

# THE Apostolic Faith

EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2017

## STEP BY STEP GUIDANCE

BY ALEX WILSON

A CALL to  
**CONTENTMENT**

THIS IS LOVE

EVIDENCE

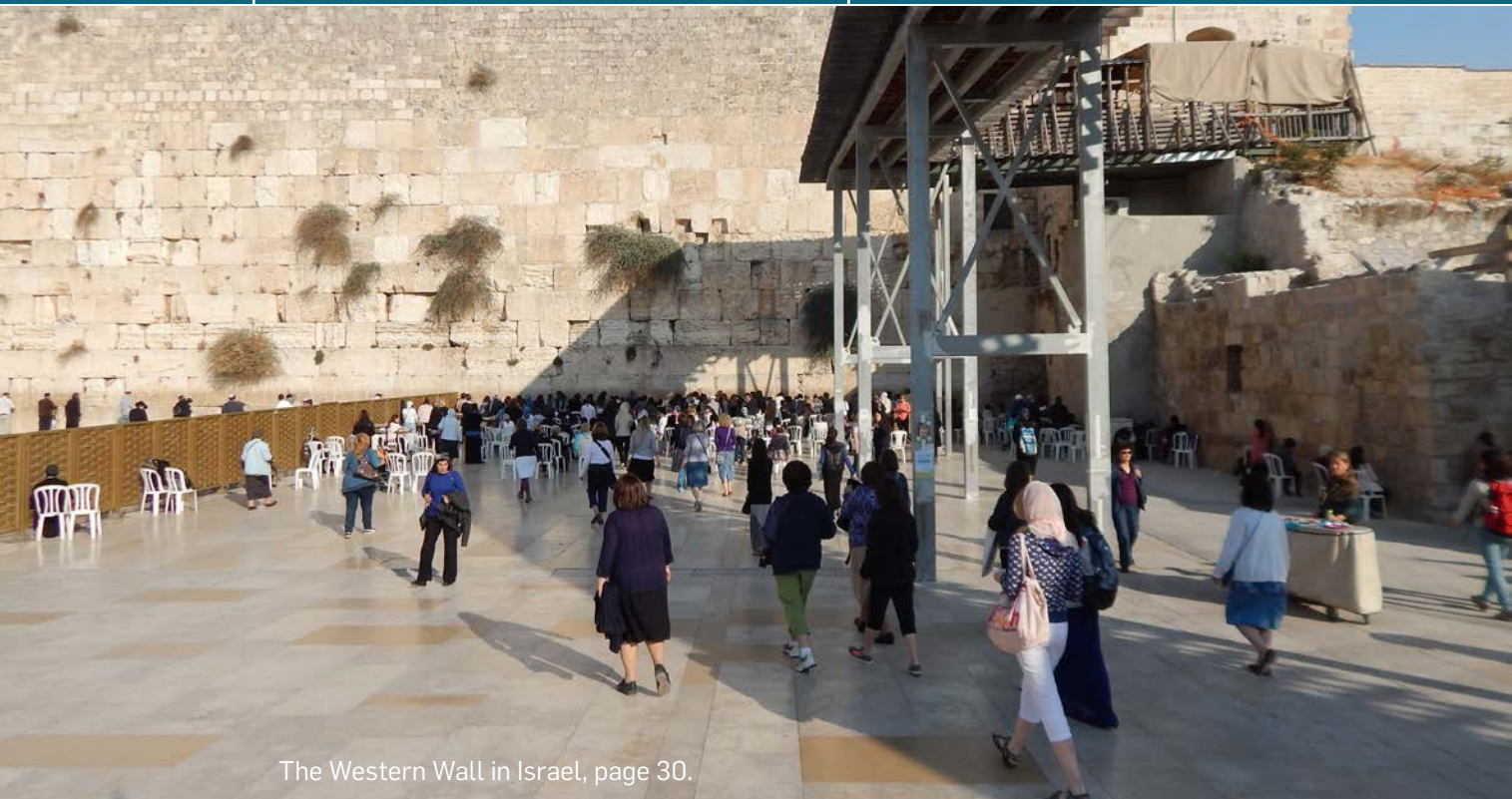
**SCATTERED  
ABROAD**



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# VIEWPOINT



BY DARREL LEE

R

## READING THE TESTIMONY OF SYLVIA PHILLIPS

(see page 21) reminds me of my first visit to our Dallas, Oregon, church on Mother's Day in 1974. Shortly before, I had attended our Roseburg Apostolic

Faith church, and the people there told me of the Dallas location, just thirty miles north of the Oregon State University campus where I was living. So on the evening before Mother's Day, I telephoned the Dallas pastor, asking if I could come to the church service the next morning. He assured me that I could, and extended a Sunday dinner invitation to me. That pastor was Brother Earl, Sister Sylvia's husband.

A couple of things about that Mother's Day meal come to mind. First, my future wife Debbie, who lived with the Phillips family for three-and-a-half years, helped with the meal. I confess to noticing her. What I didn't know was that after my phone call the night before, the Phillips family had teased her by coupling my name with hers, saying repeatedly, "Debbie and Darrel, Debbie and Darrel." That was a bit premature, but it was on target.

I also recall them asking me, "Are you saved?" Though twenty-one years old, I was not from a church background and had rarely attended church. I only recently had begun reading the Bible, and did not know what

"saved" meant. Not wanting to claim something I did not have, my reply was, "No." That left them puzzled because they could tell something had occurred in my life triggering my sudden interest in attending church. They were on target there as well.

Just a short time before, I had experienced my first encounter with God, but did not know what to call my conversion and the resulting dramatic change in me. That event had taken place during spring break as I was attempting to sleep in the basement bedroom of our Roseburg home. The Spirit of God flooded my room, and for the first time, I became aware that there was a God. I prayed, "Lord, please forgive me of my sins. I don't know how I can ever do it, but if You will help me, I will try to serve You." In an instant, the power of God went through my entire being in a miraculous manner. I was never to be the same.

That prayer was remarkable in a number of ways. First, I do not recall ever being taught to ask forgiveness for sins. In fact, I did not even know what sins were. Second, I had no knowledge of the power of God or the possibilities that existed by praying such a prayer. Finally, I did not know what it meant to "serve" Him. In spite of my spiritual ignorance, though, at that instant I was born again. Since I had shared some of that experience with the Phillips family, they were understandably perplexed when I said I was not saved. The following Sunday, in our Roseburg church, the pastor explained to me that when a person was saved, old habits and desires would be instantly gone and replaced with new habits and desires that were pleasing to God. Upon hearing that, I declared, "That happened to me two months ago!" It had. There had

**AS YOU ARE FAITHFUL, UNTOLD NUMBERS MAY BENEFIT BY YOUR CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE.**

## **WHEN SISTER SYLVIA WAS SAVED BACK IN 1948, SHE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING THE IMPACT SHE WOULD HAVE ON DEBBIE AND ME YEARS LATER—WE WERE NOT EVEN BORN YET!**

been no profanity or unholy desires since that March night in Roseburg. Instead, for two months I had been praying, reading the Bible, and looking for churches to attend. Four decades have now passed and those old desires have never returned.

I soon returned to our Dallas church and testified that I was indeed saved. In time, I ended up living in that city, and Brother Earl became my pastor. I sat at the Phillips' table on many Sunday afternoons, benefiting from the cooking of Sister Sylvia. On Valentine's Day, 1976, Debbie and I were married in the Dallas church with Brother Earl officiating. The Phillips were soon transferred and he pastored at other Apostolic Faith locations. However, the lessons we learned under their mentoring stuck with us.

Debbie and I lived in Dallas for another seventeen years. Our two children were born and later saved



while we were living there. With the passing of time, we now live in Portland, where Brother Earl and Sister Sylvia also live. Roles have changed. I am their pastor, with Debbie serving alongside me, just as Sister Sylvia served alongside Brother Earl in the work of the Lord. We have had the privilege of working shoulder-to-shoulder in a variety of Gospel endeavors over the years.

When Sister Sylvia was saved back in 1948, she had no way of knowing the impact she would have on Debbie and me years later—we were not even born yet! And we are just two of many who have been positively influenced by Sister Sylvia's testimony; her salvation story and example of faithfulness has reached hundreds and perhaps even thousands over the years.

Similarly, you have no way of knowing how many will be inspired by your decision to serve God. As you are faithful, untold numbers may benefit by your Christian example. Perhaps some of those individuals are yet to be born! As you read Sister Sylvia's testimony, and the other articles in this quarterly magazine, we pray they will inspire you to consider the impact of your life on others.

Photo: Darrel and Debbie Lee on their wedding day in 1976, with Earl and Sylvia Phillips and one of their granddaughters who participated as a flower girl.



# FROM THE WORD

A person wearing a blue checkered suit jacket is shown from the waist down. They are holding a brown leather satchel with a strap over their shoulder. In their right hand, they are holding a Bible with a worn, light-colored cover. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a path and trees.

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# A CALL TO CONTENTMENT

FROM A SERMON BY DARREL LEE

WHATEVER STATE WE FIND  
OURSELVES IN, GOOD OR  
BAD, WE CAN BE CONTENT!

**D**

DURING A RECENT THREE-WEEK TRIP TO NIGERIA, I found myself in the state of flying, in the state of riding in a car, and in the state of sitting in church. I experienced a variety of states with regard to sleeping conditions: I slept while traveling in a car, when flying on board a plane, and in beds—a number of beds, some firm and some soft. The beds had pillows, including a feather pillow that was comfortable and a foam pillow in one hotel which was not so comfortable! So, in the course of those three weeks, I experienced a variety of states or conditions.

In Philippians 4:11 we read of Paul the Apostle's attitude toward the various states he had experienced. He wrote, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Paul was not referring to states in a geographic sense. He was speaking of circumstances—of conditions in which he had found himself since he answered the call of God while on the road to Damascus.

As Paul penned these words, he was in a state of imprisonment. Answering God's call does not guarantee a state of ease; we have no promise of that. In 2 Corinthians 11 there is a description of the conditions Paul had found himself in over the years since his conversion. Five times he had received thirty-nine stripes. Three times he had been beaten with rods. Once he was stoned and left for dead. Paul had been in three shipwrecks—he had spent a night and a day treading water in the sea. Verses 26-27 continue the list of circumstances he had endured: "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." In spite of those conditions of extreme discomfort, Paul had learned that in whatever state he found himself, "therewith to be content." He had learned that whatever God sent his way was good enough for him. In that knowledge, he could have the peace God promises, conditions notwithstanding.



## CONTENTMENT is related to thankfulness

Contentment is closely related to a spirit of thankfulness. Think about it: can a person be both discontent and thankful at the same time? It does not seem possible. The reason Paul could be content was because he was grateful to God, and that is true of us as well. None of us live in ideal conditions all the time. Despite the circumstances we find ourselves in, though, we can learn from Paul the blessings that come when we keep a spirit of gratitude.

The background of this letter to the Philippians was one of the times when Paul's actions revealed his contentment in spite of adverse circumstances. Paul had seen a vision of a man from Macedonia pleading "Come over and help us," and had answered the Macedonian call, immediately traveling to Philippi with Silas. There he found converts by the river where they customarily went to pray. A soothsaying woman was converted, but those who profited by that woman found their means of gain was lost. As a result, Paul and Silas were brought before the magistrates, beaten, and cast into prison. However, at midnight they sang praises to God! They were content and thankful in the dark dungeon to the extent that they could sing in spite of the stripes on their backs.

God sent an earthquake, and the foundations of the prison were shaken. All the doors opened, and the bands restraining the prisoners were loosed. However, rather than escaping, the prisoners stayed where they were. The jailer was amazed when he saw the open prison doors but all the prisoners still there, and fell at the feet of Paul and Silas asking what he must do to be saved. As a result of the spirit of gratitude and contentment of those two men, not only was the jailer saved but so were those of his household.

Those at Philippi knew what Paul had endured; they had provided for his needs. In Philippians 4:10 we read, "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity." The people there had helped him once, but for whatever reason, there had been a period of time in which they could not help him. Though Paul was grateful that they had helped him once more, he had learned that even without help, "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

## CONTENTMENT negates complaining

Paul did not need to go around advertising that he was happy, thankful, and satisfied with whatever God allowed in his life; that fact was self-evident. The Philippians knew by his actions and his spirit that Paul was content. He had no complaints. Contentment and complaining do not coexist! A negative attitude and a grateful spirit are the antithesis of each other.

It is interesting to note that the original Greek word translated "contentment" is translated elsewhere in the King James version of the Bible as "satisfied" or "sufficient." For example, in 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul recounted that in a time of trial, God had assured him, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Sufficiency is elusive in this life, but what God offers is satisfying. And that satisfaction is not a temporary condition; it is a perspective that will see us through whatever state we find ourselves in.

