimeter which had been taped off at the site.

The groundbreaking event began with a brass ensemble playing a spirited rendition of “Jesus Saves.” Then the Superintendent General, Darrel Lee, read from Nehemiah chapter 1, which describes the Israelites’ distress that Jerusalem had been burned and wasted, and Nehemiah’s prayer for God to help them. He commented that when the chapel building was burned two years ago, church members were also distressed and prayed, and now God was beginning to give beauty for ashes.



Reverend Lee referred to the words of Reverend Loyce C. Carver at the groundbreaking ceremony of the current headquarters building, which is located across Fifty-second Avenue from the campground. On that occasion, Reverend Carver had stated, “The function of this office is to send out to the whole world the product of meetings held here—sermons that are preached and testimonies that are given—that God’s name might be glorified. These are typed and edited, printed, and distributed into all the world, free of charge. It is the same Gospel that you hear when you come to a meeting, but we try to put wings to it so it will go everywhere.”

Historical Site

Over the years the east chapel has been used for Sunday school, the camp office, Bible studies, a nursery, and more.



New Headquarters

The new building will be 10,000 square feet and is expected to be completed in 2018.



Left to right: A brass ensemble plays "Jesus Saves"; Earl Phillips, Darrel Lee, and Nolan Roby as the first shovels are turned; Members of the Portland congregation looking on.

Reverend Lee noted that this is still our charge, saying, "We will continue to do in this new building what we have done in our previous headquarters buildings for 110 years. We will strive to do it in a more widespread manner yet, because we have the benefit of the digital advances our predecessors lacked."

Reverend John Musgrave gave a prayer to conclude the ceremony. Then Reverend Earl Phillips and Reverend Nolan Roby—both retired pastors whose families came into the Gospel through the church literature—donned hard hats and turned the first shovels of dirt, signaling the official start of the building project.

Construction is expected to begin after the first of the year. The plans were drawn by an architect who used the historic setting of our campground and its existing buildings, along with the office operational functions and workflow, to create a modern office building. It was designed in a way that should meet the present needs of the Apostolic Faith organization while anticipating those of the next generation.

The construction will take up to eighteen months and is expected to be completed prior to the 2018 Portland camp meeting.

WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

STRATEGIC OUTREACH EFFORTS



Left to right: The congregation in Lagos during a Sunday morning service; Guests are welcomed at Ayisah, Ghana; The congregation at Cotonou, Benin.

Organized Gospel outreach into neighboring countries is a concerted focus at the headquarters of the Apostolic Faith work in West and Central Africa (WECA). Located in Anthony Village, Lagos, Nigeria, the headquarters staff is composed of two main management teams: one team having oversight of implementing strategies to spread the Gospel to the twenty-two countries in the WECA district, and the other supervising outreach efforts in the Lagos region and the nation of Nigeria. Both teams are led by WECA District Superintendent Adebayo Adeniran, with some staff overlapping in duties.

In November of 2016, Reverend Darrel Lee, Superintendent General of the Apostolic Faith organization, visited Nigeria, Ghana, and Benin, all of which are part of the WECA area. On the first day of his visit, November 2, activities included a formal welcome

reception at the Anthony Village campground where the WECA headquarters is located. The welcoming committee included about three dozen senior staff members who represented the two management teams.

WECA outreach team efforts

Among the responsibilities of the management team supervising outreach efforts into countries in the WECA district are the translation, printing, and distribution of Gospel literature. Several of the countries are English and French speaking, and literature is produced in a number of African languages as well. Sunday school booklets, hymn books, tracts, and a variety of other materials are also printed at the WECA headquarters.

The outreach team has seen great progress in recent years. In Ghana, for example, where Reverend Lee

Church Locations

Our work in Nigeria and Ghana began in the 1940s. Today there are over 1,000 Apostolic Faith churches throughout West & Central Africa.



Printing in Africa

Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa all have equipment for printing *The Apostolic Faith* magazine for their districts.

visited on November 3 through 6, there are now thirty-nine churches and Bible study centers. The work there continues to grow, expanding from the south of the country to the central and north. In the city of Sege (a ninety-minute drive from the Ghana headquarters in Accra), a new church building is to be constructed that will be about four times the size of the current one. This is greatly needed as the saints there have far outgrown the building they are in; during their combined meetings, only one-third of the congregation can be seated inside.