Paul related in Philippians 4:12, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." It pays to be content with what we have, rather than to lament what we lack. It takes God to instill that spirit! We may need to be reminded from time to time about the importance of contentment, but when we go to God with a genuine spirit of thankfulness, we find that contentment follows.





## CONTENTMENT makes conditions irrelevant

No one has perfect conditions all of the time; everyone faces challenges in life. Paul had good times of fellowship and saw souls converted; those were times of rejoicing. However, Paul and Silas still sang the praises of God when they were in the prison with their backs hurting from the beating they had received. And there were still challenges ahead of them to endure! Nonetheless, neither the trial of the moment nor an awareness that more trials likely were ahead could rob them of a spirit of thankfulness and contentment.

Sometimes people think, If I could just change my circumstances—if I could just live in a different house . . . if I could change my neighborhood . . . if I could get a different job—then I would be thankful and content. That is not how it works! Even when a goal is reached or an achievement attained, that momentary feeling of fulfillment does not endure. Soon, another goal will take its place. Something else will seem to be necessary for happiness. The fact is, true contentment is not found in achievements, attainments, or possessions. It is found in God!

In Proverbs 15:15 we read, “All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.” Notice that this verse does not say, “He that has a continual feast has a merry heart.” We must not concentrate on the conditions around us but on the condition of our hearts. If our hearts are at peace with God, the conditions about us will be irrelevant.

Paul wrote to the believers at Philippi, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” “All things” includes practicing contentment! In whatever condition we find ourselves and whatever challenges we face, we can do all things by the grace of God—through the strength that God imparts.

## CONTENTMENT protects our joy and peace

Back in the 1600s, a Puritan preacher by the name of Jeremiah Burroughs wrote a piece that showed the folly of discontentment. He said, “Discontent is like a worm that eats the meat out of the nut.” In other words, it takes the good part and leaves only the shell. That illustration struck home to me because when I was growing up, we had a hazelnut orchard with four hundred trees. After the nuts fell to the ground, we harvested them, filling buckets with nuts that were eventually dried and sold. We learned

early on that when you cracked a nut to eat, it paid to examine it before putting it into your mouth. Occasionally a nut was wormy—not many of them, but enough that we found it was a distasteful experience if you did not look before you chewed. If your hazelnuts are devoured by worms it is of no consequence, but if your joy is eaten away by a negative attitude, that is a problem. Discontentment will “eat the meat out of the nut,” stealing your sense of satisfaction and well-being.

## CONTENTMENT trusts God for the future

There is a great contrast between discontentment and contentment. Discontentment laments the past, is not satisfied with the present, and worries about the future. On the other hand, contentment knows we cannot change the past, is satisfied with the present, and is at peace knowing that God will chart the course for the future. It takes God to put that in a heart, and it takes a surrendered heart to go to God and ask him to put it in there. Only He can make us peaceful, hopeful, happy, and content.

Today, as we approach God, let us come with thankful hearts. As we evaluate our current circumstances, whether they are good or bad, let us have hearts filled with gratitude. The possibility of true contentment exists. It is not manufactured; it is not pretense; it is real. And it is not necessary for us to change anything in life to achieve it. Whatever state we find ourselves in, we can be content!

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

# 1 CORINTHIANS 12-16

THE FINAL PART OF A 3-PART STUDY ON 1 CORINTHIANS

## OVERVIEW

### SETTING

▶ Corinth was a large seaport city in southern Greece, and a major trade center. Its people were immoral and steeped in idolatry, but during Paul's eighteen-month stay there (see Acts 18:11) he had won a number of converts. The Christian church in that city was primarily made up of Gentiles, who were led by Apollos after the departure of Paul. However, in the approximately three years since Paul had left, the spiritual condition of some in the church in Corinth had deteriorated. When some of the members wrote to Paul expressing their concern and asking a number of questions, the Apostle responded by writing the epistle of 1 Corinthians.





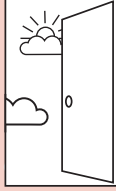
▶ The letter was written around A.D. 55.

### PURPOSE

Paul's intent in writing to the Corinthian church was to expose evil that persistently threatened to destroy true Christianity. He also responded to several questions regarding practical and doctrinal problems, and pointed the members of the Corinthian church to a life of true holiness in Christ.

### KEY PEOPLE

- ▶ Paul the Apostle, the author
- ▶ Timothy
- ▶ Members of Chloe's household

CHAPTER 12	CHAPTER 13	CHAPTER 14	CHAPTER 15	CHAPTER 16
				
<p>Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (12:27)</p>	<p>Now abideth faith, hope, charity . . . but the greatest of these is charity. (13:13)</p>	<p>I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. (14:15)</p>	<p>O death, where is thy sting? (15:55)</p>	<p>A great door and effectual is opened unto me. (16:9)</p>

## BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 12 BEGINS THE THIRD MAJOR DIVISION OF PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE BELIEVERS AT CORINTH. In this portion of his letter, the Apostle addressed concerns regarding spiritual gifts (chapters 12-14), and the doctrine of the resurrection (chapter 15). In the concluding chapter, he offered some final counsel regarding practical matters, all of which centered on the vital attributes of Christian fellowship and unity.

# 12

The supernatural demonstrations of the Holy Spirit that God had permitted to be manifested in the Corinthian church had become symbols of spiritual superiority in the minds of some. This distorted view had become grounds for strife and contentions that were threatening the unity of the body of believers.

In an attempt to clear up a seeming misunderstanding regarding whether all utterances came from the Spirit of God, Paul reminded the Corinthian believers that before their conversions they had served idols. While the practice of ecstatic utterances was a part of the worship of various Greek gods, such expressions were vastly different from utterances which originated from the Spirit of God. Paul established that how a person spoke was determined by the nature of the spirit within.

Next, Paul pointed out that God reveals Himself in many ways, substantiating this by listing the various gifts through which the Spirit accomplishes His purpose. The word translated *diversities* conveys a sense

of apportioned distribution from one source. Because the Holy Spirit would not oppose Himself, any gifts given by Him would work in harmony with one another.

The Apostle used the illustration of the human body to show how God intended the Body of Christ to work. Just as each part of the physical body has a different function, each individual has a unique role to play in the function and well-being of the Church. The gifts of the Spirit were designed to edify, nourish, and support the Church as a whole, and as such, one gift should never be honored above another. Paul ended his dissertation on this topic by exhorting the believers to act as one body with one purpose, which is derived from one Source.

# 13

While spiritual gifts had a place and role in the Church body, Paul declared that love was to be preeminent. In chapter 13, he focused on this greatest of God's gifts, which he identified by the word charity. In morally corrupt Corinth, the word *love* had little meaning. Four Greek words are translated into the English word *love*: 1) *Agape*—selfless, sacrificial love that acts in conformity to the character and nature of God; 2) *Phileo*—endearing love that cherishes, such as the husband/wife relationship, the love of a brother/sister, or dearest friend; 3) *Eros*—passionate or physical love; and 4) *Storge*—affectionate love, such as the loyalty of an employee to his employer.

Translators had no proper word to convey the true meaning of Christian love, so in this chapter they chose the word “charity,” which is related to “cherish.”

Paul's exposition in chapter 13 centered on three aspects of love: the contrast between love and other spiritual gifts and elements essential in the church; the Christ-like nature of love, and the comprehensive and inclusive nature of love.



## 14

Paul wanted the Corinthians to understand that while spiritual gifts were valuable, they needed to be kept in the proper perspective. The misuse of the gift of tongues by some individuals in the church was a concern because it had caused disorder in worship. Paul instructed that while speaking in tongues was a gift from the Holy Spirit, it was not an indicator of spiritual superiority. Like the gift of prophecy—a gift also related to speaking—it was to contribute to unity and the edification of the Body of Christ. (It is important to note that the word “prophecy” in this passage is not used in the limited sense of foretelling the future, but rather a pouring forth of Heaven-given speech.)

In this chapter, Paul gave two guiding principles for orderly worship. First, worship was to be conducted in a manner that the assembled congregation would understand. Second, instruction was a necessary part of worship. Worship services were designed to edify, so the components were to be carried out in an orderly manner. Paul

used the word “decently” to show that the dignity and gravity of the services should not be interrupted; and the words “in order” to point out that each part of the service was to occur by design and arrangement, rather than by random impulse.

In verses 34-35, Paul addressed the participation of women in worship practices. It is clear from 1 Corinthians 11:5 and chapters 12-14 that women had spiritual gifts and were encouraged to exercise them in the Body of Christ. However, in Corinthian culture, women were not allowed to confront men in public. In addition, women of that day did not receive formal religious education, as the men did. Seemingly, however, some of the women in the church thought their newfound Christian freedom gave them the right to question the men during a worship service, and this was creating disorder. Paul was instructing the women not to flaunt their Christian freedom during the worship services. This was done as a means of promoting unity; he was not teaching about a woman's role in the church.

## 15

Corinth was a Greek city, and in general, the Greeks believed in immortality of the soul but not physical resurrection of the body. When Paul preached at Athens and declared the Resurrection of Christ, many laughed and mocked him (Acts 17). Most Greek philosophers considered the human body a prison for the soul, and welcomed death as deliverance from bondage, thinking the soul alone would enter an eternal state. Christianity, in contrast, taught that the body and soul would be united after resurrection. Because the church at Corinth was in the heart of Greek culture, Paul addressed this point of confusion and disbelief among members of the church at Corinth.

Paul emphasized to the Corinthian church the importance of their belief in the Resurrection, giving detailed examples of what Christians' resurrected bodies will be like. He explained that those who are resurrected will be recognizable, each having their distinct personality and individuality. However, unlike physical bodies on earth, resurrected bodies will be perfected through Christ's work. He likened the difference to seeds planted in a garden, bringing out that beautiful plants look very different than the small seeds from which they grow—God gives them new “bodies.”

## 16

The concluding chapter of 1 Corinthians opens with Paul's advice concerning contributions for the support of the Jerusalem church, which was suffering from poverty and famine. The believers at Corinth were aware that the Apostle was collecting funds, and apparently had inquired regarding how they could participate in this collection. His response outlined several points: their giving was to be systematic and planned, the amount of each gift was to be proportionate to the giver's income, and the collection was to be taken before he arrived.

After brief comments about his travel plans and those of his fellow laborers, Timothy and Apollos, Paul made

his closing remarks. He directed the Corinthian believers to be alert to spiritual dangers, to remain true to the Lord, to behave maturely, to be strong, and to do all things with kindness and love.

As the spiritual father of the church at Corinth, he extended his love to all in the assembly, including believers and unbelievers. He also gave a serious warning to those who failed to love and accept Christ, saying, “Anathema Maranatha,” which means, “Let them be cursed; the Lord cometh.” He knew those who chose not to believe on Jesus Christ would be cursed upon the return of the Lord.

# LOVE

FOR NOW WE SEE THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY; BUT THEN FACE TO FACE: NOW I KNOW IN PART; BUT THEN SHALL I KNOW EVEN AS ALSO I AM KNOWN. AND NOW ABIDETH FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY, THESE THREE; BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY. (1 Corinthians 13:12-13)

## APPLICATION

**FOCUS VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:27**

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

Did you know that approximately every seven years, your body replaces the equivalent of an entire skeleton? Were you aware that the average person will breathe about seventy-five million gallons of air during his lifetime? The fun part of learning anatomy in school was discovering these intriguing facts. The hard part was memorizing all the correct terms! The study of the human body is complex and interesting. Though there are many structures within the body, each has a particular function and interacts with the other structures in a precise manner. When there is normal interaction, the body functions properly and is strong. When the normal interaction is interrupted, performance slows down and the body lacks the energy it needs.

The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, used the human body as an example of how the Body of Christ should work. We are one church body, made up of many individuals with different personalities and talents. God has a specific purpose for each of us, yet we must interact with each

other in our work. As we desire to do His will each day, God will use us to attend to needs within and outside of the Body of Christ. Perhaps today He wants you to be the “hand” that helps a brother or a sister who is ill. God may use your act of kindness to lift up his or her spirits. Tomorrow, He may want you to be a “foot” and travel for Him. Regardless of whether we travel across the street to invite a neighbor to church, or travel overseas to spread the Good News of salvation, God will use our service to work out His purpose. Often, His purpose is two-fold in nature. While He uses our efforts to reach out to others, He also continues to reach out to us. He lovingly molds us and encourages us to look to Him as the Source of our strength. The more surrendered we become to His will, the more His love will flow through us to others.

So, whether you will live long enough to breathe approximately seventy-five million gallons of air or not, remember that God has a purpose for you for each day of your life!

# THE LAW OF FAITH

FROM A SERMON BY MIKE FRIESEN

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**LIKE THE LAW OF GRAVITY, THE LAW OF FAITH DOES NOT CHANGE, AND WE CAN LEARN TO USE IT EFFECTIVELY.**

THE LORD HAS GIVEN EACH OF US A MEASURE OF FAITH. Sometimes we feel like we need more faith, but maybe we could use what we have better. When we see athletes performing at their peak in a professional game or the Olympics, we are inspired. Isn't that how we want to be as Christians—employing our faith to the fullest?

Faith is important, because it is through faith that we receive salvation. Strengthening the faith we have is also important, because it is through exercising our faith that we obtain other promises of God. After we are saved, we might be so relieved to be free from the burden of sin that we are not concerned about potential challenges in the future, but sooner or later a situation comes up that requires God's help. Perhaps we face a health crisis, or someone we care about goes through a trial, or we have a burden for our loved ones to be saved also. Faith is powerful and can work in all of these situations if we apply it correctly.

Faith can be thought of as a bridge to receiving answers to prayer, but it is much more than that. It is a law—an invariable principle—that governs our Christian walk. Paul referred to the “law of faith” in Romans 3:27-28 when he asked, “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.”

Utilizing the law of faith is how we obtain what we need from God. It guarantees that when we believe God's Word to the point of obedience, He will hear our prayers and respond, though He may not answer in the way we expect. This law that God has put in place is unchangeable. It is similar to a law of nature in that regard. Consider the law of gravity. Sometimes we wish it could change, such as during that space of time between when we lose our footing on a ladder and when we hit the ground. However, the law of gravity is constant; it doesn't change over time or because of circumstances. The law of faith is like that. It has not changed since God created it, and it will never be modified, amended, or deleted. We can count on the law of faith to work consistently and without fail.





Knowing about the law of faith and how it operates, how can we use it most effectively? How can we take the faith that we have, however small it may be, and use it to the fullest extent? Here are a few Biblical guidelines.

### **LET FAITH take hold in your heart.**

It is helpful to understand the difference between faith and hope. Both are essential and both are Biblical, but they are different. Hebrews 11:1 tells us what the difference is, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for..." Hope provides the target for our faith. It looks ahead to a promise of God and says, "I would like that. I look forward to receiving that." Faith says, "I know God will bring this to pass, as I ask according to His Word." Hope looks to the future, while faith operates in the "now." This doesn't mean that our prayers are always answered immediately, but faith takes hold in our hearts immediately. God is sovereign, and He makes the determination as to when and how to act, but this does not affect the law of faith.

An example of how faith takes hold is found in the testimony of Agnes Clasper. She told of how her daughter lay dying of tuberculosis after several doctors and a specialist had been consulted. Sister Agnes had recently moved to Portland and was talking to a neighbor over the fence, telling her of the situation. When the woman heard all

that the child had been through, she said, "If you only had known to have brought her to the Apostolic Faith mission, our saints would have prayed and God would have healed your child." There is something about that kind of confidence that says, "God will do it." Sister Agnes went to the mission to investigate, and heard, "There is power in the Blood of Jesus to heal all manner of diseases." Suddenly she had hope and her faith had a target. She and the others at church prayed that God would heal her daughter, and in accordance with the law of faith, God heard their prayers and responded. He healed the child, who lived to tell her grandchildren of the experience.

If you are looking to a promise of God and have not received an answer, do not give up. Knowing that His will is to answer, let faith take hold in your heart.

### **LET FAITH take hold in your thoughts.**

The enemy would like us to dwell on negative thoughts. He would have us spend our prayer time thinking such things as How is this going to work out? and What if God doesn't answer? The enemy tries to stir up these thoughts within us. However, as we focus on God and His faithfulness, we will see the law of faith work. Hebrews 10:35-36 says, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of

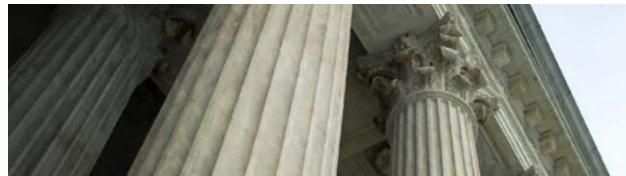


patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” Instead of worrying about what could go wrong, we can encourage ourselves by thinking about what is possible with God.

Going through a spiritual battle is nothing to feel bad about. Recently, I had been praying about a situation for some time and felt troubled because it seemed like a battle. I thought it should have been easier for me to rise above the situation. However, the Lord encouraged me. I realized that as long as I was fighting the battle, I had victory. If you are fighting a battle, do not doubt; hold on to confidence, knowing that the law of faith assures an answer from God.

### LET FAITH take hold in your words.

What we say can either help or hurt our faith. If we get up from a prayer meeting after seeking earnestly for some time and have not received an answer, we might make a comment that does not express optimism. Voicing doubt



can start to erode our faith. We don't want to do that. We want our faith to be buoyed up, like a boat on the water. We want it to keep increasing. A better way to conclude a prayer meeting where God hasn't answered yet would be to say, "I know God is able, so I will continue to persevere in prayer."

Consider the account of David and Goliath. As young David confronted the giant, Goliath, he verbalized his faith in God's ability to deliver His people saying, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:45,47). Some may have thought David was too bold in his words, but when we express confidence in God's ability, it can fortify our faith and help to bring the victory.

### LET FAITH take hold regarding the details.

A few years ago I worked for a builder who was very good at staging. After we had completed a house, he would furnish it so that when prospective buyers toured they would not only see a beautiful structure, but also nice furniture and décor. He would add little creative touches that made the place seem like a home, so people could picture themselves living there. I am no interior designer, and if it had been left up to me, I probably would have just put a few large pieces of furniture in each room, like a couch and chair. He would add end tables and then put little knickknacks on the tables. He also hung pictures on the walls. As Christians, our faith should progress as we mature. At first we might pray about situations that are big problems, and we should pray about big problems. However, we should also pray about the details. When we pray about every aspect of our lives, we have more opportunity to rely on God, draw closer to Him, and see Him work on our behalf. And, each small answer to prayer strengthens our faith for the larger, more difficult issues.

Employing our faith to the fullest will allow God to fulfill His promises for us, carry out His perfect will for our lives, and use us effectively for the Gospel. This will not only have a great impact on our own lives, but also on the lives of those around us. When we pray for someone and God undertakes for them, their faith is increased. Also, when others see how God is working in our lives through faith, they are drawn to the Gospel themselves. In John 14:12, Jesus gave this promise: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." This should challenge, inspire, and encourage us as we consider the possibilities that are ours, based on the law of faith.

■ Rev. Mike Friesen is a minister of the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon.



## R E T U R N

to the

## LORD

THERE WAS A WAY BACK TO GOD FOR ISRAEL, AND THERE IS STILL A WAY BACK FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE LEFT THE LORD.

FROM A SERMON BY BILL McKIBBEN

**M**

MANUAL TYPEWRITERS ARE ARCHAIC IN TODAY'S WORLD, BUT WE HAD ONE IN OUR HOUSE WHEN I WAS GROWING UP. It was a keyboard machine operated entirely by hand, used for producing characters resembling print. When a key was pressed, a little arm with a raised letter on the end flew up and struck a ribbon, transferring an ink impression of the letter onto the paper. As a child, it was fun to push keys as fast as I could. My favorite part was when the "ding" would sound at the end of the line. That ding signaled that it was time to press the carriage return lever—a handle on the right side of the typewriter that returned the carriage back to its first position so the operator could begin the next line of type.

When I started high school, our class had the first electric typewriters in the school. The electric typewriter featured a metal ball that revolved to position the selected letter on the line. On that machine, when you needed to return to the left margin, you simply hit a button. Like the older manual typewriter, though, the machine would ding so you knew when to make a return. Today, some decades later, I work on a computer. There is no ding telling me when to return; the return function is automatic when the right margin is reached.

The prophet Hosea spoke of a return with spiritual significance. Hosea was a contemporary of Isaiah and Micah, living six to eight hundred years





before the time of Christ. The thrust of his message to the Northern Kingdom of Israel was an impassioned plea: “Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up” (Hosea 6:1).

In prior chapters, Hosea had condemned the backsliding of Ephraim (or Israel), and explained the reason for the nation’s distress, saying, “Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after [behind or short of] the commandment” (Hosea 5:11).

In succeeding chapters, the prophet related in vivid, metaphoric language why the people needed to return to God. In one descriptive phrase after another, he pointed out their sins against God. For example, in chapter 7 verse 8, he described Ephraim as being like a cake that is not turned—a pancake that is half done. The people were engaged in a great deal of religious activity, but they were “raw” or “undone” in terms of any reality in their relationship with God. In verse 9, Hosea asserted that Ephraim was unaware that strangers had “devoured his strength”—the people had been robbed of their spiritual vigor and were in a state of moral decay, but did not realize it. In chapter 12, the prophet accused Israel of having “the balances of deceit” in her hand, and of loving to oppress.

Clearly, Hosea’s message was not a positive one! It could

not be, because Israel’s condition was deplorable. In fact, throughout the whole book, we find that God was saying to the people that they had been unfaithful to Him as their covenant God; they were committing spiritual adultery. The people were in desperate need of a return—they needed to come back to God.

There was no excuse of ignorance on Israel’s part; the nation had been blessed in many ways throughout their history. God had met with them on Mt. Sinai during the time of Moses and revealed His will for them, giving them His Law written on tables of stone. God had worked miracles on their behalf. He had commissioned prophets who had expounded His instruction to them. However, they had turned away from Him. Hosea 5:11 states that they *willingly* chose to walk short of what God told them to do.

God responded to their disobedience by saying through Hosea, “Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness” (Hosea 5:12). When I was a child, my grandmother had bags of mothballs hanging in her closet to deter moths from getting in and eating holes in the clothes. Moths are destructive. “Rottenness” also alludes to decay. So in picturesque language, God was saying, He would devour and destroy their efforts because of their rejection of His commandments.

The people had looked outside of God for an answer to their distress. They approached the greatest political powers in the area to find a solution to their problems. We still have people in our day who look for political solutions to mankind’s problems. However, God derided Israel’s attempts to find a personally crafted solution. You can almost hear Him saying, “You went to the King of Assyria to solve this problem? The problem is that you will not do what I said, as your God!”

There are no political solutions to ungodliness. That may not be a popular view but it is true. Ungodliness cannot be rectified through a political system, a particular



leader, or even a certain style of government. It can only be rectified through an inner transformation of the human heart that occurs when an individual yields in complete surrender to the will of God.

God responded to Israel's rebellious actions, saying through the prophet, "I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him" (Hosea 5:14).

Some people in our day seem to think that God should only be nice, kind, and gentle. God is all of that, but make no mistake, He is also a God of judgment! Hosea used vivid, metaphoric language to try to get Israel's attention and make them aware that retribution would certainly come if they failed to return to God. They could not go against the revealed will of God and expect that He would overlook their rejection of Him. That is still true today! No matter what our culture says, we cannot continue to resist God without incurring His wrath.

Of course, God reaches out to sinful man. The prophet Isaiah pled with Israel, saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). God offers mercy, but He will not compromise with sin. We dare not lose sight of the fact that if man willfully continues in rejection of God's commandments, brokenness and oppression will follow. Sin has consequences!

In a theological sense, we use the word *apostasy* to describe a turning away from God. The word *apostasy* literally means "a total desertion or departure from one's religion, principles, party, or cause." It comes from a Greek word which means "standing away or withdrawing." Some have said that apostasy really occurs in two parts. The first part is when we withdraw from God. The second part is even more serious; when we have rejected God, that is when God withdraws from us. Through Hosea, God warned the people of Israel that His withdrawal was coming and He would stay withdrawn until they returned to Him. He said, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face" (Hosea 5:15).

God cannot countenance sin. That is what His whole plan of redemption is about—a balancing of His holy justice and judgment with His grace and mercy. We cannot fully appreciate the grace and mercy of God until we understand that God's divine justice must be satisfied. His pure and holy nature demands it.

God created humankind with a free will. He allows people to go their own way because He wants them to serve Him out of willingness rather than coercion. However, choices have consequences. When an individual willingly chooses to go against what God's Word says, brokenness

will follow. When a nation willingly chooses to go against what God's Word says, oppression will follow.

It is interesting how many people who do not worry about what God thinks feel free to accuse Him when trouble comes. Frequently the first question is, "Why did God do this? Where is God in all this?" They do not stop to consider that they have been ignoring God and His commandments. For the most part, people just keep on going, giving no thought to the fact that a return to God is needed.