Ayisah is about a half hour away from Sege. The Apostolic Faith Church there is regularly attended by up to three hundred, and during a recent youth retreat, it was filled to capacity. The Faith Kope church is another that is under construction, where nearly one hundred currently gather for services in the partially completed building. A new campground site has been purchased for Ghana, but work on the facilities has not yet started.

The Republic of Benin is another area where the WECA work has seen tremendous results. Reverend Lee visited our work there on November 8 and 9, where he met with district church leaders and visited three churches.

The Benin headquarters church is located in Cotonou, where a recent workers' meeting included over 200, overflowing the room where they gathered. At the last Benin camp meeting, the Pk. 14 campground hosted six thousand attendees, which is the capacity of the tabernacle on site. The saints have a long-term development plan to modernize and it includes a new tabernacle that may seat ten thousand. This is a very ambitious proposal, but there is no doubt God will help them bring it to pass if Jesus tarries.

Lagos region team efforts

The Lagos team at the WECA headquarters in Anthony Village offers support to 115 branch churches and 85 Bible study centers in the Lagos region alone. The high number is the result of intentional decentralization of the Lagos region work. Because the price of fuel is high in Nigeria and the commute time to the Anthony Village headquarters is long for most of the church attendees, the saints are encouraged to attend the more local branch churches.

A Resource Development Center was dedicated at the WECA headquarters complex in January 2015. It houses several pieces of new equipment and is in full operation now, printing the latest issue of our flagship publication on site. Through the use of electronically delivered files, the printing staff is now able to print on the same schedule as Portland, and produce up to four times the number of issues that the Portland headquarters was previously able to ship to them. On a continent where there is a hunger for Gospel literature, the demand will still exceed what can be produced.

The Apostolic Faith work in WECA continues to thrive. At the last annual camp meeting in Faith City, Nigeria, attendance rose to 20,000, and included twenty-four monarchs with their wives and entourages. In addition, connections to the Apostolic Faith WECA website were made from thirty-six countries as over 7,000 tuned in to the live webcasts at www.apostolicfaithweca.org.

Rumuomasi, Nigeria, church dedicated with a resounding "amen"

In addition to his visit to Ghana and Benin, Reverend Lee also visited several Apostolic Faith churches in Nigeria. A dedication service was held on November 11, 2016 for a new Apostolic Faith Church building in Rumuomasi, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The work in that area began in the late 1980s with a few saints gathering for prayer meetings. By 1994, there were sufficient numbers to hold Sunday evening services, with ministers sent from the District Headquarters to lead the meetings. In 2001, land was purchased for a permanent church, and a children's hall was the first building constructed on the site. Most recently, the sanctuary and prayer room were added.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the beautiful new brick building included the declaration, "We cut this ribbon and dedicate this church in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." At each phrase of this statement, a resounding "amen" was heard from the congregation. Then the orchestra began to play a processional song and, along with the choir, led the way into the sanctuary.

The dedication service began with a children's program depicting the construction of the Temple under Solomon's reign and his prayer at its dedication. It



Rev. Darrel Lee with WECA leaders in Cotonou, Benin.

continued with a brief history of the Apostolic Faith work in the Rumuomasi area, and several music specials. The culmination was a vocal solo of “Bless this House” and the dedication message by Reverend Lee. The dedicatory prayer was given by Reverend Adeniran, followed by the choir singing Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus.” The service closed with the congregation singing “To God Be the Glory” and then going to prayer. A tour of the new facility was given after the dedication service.

The long-anticipated dedication in Sagamu, Nigeria

November 14, 2016, was the date of the dedication of a new Apostolic Faith Church in Sagamu, Nigeria, which is about a two-hour drive north of the Anthony Village headquarters complex. The dedication service was an answer to longtime prayers of veteran workers in the area.

The Sagamu group began with a small group of four families who lived in Sagamu, but traveled weekly to Ijebu Ode for Sunday services. In 1982, they began holding Bible studies and prayer meetings in the home of one of the brothers. Full church services began on October 22, 1995, with a congregation of forty people.