There may come a time, as it did with Israel, when God must say, "I'm going to step back until you finally can acknowledge your offense and return to Me." However, notice in verse 15 that there also is a reference to mercy. God says, "I will go and return to my place *till* they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face." There was a way



back to God for Israel, and there is for people today who have turned away from Him. Hosea said, "If we come and return to the Lord, He will give us life and we can know Him." There is a positive impact on our lives when we follow this admonition and "come and return" to the Lord. Our sins will be forgiven and we will be right with God. We will have an intimate, thriving relationship with the Creator as we keep our eyes on Him and live in obedience to His Word. Finally, we will look forward to a blessed eternity with Him!

Today, if you are not where you're supposed to be with the Lord, we urge you to return. The "ding" is sounding; we are nearing the end of the line. The Holy Spirit still is calling hearts to repentance, just as when the prophet Hosea, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, called out to Israel to return to the Lord. God promises to renew and restore if you will just yield to Him. Pay heed to His warning, and return to Him today!

■ Rev. Bill McKibben is Director of Asia Work for the Apostolic Faith organization and pastor of the church in Seattle, Washington.



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# FROM A REBELLIOUS TEEN TO A PASTOR'S WIFE

BY SYLVIA PHILLIPS

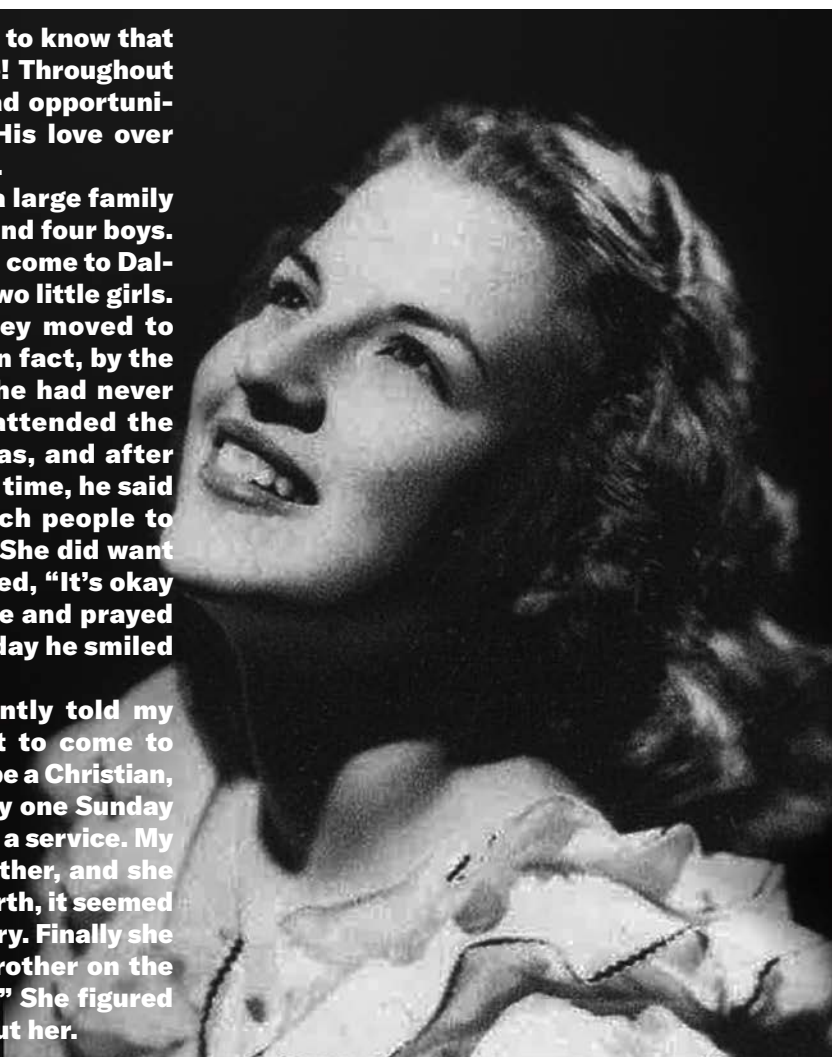
**W**

**What a joy it is to know that Jesus loves me! Throughout my life, I've had opportunities to prove His love over and over again.**

**I grew up in a large family of seven girls and four boys.**

**Before my birth, my parents had come to Dallas, Oregon, from Canada with two little girls. A baby boy was born after they moved to Dallas, but he was very sickly. In fact, by the time he was four months old, he had never smiled. My mother's brother attended the Apostolic Faith Church in Dallas, and after my folks had been there a short time, he said to her, "Do you want the church people to come and pray for your baby?" She did want prayer, but she merely responded, "It's okay if you want them to." They came and prayed for the baby, and the very next day he smiled and began gaining weight.**

**After that, my uncle frequently told my mother, "You know, you ought to come to church." Though she claimed to be a Christian, she kept making excuses. Finally one Sunday morning, she gave in and went to a service. My mother sat right behind her brother, and she said that as the message went forth, it seemed like the preacher told her life story. Finally she reached forward, tapped her brother on the shoulder, and said, "Tattle-tale!" She figured he had told the preacher all about her.**



Left to right: Sylvia and her husband Earl, when he had taken his first pastorate position at the church in Dallas, Oregon, in 1971; Sylvia as a child in the 1930s.



Our family did not have a lot of earthly goods as I was growing up, but we had God in our home. We lived on a farm and there were many chores to tend to, but my parents were not too busy to teach us children the Word of God. We all knew what was right and what was wrong. We knew that if the Lord came, we would have to be ready if we wanted to spend eternity with Him.

It was a beautiful feeling to know that my parents could get in touch with God; I felt safe. I can remember walking into the house and finding my mother there on her knees. I knew she was praying for her family; with eleven kids, there was a lot to pray about!

At different times in my childhood, the hand of God worked in our home. My father was the head of our family in every way. One time, though, he was struggling with a horrible throat infection. He was in such pain that he had to sleep in a chair—he couldn't lie down because he could not swallow. I had never seen my dad cry, but when the Lord came down and touched that man, he sat there weeping and praising God. Instances like that helped me know for sure that God was real.



After the service ended, some of the people asked my mother if she wanted to pray. She said no because she had the baby. However, as she walked toward the back of the church, the Lord spoke to her and said, "You know, you say you're a Christian, so you should be able to pray with these folks." She went forward to the altar, and there the Lord opened her eyes to her need of Him and saved her soul.

My father had never heard that a person could be saved until they moved to Dallas and began attending the Apostolic Faith Church. He did not know he was committing sin, but when he heard that God could come into a person's heart and sin would go out, that sounded good to Him. One night the preacher asked for those who wanted to be saved to raise their hands. My father did not raise his hand, but when they began singing the song, "Softly and tenderly, Jesus is calling" something in that song just broke him up inside. He made his way down to the altar and God gave him a repentant heart. He had not been there for five minutes when he knew he had the old-time religion. Peace and joy flooded his heart, and he knew God had saved his soul.

As a child I loved God, but when I was twelve years

old, we moved from the farm to Portland, Oregon, and the world began to seem bright and attractive to me. There was a lot of rebellion and stubbornness in my heart and it was difficult for me to tell the truth. That caused some unhappy moments in our home. I figured that the Christian life was fine for my folks, but I thought it would be the end of all my fun if I yielded my life to God. While I certainly didn't want to go to Hell, I felt like I was missing something out there in the world.

I am sure my parents often thought, What are we going to do with that girl? I was one of those kids who



Top to bottom: The Phillips family in the early 1960s; Earl and Sylvia on their wedding day in October of 1950.



sat in the back at church and talked with my friends during the service, not paying attention to what was said. After a while, I found myself not liking the church at all. I began to think, When I am eighteen, I'm going to leave. Mom and Dad are just too strict. My plan was to enjoy myself while I was young, and when I was old

and ready to die, I would pray and get saved.

God had other plans for me though, and I am so grateful for His mercy. He talked to my heart constantly, though I rejected Him many times. My heart was full of condemnation, and deep inside I was troubled about the sins that were in my life.

On the night of March 21, 1948, I was sitting in church with my older sister and her husband. They were newlyweds

but they were already having trouble in their marriage and were talking about divorce. Their sadness broke my heart. The minister who preached that night was Jack Robbins, and I could feel the Spirit of God calling. I did not really understand what was happening, but He was softening my resistance.

When the church service was over, a minister came and spoke to the three of us, asking if we would like to pray. My sister and brother-in-law said yes, and I was glad to go down to an altar of prayer too. There I knelt and poured out my heart, telling the Lord how sorry I was for the wrong things I had done, for my rebellion and disobedience, and for the lies I had told. I said, "If You will put something real in my life—something that I know about—I will serve You the rest of my life." When I meant those words with everything in me, the most wonderful thing happened: Jesus came into my heart! What a change He made! I felt like I was brand new. In fact, I was brand new; my very nature was transformed. In a moment of time, the rebellion and lying tongue were gone. God gave me joy and a deep inward peace settled over my heart. I literally felt like I could float out of the church that night, I was so happy.

At school the next day, I went to the vice principal's office and told her I needed to talk to her. One time while selling candy bars for our club at school, I decided I deserved a candy bar for my efforts and took one without paying for it. No one knew, but God saw. That morning I confessed to the vice-principal what I had done and paid for the candy bar. When I left the room, I broke down and cried, and waves of



glory flooded my heart. I felt so good! No one could have made me do that, but God put it in my heart to make restitution.

Of course, when you are just fifteen, you have no idea what the rest of your life will bring. I was still a teenager, but I was a lot better teenager, that's for sure. And that was just the beginning of a wonderful, fulfilling walk with God. Through the years I have proved that God is always the same and always there. He has kept me with peace in my heart in the good times and the hard times. I am so thankful for His blessings.

The same night I prayed through, a young man prayed through to salvation as well. While we were not well acquainted, I knew of him and figured he needed to be saved for sure. The Lord had a plan! I had no interest in that young man at the time, but the Lord brought him to me a few years later, and he has been a wonderful husband. We have been married for over sixty-six years now, and we have enjoyed a beautiful life together.

While there have been many mountain-top experiences, of course there have been some rough times and hard places along the way as well. I remember when our children were young that I went through a time of feeling lonely. I was home a lot with four small children, and I began to feel sorry for myself. One day as I was weeping and praying, the Lord spoke to my heart and said, "I can be your Friend." I realized I had not taken advantage of the fellowship that Jesus offered. Through that, I was able to draw closer to Him, and I learned that Jesus truly was my very best Friend!

During a church service at camp meeting that year, I was singing in the choir. The song chosen was "If Jesus Goes with Me, I'll Go Anywhere." As I sang those words, tears suddenly came to my eyes. I thought, Lord, what is going on? Why am I crying? I did not realize it, but the Lord was calling me into a closer walk with Him. As I prayed, He put something in my soul that just wanted to line up to everything He required. He put a desire in my heart to be more than just "in the Gospel." There was a longing to really serve Him.

Though I did not understand what was happening, God knew what He was doing: He was getting me ready for a future assignment. Shortly after that, the Lord called my husband to be a minister, and later he became a pastor. It seems almost unbelievable, but the Lord took the kind of person I was and made me into a pastor's wife. It is nothing in myself but only what God has done.

At different times in our lives, my husband and I have experienced God's healing touch. Several years ago I had a bout with shingles on my head. It was one

of the most excruciating pains I have ever endured. My husband was scheduled to go to Hempstead, New York, for special services there, and I had intended to go with him, but God had other plans. It was hard to be home alone and suffering so severely, but I learned new lessons about trusting God day by day during that time. Several times the ministers came by and prayed for me. One evening as I was sitting at home and listening to some music, the Lord came down and assured me, "My grace is sufficient." It truly is. He brought me through that trial.

Another time I became ill while we were visiting some of our churches in the Caribbean. We arrived on a Friday night, and had only been there a few hours when I started feeling sick. As the night went on, I got more and more violently ill. The thought went through my mind, I am going to be in bed the whole time we are here. But thank the good Lord, He touched me. The next morning I was weak, but as the day progressed, I felt better and better. On Sunday morning, we went to a church up in the mountains. Though it was only twenty miles away, it took us two hours to get there, so you can imagine how rough the roads were. We left at 8:00 in the morning and did not get back until 7:00 in the evening, but God kept me feeling fine throughout that whole day. I am so grateful He is there when we need Him!

My husband and I were able to raise our four children in the Gospel, and what a wonderful privilege it has been to pray with them and for them through the years. We now have nine grandchildren and twenty-six great-grandchildren, and my heart just overflows with joy for what God has done for us and our family.

Recently we had a chance to visit our church in Dallas, Oregon, where I had been taken when I was just a child. As I sat in the service, I thought of the little Sunday school room in that building where I first felt God's love in a definite way. I recall sitting on a wooden bench, when I was so little that my feet could not even touch the floor, and listening to my Sunday school teacher tell us the Christmas story about Jesus being born. The love of God touched my heart that day, and all these years later, I still remember it. How good God has been to me! He has been a perfect Friend all these years. It is wonderful to have an anchor in Jesus, and truly I love Him with all my heart.

■ Sylvia Phillips and her husband, Earl, live in Portland, Oregon, where they continue to assist in the work of the Lord after his retirement from pastoring.



# STEP BY STEP GUIDANCE

BY ALEX WILSON

**H**

**Having the privilege to grow up being taught the Gospel is truly wonderful, but what is even better is to be born into it through the experience of salvation, which no amount of godly heritage can ever provide. This is something every sinner must receive for himself, regardless of his background. There are no shortcuts.**



As a boy of six years old, I felt a very real need for a change in my heart. Kneeling beside my bed, I prayed in childlike faith, asking Jesus to forgive my sins and to live in my heart. Over twenty years have passed since that prayer, but the grace of God which was extended to me that day is still alive and well in my heart!

I was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, where my parents were faithful to take me to the Apostolic Faith Church even before my earliest memories. I learned from a young age that Jesus loves me. The lessons at Sunday school, Children's church, and from my parents helped me understand the necessity of personally accepting Jesus into my heart in order to go to Heaven someday. Now I am so thankful for that decision to invite Him in while I was still young.

Shortly after receiving salvation, I walked into my parents' bedroom and asked my dad what the "next step" was. He explained sanctification to me, which prompted me to begin seeking that experience in a childlike way. At the time, I did not fully understand the power of sanctification or grasp how it purifies and aligns one's heart with the Lord through the removal of the sinful nature. All I knew was that it was the next step, and therefore seeking it was up to me. My memory of receiving that experience is clear. A sermon at the church in Portland caused me to want to simply be brought closer to God. Kneeling at the altar of prayer after the service, I asked the Lord to stir my heart and He faithfully answered and gave me the experience of sanctification.

Once again, I asked my dad about the next step in my spiritual journey, and he explained about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. When I was sixteen years old, God impressed upon my heart that it was time to act. Sitting out in front of the tabernacle before an evening service at a Portland camp meeting, I promised to seek for that experience. I did not know how or when it would happen, but a resolve was in my heart to pursue God until I received.

After the service ended, I went through all of my consecrations again, reviewing aspects of my life that were already yielded and reconfirming that they were still given to God. The Spirit of the Lord was there, but as I continued praying, it felt as if my heart was in a dry desert land. I was so tired of seeking, and thought everything had been given to God once and

then again. Despite all of that, something just wasn't right. It was at this point the final step came. The Lord showed me to simply praise Him. When all of that raw emotion was turned into heartfelt praises to Him, within a matter of seconds He gave me an experience that to this day still constitutes my definition of the phrase "awesome wonder." It felt as if a door had been opened on a windy day and someone had walked right in front of me. I opened my eyes but there was no one there. In fact, there were probably less than a half dozen people still at the altars. The only person near was my great-uncle, Roy Frymire, who was faithfully praying with me. At that moment the very real presence of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, descended into my heart. God is so good! The witness came as I briefly spoke in a language unknown to me, and again the next night during a wonderful re-anointing where I spoke in another language until finally going to sleep.

Looking back, it is clear that the Lord has been with me everywhere I have gone and has helped with every challenge. In seventh grade, my life was significantly altered when my dad was asked to pastor the Apostolic Faith Church in Seattle, Washington. He and my mom faithfully answered that call, and so in the summer of 2002, at the age of thirteen, I moved there with my parents and two sisters. Adjusting to a new city was challenging, but the Lord was with me to provide strength and help.

During the summer of 2006, I contracted a rare and serious infection in my left eye which could easily have blinded me. Thankfully, the condition was diagnosed in its early stages, which prevented more serious damage. Even so, I was not able to see out of that eye for about three months while undergoing an intensive treatment program. During that time, God provided a way for me to continue to work at my part-time job and attend high school classes. My vision in that eye is still blurred due to the effects of the infection, but I praise the Lord that sight is as good as it is. The incident could be summed up by saying "I got lucky," but that isn't what really happened. God intervened on my behalf and brought me through that difficult time just as He wanted.

In September of 2007, my life underwent two more significant changes: starting college, and my parents moving to Richmond, California, to assume the pastorate there. Through these adjustments, the Lord





effort, the Lord could be counted upon to guide me. Simply knowing the Lord would be there no matter what the outcome was a tremendous benefit to me.

Near the end of my time in college, I began dating Lorina, the young lady who would become my wife. I knew the choice

was still faithful to be with me. Going into college, I had decided to pursue a career in the engineering field but was uncertain which branch to choose. The Lord provided a clear answer through the prerequisite classes. Two out of the three branches I was considering would have required a lot of work in areas where I didn't enjoy the entry level classes. However, in the third branch—electrical engineering—the beginning course work helped me see clearly that my path should go into that field.

Throughout my schooling, the Lord repeatedly provided for me. He was faithful to give me the needed scholarships, as well as the opportunity for internship and tutoring work so I could graduate with no debt and step right into full-time employment where I had been interning. Considering the poor economy during those years, there is no doubt whatsoever that it was God's hand that provided exactly what I needed.

The Lord proved Himself faithful to me in another way during my time in college. Occasionally an almost paralyzing fear of failure would grip me. Even though my mind knew logically that I could learn the material, at times it was hard to convince myself of that. Then it occurred to me that if I would do my best, the Lord would do the rest. What a change that realization made in my outlook! The irrational fear and stress instantly disappeared, and I knew that even if the results of my course work were not what I wanted or envisioned, by truly putting forth my best

of who to marry is one of the biggest decisions a person can make, and again, the Lord was there to lead. As Lorina and I got to know each other better, it seemed more and more like marriage was the direction we were headed. However, I still felt uncertain because I had not received a one-hundred-percent definite answer from the Lord that Lorina was the one I was to marry. It was time to dive deep into prayer.

God was faithful yet again. Walking through a parking lot one morning while heading into work, praying silently as I went, the Lord's Spirit assured me that Lorina was indeed the right one for me. It was so clear that it was almost like receiving one of the foundational spiritual experiences. There was no doubt.

Since our marriage we have been blessed over and over again by the Lord. He has provided the opportunity for me to continue my studies in engineering while working, the opportunity for Lorina to attend college and begin her career, and the blessing of having a wonderful church family here in Seattle to support us with their prayers. I do not have the years of experience of many of the older saints, but it is absolutely certain that the Lord has been good to me in my short number of years of knowing Him. I cannot give Him enough praise for what He has made out of my life!

■ Alex Wilson and his wife, Lorina, attend the Apostolic Faith Church in Seattle, Washington, where he is a youth minister.

# JESUS OPENED THE WAY

A VISIT TO ISRAEL BROUGHT A NEW APPRECIATION  
FOR WHAT GOD OFFERS US THROUGH CALVARY.

A PERSONAL  
REFLECTION FROM  
CATEY HINKLE

**A FEW YEARS AGO, I VISITED THE COUNTRY OF ISRAEL.** One interesting aspect of the trip was seeing Orthodox Jews who live by the teachings of the Old Testament but totally disregard the New Testament. In a sense, they gave a glimpse of what Old Testament times were like, which in turn gave me a new appreciation for what Christians have today.

One moment of the trip that really impacted me took place when our group was standing in the Western Wall courtyard. A ramp ascends from the courtyard to the top of the Temple Mount, where the Jewish Temple once stood. We noticed a warning sign above the ramp which stated in Hebrew and English: “According to the Torah it is forbidden for any person to enter the area of the Temple Mount due to its sacredness.” Our tour guide explained that the warning was out of concern that people might walk over the location of the Holy of Holies, the room in the Temple where God’s presence dwelled. According to Old Testament Law, anyone who entered that room would die (with the exception of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement). Since the Israelis have not been able to excavate the Temple Mount and are not sure exactly where the Holy of Holies was located, rabbis have instructed that no one should walk on the Temple Mount at all.

Upon hearing that explanation, a friend commented to me, “Well, we don’t have to worry about that warning; we have access to the Holy of Holies. Jesus opened the way!” When she said this, it dawned on me that if Jesus had not yet come, that warning sign would be for me. I would be banned from the Holy of Holies, and with good reason. The thought came to me that for centuries Jewish children had been carefully taught that they must never—never!—step foot in the Holy of Holies. In stark contrast, as a child I was taught that because of Jesus’ sacrifice I could go right into the Holy of Holies (in a spiritual sense), and I was encouraged to do so. In fact, I was told that I should go boldly! What a shock it must have been for early Jewish believers the first time they read the words, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace...” (Hebrews 4:16).

This experience reminded me that it is difficult to fully appreciate something I have always had. Yet, I don’t want to take any blessing for granted—especially not





The Western Wall and the ramp up to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.



blessings that Jesus paid for with His life. I decided to spend some time considering what else Jesus provided for us. Here are a few things that came to mind.

**HIS EXAMPLE.** The Jews had been privileged to receive the Law, the only known written instructions for how to live righteously before God. In addition, they had historical accounts and inspired words from prophets and poets which revealed more of God's character. Yet what we have today is far better: at the birth of Jesus, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Jesus did more than just tell people how to live righteously; He showed them how to do it. His life set a pattern that we can follow. In moments when we are not sure about the right thing to do, we can ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" Having His life as a practical example to follow is an invaluable resource.

**HIS TEACHINGS.** There were some misunderstandings of Old Testament Scriptures in Jesus' time, and He clarified many of them. Who better to explain Scripture than the Word of God Himself? Furthermore, Jesus gave teachings that previously had not been revealed. He gave us the principles of the Beatitudes, the memorable lessons in the parables, the example of the Lord's Prayer, the hope that "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2), and so much more. Because of Jesus, we have a far greater revelation of the truth and more promises from God than individuals did in Old Testament times.

**HIS ATONEMENT.** God made it clear to mankind that a blood sacrifice is required to atone for sin, and for several millennia people offered animal sacrifices. However, the blood of animals is not sufficient to atone for human sins; those sacrifices could only point ahead to the Perfect Sacrifice. Therefore, animal offerings had to be made repeatedly. Atonement was never finished until the day Jesus declared it so on the Cross, paying the penalty for sin with His own Blood. Those who made animal sacrifices had a wonderful hope, but we have a finished work.

**HIS PRIESTHOOD.** The high priest was the person who administered the process of reconciling people to God. However, he had his own sins that needed atonement, and he struggled with the same human limitations that we all deal with—limited knowledge, understanding, and physical capabilities.

Today, we have Jesus as our High Priest. He is not bound by human limitations, yet He understands our challenges because He lived as a man. Hebrews 2:17 says, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest." Thus, rather than a man representing us before God, our Advocate is the powerful, merciful, and faithful High Priest, Jesus Christ. We truly have the best.

**HE SHOWED GOD'S LOVE.** We often talk about God's love in church, and without question the primary example of His love for us is that He sent Jesus to save us. One of the most well-known verses of the Bible states this plainly: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..." (John 3:16).

I wonder, what was the primary example of God's love before Jesus came? Could people possibly have comprehended the depth of God's love without having seen the length to which He would go to restore our broken relationship with Him? Perhaps the Jews thought they were not allowed in the Holy of Holies because God did not want them there, not understanding that He so badly did want them to dwell in intimacy with Him, but the way was not yet made.

Even after Calvary, it can still be challenging to grasp how much God loves us, but we are blessed to have the most beautiful demonstration of His love as the starting place for our understanding.

**HE IS OUR FRIEND.** In the Old Testament, people were often referred to as God's children, His people, or His servants. Only twice was someone called His friend. However, in John 15:15 we read where Jesus said, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Because Jesus lived as a man, we can relate to Him more on a peer level. We see His friendship displayed at times such as when Mary and Martha were heartbroken by Lazarus' death, and Jesus was moved to tears for them. Then he prayed for God to raise Lazarus from the dead, and He did. What a Friend!

Friendship with Jesus is not for a select few; He was even friendly toward sinners. In Matthew 28:20 He promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." That means He will be with us through suffering, temptation, times of joy, ordinary days—always. There is no better Friend to have by our side.