When the congregation continued to grow, land was purchased for a church building. Bulldozing of the site began in 1999, and in June of 2000, construction of a church facility was initiated. A dedication service took place on October 6, 2002, marking the first time services were held on the current site. Two adjoining pieces of land were purchased in 2011 and 2014, making a plot of ground that was adequate for the expansion and provision of the new Sagamu facility. Branch churches in the area came together with the saints in Sagamu to help with the construction, and their supportive efforts were greatly appreciated.

Present at the dedication service were a number of local dignitaries, including chiefs and kings. The

ribbon-cutting ceremony was simple, and concluded with the orchestra and choir performing “To God Be the Glory” as they led the way into the sanctuary. The room quickly filled to capacity with about 350 of the 1,036 in attendance finding a seat, while the rest of the congregation went to the basement to watch the service via video feed.

The orchestra and choir played a number of selections throughout the service. One favorite was the choir, accompanied by the brass, singing in Yoruba (the native language of the congregation) “E Fi Lyin Fun Oluwa Nibi Mimo Re,” which roughly translated means, “The Lord Placed a Few Saints Here.”

Reverend Lee gave the dedication message, which was followed by a dedicatory prayer given by Reverend Adeniran. Then the choir sang the “Hallelujah Chorus.” After a closing song and altar call, nearly everyone knelt in prayer, including many of the local dignitaries.

Minna church dedication

During November, a church was also dedicated in the city of Minna. Opening with the processional song, “Our Hearts are Full of Joy Today,” a spirit of thanksgiving marked this occasion as well. The initial services in Minna were held in 1978 in the home of one of the sisters. Minna was the first Apostolic Faith branch church established in the Kwara District, though it is now the headquarters church for the Niger District. The foundation for the new church was laid in May, 2011, and the dedication service on November 16 was full of great rejoicing that the edifice had been completed.

Reverend Lee’s trip concluded with a ministers and workers meeting in Abuja, where the theme of “Unity” was again emphasized as it had been in previous meetings during this trip. He noted, “It has been a great trip in every respect. We thank God for His presence in the services, safe travels, and wonderful fellowship together.”

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OUR CLASSICS



The Portland Apostolic Faith Church on Sixth and Burnside, in use from 1922 to 1980.

PRECISELY TIMED

From a sermon by Roy Frymire



JESUS ALWAYS STEPS ON THE SCENE AT THE APPROPRIATE MOMENT.

Some time ago, I visited a clock shop in Leavenworth, Washington, which featured grandfather clocks. On the wall, a sign said that they would deliver a grandfather clock anywhere within a one-hundred-mile radius of Leavenworth, set it up, and make sure it ran accurately. A couple of customers were talking to the owner of the shop, wanting reassurance that he would fulfill his commitment. They asked, "If we buy the clock, will you come out and level it up and get it started?"

The shop owner told them, "You don't level a grandfather clock with a level. A tick and a tock regulate its time, and they have to be equal. The pendulum has to swing an equal distance on either side of the center." Since clocks come in a variety of sizes, that means that each grandfather clock has its own beat—its own individual rhythm—while still keeping the right time.

Throughout the years, time has been measured in a variety of ways, including the sundial and the hourglass. Today, the world time zones are measured from the Greenwich Observatory in England. We set our clocks and watches accordingly. Even then, some people are early, some are late, and others are right on time. In these cases, our "individual rhythms" don't change the time.

While people may at times fail to be punctual, the Lord Jesus is never late. We can have the knowledge in our hearts that He is always on time. He does not depend on earthly timepieces for His schedule. His timing is to a beat from Heaven—an eternal beat. Even His arrival on this earth was regulated from Above, for the Bible tells us that in the fullness of time, God sent His Son into this world.

We read that once, while Jesus was on earth, He sent His disciples into a city to prepare for the Passover. "And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him" (Luke 22:13-14).

"When the hour was come, . . ." It was a special moment not regulated by the hour of the day, but by its prescribed place in Christ's earthly mission to this world, as ordained by God himself.