**HE FULFILLED PROPHECY.** It is estimated that over three hundred Old Testament prophecies about Jesus were fulfilled during His lifetime. Many of those prophecies were not fully understood until they were fulfilled and the actual meaning was revealed. Consequently, we now have a better understanding of God's plan for humanity and more evidence than ever before that God's Word is precise and true. Based on the accuracy of prophetic fulfillment in Jesus' life, we can be even more confident that not a single word in Scripture is accidental and not one prophecy will fail.

**HE OPENED A WAY INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES.** The importance of this first example that came to me while standing at the base of the Temple Mount cannot be overstated. The Holy of Holies was where God dwelled, and before Jesus' sacrifice there was no open access for people to come that close to Him. Hebrews 9:8 explains, "The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." God did want people to come close to Him, but they were defiled with sin and thus disqualified from entering. Because of Jesus, our sin can be fully atoned for and cleansed. After that has happened, we are able to enter into a more intimate fellowship with God and His Spirit can dwell in us continually. This is what we know as the experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

After Jesus opened the way into the Holiest of All, the first people to receive that experience were the 120 who gathered in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost. That moment had been prophesied centuries before, and finally it was reality. I consider it a great privilege to be included among those who have received this blessing.

**JESUS ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH FOR US.** People who lived before Jesus' time were not completely left out; we know they could have wonderful relationships with God and make Heaven. Yet, "these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us" (Hebrews 11:39-40). Jesus' death at Calvary was the pivotal moment in all of human history, and we are living on the better side of that event. An amazing opportunity has been given to us. We don't want to take any of it for granted, but strive to obtain and appreciate every blessing Christ has made available.

■ Catey Hinkle is Managing Editor at the Apostolic Faith headquarters office in Portland, Oregon.



**JOSHUA HANCOCK**



Even though I was raised in a Christian home, sadly I chose a different path for most of my high school years. I had grown up knowing what was right, but had decided to do everything that was wrong. Thankfully, the Lord called after me and didn't leave me where I was. He is not willing that any should perish, and He wasn't willing that I should perish.

God can chase a person down no matter where he is. He found me on a train, riding to

Los Angeles after my family had moved. He cornered me up, asking, "Where are you going? What are you doing with your life?" I had no answer because I knew what I was doing was wrong. I said, "Lord, I need to get right with You," and I did. I got saved during that train ride.

That same year in a Friday night young people's service, God sanctified me, and then in April 2016 at the Richmond special meetings, He filled me with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It was an absolutely wonderful experience.

The Lord gives the baptism to each generation. I see all the ministers on the platform and know they are getting older, and realize that if the Lord carries my generation will eventually be sitting up there. I don't want my generation to let the Apostolic Faith slip, and we won't. I am thankful for this Gospel and the truth we have.

**GEORGE YELLOTT**



When I was just a little boy, my grandparents picked me up and took me to Sunday school. I remember some of the Bible stories and object lessons. Although our family moved out of the area and I did not go to church for a while, those teachings helped draw me back to make my life right with the Lord. I'm glad that He brought me back and saved me.

**LISA DEBUSK**



To God be the glory; great things He has done! I am so thankful to be a part of this family of God. I am also thankful for my parents and their faithfulness. They showed us children that we needed to make Heaven our home. Also, they brought us to church, meeting after meeting. Back then services were held several times a week, and I would go with my mom during the week to do little things at the church like cleaning. I praise God that they are still faithful.

In a couple of months, it will be forty years since the Lord saved me. As I look around and see all the young people in our church, I want to tell them, "God can keep you." I was young and in school when Jesus saved me, and He has kept me from that day to this.

God has answered so many prayers. There have been many times when I have fallen on my knees and cried out to Jesus, and He was there every time. I love the Lord, and I want to be what He wants me to be. I want to be faithful like my parents and make Heaven my home.



# EVIDENCE

At the age of thirteen, I was seen by doctors at four different hospitals and diagnosed with a brain-stem tumor. They weren't one-hundred-percent sure it was a tumor, but wanted to do surgery. They said if I didn't have the surgery, I wouldn't live to see age twenty-one. The risks were nearly as great. They said I could go blind, be paralyzed from the waist up, or die on the operating table. I was not a Christian and did not know the grace of God, but I had a praying grandmother. She stayed by my side and I could hear her prayers. When my mother asked what I wanted to do, I said, "God will not take me until He is ready to take me." I did not have the surgery. I knew God had allowed me to live and felt that He was with me, but I was like a hearer of the Word and not a doer. I did not confess my sins and repent of them, and did not ask the Lord to take control of my life.

For many years, I worked in management handling finances. Then in 2009, I became unable to work, and after having an MRI, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and a brain tumor. All I could think about was who would take care of my wife and children. I was so worried that I couldn't eat, but the Lord spoke to my heart saying, "Yield your life to Me, and I will show you what I can do."

About that time, the church that I had been married in was holding revival meetings. I went one night and the Lord spoke to my heart again. He said, "What are you waiting for? Haven't I shown you that I am the Almighty God? I can heal you and continue to bless your family in this life and in the next." I stepped out on faith and prayed, and God saved me. Three months later, I went back to get another MRI and they could find no trace of either the multiple sclerosis or the tumor. God is good! Now, I am forty-five and have a beautiful wife, a fifteen-year-old son, and a thirteen-year-old daughter. My life belongs to God; I am alive only by His grace.

**MARVIN JOHNSON**



**VICTORIA WORTHINGTON**



God saved me at a young age. I love the song that says, "How can I keep from singing His praise?" God is amazing and I am thankful He is always with me.

Recently, I have been having some vocal stress. I had acid reflux that was getting into my vocal chords and making them swollen. It hurt to talk, and I couldn't sing very well. This was concerning because my friend had asked me to sing in her wedding.

When praying about it, God put a peace in my heart. I asked Him to show me that His promises applied to me, saying, "I know You do this for other people," and He just let me know that He was going to heal me. At the wedding, I was able to sing, and I am doing better. I asked God to do a miracle and heal me, and He did!

I am so thankful that God hears our prayers and we can call out to Him in any situation.

SUNGUN YUNE



I thank God for saving, sanctifying, and baptizing me with the Holy Ghost. For a while I was thinking about God's love. I knew it superficially, but I wanted to know His love more deeply. During camp meeting last summer in Portland, God really touched my heart, and I felt it.

The Bible says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:12). The last verse of that chapter says, "But covet earnestly the best gifts." It made me wonder if I needed to be in a different position or to

put forth more effort in some way. The answer came to me in a sermon—the best gift is love.

Later that summer, we attended another camp meeting in Korea. There we felt God's presence and Holy Spirit again. We all felt the first love that He gives. I felt His deeper love and want to pass it on to others. I am so thankful for what God has done in my life.

SHELLEY BARLEY



I am thankful for all the Lord has done for me. It has been a year since I lost my mom. It has been a really tough year for me, probably the toughest of my life. But the Lord is not only there when things are good; He is there when things are falling apart, too. I never knew the depths that grief could take a person, but the Lord has been there to lean on the whole time. Right after my mom passed away, I felt His presence while praying, and He just let me know that everything was going to be okay.

The Lord has shown me what a blessing it has been to have a godly heritage. It was through

my grandfather's accident and his love for the Lord that I realized some years ago that I had a decision to make. I chose the Lord, and my mother stood with me. We were saved, and sanctified, and water baptized together. She was an example to me, and one we all looked to. I'm thankful that I had that heritage and had such a wonderful mother. I have the best church family too, because everybody here has been so faithful, kind, and sweet. I love the Lord with all my heart. My goal is to be with my Savior, and some day I'm going to see my mom by the Crystal Sea.

OLULANA ALOFE



God made me very happy when I was eleven years old. I was brought to the Apostolic Faith Church in Nigeria and heard that God could save sinners. Even though I was just a child, I was tired of the way I was living, so I prayed and God saved my soul. The joy in my heart was so tremendous that I could not contain it. I had such love. Before I was saved, I was the type of person who would get back at you if you did something to me, but God changed that completely.

Later, I heard about sanctification and read some tracts on it. I prayed and God sanctified me. It was wonderful. Then I heard about being baptized with the Holy Ghost for service. I sought that at the altar on a wonderful revival night, and God baptized me.

Since then God has been so good to me. He gave me a Christian wife and children. We are teaching our children to follow the Gospel in the same way my dad taught me, and that gives me great joy. I know Jesus will come back one day, and I am ready to see Him. I want everyone to pray along with me that when He comes, we will all meet Him in the air for a camp meeting that will never end. I give God the glory.

# WORLD **REPORT**



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# SCATTERED ABROAD

## TRANSFERS LEAD TO UNANTICIPATED NEW CHURCH GROUPS THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA.

In the Apostolic Faith Church organization, circumstances such as immigration, job transfers, and schooling have resulted in a number of “house churches” springing up throughout North America in areas where there are no Apostolic Faith churches. New communities are being reached with the Latter Rain Gospel through the efforts of these small groups gathering in private homes or rented facilities.

This follows the pattern of what occurred in the era of the Early Church. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, early believers gathered at the Temple or in synagogues. However, as Christianity expanded, they separated from their Jewish roots and began assembling in the private homes of wealthy individuals who had houses large enough to accommodate about fifty people. Biblical examples of Christians who used their homes for church services were Gaius (Romans 16:23), Justus (Acts 18:7), Stephanas (1 Corinthians 16:15), and Priscilla and Aquila (Romans 16:3-5). As persecution caused the early Christians to scatter, house churches sprang up throughout the Roman Empire. For close to three hundred years, meeting in private homes for teaching, worship, and prayer was a common practice. Following are some of the locations where groups are meeting today.

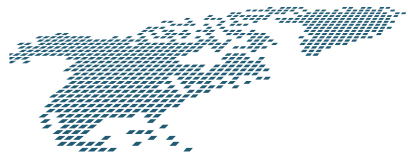


### Key West, Florida

Ellison Ashe was born and raised in Key West, but moved to Los Angeles, California, to pursue his education. There he also found the Gospel and was saved at the Los Angeles Apostolic Faith Church. He returned to Key West with a burning desire to share the Good News in his hometown, and eventually settled there permanently with his wife, Barbara, and their children. They distributed church literature and held services on street corners with the whole family participating. Later Ellison opened a business and held services in his small storefront office.

## NUMBER OF GROUPS

We currently have around 24 groups who meet in rented facilities throughout North America.



## STARTING YOUNG

Our group in Key West recently outgrew the 15-passenger van used to pick up students for Sunday school.



Left to Right: Sunday school children in Key West, Florida; Three attendees of the Reston, Virginia, dedication; Beginner Sunday school students Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Over the years, the group consisted mostly of the Ashe family and a man who brought his four grandchildren. Ellison's daughter, Rebekah, began overseeing the group in 2016 following her father's retirement, and in June 2016, they held special meetings in a hotel conference room. This resulted in more people attending their services, especially Sunday school. The group then began looking for a larger facility, and in October 2016, a local church offered to let them use their building rent free as long as they held their services at different times than the ones already being held at the location. Rebekah and the group made flyers and distributed them throughout

the neighborhood while praying for at least one new Sunday school student. That first Sunday they had two new children, and as of January 2017, their Sunday school had grown to over fourteen. They rent a van every Sunday to pick up the students, and two teachers have been added to teach different age groups.

The Key West church group has also held a mini-concert, and from time to time they have fellowship dinners following Sunday morning services. The response to these efforts has been positive, and they are seeing visitors and the parents of the Sunday school children attending their Sunday services.



## Pullman, Washington

In 2010, Olusola Adesope secured a position at Washington State University in Pullman. Since there was no Apostolic Faith Church in that area, he and his family commuted to Yakima, Washington, for services on Sundays—a seven-hour round trip. After two more families moved to Eastern Washington, the Adesopes began holding Sunday school in their home, and watching the live webcasts of the Apostolic Faith church services in Portland, Oregon. As university students began attending, the group outgrew the Adesope's home, so they rented two rooms at a community center for Sunday school and watching the webcasts.

The group started holding regular church services in 2014, and soon they also had choir and orchestra members who faithfully participated in meetings. The average attendance is now around thirty-five people. In January 2016, the group started having special prayer that they would find a more suitable facility to rent, and in May 2016, a local pastor from another church offered to let them use a facility adjacent to his church which



was not being used. Chairs were also provided, and the first service was held on July 24, 2016. The size of the Sunday school rooms and sanctuary allow for growth, and the prayer is that many more will be added to the group as Jesus carries.

## Queens, New York, and Lebanon, Pennsylvania

Our Spanish-speaking church in the Bronx, New York, recently started outreach ministries in Queens and Lebanon. The group in Queens started with one family who attended services in the Bronx when they could, but a lack of transportation prevented them from coming often. Members of the Bronx church began visiting their home for a mid-week prayer meeting, and their numbers grew until a larger space was needed. There are now about eleven who meet in Queens, and Aldo George, their group leader, commutes from the Bronx to join them for services.

Another Spanish-speaking family showed interest in attending Apostolic Faith services, but the four-hour drive from Lebanon prevented them. Again members of the Bronx church made regular home visitations, and now they have moved to a sanctuary that can accommodate their group of about twenty-five. Eliseo Charleston, the group leader in Lebanon, had been making the four-hour drive from the Bronx every weekend to attend their services, but God provided jobs for him and his wife in



Lebanon, and they were able to relocate their family of five to that area. The vision of the Bronx church is to start other Spanish-speaking outreaches in areas where there are no Apostolic Faith churches as God opens the doors.

## Reston, Virginia

The Apostolic Faith work in Reston began when a member from our Washington, D.C., church began witnessing to clients and friends who frequented his auto repair business in northern Virginia. He told his pastor that he sensed a hunger for the Gospel in that area, and the decision was made to hold a service in a rented chapel on Sunday, November 4, 2007. Around sixty people attended that service, with many coming from the Washington, D.C., church. The Reston group began holding weekly Sunday evening services at a rented chapel with assistance from the Washington, D.C., church members, as well as Wednesday evening Bible studies at a community center. Evangelical outreaches were conducted every Saturday, which yielded positive results as more people began attending the services. Over the past several years, the group has been holding annual concerts and picnics, and several have been saved. In 2016, they were able to rent a facility close to where most of their members reside, and they now have Sunday school and morning services in addition to their evening services. They have also started holding open-air meetings in various locations with Spanish interpretation. The average attendance is about eighteen people, and on January 22, 2017, they held a service commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Reston work, with around ninety-five in attendance.



### Calgary, Alberta, Canada

An Apostolic Faith pastor who visited Calgary in 2010 advised the Apostolic Faith families living there to meet as often as possible to encourage one another. At that time, there were three families, and they began meeting every Sunday in their homes to study the Sunday school lessons posted on the Apostolic Faith Church website. In 2011, the group rented a room at a community center in the northeastern part of Calgary. While they mostly focused on Sunday school, they held worship services whenever they had a visiting minister.

In 2012, the group found another facility that was more private and would accommodate up to twenty-five people. The following year, they began having annual Christmas programs, which proved to be a great outreach to the community. By 2014, with the addition of several attending from Edmonton, Alberta, the Calgary group once again began to look for a larger facility. In August of that year they started holding services in a sizable facility that accommodates up to seventy people, and is large enough to hold combined meetings with Fort McMurray and Edmonton. Four young musicians faithfully provide instrumental and vocal selections and they have an average of thirty who attend every Sunday. Although families come and go from the area, often for employment reasons, they are thankful they have an Apostolic Faith group in Calgary in which to worship.

### Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada

The Apostolic Faith work in Fort McMurray began over ten years ago when a number of Apostolic Faith church members from Newfoundland, Canada, moved there for jobs. The average age of the population in Fort McMurray is thirty-two, and it has been instrumental in the development of the Canadian petroleum industry.

In May 2016, Fort McMurray experienced a devastating wildfire that destroyed many homes and businesses, and displaced thousands of people. Life is slowly returning to normal in the area, and the church group in Fort McMurray is thankful for the outreach opportunities to spread the Gospel, including Sunday school and holding services at the Northern Lights Health Center, a care facility for long-term patients.



### Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Winnipeg was one of the locations visited by the founder of the Apostolic Faith Work, Florence Crawford, in the winter of 1907-1908. Although a work in Winnipeg was not established at that time, it did begin when Samson Jimaza, a youth minister from Lagos, Nigeria, migrated to Winnipeg in 2008. The closest Apostolic Faith Church at that time was in Thompson, Manitoba—about an eight-hour drive one way. In 2010, another couple relocated from the United Kingdom to Winnipeg, and they began meeting with Samson in his apartment for church services. Not too long after, two more families arrived from the United Kingdom, and in 2011, several others arrived from Nigeria. At that time, the group numbered ten adults and four children.

In April 2012, the group found a facility to rent, and their numbers continued to grow. Newcomers included a woman from Norway and her two children. By 2013, several college students from Nigeria were part of the group, and visitors attended almost every Sunday. Today, their Sunday attendance fluctuates from forty to sixty people. The group also holds Tuesday evening prayer meetings in various homes, with up to thirty in attendance. Families in the church volunteer on a rotational basis to provide lunch for everyone who attends the Sunday morning services. The group is blessed to have vocalists and instrumentalists who are dedicated to the service of the Lord, including music teachers who are able to teach others to play and read music. They held their first annual Christmas program in 2015, with around eighty in attendance. In 2016, they had another impressive turnout in spite of a forecasted snowstorm, which afterward dumped over a foot of snow!

These are just a few of the Apostolic Faith groups that have sprung up over the years as Apostolic Faith church members relocate to areas where there are no branch churches. Although small in number of attendees, their zeal to spread the Latter Rain Gospel has resulted in souls being saved. They are evidence that it does not require a church building and large congregation to preach the Gospel and impact a community. One by one, these small groups are sharing their testimonies and winning souls for Christ. The prayer is that the Latter Rain Gospel will continue to spread across North America and the world as Jesus tarries.

# NEW JERSEY CHURCH DEDICATION



Left to Right: A group photo of all attendees in front of the new church building; Pastor James Timbilla speaks after the Saturday evening dedication concert.

**A** weekend of special meetings was held April 21-23, 2017, in Wharton, New Jersey, centering around the dedication of a new Apostolic Faith Church in that location. The schedule included evangelistic services on Friday and Sunday evenings, a morning devotional service and evening concert on Saturday, and the dedication ceremony on Sunday morning.

The Saturday evening concert, led by music director Daniel Tetteh, was well represented with participation from several of our churches in the area. It opened with the orchestra playing a rousing “Star Spangled Banner” and the choir singing “The Heavens Are Telling.” Throughout the evening, several more choirs were heard including a youth choir which sang “Amen,” a men’s choir singing “When We All Get Together with the Lord,” and a women’s choir singing “Jesus Is Coming.” There was also a vocal solo of “Allelujah,” and a mixed

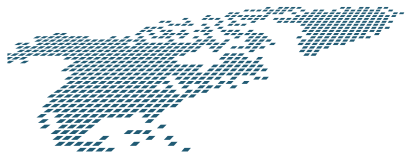
quartet sang “Oh, Freedom.” In addition to the choir and orchestra numbers, an instrumental trio played a beautiful “Four Waltzes.” The evening concluded with the adult choir singing the inspirational “Hallelujah Chorus.”

Sunday’s dedication was attended by nearly two hundred, with representation from our churches in the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania as well as the headquarters in Portland, Oregon. The sanctuary comfortably holds about seventy-five, so the overflow audience met downstairs to watch the service on screens. The event was also broadcast live online.

The service began with the orchestra playing “Surely the Presence of the Lord Is in this Place.” The pastor, Reverend James Timbilla, welcomed everyone, and then the service proceeded with a children’s program and the opening prayer. The congregation was blessed by several music specials throughout, one of which was a flute solo

## INTERNATIONAL RELOCATION

Pastor James Timbilla grew up in Ghana and was a pastor and board member for our work there until he moved to the US in 2006.



## MOVING EAST

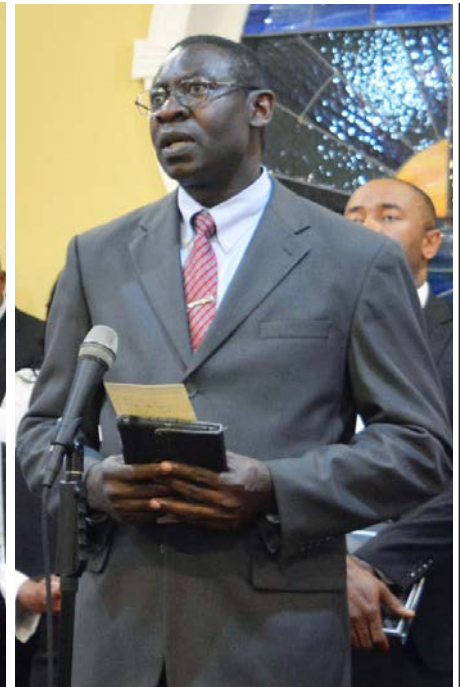
Teaneck is located 10 miles east of our churches in the Bronx, and Wharton is 35 miles east of Teaneck.

of "He Is Exalted" with "Great Is the Lord." Reverend Darrel Lee, Superintendent General of the Apostolic Faith organization, and his wife, Debbie, were present for the occasion, and he gave the message. Following this, the dedicatory prayer was offered by Reverend Eugene Segres, Jr., District Superintendent of Eastern and Southern United States, and then the choir closed with "The Lord Bless You and Keep You."

To commemorate the event, a program was distributed containing a history of the Wharton work which originated in Teaneck, New Jersey, in 2006. Members of the organization who resided in and around Teaneck and also Yonkers, New York, were worshiping at our Brooklyn and Hempstead, New York, churches. Due to the long commute, which was made more challenging by heavy traffic and hazardous weather conditions in the winter, they decided to meet locally for mid-week prayer meetings. The first was held on Wednesday, June 14, 2006, in the residence of Emmanuel Anim-Mperey, with twelve people in attendance.

The prayer meetings continued for three years with Reverend Godson Tetteh leading, and the group's number grew to nineteen. The group sought permission to hold regular services, and after discussion between the Portland headquarters, the district superintendent, and the Hempstead pastor, this was granted. Reverend Tetteh had newly relocated to Ghana, so Reverend Timbilla was appointed to lead, and the first Sunday morning service was held on August 20, 2010.

Over the next six years, the group expanded their outreach by making senior home visits in Teaneck and



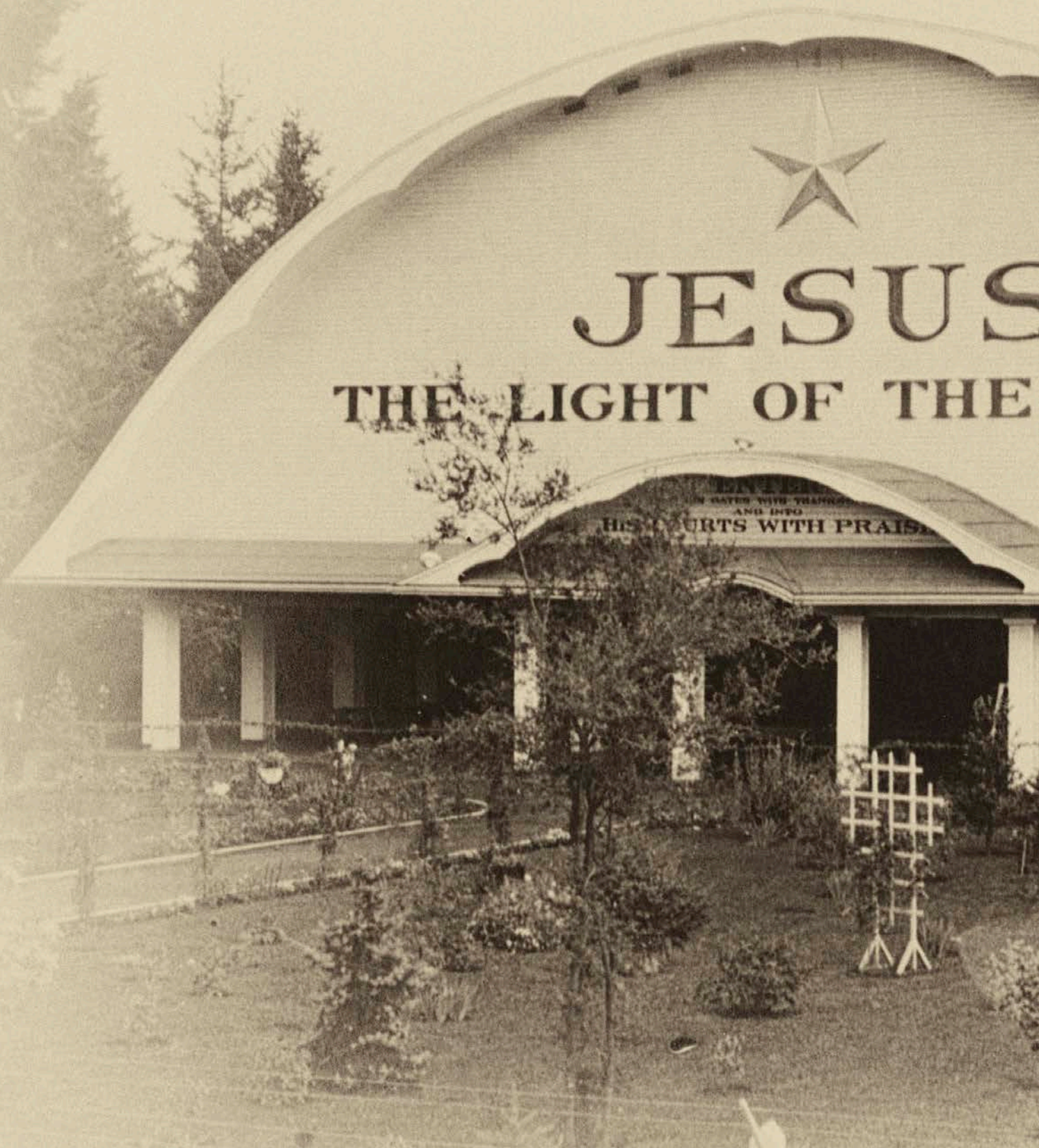
the nearby town of Hackensack, holding annual special meetings, and providing an annual revival music concert. They changed locations several times as more congregants were added to their number, including their first convert. In August of 2015 it became clear that a permanent meeting site was needed.