On occasion, people urged Jesus to act ahead of God's time. While they were at a marriage in Cana

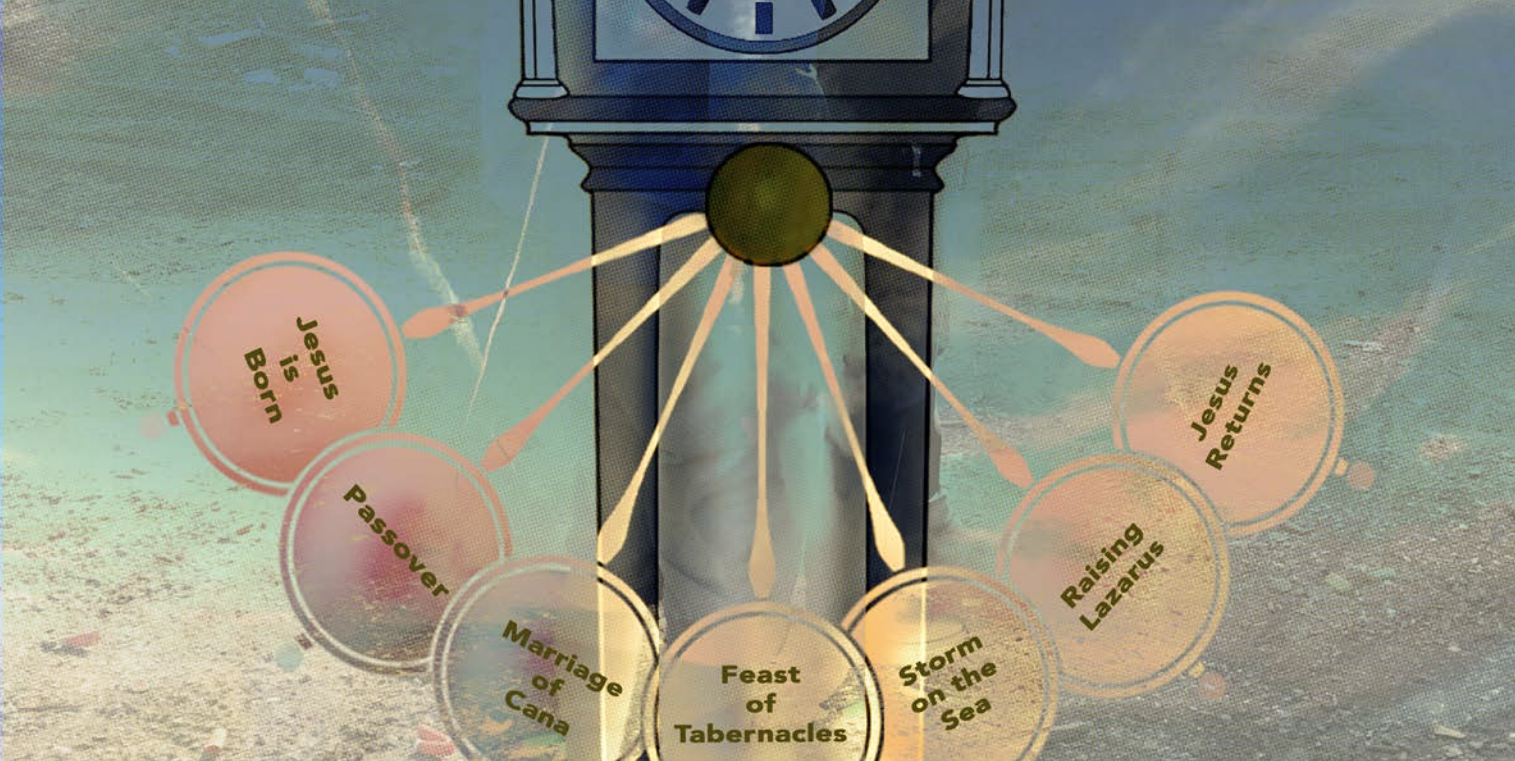
of Galilee, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus replied, "Mine hour is not yet come." Jesus' mother had observed her Son for years. She had heard the pronouncement of the angel when Jesus' birth was foretold. She had seen some wonderful things when He was born into this world. She had watched His life as He matured. When she turned to the servants and said, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it," she knew that if He were willing, He certainly would do something about the present need. At that time, Jesus performed His first miracle when He turned the water into wine. (See John 2:1-11.)

When it was time for the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus' brothers wanted Him to show Himself to the world. They urged Him to act ahead of time, but He said to them, "My time is not yet come" (John 7:6). Again we can see that our Lord worked according to His Father's time schedule.

After Jesus began ministering to the multitudes, He was sometimes accused of being too late. Once, when He and the disciples were going across the Sea of Galilee, Jesus was asleep in the back of a ship. The Bible says, "There arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full" (Mark 4:37). The disciples awakened the Lord and said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" (Mark 4:38). The implication was "Lord, the ship is sinking! You should be doing something now! Don't you care about us?" But it is never too late with Jesus. The next verse tells us, "And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm" (Mark 4:39).

On another occasion, two of Jesus' friends, Mary and Martha, sent word to Him about their brother Lazarus: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick" (John 11:3). They felt a message of that kind would bring the Master immediately, but the Bible says that Jesus tarried two days. When He started to Bethany where Mary and Martha lived, He said to His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (John 11:11). Jesus knew that Lazarus had died, and as far as Mary and Martha were concerned, it seemed that Jesus had come too late.

Martha said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:21). Lazarus had been



dead four days by then, and they were sorrowing over the loss of their brother. Naturally, they thought the Lord was too late. If only He had come a little sooner! Have you ever felt that was your experience? Oh, if the Lord would only answer soon, before it is too late! Don't worry. He knows exactly what is taking place in your life. He knows exactly what you are going through. He is always on time.

When Jesus and the others went to the grave where Lazarus had been laid, He told them to take away the stone. The people still believed it was too late because four days had passed since Lazarus had died. But Jesus asked, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40). When the stone was finally rolled away, Jesus called Lazarus to come forth, and he came out of the tomb bound in his graveclothes. Jesus was on time.

Perhaps you have a promise in the Word of God that has not yet been fulfilled. Remember, God is not governed by our time schedule. Because of that, He does not always come when we might expect Him to, but if the Lord has promised, we can depend on that promise. When we come to Him in faith, He will be faithful to fulfill that promise in our lives. He will not fail, and when He answers, we will say, "It was not too late."

There is another promise that Jesus is going to fulfill one of these days. The Bible tells us, "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2). The world is not expecting that day, but it is the day appointed according to God's time schedule. Jesus told His disciples, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36). There will be a moment in Heaven when God the Father says, "It is time." Then the Lord Jesus is going to leave His mediatorial throne and come back to this world to catch away

those who have believed on Him and who are ready for His coming.

The Bible tells us that the moment when Jesus returns to this world will be as a thief in the night. A thief does not announce his coming. He moves by stealth, and people are not aware that he has even been there until after he is gone. That is the way it will be with the coming of the Lord. Just as surely as Jesus kept His appointments on this earth in the years that He ministered here, so that moment will be fulfilled, and Jesus Christ will come back to this world again.

Though the thief gives no advance notice of his arrival, Jesus Christ has given us ample notice of the events that will take place in this world just prior to His return. There are numerous signs of the times that are being fulfilled every day, including earthquakes and famines. Jesus said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

We must be aware that the timepiece of Heaven is reaching that point when the Father will say, "Son, it is time to return to earth to gather up those who are waiting for You. It is time to bring them to the wonderful place that has been prepared for them."

Are you ready? Do you know in your heart that, if Jesus should return today, you are prepared to meet Him? If not, Jesus is calling you. The day is at hand, and Jesus "is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Jesus is always on time. Will you be?

- **Rev. Roy Frymire** was the pastor of Apostolic Faith churches in several locations. After retiring, he served on the ministerial staff at the church in Portland until his death in 2008.

TURNING POINT

By Ona Mae Worthington



As a child, I loved the Lord and the Bible. When I was first learning to read, I would lie on the floor with the Bible open in front of me, and sound out the words. I thank God for that early love in my heart, because it was the Word of God that shielded me as I grew up.

While still very young, I became terribly ill. An old country minister was called to come and pray, and the next morning, I was up and playing as normal—the Lord had healed me. Years later I had surgery for something else, and it was discovered that my appendix had burst years before and was now a tiny shriveled mass of tissue. What was thought to have been the flu was actually a ruptured appendix! Another time I was thrown by a horse and was unconscious for days. The Lord was sought in prayer, and He completely healed me.

When I was in high school, I spent many early morning hours in a secluded spot under a tree in our yard, meditating on God and often writing down my thoughts—sometimes in poetry.

The time came when I got married. Then, shortly before my husband went into military service, our first child—a girl—was born. Later, a son was added to our family. During these years, I began to wander from the faith of my childhood. The truth grew dim, because I allowed a love for the worldly pleasures and possessions of this world to crowd out eternal values.

God was faithful. Amid the clamor of worldly activities, I felt God calling after my heart. This came at a time of conflict and unhappiness in our home. Our

marriage was on shaky ground, and without God, I had no resource to steady me. I became bitter in heart and rebellious against the Gospel. Truly I was “on the skids” and nearing the precipice of destruction.

My husband and I had started to drink socially. One night, after some trouble, I went to a cocktail lounge and began drinking. Later that evening, it was with shame that I realized I was unable to steady myself enough to walk properly. On another occasion, after my husband and I had quarreled, I left the house and recklessly drove our car along a winding canyon road, almost daring God to let me take my life—and yet once more I was held back. That same precious Word that had been the guide of my youth, put a fear in my heart. I could not abandon myself to such folly, for I knew that to take one’s own life was a total rejection of God’s mercy and the end would be eternal Hell.

A turning point came one night when I was in the kitchen pouring wine into some glasses for friends. Our young daughter stood watching the sparkling mixture and asked, “Mother, may I have some?” As I looked into her trusting, upturned face, I felt a sword of guilt pierce my heart. I answered, “No, dear, not until you are older.” As I spoke those words, the sword pierced deeper still. I knew I wanted a different life for my children.

After that incident, I was not the same; God had brought me to a crossroads. From that point, He dealt with my heart continually, and I came under heavy conviction. Over and over the thoughts would come: The destiny of your children is in your hands . . . it all depends on you . . . you must decide. Day after day I

HER LITTLE DAUGHTER'S INNOCENT QUESTION CAUSED A SWORD OF GUILT TO PIERCE HER HEART. THAT WAS HER TURNING POINT.



continued to count the cost, though down in my heart I wanted to settle it God's way. Conviction was so heavy that one day as I was going about my chores, ironing the children's clothes, tears rolled down my cheeks.

During this time, about 1948, I received word from my mother and father that they had visited Portland, Oregon, and found the most wonderful church. They had learned of it when they saw its large sign in the downtown area of the city proclaiming, "Jesus, the Light of the World." They said God was in that place and we must come and see for ourselves. My soul greatly longed for all of God's truth, so I prayed about going.

Not too long after that, I heard from my sister, Kay, who was terminally ill with tuberculosis. She had received the same report from Mother and Dad about the Apostolic Faith Church and was told that if she would come, the ministers would pray for her and she could be healed. She went to Portland, the ministers prayed for her, and God instantly healed her of tuberculosis.



Top to bottom: Ona Mae (front row, center) with the Chehalis, Washington, church choir; At home with her young family; Singing (far left) with a Gospel quartet.

My husband and I had moved to Montana, and I had found a church to attend, though it did not satisfy. Several well-meaning

members of the congregation began praying for me to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. As I knelt and prayed one day to receive it, something in me resisted. I felt confusion and consternation within but did not understand why. I buried my face in my arms and cried out in my distress, "Lord, how shall I pray?" A still, small Voice spoke within, "Pray that I will give you what you need." In that moment, I acknowledged that what I really needed was salvation.

Shortly after that, Kay invited me to attend the upcoming Apostolic Faith camp meeting in Portland with her. We traveled by train with our children, and it was such a happy journey. As we talked together, my heart was filled with joyful expectancy, and the children reflected our happiness.

When we arrived at the campground, I felt a Holy Presence resting there and felt as if I belonged. I thought, surely, this must be what Heaven is like. After one of the services, I went forward and prayed, saying, "God, You promised—our children must have the Truth for their anchor. Please lead me." He did! Soon after that God restored the peace and love that I had experienced as a child, and I was able to say I was saved.

Then, in a way I cannot explain, God assured me that if I would teach my children to fear and honor Him, He would guard their steps from evil and His purpose would be fulfilled in their lives.

After returning home from the camp meeting, I began to pray fervently for God to move our family to Portland. About this time, my husband found that his job was not what he thought it would be. Also, our son had contracted rheumatic fever, and his doctor informed us that the extreme temperatures of Montana, ranging from very hot to very cold, were not conducive to his recovery. Within a few

weeks, we were on our way to Portland. God had answered prayer!

As our family began attending the Apostolic Faith Church, we sat under the ministry and teachings of godly men and women. Brother George Hughes, an Apostolic Faith missionary to Africa, was one who was such an encouragement to me. He was my Sunday school teacher for a time. During some of the classes, the Spirit of God was so powerful that many went to their knees in prayer before the class was over. It was through this class that a hunger for more of God grew within me.

As I prayed and consecrated my all to God, He sanctified me. This wonderful experience was something I had not even heard about until after we moved to Portland. Later, God also baptized me with the Holy Ghost.

God preserved our home, and those two small children have grown up to be a blessing to us. We now have many beautiful grandchildren who are being raised under the sound of the Gospel.

Over the years, I have reflected back to that day of decision and asked myself, "What if I had chosen differently?" At the time, I did not comprehend the magnitude of my decision, but it has been like a tiny trickle from a mountain spring, ever widening through the years, until it will one day merge into the vast river of eternity.

Gratitude fills my heart at each remembrance of that day when I met the Lord at the crossroads of life.

■ *Ona Mae Worthington was involved in the work of the Lord for many years. Among other activities, she sang in the choir and taught Sunday school.*

What Must I Do to be Saved?

Acknowledge—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

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

Repent—"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

Forsake—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him . . . for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

Believe—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

If you are a new Christian, write us and request the tract entitled, "Starting Out."

A Statement of Bible Doctrine

WE BELIEVE IN THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE, AND ENDORSE ALL THE TEACHINGS CONTAINED IN IT. FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF OUR BASIC DOCTRINES.

The Divine Trinity consists of three Persons: God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, perfectly united as one. Matthew 3:16,17; 1 John 5:7.

Repentance is a godly sorrow for and a renouncing of all sin. Isaiah 55:7; Matthew 4:17.

Justification (or salvation) is the act of God's grace through which we receive forgiveness for sins and stand before God as though we had never sinned. Romans 5:1; 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Entire Sanctification, the act of God's grace whereby we are made holy, is the second definite work and is subsequent to justification. John 17:15-21; Hebrews 13:12.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is the endowment of power upon the sanctified life, and is evidenced by speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. John 14:16-17,26; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4.

Divine Healing of sickness is provided through the atonement. James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24.

The Second Coming of Jesus will be as literal and visible as His going away (Acts 1:9-11) and will consist of two appearances. First, He comes to catch away His waiting Bride. Matthew 24:40-44; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. Second, He comes to execute judgment upon the ungodly. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14,15.

The Tribulation will occur between Christ's coming for His Bride and His return in judgment. Isaiah 26:20-21; Revelation 9 and 16.

Christ's Millennial Reign is the 1000 years of peaceful reign by Jesus on earth. Isaiah 11 and 35; Revelation 20:1-6.

The Great White Throne Judgment is the final judgment when all the wicked dead will stand before God. Revelation 20:11-15.

The New Heaven and The New Earth will replace the present heaven and earth, which will be destroyed after the Great White Throne Judgment. 2 Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 21:1-3.

Eternal Heaven and Eternal Hell are literal places of final and eternal destiny. Matthew 25:41-46; Luke 16:22-28.

Marriage is a covenant between one man and one woman that is binding before God for life. Neither person has a right to marry again while the first companion lives. Mark 10:6-12; Romans 7:1-3.

Restitution is necessary, wherein wrongs against others are righted. Ezekiel 33:15; Matthew 5:23-24.

Water Baptism is by one immersion "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matthew 3:16; 28:19.

The Lord's Supper is an institution ordained by Jesus so that we might remember His death until He returns. Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23,26.

Foot Washing is practiced according to the example and commandment Jesus gave. John 13:14-15.



You may obtain additional information about these doctrines and learn about our other publications in both English and foreign languages by writing to the Apostolic Faith Church at 6615 SE 52nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97206, U.S.A. or visiting our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.

Before these magazines are sent out, they are always prayed over for the healing of the sick and the salvation of souls.

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