The Teaneck saints began to earnestly pray and look for an alternate place of worship. When nothing materialized, they expanded the search area and found the building in Wharton. At first, it seemed unattainable and possibly too far away, but after touring the building and seeking the will of God, the decision was made to purchase it.

Keys to the Wharton church were received on August 5, 2016, and the first official service was held there on August 21, 2016. The building is beautiful and has room to grow. The Wharton saints appreciate this new place to worship, and are committed to continuing to spread the Latter Rain Gospel at their location.



# OUR **CLASSICS**



The tabernacle on the Portland Apostolic Faith campground, shortly after it was built in 1921.



# THIS IS LOVE.

FROM A SERMON  
BY LOYCE CARVER



The love of God. . . . We should remember it, talk about it, live in it, and appreciate it! John 3:16 reveals the very essence of the message of God's love: "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."

Jesus Christ's dying—not only for His friends, but also for those who are rebels against God's goodness—is the supreme example of love. And we can prove that love by our own experience! We were all born in sin with a depraved nature. But Jesus can change that nature with His love. He can make us want to think and talk about things which please Him.

We should talk about the love of God to our families, our friends, and to anyone else we can. Our salvation is all of grace, all of God's love and provision in response to our repentance. The more often we talk about this, the more likely we are to be saturated with it. God wants us to remember that He gave His Son. He wants us to remember His love.

In a spiritual sense, you are what you take in. If you let God fill you with His love, His Word, His goodness,

and the memory of what He has done, you will see what more He can do. The more you think about it, the more you have to think about, because there is no limit to what God has done or can do.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). What does that mean?

It means that when compared with how much God loved us, our love is insignificant. There is no way to compare it. The proof of love is that God loved us enough to die for us while we were yet sinners.

But God has commanded us to love one another. That is what we can do. We cannot love as God does, pardoning others' sins. We cannot hear their prayers and know their hearts as God can. But God expects us to extend love even when we are unable see another's heart and desires. This is the proof of our discipleship. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

If we show that love to our brother, the world will see it. Can they see God through our actions? If we say something cutting, critical, or hard against our



## IF WE LET GOD HAVE HIS WAY, HE WILL PERFECT HIS LOVE IN US. HE WILL DO THAT BY TEACHING US, AND BY CORRECTING AND CHASTISING US. GOD SHOWS US LOVE EVEN WHEN HE CORRECTS US.

brother, the unsaved person will know God is not in that. We prove to the world that we love God when we show love toward others and conduct ourselves in a manner that proves it.

If we let God have His way, He will perfect His love in us. He will do that by teaching us, and by correcting and chastising us. God shows us love even when He corrects us.

When your son plays in your front yard, you tell him, "You must not go into the street. You must not even sit on the curb or dangle your feet there. The street is for cars and buses, and you must not go out there." If the youngster forgets your admonition and runs into the street, you retrieve him quickly. How frightened you are when you see what is happening! You fear for his life.

When you bring him back, you don't just cuddle him in your arms and say, "Son, don't you know better than that? I have told you half a dozen times that you shouldn't do that." No! No! You chastise him. You say, "I told you not to do that. You'll be hurt. The car will run over you and break your leg or kill you." And you apply some pressure and discipline to help the child remember.

You want him to remember that the correction hurts. Then he won't have to learn by experience that it hurts to be run over by a car. You are not doing the child an injustice; your love causes you to apply the correction so he will not do something dangerous.

What if the children down the street come to your yard and defy all those teachings? What if they begin taking your boy into the street? What do you do? You say, "Will you children please go home. You stay in your own yard. I cannot have you leading my child into the street." Perhaps your neighbors will not jump up and down with glee because you sent their children home. But you had to do it at the peril of danger to your own child.

God loves us as His children, and He wants to teach us lessons. He appoints teachers and leaders to help us. Sometimes they have to take a stand and say, "It must be this way." Some people think any discipline, especially church discipline, is far removed from love, but it isn't. If we submit ourselves to God's discipline, we are happy. We are happy even in difficult and

trying circumstances, because we know God loves us and is caring for us.

You have a responsibility toward God to live peaceably with all men, as far as lies within you. But remember, you must not compromise with their sin just to have their approval or appreciation. God does not allow that any more than we allow our children to go into the street just because the neighbor's children go there.

So we have a responsibility to love. And we have to love in reality and not just in words. "Let love be without dissimulation" (Romans 12:9). That means love is to be without pretense or hypocrisy. Don't say, "I love you," and then act as though you do not.

A husband and wife get along much more easily if they are loving toward each other. It is not enough for a wife to show love only occasionally, suddenly turning on the charm after having been stubborn. That doesn't persuade anyone. Neither is it fitting for a husband to be demanding and overbearing, and then brush it all aside as if no harsh words had been said.

God wants us to live in love. There is more power in living in the right relationship with each other, showing proper respect for one another, than in occasionally saying, "I love you." Oh, words are important. Kind and loving words are probably not said often enough. However, the words mean little if they are not backed up with actions. So don't let your love be only on the surface. Live in God's love every day.

God is love, and the best proof of it is that He sent Jesus to earth to die for us. And the best proof that we have Christ in us is that we love one another. Let us set ourselves to do that. As we praise God more and more for His love and mercy, His love will shine through us and be an inspiration to others. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

■ Rev. Loyce Carver was General Overseer of the Apostolic Faith organization from 1965 until 1993, and continued on the ministerial staff at the headquarters church in Portland, Oregon, until his death in 1996.

# A Seafaring Man Finds *Salvation*

**M** My grandparents were immigrants from Ireland, fishermen who settled on a small island in Lake Michigan. There my parents raised me in a good home, where I was the youngest of eleven children. Although we went to church, we did not have a Bible in our house. Neither my mother nor father could read or write, so they would not have been able to do much with it if there had been one.

Life was hard. I remember seeing my mother look out across the water, her mind far away. One time I asked her, "What is going to happen when we go down in that old box?" As an altar boy, many times I stood alongside a grave and held the hyssop or the holy water while the minister sprinkled the coffin before it was lowered into the ground. I saw many an old fisherman or farmer who had lost his mate stand there and cry, without a hope in the world. Sometimes they would try to jump into the grave, and others had to hold them back. What was life all about? My mother had no answer for me.

Growing up, I went to a religious school. The first question of the catechism I learned was, "Why did God make me?" The answer was: "God made me to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him, and to be happy with Him in this world; and to be forever with Him in the next." Well, we tried to serve God and be happy, but we didn't know how.

When I was thirteen years old, I heard that my thirty-four-year-old brother had died aboard a Coast Guard ship. He had come out of the mess hall where he'd had his breakfast, and walked up by the pilot house. There he sat down on the railing, lit up a cigarette, and dropped dead. I was never the same after that. It caused me to realize that people could die young.

One day when I was in the eighth grade and had gotten into trouble, a teacher told me, "You are doing nothing but soaking up heat. It would be

better for all of us if you left." So I went to sea, and for the next eleven years I sailed on tramp steamers around the world. I remember being up in the crow's nest on the ship at night, and looking at the stars. Tears would come to my eyes, but I couldn't find what I needed. There was something in my heart that was crying out for reality, but I didn't know how to reach God.

While I was a seafaring man, I visited skid rows in large cities around the world. I was in and out of jail for drunkenness. When I was nineteen years old, I took my first treatment for alcoholism. Before I was discharged, the doctor showed me around the alcoholic ward and pointed out the different ones he knew who had been there often. He told me there was no cure for them. I was still young, but already I was being discharged as a chronic alcoholic. I tried to get out of that kind of life, but was helpless.

Finally, my wanderings took me to Eureka, California, where I was picked up again and put into jail for drunkenness. There I heard something I never forgot. A group of people came to the jail from the Apostolic Faith Church to hold a meeting. A few words the minister spoke at the close gave me hope. He knew he was talking to a group of drunken loggers who could not get into the woods because it was the rainy season. I was there among them. He said, "You don't have to be in church to pray. It doesn't make any difference where you are—by the side of an old log in the woods, or in the rigging, the conditions are the same. If you get honest with the Lord, He will hear you. If you don't, you won't get anything." I liked that. I had always liked straight talk.

Soon after that jail meeting, I sailed from San Francisco to South America on a Norwegian ship. I was not yet thirty years old, but my nerves were shot. Just the click of the gyro as I tried to keep the ship on course during a night watch would almost drive me crazy. I kept a bottle of liquor in my pocket to see me through, and to keep me from jumping

overboard. Also, I had a blood disease I had picked up in South Africa. After being in three marine hospitals, I was still no better.

After returning to San Francisco, in a flop house on Market Street and Embarcadero, I got out of bed and prayed. I felt I was going to die, and I wanted to try once more to see if there was a God, and if He would hear me. At three o'clock in the morning, I prayed the Lord's Prayer. That was all I knew. Then I prayed, "God, do for me what You did for those people I heard testify in Eureka." In the twinkling of an eye, the power of God came down into that hotel room. All Heaven broke loose and God set me free. I didn't know what it meant to be born again, but the Spirit of the Lord spoke to my heart, "Your disease-wracked body is clean. Your sins are forgiven. Go forth and do right or you will spend eternity in condemnation."

The next day I walked out of that hotel a man free from sin, a new creature in Christ Jesus. Some of the old gang called out to me, "Come get an eyeopener." I answered, "I've had my eyes opened. I'm through with the old life."

I didn't know a thing about restitution, but God led me and helped me to make my past right. I didn't have a trade, or even a change of clothes. I had nothing, but I got a job at a railroad camp, and kept it until the Lord led me back to Eureka.

In Eureka, I obtained a job as a longshoreman running winches on the ships which were being loaded with lumber. I was single with no family nearby so I stayed in an old workman's hotel. I didn't know where to attend church, but one thing I knew—prayer had saved me, and if I prayed, God would take care of me. One night, alongside my bed in that hotel, I prayed and prayed. Then something started happening. I felt an impression on my ears, and in the background I heard a song, "When the roll is called up yonder, I'll

be there." It felt as if a suction cup was pulled off my heart. There was victory and joy. Later when I came among the Apostolic Faith people and described that experience to them, someone told me, "God sanctified you." At the time I didn't know what to call it, but God had done something in my life, something to hold me.

Even though I had heard the Apostolic Faith people years before when they held the meeting in the jail, I didn't know what church they were from. One day down on the waterfront, I met a man I had been in jail with before my salvation. He asked me for a cigarette, and I said, "I don't smoke anymore. It was taken away from me." He asked what happened and I told him that I'd prayed. He said, "I know what you mean. My father is a pastor in a church over on F Street. Do you want to go there and see?" I went. It was the Apostolic Faith Church, and as soon as the first testimony was given, I knew it was where I was going to stay.

There I heard about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and began to seek for that experience. Somehow it seemed that I could not get through. Years went by, and I was about ready to give up. By then I was married, and there was an old trailer out by our house where I went to pray. That night I stayed and prayed, until finally my wife came out. When she got there, she heard me speaking in another language, one I did not know. God had helped me connect with Him and had baptized me with the Holy Ghost.

It is good to walk with Jesus. Many years have passed since God saved me, and He has kept me. Today the peace of God reigns in my heart. Surely God delights in mercy. I am thankful for the old-time religion.

■ George Martin was a member of the Apostolic Faith Church in Eureka, California, until he went home to Heaven in 2007.

## 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](http://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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# JESUS

## THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

LET'S GO TO THE COURTS WITH THANKS  
AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE

