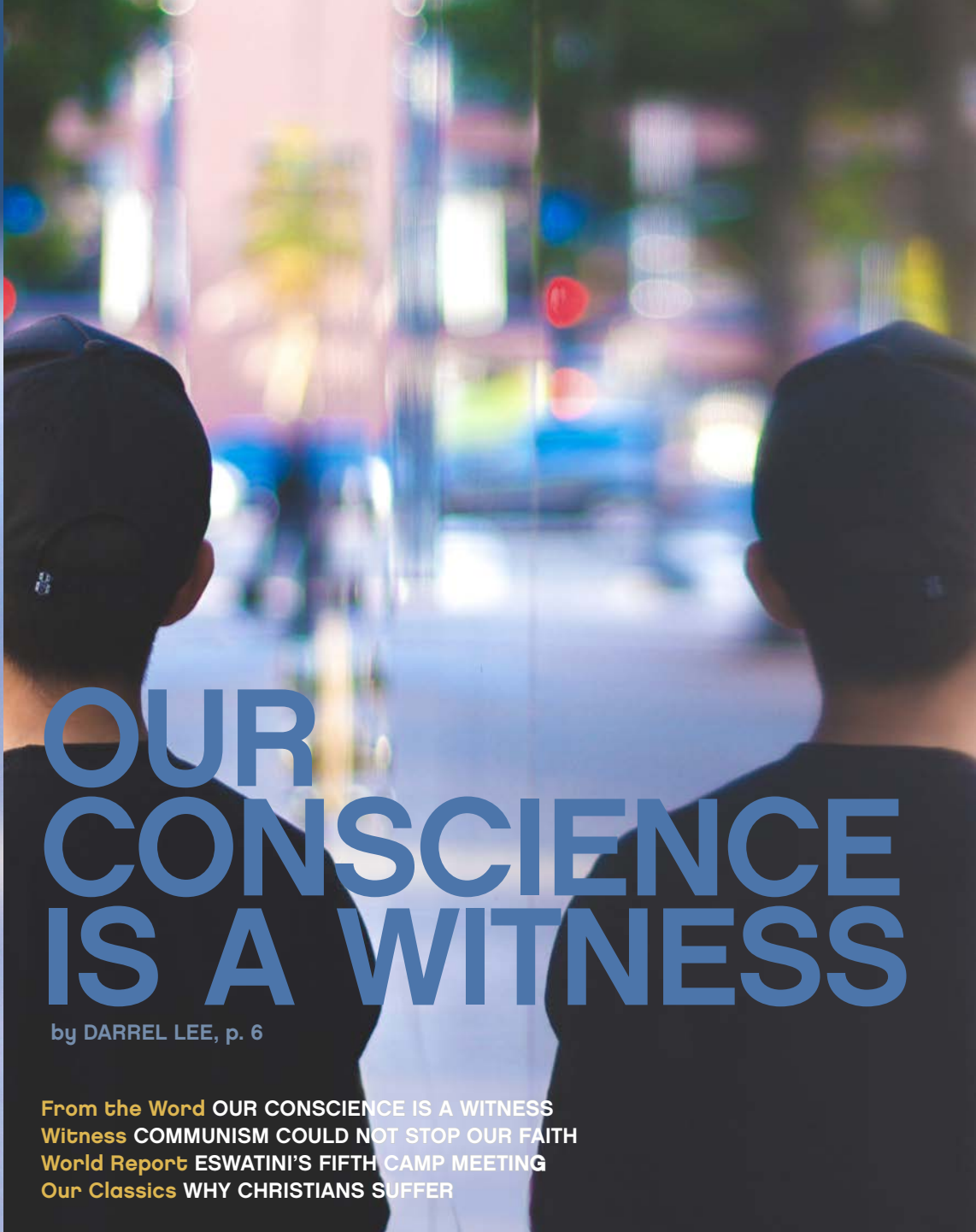


THE Apostolic Faith

EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2019



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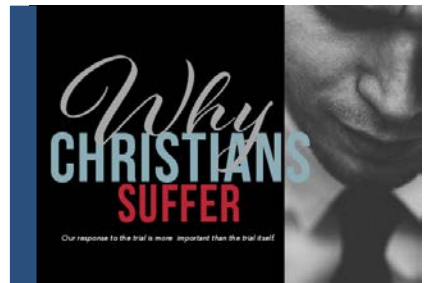
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VIEWPOINT

BY DARREL LEE, SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL



A determination to learn about the Word of God will enrich our lives in every way.

provides an enormous opportunity for those who are determined to learn.

Unlike most contemporary material, this devotional and study curriculum is rooted in Wesleyan holiness theology. Rather than justifying or apologizing for spiritual failure, its Biblical frame of reference is that Jesus not only forgives past sins, but He delivers and

DAYBREAK & DISCOVERY



Join us for a new unit of Daybreak and Discovery, going verse-by-verse through the Books of Luke, Acts, James, Galatians, and Romans.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH who are reared in Christian homes have great advantages, one of which is obtaining a measure of Bible literacy. In contrast, I was Biblically illiterate until age twenty-one! Except for attending a week of Vacation Bible School as a youngster, I was not exposed to the Bible. I did not own one, nor had I read one. Scriptural accounts that my own children began to learn as toddlers were foreign to me. A while after my conversion, when assigned to teach a Sunday school class of five-year-olds, I was learning Bible stories for the first time while some of my students had already heard them multiple times in their homes and at church. They should have been teaching me!

Even with the advantages of being taught, there comes a point where we must determine to learn. There is a distinction between the two. In teaching, the burden of responsibility falls on the instructor. In learning, it rests primarily upon the student. Our *Daybreak* and *Discovery* curriculum is designed to aid users in a textual approach to Bible study. It is true that this material effectively teaches. More importantly, it

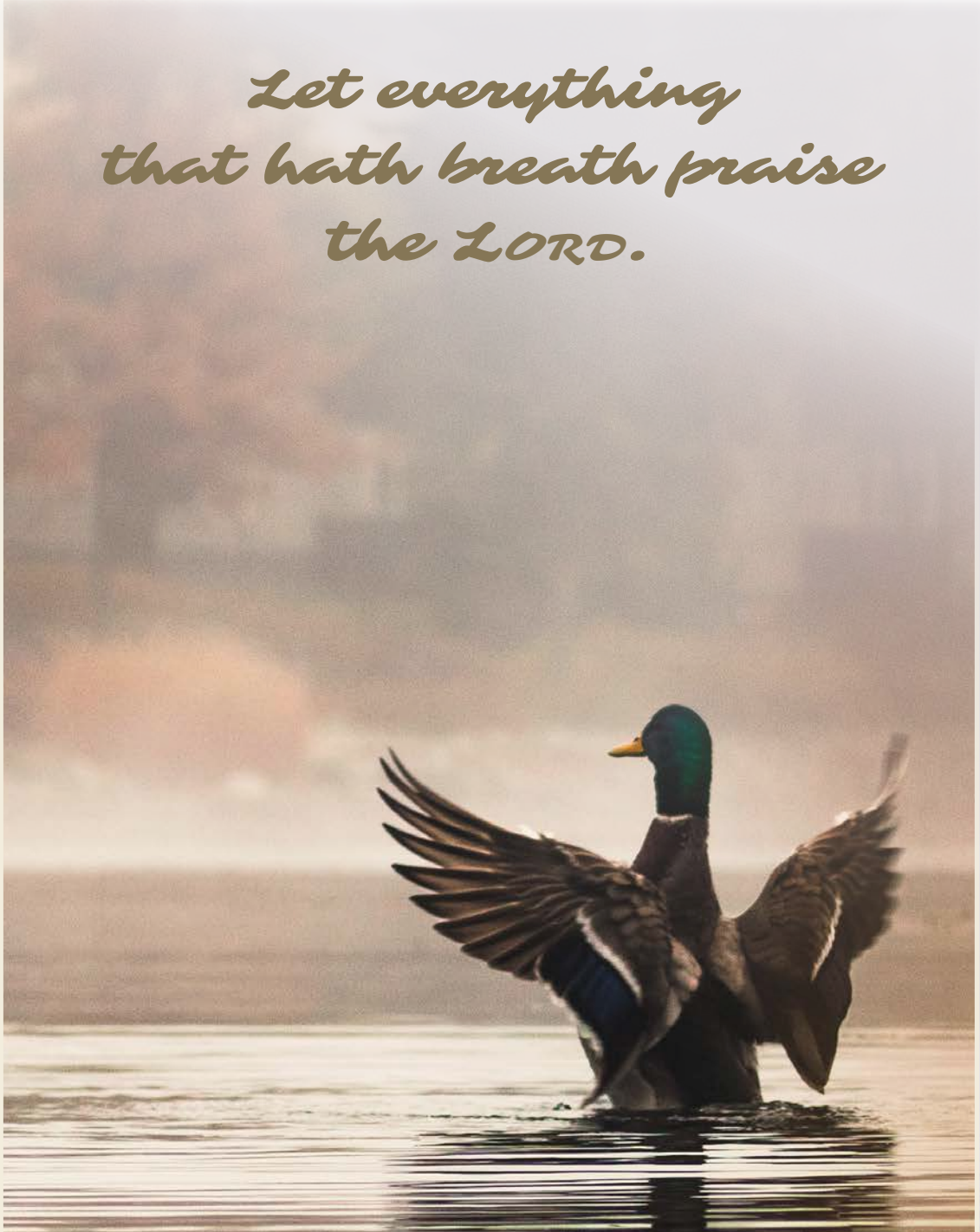
keeps from spiritual failure in the future. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). The Bible teaches that there is complete victory in Jesus!

It is not too late to begin in our current quarter of study material, which covers the books of Luke, Acts, James, Galatians, and Romans. The daily *Daybreak* lessons can be accessed easily through our app and on the Daily Devotional page of our website, where you can also subscribe to have the lessons sent to your email inbox. The corresponding weekly *Discovery* lessons will be posted on our Sunday School page. Read the article on page 11 of this magazine for details about how to take full advantage of this learning opportunity.

Just think, if you join us for this unit of *Daybreak* and *Discovery*, in only thirteen weeks you will have a better grasp of five books of the Bible! This is far too good of an opportunity to pass up. The time you spend immersed in God's Word will enrich your life in every way. Δ

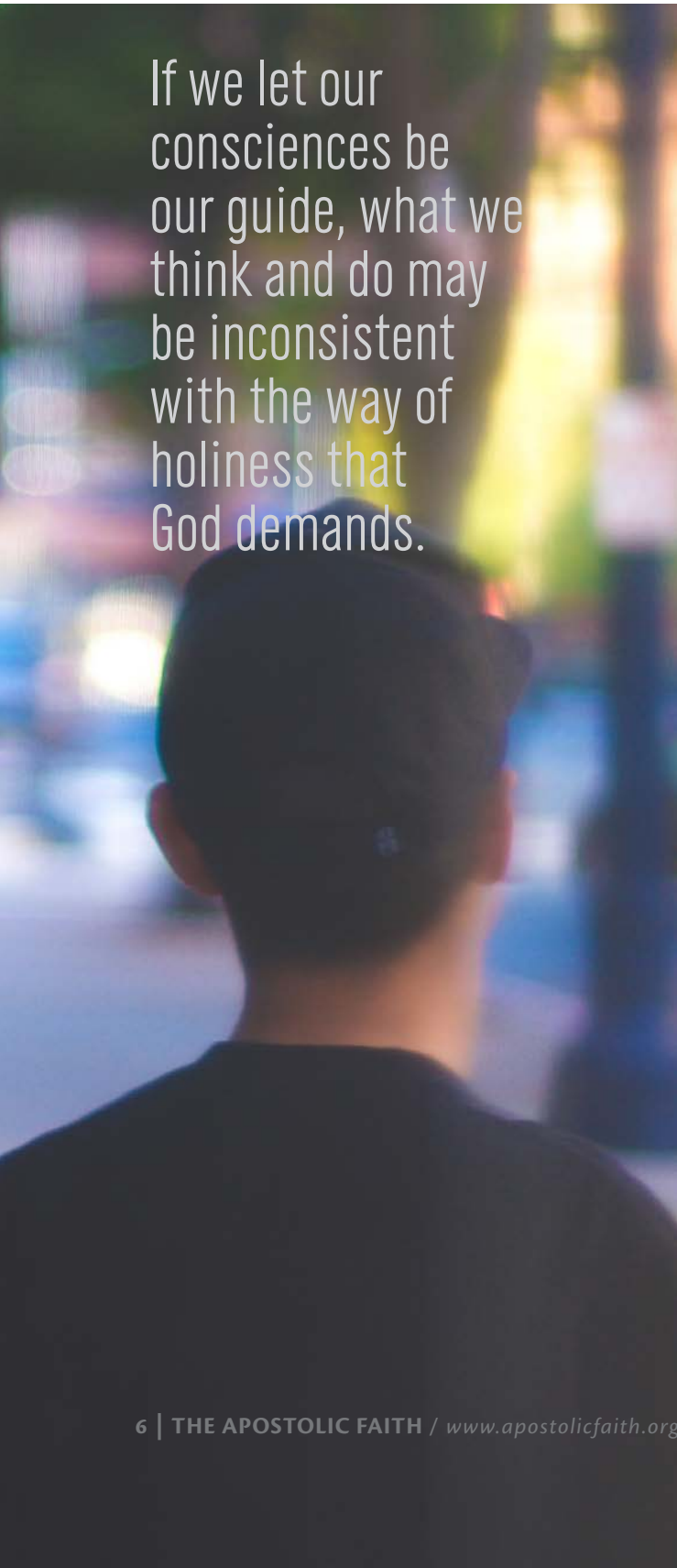
D Lee

*Let everything
that hath breath praise
the LORD.*



OUR CONSCIENCE IS A WITNESS

by DARREL LEE



If we let our consciences be our guide, what we think and do may be inconsistent with the way of holiness that God demands.

THE WORD CONSCIENCE REFERS TO MORAL AWARENESS—IT IS THE ASPECT OF OUR INTELLECT THAT REASONS, makes decisions, and distinguishes right from wrong. A healthy conscience is a good thing. It directs us to the kind of walk that God wants us to have. We want to be attentive to God who has sent His Holy Spirit to check us, to speak to us, and to guide us through our consciences. We want to be sensitive and responsive to that leading.

On the other hand, an unhealthy conscience is dangerous and deceitful. An unhealthy conscience may excuse what it should accuse. Poor choices have changed it from being sensitive to being calloused and unresponsive. It no longer winces at actions or thoughts it once considered doubtful or even knew to be wrong.

As sinners, some of us experienced that decreasing sensitivity of conscience. Behaviors that once we thought we would never do, we began doing. The conscience that was healthy at one time became unhealthy, and we began living in ways we never dreamed we would live.

When I was growing up, I recall hearing more than once, “Let your conscience be your guide.” While that is a common saying, following its advice could be risky. It would be like depending upon a polygraph, the results of which may be unreliable. It is difficult to detect deception!

The Apostle Paul identified why the conscience can be an unreliable guide in his epistles to Titus and Timothy. To Titus, he wrote of individuals whose consciences had been “defiled”—in other words, sullied, tainted, or morally contaminated. We read, “Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled” (Titus 1:15). If we let our consciences be our guide, what we think and do may be inconsistent with the way of holiness that God demands. In fact, Paul went on to speak of those who profess to know God but in works deny Him. If they were walking according to their consciences, their works were susceptible to corruption.

To Timothy, Paul wrote of those whose consciences had been “seared”—made insensitive or cauterized as if with a hot iron. In 1 Timothy 4:1-2, the Apostle warned, “In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” As a finger is numb after being burned by a hot iron, a conscience can be numbed by the searing of sin.

DOES IT AFFIRM OR CONDEMN OUR ACTIONS?

PAUL'S EXPLANATION TO THE ROMANS

In Romans 1, the Apostle Paul gives a description of those who ignored their consciences and resisted what they knew to be right. In verse 21 we read, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Sin begins in the heart—in the mind and imagination. The rest of Romans 1 describes the condition of those who engaged in behaviors that defile, and they all began with a corrupted conscience.

The Bible indicates that God has revealed Himself to each person through the conscience. In Romans 2:14-15, the Apostle noted that some of the Gentiles responded to their consciences, even though they were not knowledgeable about the law of God. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." A moral principle was at work in their hearts, because when they failed to adhere to their ethical code, their consciences caused them to feel guilt.

The Jews had a condescending view of the Gentiles because the oracles of God had been committed to them when God gave the Law to Moses at Mt. Sinai as a special revelation. However, the Jews failed to understand that God's intention was that through them the entire world was to be converted. Instead of following Him in obedience, they rejected His commandments and turned away in rebellion.

Paul declared that the Jews and Gentiles were equally accountable to God, because He speaks to all through Creation. We do not need to have been at Mt. Sinai. Every time the sun comes up or sets, or we look to the stars or the mountains or the trees, or hear the birds, Creation speaks and God reveals himself. In Romans 1:20 we read, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." The whole world is without excuse. The Jews are not excused from judgment because

Abraham was their father or because God gave the Law to Moses on the Mount, nor are the Gentiles excused because they are *not* descendants of Abraham and were *not* at the Mount.

God has given every individual a conscience, and that conscience is a witness. A witness testifies to what he sees and knows; in like manner, the conscience testifies whether the actions being contemplated are in accordance or opposition with what God demands.

We see a conscience in little ones. Children look over their shoulders to see if their moms or dads are watching when they have done something, or are about to do something, that they know is wrong. They have guilty consciences! As adults, we do not need to look over our shoulders to know that God is observing. Our consciences tell us whether or not we are making decisions consistent with God's requirements.

THE CONSCIENCE ACCUSES OR EXCUSES

When a conscience is healthy, it accuses, condemns, and pronounces guilty when actions are wrong. It affirms—it does not condemn—actions that are right and pleasing to God.

No one likes to be accused falsely. When I was a sophomore in high school, a friend of mine declared he could break a ruler with one hand, and proceeded to do so. A short time later, I was called to the Vice Principal's office, where I was accused of breaking that ruler. Since I had not broken the ruler, the Vice Principal was accusing me falsely. I could do one of two things—insist that I had not broken the ruler and say who did, or just sit there and listen. I chose the latter. Even though I was being accused of something I had not done, I knew there was an environment created by my previous questionable behavior that did make me suspect. So to some extent, perhaps I deserved the accusation.

My dad occasionally testified that before he was saved, one of his sons told him he was a sinner. I remember telling him that. However, I was not accusing him; I was simply informing him of what the Word of God states. In Romans 3:23 we find the words, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Our consciences convey that accusation to us. When we become aware of the fact that we need to be saved, a certain amount of shame accompanies the



FROM THE WORD

awareness. We know we are guilty! My dad finally did pray and receive salvation, and he served God until he passed away this past January. However, even if no one tells us that we are sinners, the Spirit of God is faithful to let us know.

Society today insists that individuals should not be burdened with guilt, no matter what they are or do. However, we cannot be saved without guilt. We *need* guilt to come to God! That accusation by our consciences is what prompts us to look God's way. Conviction is a gift of God that leads us to repentance.

ADAM AND EVE

We see an example of the accusation of conscience in the account of Adam and Eve in the Garden. After they had eaten of the forbidden fruit, "the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:7). They became aware of their condition, and felt shame. Continuing in verse 8, we read, "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." Adam and Eve had never hidden from God before, but after they disobeyed, their consciences accused them. They felt guilt!

Their disobedience began when Eve stood beneath the tree and considered its fruit. The serpent came along and suggested that if she ate of it, she would be wise like God. She saw that the tree was "pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6). She knew what God had said; in fact, she actually declared what God had said! No doubt her conscience warned her. However, she took the fruit and ate of it, overruling her conscience. She made a decisive choice to go against the commandment of God.

Our consciences are active before we commit sin. We know what is right and wrong. In James 4:17 we read, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." We have to trample over the resistance of our consciences and the warning of the Spirit of God when we do wrong.



Our conscience will be an unreliable guide if it has been "seared"—made insensitive or cauterized as if with a hot iron.

"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Jesus spoke those words as accusers came to Him condemning a woman who had been guilty of adultery. They left one by one as their consciences accused them.



After you violate God's instructions the first time, it becomes easier the next time. Why? It is like calluses on your hand. The skin becomes tough and is no longer as sensitive as it once was. Once you looked over your shoulder and thought you should not do a wrong action, but you did it anyway. Over time, your perspective changes to, "No problem; it does not bother me." That very comment suggests that it does bother you! The conscience is still speaking; it is accusing.

THE GUILT OF JOSEPH'S BROTHERS

We see how long the conscience can trouble a person in the account of Joseph's brothers. Standing before Joseph, although unaware of his identity, they acknowledged to each other that they were guilty. Their consciences were not troubled over actions in their recent past, but over what had occurred twenty years earlier when they sold their brother into slavery. We read, "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear?" (Genesis 42:21-22). Two decades earlier, no doubt they had discussed who would push Joseph into the pit and who would take the money. Perhaps they even had said among themselves, "We should not do this." However, they did it, and twenty years later their consciences were still plaguing them.

THE ACCUSERS ACCUSED

The accusers of the woman taken in adultery were convicted by their consciences. They had brought the woman to Jesus, asking Him what should be done to her. In John 8:7 we read, "So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Then He stooped down and wrote on the ground. I wonder what He wrote. Some have suggested that it was the Ten Commandments. Maybe it was just the one commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Whatever He wrote, the woman's accusers realized they were guilty. One by one, their consciences began to bother them. They had

CARNALITY IS LIKE GRAVITY.

What gravity is to matter, carnality is to conduct. Gravity pulls down physically; carnality pulls down morally. Just as we have no ability in ourselves to overcome the law of gravity, we have no ability in ourselves to triumph over carnality. It takes the power of the Blood of Jesus to deliver us!



FROM THE WORD

been suggesting that the woman be stoned, but after hearing Jesus' words, they slipped away, no doubt hoping they would not be noticed. When Jesus looked up, they were all gone. In verse 9 we read that they, "being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one." Jesus had not accused them; their consciences had testified against them.

THE EXPERIENCE OF SAUL OF TARSUS

Before Saul of Tarsus met Christ on the road to Damascus, he was going against his conscience. However, a light shone from Heaven and Jesus spoke to Saul saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? . . . it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:4-5). That was a reference to a *goad*—a sharp iron stick used to direct the movements of an ox. When an animal resists and kicks against a goad, it inflicts pain. That is like resisting your conscience. It takes effort to resist, and it inflicts pain when you do. It is much better and certainly less painful to abide by what your conscience is telling you.

Paul knew what it was to resist his conscience. In Romans chapter 7, he declared himself to be carnal, sold under sin, having found that carnality overcomes the conscience. Paul described how, prior to his conversion, he had allowed the very things he objected to in his own life. He did not want to do those things, but he found himself powerless to resist. The things that he wanted to do, he lacked the power to do. That is why he cried out in verse 24, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Carnality is like gravity. What gravity is to matter, carnality is to conduct. Gravity pulls down

The Conversion of St. Paul, an oil painting by Carravaggio (1571-1610), hangs in Rome, Italy.



physically; carnality pulls down morally. Just as we have no ability in ourselves to overcome the law of gravity, we have no ability in ourselves to triumph over carnality. It takes the power of the Blood of Jesus to deliver us!

Paul experienced that. When we read on in Romans 8, we find Paul's statement, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Paul was declaring that he found the solution to carnality—the Blood of Jesus. He found that solution when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus, and then spent three days praying in a house on a street called Straight. He prayed through! God forgave his sins and subsequently purged Paul's carnal nature, and at last Paul had victory. He had a pure and healthy conscience and could live without sinning.

A CONTINUAL GUIDE

The conscience continues to be active as the Spirit of God guides us through life. When one has a healthy conscience and is doing the will of God, the conscience excuses him because there is no immoral or ungodly behavior to condemn. There may be behavior that indicates a need to mature and grow spiritually, and the conscience is faithful to remind us of that. It prompts, "Don't go that direction; go this way. Wait a minute; hold back there. That is not the right way." That is a healthy conscience. We are *excused* as we comply with the will of God, rather than *accused* for refusing to obey.

What condition is your conscience in today? Hopefully, you have a healthy conscience—one that has excused you. God has pardoned you, and you have been saved and forgiven. There is no more condemnation, no more guilt or shame.

If you lack that assurance—if your conscience is accusing you—come to God and ask for the remedy. That remedy is the Blood of Jesus. In Hebrews 9:14 we read, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The Blood of Jesus can be applied to your heart and your conscience will be purged. It will no longer condemn you, because you have been pardoned through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross of Calvary.

The conscience is a gift of God. Let's value it as such, and pay careful attention to what it tells us! Δ

Reverend Darrel Lee is Superintendent General of the Apostolic Faith Church.

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT DAYBREAK AND DISCOVERY?

by The Apostolic Faith Editorial Committee



READING THE BIBLE is different from *studying* the Bible. When we read the Bible, we go through a portion of text at a natural pace. When we study, we slow down and ponder. We ask questions and search out meanings. We consider the author, context, and background. We are on a quest for a deeper-than-surface understanding and we recognize that acquiring this will take effort.

In today's fast-paced culture, there is a tendency to desire instant results, and that mindset can creep into our Bible study habits. We may need to resist an inclination to "check the box"—to try to read a portion of Scripture and understand it as quickly as possible. The Bible is best studied slowly. For example, we could probably read the third chapter of James in a few minutes, but we can study it much longer—and learning to apply the principles expounded there will take longer yet! We might be able to read the whole epistle of James in half an hour, but we can never get to the end of searching its depths. And the same is true of every other book in the Word of God as well.

The Bible contains all the information we need to make it to Heaven, but if we merely read wherever we happen to open to on any given day, we are almost certain to miss some vital instruction. Having a systematic method of studying will be helpful in putting God's Word deep into our hearts.

To assist us in this, the Apostolic Faith organization is producing a comprehensive Bible study program that will guide participants through the entire Word of God in a three-year period. The materials provided for each book include a prescribed text reading for each day, devotionals to go with each text passage, background information, a timeline showing where the book fits in the sequence of Biblical events, a coordinating Sunday school or group study lesson, and a variety of supplemental information. If this material is new to you, turn the page for a deeper explanation of what it entails.



In the fall of 2019, a new unit of *Daybreak* and *Discovery* materials became available, covering the books of Luke, Acts, James, Galatians, and Romans. In the following pages we provide a sample lesson from the unit. We encourage you to participate in studying these important New Testament books with us!

DAYBREAK

The material for personal study is titled *Daybreak*, and each *Daybreak* unit contains three months of daily devotionals.

Each Biblical book or epistle covered in a *Daybreak* unit begins with an overview that provides information about the book's author, recipient, date, and setting. The overview also identifies any significant themes and/or unique aspects of the book. An outline of the book's chapters and a timeline, along with occasional maps and charts are also part of the materials offered.

Each book of the Bible has been divided into daily text blocks that vary in length. These are the foundation for the daily devotional that is based on a



DAYBREAK (SAMPLE LESSON)

James 3:1-18



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” (James 3:5)

On October 8, 2017, wind blasted through northern California, spreading a series of wildfires at an alarming rate. Flames raced from tree to tree, and then house to house, faster than a car could drive. What was once a few small, contained blazes became collectively the most devastating wildfire in the history of the United States, burning nearly 245,000 acres and causing at least \$9.4 billion in insured damages.¹

In our text, James compared the devastation of fire to the devastation that can come from uncontrolled words. How many times have words wounded a heart, damaged trust, or caused a person to stumble in his or her faith? Although James was specifically addressing teachers and spiritual leaders in this portion of his letter, his words should remind us all how important it is to control our tongues.

Catherine Marshall, an American inspirational author and wife of twice-appointed Senate Chaplain Peter Marshall, discovered through personal experience the importance of controlling one's words. She had drifted into a habit of being critical of others, justifying her tendency toward negative speech by telling herself that God gave us intelligence to analyze and evaluate. However, she felt the Lord dealing with her about this, and eventually decided to try a one-day experiment—just for one day, she would refrain from criticism.

Within a few short hours, she realized this was *not* going to be easy! She was surprised to realize just how much of her daily conversations had been judgmental in nature. It took real effort to hold her tongue, and eventually she found herself simply sitting silently through a good portion of the day. However, through that experiment, God helped her learn a valuable lesson about the importance of being careful how she spoke.

Words can also be written, and a less-than-kind comment on social media can have just as much impact as a thoughtlessly spoken jab. Conversely, a quick email or text message of encouragement to a friend can be just as much of a blessing as a quietly voiced word of comfort or appreciation.

The key is control. If we control fire, we can use it to cook our food, warm our bodies, and light up a dark night. If we control our tongues, we can use that

power to honor God and to benefit others. So let us purpose to be careful with our words! They have great power to affect others, and could lead to eternal consequences.

BACKGROUND

The third chapter of James can be divided into two sections. Verses 1-12 deal with controlling the tongue, and verses 13-18 address the topic of genuine wisdom, or wisdom from above.

The Apostle began by specifically addressing leaders in the ministry. The word *masters* in verse 1 is the Greek word *didaskaloi*; it could also be translated as “teachers.” James knew these spiritual leaders had great influence over the followers of Christ, and for that reason, they would be held more accountable, facing greater judgment for careless words. James was not suggesting they refrain from becoming teachers but rather that if they became teachers, to do so knowing they would have a higher degree of accountability.

James continued with a common Jewish literary device of attributing fault to a specific member of the body; in this case, the tongue. In verses 3-4, he used two objects to illustrate his point: a bit and a rudder. A bit is a relatively small device, but when put into a horse's mouth, it can control the animal. The same is true of a ship's rudder. While insignificant when compared to the size of the ship, it dictates the direction of the vessel, even in a strong wind.

In verses 5-6, James likened the damage the tongue can do to that of a fire. The tongue's unrighteous words or “world of iniquity” can spread devastation swiftly. The “course of nature” refers to the whole course of life.

James mentions a variety of living creatures in verse 7, asserting that while these could be tamed, no man could tame the tongue. This was not to imply the tongue cannot ever be tamed; James understood that God can tame it. The word “tamed” occurs in only one other New Testament passage, which was when the demonic of Gadara was healed (Mark 5:4).

The Apostle pointed out in verse 9 that human beings were made “after the similitude” or in the image of God. This gives the reason for his assertion that the tongue should never be used to curse another human being—because doing so would essentially be cursing the image of God.

In verses 10-11, James spoke of a moral contradiction—that the tongue is capable of both good and bad speech. His point was that in Christians, “these things ought not so to be” because such contradictory

ON OUR WEBSITE

The *Daybreak* daily devotionals, *Discovery* lessons for group study, and *Discovery Teachers Guides* are all available free of charge on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org, with *Daybreak* lessons available in both print and audio versions.

To access the *Daybreak* devotionals for the unit currently being studied, click on “Daily Devotional” under “Library” in the main menu.

To access the *Discovery* lessons and the *Discovery*

words are unlike God, evil or deliberately injurious words being the fruit of an evil or corrupted heart.

In verse 13, James began his description of genuine wisdom that comes from above by making the case that true wisdom can be measured by behavior. In verses 14-16, he described the wisdom that is carnal, and condemned "bitter envying" and "strife" as being "earthly, sensual, devilish." "Bitter envying" indicates a harsh, resentful attitude toward others. "Devilish" (*diamoniodes*) refers to something that proceeds from Satan and is characteristic of the spirit of demons. Earthly wisdom reflects the deception of Satan and is foolishness in the sight of God. It is self-seeking, of this world, and demonic, and ends in confusion and strife.

Then James contrasted this earthly or carnal wisdom with the wisdom that is from above (verses 17-18). The eight characteristics of godly wisdom that he listed align closely with Paul's fruit of the Spirit (given in Galatians 5:22-23). The first characteristic is "pure," which in this context means "unmixed with evil." Godly purity is a result of inward cleansing. Combined with the following manifestations, these two verses provide a picture of wisdom that resembles and patterns after the nature of God.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
Used by permission per WORDsearch

VII. Faith and the tongue (3:1-12)

- A. The misuse of the tongue (3:1)
- B. The control of the tongue (3:2)
- C. The description of the tongue (3:3-12)
 - 1. Its power (3:3-4)
 - 2. Its destructiveness (3:5-6)
 - 3. Its untamableness (3:7-8)
 - 4. Its inconsistency (3:9-12)

VIII. Faith and wisdom (3:13-18)

- A. The principle (3:13)
- B. The nature of earthly wisdom (3:14-16)
- C. The nature of heavenly wisdom (3:17-18)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. In verse 8, what did James say filled the uncontrolled tongue?

2. What are some types of negative or ungodly speech that would fit with James' assertion that the tongue is an "unruly evil" (verse 8)?

3. What are some types of godly speech that we can and should cultivate as Christians?

CONCLUSION

We want our speech and behavior to be controlled by the Holy Spirit and used in ways that are pleasing to God.

NOTES



key verse or verses in the day's text. The devotionals typically include an illustration or application from daily life, an inspirational point, and a challenge or uplifting thought to encourage the readers.

Background information—material designed to expand the readers' understanding of the Scripture text—follows each devotional article. This section offers a brief summary of the Bible passage, provides an explanation of key points, and offers facts about the setting, culture, geographic region, or era. It also defines unfamiliar words in the passage, or explains the implication of words in the original language.

Readers can assess their comprehension of the day's text by answering a few thought-provoking questions that reinforce key points. A brief conclusion summarizes each day's devotional with an inspirational thought or challenge.

1. <http://www.sacbee.com/news/state/california/fires/article180238591.html>

Teacher's Guide for the unit currently being studied, click on **"Sunday School"** under **"Library"** in the main menu.

To view the full list of available units, click on **"Curriculum"** under **"Library"** in the main menu, then

select **"Daybreak for Students," "Discovery for Students,"** or **"Discovery for Teachers."**

To have **Daybreak** sent to your inbox each day, enter your name and email address on the **Daily Devotional** page mentioned above.



James' Letter

DISCOVERY

As a supplement to the *Daybreak* daily devotionals, a companion study titled *Discovery* that is built around the same books of the Bible is available for use in a Sunday school or group-study setting. Although personal study is necessary to really knowing the Word of God, we can gain valuable insight by working through questions and sharing perspectives in a group session. Reviewing together what we have learned in independent Bible study can reinforce key points and broaden our understanding of each passage.

Discovery Teacher's Guides offer those who lead these group sessions additional insights and discussion questions designed to encourage group interaction.

SOURCE FOR QUESTIONS

James 1:1 through 5:20

KEY VERSE FOR MEMORIZATION

"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." (James 2:18)

BACKGROUND

By A.D. 49, many of the early believers had left Jerusalem to live in areas outside of Palestine due to the persecution that arose after Stephen's death. Since these individuals who were "scattered abroad" no longer had day-to-day contact with the leaders of the church, James wrote this epistle to encourage them to endure in spite of trials, to continue growing in Christ, and to evidence their faith by actions that were appropriate for believers.

More than any other book in the New Testament, James focuses on the necessity for followers of Christ to act in accordance with their faith. The author was convinced that what Christians believe must affect what they do. His repeated emphasis on practical aspects of the life of faith is similar in many ways to Proverbs and other portions of the wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

While there is no clearly defined structure in James' epistle, a number of themes are woven throughout the five chapters. These include faith that is revealed by actions, remaining steadfast in trials, wise speech, the wisdom of God, the worthlessness of riches, and perseverance in prayer. His instruction, though written nearly two thousand years ago, can still serve as a how-to book on genuine Christian living.

QUESTIONS

1. James began his epistle by challenging the recipients of his letter to patiently endure when faced with difficult circumstances. The word "temptation" in James 1:2 refers to both outward adversities and trials. The phrase "trying of your faith" in verse 3 implies a test designed to prove the quality of something. In verse 4, what reason did James give for patient endurance of temptations and trials?

2. Early Christian churches followed the pattern of synagogue worship in which religious instruction was delivered orally, so throughout his epistle James frequently challenged believers to put into practice what they heard from God's Word. One such instruction is found in James 1:22, where he admonished, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." How would you describe a person who is a doer of the word?

3. In James 2:14-26, James described the interaction of "faith" and "works" in the Christian life. How does his assertion that "faith without works is dead" (verse 20) fit with the Apostle Paul's teaching that salvation is obtained through faith alone, and not by works?

4. In chapter 3, James moved from generalities about good deeds to specifics about godly speech. In verse 5, he compared the damage the tongue can do to a fire, saying, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" What are some ways uncontrolled speech and fire are alike?

ON OUR APP

The unit currently being studied can also be accessed on our free app for mobile devices, which you can download from our website at www.apostolicfaith.org/app.



THE POWER OF PREVAILING PRAYER

by JOHN BAROS



PRAYER IS THE MOST INTIMATE form of communication between God and His creation, because it is the heart of man communicating with the heart of God. We need prayer, and not just prayer, but *prevailing* prayer. It is our lifeline to God.

Genesis 32 gives an example of prevailing prayer. In the account, Jacob was traveling home with his household after twenty years away. He was in great distress about reuniting with his brother, Esau, whom he had defrauded of his birthright. As the travelers reached the last leg of their journey, Jacob separated from his family for the night, and we read in verse 24 that he “was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.” As dawn approached, the man said to Jacob, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed” (verse 28).

The Bible gives a few more details of Jacob’s encounter in Hosea 12:4-5, which show it was not just a physical wrestling

match that took place: “Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial.” Jacob had prevailed with God in prayer, and as a result, his family went on to be welcomed by Esau in peace.

The word *prevail* means “to endure, accomplish, triumph or overcome, and have power or influence.” Therefore, prevailing prayer is prayer that has power or influence with God. It is the type of prayer that is capable of producing results, prayer that accomplishes something. And to prevail in prayer means to endure until you have prayed through to an answer.

Prevailing prayer can be born out of a desperate need or a hunger for the things of God. It can be born out of a heavy burden for the condition of our own souls or the souls of others. Often it involves hours on our knees. Jacob wrestled with God all night. If we are willing to do the work, we too can prevail with God through prayer; we can gain the victory over trials and temptations. To prevail takes faith, sincerity, obedience, humility, and persistence. Looking into each of these can help us when we pray.

FAITH

It has been said that “God moves mountains, but faith and prayer move God.” About five years ago I received a lesson on how faith moves a father. It was my own son who taught me this. About a year after moving to Roseburg, Oregon, my wife and I discovered that our youngest child, Evan, who at that time was six years old, needed glasses. One day he told his mom, “I see you have two noses.” We realized there was a problem with his vision and took him to the eye doctor. Sure enough, the doctor prescribed glasses, and we purchased a pair. A few days later, it fell on me to take our three boys to school, and as they were getting out of the van, Evan realized he didn’t have his glasses and began to cry. I quickly evaluated the

WHAT TO DO WHEN ANSWERS FROM GOD DO NOT COME EASILY.

situation and thought, *He has been six years without glasses; he will be fine for one day.* However, Evan didn't feel the same way and continued to cry. His older brother Ethan turned to him and said, "Everything is going to be okay. Go to class and Dad will go home and get your glasses and bring them to the office." As the van door closed, he said again, "Dad will bring your glasses." I drove away still convinced that Evan would be fine without his glasses, but the faith of his older brother who was only nine at the time, assuring him that Dad would come through, prevailed with me. I went home, retrieved the glasses, and took them to the school.

There are many examples in the Bible of people who had influence with God through prayer, and in every instance, we find that faith was present. The reason for this is given in Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Wherever there is prevailing prayer, there will first of all be faith.

One woman whose faith had influence with the Lord that enabled her to prevail was the Syrophenician mother who came to Jesus crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Seemingly untouched by her cries, Jesus "answered her not a word." This did not dissuade the woman, however, and she persisted in faith. If our prayers are met with silence, we should not walk away. Our faith will be strengthened and rewarded if we will keep praying, keep prevailing. The disciples appeared unmoved by the woman's pleas as well, and asked Jesus to send her away because, "She crieth after us." Still, she pressed on. Then Jesus told her, "I am not sent but unto the house of the lost sheep of Israel." The woman could have taken offense and given up, but instead she came and "worshipped him, saying,



The Syrophenician mother came to Jesus crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Seemingly untouched by her cries, Jesus "answered her not a word." This did not dissuade the woman, however, and she persisted in faith.

Lord, help me." What beautiful words! Our prayers do not need to be fancy to be effective; they just need to be from the heart. Jesus addressed her again, saying, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Refusing to be put off, the woman reasoned with Him, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Jesus was moved, and He responded, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matthew 15:22-28).

SINCERITY

We must pray with sincerity. Prevailing prayer comes from the heart. It is not made with little commitment, and it is not a cold or careless prayer made with an indifferent attitude. Jesus rejected the prayers of the scribes and Pharisees saying, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matthew 15:8).

Part of being sincere is being focused and intentional when we pray. Prayer is a conversation with God, so we must be engaged mentally in what we are saying. A minister once gave some practical advice concerning this. He said we should pray out loud when we can, not because we want to be heard by others, but because it helps us to concentrate on what we are trying to communicate.

There are times when words are not enough to express what we feel inside. The woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment did not say one word; she spoke with her whole being (see Matthew 9:20-22). She touched Jesus with her heart, and that was her unspoken prayer.

Hannah is another who cried out with her heart and not words. Though her prayer was silent, it was fervent. The account found in 1 Samuel 1:1-17 relates that "she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore." Her prayer was full of consecration also: "She vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of

FROM THE WORD

hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and . . . give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life." Those around her could not hear her prayer for "she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard," but God heard. Even the priest thought she was drunk, but she told him, "No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD." She poured out her soul, yet nothing came out of her mouth.

When our prayers are focused and sincere, when we cry out to God with our whole hearts, He will hear and answer.

OBEDIENCE

Looking again at the account of Jacob, we see that God called him to return to the Promised Land: "And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee" (Genesis 31:3). God had given Jacob a blessed heritage with a wonderful covenant restating promises made to his grandfather Abraham, that he and his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan, become a great nation, and be a blessing to all mankind. By instructing Jacob to return to Canaan, God was in essence calling him to dwell in the midst of His promises, in the midst of His will. This is a place where God can bless.

Prevailing prayer must be made within the promises of God. We prevail when our entire lives are aligned to the truths of God's Word. God blesses as we pray according to His will. We can try in prayer to wrestle God to our way of thinking, but unless our request lines up with His revealed Word, our efforts will be unproductive.

People seek revival and they want to prevail with God for it, but unless there is surrender, there can be no victory. Before there can



Hannah's prayer was silent but fervent. God heard and answered her prayer and she gave birth to Samuel, who became a righteous prophet in Israel.



Jacob wrestled with the angel all night before he was to meet with his brother. He prevailed and God blessed him and changed his name to Israel.

be revival, there must be total submission. If we want to have the fullness of God, we will need to be emptied of everything that crowds out God.

The prospect of returning home put Jacob in a predicament—he would have to face his brother Esau and the consequences of stealing his birthright. Jacob was terrified for himself and his family, and with good reason, for his brother had sworn to kill him. However, Jacob knew that to be a partaker of God's promises, he needed to obey God's will and return home, and this meant making peace with his brother. Just because God commands us to do something does not mean it will be easy; it does not mean there will not be distress or discomfort. However, if there is no restitution, no making amends, there will be no prevailing. We will not be able to dwell in the Promised Land or obtain the promises of God until we have done everything in our power to rectify past offenses. When everything is cleared up, when all is on the altar, when all is surrendered, God will hear our prayers and we will prevail.

HUMILITY

With much fear and anxiety, Jacob sent servants to Esau to tell him he was coming, and his message was one of humility. He addressed his brother as, "My lord," and he described himself as, "Thy servant Jacob." The message concluded with, "That I may find grace in thy sight" (Genesis 32:4-5). He wasn't demanding honor as the son with the birthright; he approached his brother with humility.

When the servants returned with the news that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men, Jacob went alone to pray. Problems in life will drive us to God in prayer. God allows trials in our lives to bring us to Himself. May we respond like Jacob did, with humility! He cried out to God, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands" (Genesis 32:10). We can see the humility, the lack of entitlement, in his prayer. He told God that when he had left his family

"Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee."

We want to have the type of prayer that is productive, that moves God to bless, and moves us forward spiritually. We need prevailing prayer.

twenty years earlier, all he had was his staff, but because God had blessed, he was now returning with two bands of people. He was reverent, grateful, and humble, and God heard his prayer. God can do something for us also if we will humble ourselves and call on Him.

PERSISTENCE

Jacob had prayed before this crisis, and God had heard his prayers, but he did not yet have peace in his heart. What do we do when we have prayed and do not have peace? We must go back to God and pray again. And maybe, just as Jacob separated himself from his family to get alone with God, we will have to separate ourselves for a time of earnest prayer. Jacob needed an assurance in his heart, and that night God met him in the form of a man—a divine representative—and they wrestled. When the man tried to get free of Jacob's hold saying, "Let me go, for the day breaketh," Jacob said he would not let go "except thou bless me" (Genesis 32:26). Prevailing prayer is holding on until an answer is received.

When we need something from God, we need to grab hold with all our might and with all our faith. Then, through the Blood of Jesus, we will have victory, we will prevail.

Before departing, the man changed Jacob's name, and this was a representation of how God had changed his character. Jacob's name had meant "supplanter" or "ambitious deceiver," and that is what he had been when he used trickery to steal his brother's birthright. Now, he would be called Israel, the prince, the one who struggles with God and overcomes; the prevailer.

We want to have the type of prayer that is productive, that moves God to bless, and moves us forward spiritually. We need prevailing prayer. If we will endure on our knees, laying all on the altar, and praying according to His promises, we will see God work in our lives. Δ

■ Reverend John Baros is pastor of the Apostolic Faith Church in Medford, Oregon.

Jacob's attitude of humility contributed to his successful reunion with his brother Esau, after a twenty-year bitter separation.



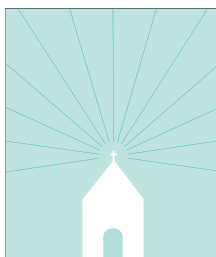
5 STEPS TO RECEIVING MORE FROM GOD

by ERIK CALHOUN

AFTER RECEIVING SALVATION, it is important to press on, seeking the deeper things of God. This allows one to become grounded in the Gospel and stay in the faith. In the Book of Acts, we read of new converts who were admonished in this way. The account demonstrates the importance of not being content with our current spiritual state, and offers the first step for proceeding forward.

The narrative is found in Acts chapter 11. Subsequent to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and while the Early Church was being established, Christ's followers endured a great deal of persecution. Scripture indicates that some left Jerusalem because of their persecution, in particular due to the stoning death of Stephen. We read in verse 19, "They which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only." Those who left traveled far, and as they went, they looked for opportunities to tell others about Jesus.

As those persecuted individuals preached the Lord Jesus, they had great success. Verse 21 tells us, "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." When news of this reached Jerusalem, which is where the Church had originated, it was decided that someone should be sent to Antioch to encourage the group there and bring back a report.



Persecution of the Early Church caused many believers in Jerusalem to flee to Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch. In their new locations, they preached the Gospel and "a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."

The man chosen to go was Barnabas, and of his visit we read, "Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (verse 23). Barnabas' message was to "cleave unto the Lord" with "purpose of heart." The word *cleave* is translated from the Greek *prosmeno*, which means "to adhere to," and also "to remain or continue." He was telling them to make a daily decision to live close to Jesus, to draw near to the Lord, whatever the cost.

Following being saved, there is no better way to cleave to the Lord than to receive the deeper experiences—to be sanctified and subsequently filled with the Holy Spirit. Barnabas set forth a good first step for drawing closer to the Lord, which is to have "purpose of heart," or determination. Other steps that will lead to victory include preparing your heart, praying, persisting, and praising God. Following are some thoughts on how to apply these steps to seek the Lord more effectively.

PURPOSE



To receive a deeper experience from the Lord, you must determine to seek until the blessing is received.

Along the way, you may be required to make consecrations that seem difficult, and a decision will need to be made to continue. Seeking the Lord is a choice. Purpose in your heart ahead of time that you will consecrate and do whatever the Lord asks of you.



BARNABAS SHARED IMPORTANT STEPS WITH THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH THAT REMAIN VALUABLE TO CHRISTIANS TODAY.

PREPARE



Preparing your heart will involve taking action. There might be some things in your life that will need to be addressed. This will take complete honesty.

Allow God to search your heart and reveal any changes or actions He requires. One thing the Spirit may prompt you to do is make past wrongs right through restitution. Don't hesitate to act on this, as putting it off could lead to sin. Other things God points out might not be sin. For example, perhaps you need to apologize for something you said or did that caused someone else pain.

Maybe the search will reveal a conflict with others. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

Clearing up anything between yourself and others—your parents, siblings, friends, and brothers and sisters in Christ—and taking any other necessary action that God reveals will prepare your heart to receive from Him.

PRAY

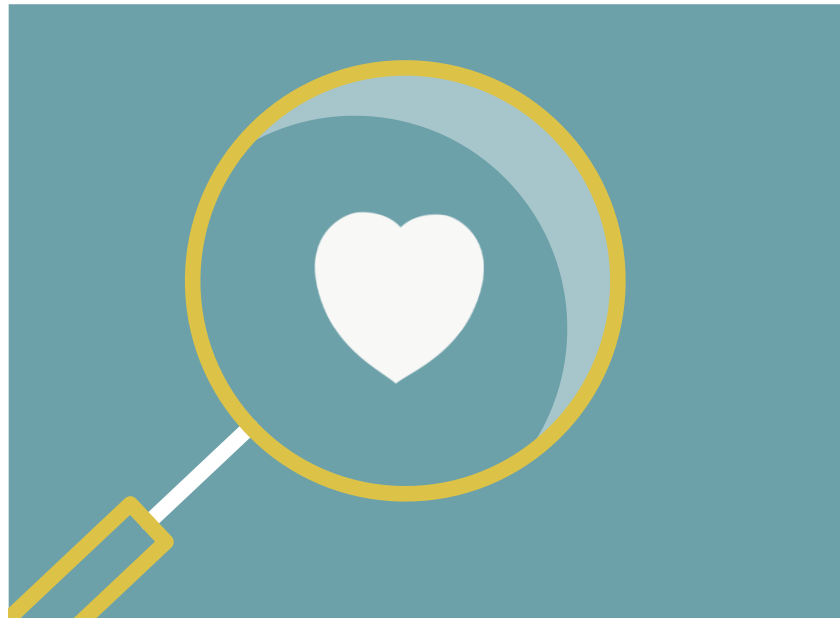


Another vital step to receiving is prayer. You can be encouraged by talking about prayer, having Bible studies about prayer, and remembering those who were prayer

warriors, but there is no substitute for actual prayer.

When Jesus told His disciples, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49), they did not hold a Bible study or have a question-and-answer session; they prayed. If you want to receive from the Lord, you will need to spend time on your knees, and quite often it will be in fervent prayer.

It is important to spend time around the altars after the services. The vast majority of people who testify to receiving their deeper



Preparing your heart will involve action. There might be some things in your life that will need to be addressed. This will take complete honesty. Allow God to search your heart and reveal any changes or actions He requires.

experiences tell of doing so while at church surrounded by the support of others. When we pray as a group, we are able to encourage each other by lifting up one another. When you don't know what to pray, try thinking of someone else and asking the Lord to bless, help, and keep him or her. Soon you will find that the Lord is blessing you, too.

Another good opportunity for praying is when you are at home. Set aside a time and place to meet with the Lord, and make it a priority. Additionally, a good time to pray is before church services in the prayer room. When you pray for the success of the meetings, not only will you benefit, but others will too.

It can be exciting to reminisce about past prayer meetings, but if you want to receive from the Lord in the present, you will need to tarry.



God has promised sanctification to those who are saved, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost to those who are sanctified. Hold on in prayer for these experiences, and when obstacles arise, you will find that He is faithful in fulfilling His promises.

PERSIST



When Jacob wrestled with the Lord, he persisted saying, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me” (Genesis 32:26).

He felt he could not give up until he had the blessing. We have heard testimonies of people who have felt this way while seeking the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Some of them have even said they felt they could not go on without it, because they had such a hunger to draw closer to the Lord. If you are seeking an experience and feel like giving up, ask God to give you a hunger that will drive you to continue seeking until you prevail.

You will likely still experience some dry prayer meetings—times when you cannot feel the presence of the Lord and it is difficult to pray. Persist when this happens, knowing that God’s promises are dependent upon His faithfulness and not on your feelings. There may also be times of doubt or confusion. This is because we have an enemy whose goal is to get us to quit. Do not be discouraged, but pray through, remembering that many have traveled the same path before you and persisted until they received.

God has promised sanctification to those who are saved, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost to those who are sanctified. Hold on in prayer for these experiences, even when obstacles arise, and you will find that He is faithful in fulfilling His promises.

PRAISE



You must also praise the Lord. Praise Him for the blessings you have already received in life, including the beauties of Creation and salvation, as well as for those things you are seeking. According to the Psalmist, God inhabits our praises: “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel” (Psalm 22:3). God’s presence is near when we acknowledge who He is and what He has done.

Part of praising is thanking the Lord. In the New Testament, the writer of Hebrews said, “Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Hebrews 13:15). This will not be difficult, because all of us have so much to thank the Lord for.

If you want to receive of the Lord, praise and thank Him, giving Him glory for all He has done.

BARNABAS’ EXHORTATION

Barnabas exhorted the new believers to cleave to the Lord. If you have received salvation and have the hope of making Heaven one day, you will need to cleave also. There is no better way to do this than to dig in and pray for the experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. If you will purpose in your heart to consecrate what is asked, and add the steps of preparing your heart, persisting in prayer, and praising God, you will obtain these promises. Then you will need to continue this path to be strengthened in the faith. Be encouraged; God always fulfills His promises and provides victory! Δ

■ Reverend Erik Calhoun is the youth pastor at the Apostolic Faith Church headquarters in Portland, Oregon.

WITNESS

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*Come hear,
all ye that fear God,
and I will declare what he
hath done for my soul.*

A FIVE-YEAR-OLD'S "DRIVING" ADVENTURE
TEACHES A LESSON IN HOW TO HANDLE LIFE'S CHALLENGES.



WHO'S IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT?

by ELLEN MORGAN

AT AN AMUSEMENT PARK NOT LONG AGO, my granddaughter was thrilled when she had the opportunity to drive a small two-seater car. Though the vehicle was lightweight and perhaps only five feet wide by eight feet long, it was a car with those all-important features: a gas pedal, brake, and steering wheel! When she reached the front of the line, she impatiently waited for the previous crew to disembark so she could take possession of the vehicle. At last the time came, and she climbed behind the wheel. Finally, now that she was five years old, she had arrived. Val was *driving!*

My son-in-law's father was the accompanying adult, and of course sat on the passenger side. They took off at a moderate speed around the track, and soon were approaching curves. Grandpa thought it looked as though she might need a guiding hand, so he extended his to assist with the turn. Quickly she waved him off, saying confidently, "I've got this!" This pattern continued as they arrived at subsequent bends in the road. It was always, "I've got this!" Regardless of the direction they turned, it was difficult for Grandpa to suppress the self-preserving tendency to grab the wheel. The little cars were on a rail, and it took a second before the under-car guides bumped against the rail, forcing the car to follow the curve. Of course, being quite amused by the independent pint-sized girl, sometimes he found it satisfying to get her once again to respond so positively, "I've got this!"

Just outside the exit, one could create a "driver's license" in a booth. When the small plastic card complete with her picture was in hand, Val became lost in thought, perhaps envisioning the vistas newly opened before her. She would not release her grip on the license—it wasn't until after she fell asleep that her grandpa rescued it from her hand.

My granddaughter was so eager to take control, and I recognize that inclination in

My granddaughter was so eager to take control, and I recognize that inclination in myself at times, too.

myself at times, too. As a little girl, I recall looking forward to reaching the next level, whatever the subject. Growing tall enough to see the top of my head in the mirrored cabinet in the bathroom was very satisfying. I thoroughly enjoyed getting a grip on new challenges, such as riding a bicycle or learning how to drive the garden tractor. And like Val, obtaining my driver's license gave me a newfound sense of freedom. It was nice to be able to handle some situations independently.

This tendency toward independence can carry over into adult life. It is all too easy to think, "I've got this!" and forge ahead full-speed. But what if there is no crystal clear direction?

LET'S LOOK AT A FEW SCENARIOS.

Graduating from high school is an exhilarating step. Finally you are a real adult! Surely, now that all your decisions are your own, life will be very enjoyable. But you face so many decisions: Where should I work? How will I commute? Which classes shall I take? What are my housing options?

After your spouse passes on to Heaven leaving you alone, everything is different. No longer are there two of you to share the everyday load. Every decision becomes a little more difficult since they are all your own. What will you do with the rest of your life?

Things are going along fine until one visit to the doctor confirms that the illness affecting your family member has the scary word "cancer" as part of its





Blessed be God,
 even the Father
 of our Lord Jesus
 Christ, the Father
 of mercies, and the
 God of all comfort.
 ~ 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3



Left to right: Ellen and her granddaughter on a family vacation in 2018; The racetrack where Val earned her driver's license.

You have a decent-paying job and the bills are paid—there's even a little bit to spare. Then one morning at work you learn that the company is closing. Your next paycheck may or may not show up. How will you pay the bills?



Ellen with her daughter Breanne (Val's mother) and grandson, Nate (brother to Val).

name. Will there be a good outcome to this crisis?

You are aging, as we all do, but still doing pretty good. Then, while attempting to clean windows, you fall. The ambulance takes you to a hospital where a broken hip is diagnosed. It looks like living in the same house with two levels and many steps is no longer practical. What's next?

You have a decent-paying job and the bills are being paid—there's even a little bit to spare. Then one morning at work you learn that the company is closing. Your next paycheck may or may not show up. How will you pay the bills?

How do we handle these situations? "I've got this" is definitely inadequate. We can be grateful that a better option is available. We might call it the "You've got this" approach.

If we haven't already done so, this is the time to bring our circumstances with all of the uncertainties to the Lord, asking for guidance. Our prayer might sound something like, "Dear Heavenly Father, I bring my situation to You because I cannot do this alone. I trust You. You created the world and all that is in it. You know the end from the

beginning. You see every aspect of my problem. I know You've got this."

On the other hand, our prayer might sound more like, "Jesus! Help me!" as mine did when my car sped down into a ditch of deep snow between two portions of the highway. On that occasion, there were several perplexing complications: it was a dark winter evening, I wasn't dressed for a snow adventure, it was a rural area, I had no cell phone and little money, and I had a passenger—a little girl. Pushing my car door against the snow, I made an opening wide enough to slide out and survey my predicament. The car was truly stuck. Silently, I sent up an SOS to God, knowing it would be impossible for me to get the car out on my own. The snow in front of my car was deeper than the car's hood, and backing out would be uphill on snowy grass, even if I could clear away all of that snow.

By the time I was able to wade to the rear of the car, a large truck was pulling up. My little passenger and I were alone, so we were vulnerable. But the friendly man who greeted me asked if I could use some help to get my car out. Gratefully, I accepted, observing that his truck was a large tow truck. He fastened his winch to the rear of my buried car, and within five minutes, my snowy but undamaged car was back on the highway, ready to continue. No one could have orchestrated the timing of that rescue any better—it was God's design. He really did have this! When I asked the tow truck driver how much he charged for



"Tow Truck" icon created by Chan Koon Lay from Noun Project, #2759993, CC Attribution 3.0 US

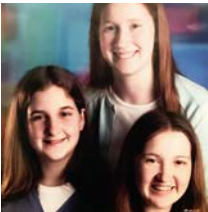


Monica with her new baby sister, Breanne.

When our first daughter was diagnosed with leukemia, my husband and I were unprepared for such devastating news. As we walked the path of pain, doctor appointments, treatments, and hospital stays with her, Jesus walked alongside us.



Monica at twenty-two months, just two months before she passed away.



Monica's younger sisters (left to right) Caitlyn, Ashley, and Breanne, in the early 2000s.

his wonderful service, he said, "Nothing. I was just on my way home." My guardian angel that night showed up as a tow truck driver. After a further hour of driving, I arrived at my parents' home. We looked under the hood of my car, and snow was packed tightly around the engine. Incredibly, my journey was slowed less than ten minutes total.

When we need comfort in time of sorrow, He is the God of all comfort: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3). When our first daughter was diagnosed with leukemia, my husband and I were unprepared for such devastating news. As we walked the path of pain, doctor appointments, treatments, and hospital stays with her, Jesus walked alongside us. He knew exactly how to help us as we faced each crisis. He comforted us every step of the way, and provided long-term help—in addition to staying by our side, He had planned that our second daughter would be born two months prior to Monica's entrance into Heaven. God knew the end from the beginning. There was no way to foresee how helpful our new

little addition was going to be, but His plan was in place even before we knew Monica was sick. After the funeral, on mornings when I didn't really feel like getting out of bed, the baby needed attention—she reminded us there was still life to live.

God comforted us during that time, and more than that, He did something we thought was impossible: He healed our hearts. Yes, we remember the sorrow, but we are no longer devastated by it. Perhaps you are engulfed by sorrow and can't see any hope in the future; you can turn to Jesus.

God solves problems in ways we never could devise. He has all wisdom, and His power is limitless, so arranging a few details is nothing to Him. If we have time for coherent thought during a crisis, we may quote a promise from the Bible such as Proverbs 18:10, "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe," or Psalm 61:3, "Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy." He will not let us down.

Life will bring both wonderful and perplexing circumstances—we have no way to predict the timing of these events. Thankfully, we can obtain help from God, whispering, "You've got this." Δ

■ **Ellen Morgan works at the Apostolic Faith headquarters office and attends the church in Portland, Oregon.**

GARFIELD WAS HEADED DOWN A DANGEROUS PATH.
THEN HE PRAYED A LIFE-CHANGING PRAYER.



"Boxing" icon created by Pham Duy Phuong - Hung from Noun Project, #2164851, CC Attribution 3.0 US.

FROM HATRED TO HAPPINESS

by GARFIELD CHARLES

IN MY EARLY YEARS, I was known as a problem child. It seemed I was always getting into trouble. While still a boy, my grandmother told me, "If you don't change, you're not going to live long." If God had not intervened, I know she would have been right, because I have seen what happened to the people I ran with back then. Some of them were shot to death and some were stabbed, and others are now incarcerated. One of my cousins seemed to disappear, but eventually his body was discovered burned up in a car. The parents of two of my friends never even got to bury their children—their bodies were never found. When we were younger, these people were better behaved than me, so I know where I was heading. If not dead, I would be in jail for murdering somebody because of the hatred and anger that was in my heart.

When I was two years old, my mother moved to St. Thomas and left me in St. Kitts to live with my grandmother, in a home where some uncles, aunts, and cousins were also living. There were some nominal Christian churches on the island, but there was almost no understanding of the Gospel in our home. The only small encounter I had with the Christian faith was that every night, my grandmother would open her Bible to a psalm and set it by the front door to keep evil spirits from coming into our house. We never *read* the Bible, we just set it by the door at night.

My aunts and uncles drank alcohol regularly, and I would see the bad effects of it. Once, one of my aunts was fighting with her boyfriend, and she threw an enamel cup that hit my sister in the forehead, knocking her down and causing her to bleed profusely. Children should not be around that type of behavior. I don't know what role those events played in shaping the person I was becoming, but it could not have been good.

While still a boy, my grandmother told me, "If you don't change, you're not going to live long." If God had not intervened, I know she would have been right, because I have seen what happened to the people I ran with back then.

Sometimes I felt I was mistreated because my parents were not around to take care of me. My aunts and uncles had their own children to look after, so I was left to my grandmother, but to me it seemed she loved the others more than she loved me. If the cousins were ever given anything, I would get the worst one. When the dog made a mess in the house, I had to clean it up. Many times I was punished for things I didn't do, and even if the adults later found out the truth, there was never an apology for having punished me wrongly. That treatment bred resentment in me, and I began to withdraw into myself.

During my growing up years, I never knew my father, and although my mom loved her children, I was convinced she did not like me and did not want me around. I felt rejected on all sides, constantly hearing that I was no good. When your grandma says you are not worth anything, and even your mom seems to agree, who is left?

At a very young age I became filled with a spirit of anger, and started running with some of the older kids in the neighborhood who were a bad influence on me. On a number of occasions I nearly died, and one time I was hit by a speeding car and people actually thought I had died. Somehow I always managed to scrape by. I got into fights a lot. I would fight anyone—even if the person was three times my size. My mother would later say that if I couldn't fight someone hand-to-hand, I would get a weapon. Yet, I never thought I





Garfield and his wife, Rosemary, at camp meeting in Portland, Oregon, in 2018 and 2019.

I had doubts about whether the Gospel was true and if it could really work for me, but I wanted my life to change and decided to give my life to God. I did not know what would happen, and to me it almost felt like a challenge for God: "Let's see what You can do with me!"

Hatred

was the problem. To me, it was the other people who were the problem.

My grandma and aunts and uncles struggled to control me, but they didn't know how. Before I was even a teenager, I got in trouble for destroying a neighbor's property, and my grandmother was told that a police report would be filed against me. At that point, she became exasperated and gave up on me. She put me on a plane to go live with my mother in St. Thomas. But soon after I arrived, my mother had enough of me too, and she wanted to send me back to my grandmother. As a child, it was tough to know that no one wanted me. It only fed the anger and hatred I had inside.

At my mom's home in St. Thomas, we had neighbors who attended the Apostolic Faith Church. My sister started going with them to Sunday school, and the church workers would try to get my brother and me to go along too. My mother was agreeable to it because she was raising us by herself and that was a way for her to have a break from us for a while, so at the age of twelve I started going to Sunday school.

We had a good teacher who would explain the Bible stories and their meanings, and at the end of each class he would always ask if any of us wanted to pray to

accept Jesus as our personal Savior. Less than a year after we started Sunday school, the Lord convicted me through one of the lessons. When we were invited to pray there was a spiritual battle going on in my heart. I had doubts about whether the Gospel was true and if it could really work for me, but I wanted my life to change and decided to give my life to God. I did not know what would happen, and to me it almost felt like a challenge for God: "Let's see what You can do with me!" I invited God into my life and He saved me that day. Later I found out that my brother had also decided to pray, and he was saved the same morning.

At that time I had so much anger in my heart, yet when the Lord forgave my sins and showed me His love, it allowed me to love. In time, God began sorting out what was wrong in my life and showing me the right way to live. One of the biggest changes I saw after receiving salvation was that I immediately loved being in church. I was still withdrawn and antisocial at that point, so as soon as church ended, I was gone! But the Lord dealt with me about that and helped me become functional in social situations, and soon I became friends with the young people at church. Today some even describe me as a gregarious person, but I know that is only because of what God has done. In so many ways, God made me into a completely different person than who I was before.

As I continued going to church, I became passionate about the Gospel, and at that time in St. Thomas there was a whole

Happiness



The Garfield Charles family: (left to right) Kyra, Azaria, Rosemarie, Garfield, Xavier, and Christian.

group of young people who felt the same way. Perhaps the fact that some of us hadn't grown up in Christian homes helped us to cherish what we had found in the Lord—we did not take it for granted. We immersed ourselves in the Scriptures and found that the more we opened up to God, the more He drew us to Himself. As we began to understand the Bible and what the Gospel is all about, we thought, *Wow! This is amazing!* We would memorize whole chapters and even books of the Bible because we loved it so much. We would be at church every time the doors were open—sometimes

As we began to understand the Bible and what the Gospel is all about, we thought, *Wow, This is amazing!* We would memorize whole chapters and even books of the Bible because we loved it so much.



Garfield testifying at Portland camp meeting.

we were the ones opening the doors! It was a wonderful time and this went on for several years.

When I was fifteen years old we went on a church beach trip for the Fourth of July and the beach was full because of the holiday. With all the activities going on, no one around noticed when I started struggling in the water, but God did. After I went under for what I thought would be the last time, a young man walking along the street just happened to see me. He dove in and pulled me out, but by the time he reached me I was at the bottom of the bay, unconscious

and with no breath in me. They had to pump water out of my lungs and literally breathe life back into me, and I spent two weeks recovering in a hospital afterwards. Once again my life had slipped away, but God gave it back. That incident made me trust God even more, realizing that He always sees me and is in control.

The hunger in my heart for God continued, and it led me to totally surrender myself to Him. I started to understand what the Bible means when it speaks of "dying daily." Where I lived there are a lot of hills, and in the summertime I would often trek up there with my Bible and spend time alone with God. It was such a special time of communion between me and the Lord, and the Spirit would fall as I read the Word and prayed. It was beautiful. I don't remember the exact date that God sanctified me, but it was in one of the many prayer meetings when I was seeking God and He was pouring out His blessing. He drew me even closer to Himself, and then the things of the world that had been appealing in the past didn't appeal to me anymore. I felt such fervency for the Gospel—I just wanted everyone to know that the Gospel is something great.

In 1981, when I was seventeen years old, I was seeking for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, so I would get up very early in the morning to go out into the hills with my Bible. As I read the Scriptures, God met me there and baptized me with the Holy Ghost. It was so glorious.

Our group of young people continued



Garfield (second from right, laughing) at age fifteen, with his mother, brother, and sisters.



Garfield at age seventeen, still living in St. Thomas.

to encourage each other in the Lord, to the point that we affected the whole community in St. Thomas, getting teens from off the streets in our neighborhood to come to church with us. I was about seventeen years old when I got my driver's license and started taking a church van to pick up people for services and do Gospel work. Sometimes we would be out all night ministering to young converts—and get eaten alive by mosquitos while doing it! But we didn't care because we were having a good time in the Lord. We would call our own fasts and hold all-night prayer vigils. All we wanted was to seek God and to talk about what He was doing, about the Scriptures, and what Heaven would be like. It was a joyous time.

My mom was saved after some of my siblings and I had been saved. She moved to New York two years before I graduated, so I lived with my brothers and sisters for those years. There was no parental supervision, but once the Lord had saved us, my mom didn't have to worry about us anymore. I did very well in school and didn't get into any trouble, which had been inescapable before.

When I graduated in 1982, I was planning to move to Oklahoma where my brother lived, but first I went to New York to visit my mother. I had made some friends at the church in Brooklyn because a group of them had come to St. Thomas in 1980. It was about the time of the youth conference when I vis-

ited, so I stayed for the conference, and it felt like a great reunion to be with those friends again. At that time, the Lord showed me that He had a different plan for my future and I ended up staying in New York.

After living in New York for a while, I met my future wife when we were both attending the camp meeting in Century, Florida, and we married in 1989. God has blessed us with four children who love the Lord, and it makes my heart so glad when I see them grasping the Gospel. I just thank God that my family found the truth and that He made a beautiful transformation in our lives. All my siblings profess faith in Christ as their personal Savior and that makes me happy as well, and my mother and one of my sisters are already in Heaven. We seemed destined for disaster, but God redirected our path and He has put joy in our hearts.

Sometimes when I think about all God has done in my life, it brings tears to my eyes. But I remember a time when I couldn't cry. At a very young age I had shut off my emotions, and that is so frightening. I definitely was capable of killing someone, but for the change God made.

Today, I can say that the Lord has brought me a mighty long way, and I feel that if God could save me, He can save anyone. Many of my old friends and loved ones have not turned their lives over to God, and I have seen the suffering it has caused. In the last seven years or so, three young men in my family have died violently. Yet God has impressed on me the promise from Psalm 91:8, "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked." I do not feel that I have done anything special to deserve what God has done for me—I am no better than anyone else. Yet, God chose me and called me to be saved, and I responded to His call. I am thankful for the opportunity He has given me, and I want to continue to serve Him for the rest of my life. Δ

Garfield Charles is a minister of the Apostolic Faith Church at 265 LaFayette Avenue in Brooklyn, New York.

EVIDENCE

Robert Ruiz
Bagong Sikat, Philippines



I AM REALLY THANKFUL that I was born and raised in a Christian family. I grew up singing songs in the children's choir and joined our church choir when I was six years old. At Christmastime "Grandpa" Harold Barrett [an Apostolic Faith missionary to the Philippines] and I would ride around our village on a hand tractor and give away candies.

As I grew older, I began slowly drifting away from the Gospel and doing things that I was not supposed to do. The Lord never went away from me—I knew He was there—but my stubborn heart chose not to let Him in. I was in trouble so many times that my friends said I was like a cat having nine lives. I was in two bad car accidents. After one of those, the police officer said he could not believe I was still alive. I couldn't believe it either, and while alone in the car on my way home I suddenly heard a Voice saying, "There is still a chance. It's not too late yet." From that point on, I knew God was calling me.

God's love never changes or expires. He is a persevering God and He never gave up on me. He strove after my heart until I yielded to Him. He has blessed me with a beautiful wife and three children. He took away all my fears and doubts. He sanctified me and baptized me with the Holy Spirit. I am thankful that there is nothing impossible for God and I want to continue serving Him for the rest of my life. Δ



Sandrah Ruiz
Bagong Sikat, Philippines

IN 2007, ROBERT INVITED ME to attend a church youth camp for the first time. I didn't understand what it was all about, but I enjoyed the company of new Christian friends. I also enjoyed singing songs I'd never heard before and the lyrics touched my heart. I knew that God loved me and that He died on the Cross for me. They told me about salvation, and after the camp I felt in my heart that I was saved. However, when pain and heartache came my way, I did things I used to do just to ease the pain and be happy.

Robert and I were married in 2009, and it was a very rough path at first. But then we both decided to give our lives to God, and slowly He fixed everything. Robert got saved and asked to join the church choir, and due to a misunderstanding, it was announced that we would both be joining the choir. I was shocked, but I just let everybody think that I really wanted to be part of the choir. Through that, God made me feel loved and I prayed and the Lord saved me. God is good! He made me realize that everything happens because He has a purpose and He is in control. Things aren't always easy, but God has worked in our lives.

God has also helped me with my education. Two years ago, I started graduate school to earn a master's degree in biology. My bachelor's degree is in nursing, so I was not completely prepared for the advanced biology courses. After the first day, I did not know how I would survive the program; I wondered why I allowed myself to be in this situation, and I wanted to quit. But now I am done with my master's program. I am still in awe looking back on how God made that possible. I cannot count the miracles He has done. I've realized that He let this happen because He wanted me to become stronger and to lean on Him every step of the way. I know He directed my path and that I am not alone in this journey.

I am thankful for all the love God has given me and for all the miracles He has done in my life. Δ

COMMUNISM COULD NOT STOP OUR FAITH

by DANIELA HRUBA

RAISED UNDER RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION, DANIELA WANTED THE SALVATION SHE WITNESSED IN HER RELATIVES.



Daniela (top left) in her youth with her parents, brother, and two sisters.

GROWING UP IN SLOVAKIA, I had a very precious heritage—relatives from both my mother’s side of the family and my father’s side were born-again believers. My parents were also Christians and they raised my two sisters, my brother, and me to know the truth of the Gospel.

Some of our relatives had received sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I remember once hearing one of my uncles pray in German; he did not know the German language, but it was the Spirit of God praying through him. Though I was just a child at the time, it was amazing for me to witness. It was so powerful. Other relatives experienced healings from cancer and other serious diseases. My own sister was healed of a serious illness, and I praise God for it!

As a child, I heard stories of the persecution our family had faced under Communism. During World War II, our country had been ruled by a totalitarian regime with allegiance to Nazi Germany, and then in 1948 a military coup brought in Communism under the Soviet Union. One of my uncles was the district superintendent of the Apostolic Faith work in Slovakia during that time, and in the 1950s he published a hymnbook, which was not allowed under Communism. He went to prison for two years for publishing that songbook, but God was with him there. God was also with his wife and children at home while he was away.

When I became a teenager, I realized that I wanted the faith I saw in the lives of my relatives. I prayed for forgiveness of my sins—I prayed, and prayed, and prayed. I was waiting for something big and powerful to happen, like the Apostle Paul’s Damascus Road experience, because I wanted to be sure I had a true experience from God.

One Sunday, my uncle preached at our church service and God’s power was present. Everyone there could feel it. That day, I experienced something strong and powerful in my heart, and I asked myself, Isn’t that salvation? But in a moment

My uncle wrote a letter to me explaining that the experience of salvation is personal and unique for each individual. His words opened my eyes to something I had not understood.

I answered myself, No. Salvation must be bigger and stronger than that.

My life was happier after that day, but I continued to pray for salvation. After a long time had passed, my uncle wrote a letter to me explaining that the experience of salvation is personal and unique for each individual. His words opened my eyes to something I had not understood, and I prayed and asked God for some evidence of salvation in my life. This was a very difficult challenge for my faith. Then, God brought to my attention the Bible verse found in Romans 8:14, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” This was a decisive verse for me. After I read those words, I finally realized that I had been saved because I knew in my spirit that God was leading me, and that He had granted my desire to live for Him without sin. This was the evidence I had prayed for, and I am so grateful for my salvation.

After I finished my schooling, I started to work in a histology department at a hospital. My colleagues and I were all young but we each had a good education. Our boss was in her mid-forties and she was not educated in histology. However, she was a member of the trade union movement, and because of Communism, that meant she had special protection in her career.

Eventually our boss became cruel and terrorized my colleagues and me, and I was the main target of her hatred. Being young, I did not know how to cope with the situation. I wanted to look for another job, but at that time it was not possible. Every morning, I would wake up with an uneasy stomach, and every evening I would come home from work and cry. My parents and siblings prayed for me and tried to encourage me, but it seemed God was not hearing our prayers.



One of my uncles was the district superintendent of the Apostolic Faith work in Slovakia during that time, and in the 1950s he published a hymnbook, which was not allowed under Communism. He went to prison for two years for publishing that songbook, but God was with him there.



God has led me through hard times and easy times, and He has never forsaken me.



This situation went on for many years, until the fall of Communism in 1989. Then things finally started to improve, and one day my boss came to me and apologized. My suffering finally ended, and a short while later she retired. Although that experience was difficult to endure, God was always with me and it was schooling for my faith.

In 2014 I was diagnosed with cancer but was able to overcome it with treatment. Then after an ultrasound in 2017, the doctor told me things did not look good and that I needed to have a biopsy. After I completed the biopsy, I knew it would take several days to screen the tissue sample, and during that time I prayed and asked God to give me peace in my heart. I surrendered my will to God's and determined I would accept His decision no matter what it was. At the time, I was planning a visit to the Apostolic Faith Church in Stavanger, Norway, but knew that if my health was not good, I would not be able to make the trip. Thankfully, the results were good and I was able to travel. I was so grateful for the opportunity to visit the saints in Stavanger.

God has led me through hard times and easy times, and He has never forsaken me. I am grateful for all He has done for me. Δ

■ Daniela Hruba lives in Slovakia where there are presently no Apostolic Faith churches, but she joins the Portland church regularly through the web-cast. She shared this testimony during a 2018 visit to the Apostolic Faith Church in Stavanger, Norway.

Top: Daniela with her son in Norway in December of 2018.

Bottom: Daniela and her mother, whom she lives with and cares for.

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.”

EVIDENCE



Julie Friesen
PORTLAND, OREGON

It will be thirty years this camp meeting since the Lord saved me. As a teen, I was running around with people who weren't very good and God asked me, "Do you want this life, or do you want the life you've been raised in, with Christian parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents?" I knew the Christian life was what I wanted. That camp meeting, I wanted to get saved so badly. I was sitting on the second row in the tabernacle thinking, *Lord, please make this sermon end so I can go to the altar and get saved!* In His sweet Voice He said, "You don't have to wait," and I didn't even get out the words "I'm sorry" before God's peace that passeth all understanding came over me. It was so wonderful! I went to the altar and prayed to be sanctified, and God showed me that I needed to make something right, so I called that person and they said it was not a problem. As I put the handle to the phone down, I felt electricity run from my hand all the way up to my head and back down—it was pure sanctification of the Lord. All I could do was cry and thank the Lord. A few days later, God filled me with His Holy Spirit. That was thirty years ago. I am so blessed, and I give God all the credit.



Dale Copko
PORTLAND, OREGON

Twenty-one years ago today, Donna and I were walking out of Doernbecher Hospital carrying our daughter, who is a beautiful young lady today. She didn't look very beautiful that day; she was bruised up. She was just a toddler and had been run over by a car two days before, but the Lord was so good to us; He spared her life. Being raised in a Christian family, I went through life with the Lord telling me, "You just need to trust Me." That has been my theme through my whole life, and even now. I'm glad we were able to trust the Lord through that time, and I'm so thankful we can still trust Him today.



Paula Jordan
GRANTS PASS, OREGON

The Lord met me on a dirt road, next to my ten-speed bike, when I was a sixteen-year-old Sunday school girl. I had so much anger and bitterness in my heart, and just wanted peace. I fell on my knees and said, "Lord, I need what my Sunday school teacher told me about; I want that peace. I will serve You and do whatever You call me to." I am so thankful; He answered my prayer.

That was a long time ago, and life has been good. God has been everything that I have ever needed or wanted. He has been with me in every situation. He was there when I walked out of the doctor's office after receiving bad news, and later He healed me in Portland. He was there each time I had to move, and He was with me when I had to find another job. He gave me a job in a Christian organization where I not only talk with Christians, but also have the opportunity to talk with those who are not saved, and give them a reason for the hope that is in my heart.

God has given me my basic Christian experiences and more, because every day is an experience when you walk with the Lord. I thank Him for all He has done in my life.

WORLD REPORT

SHORT TAKES **39**

*The earth is the LORD'S,
and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that
dwell therein.*



SHORT TAKES

BRIEF REPORTS FROM OUR CHURCHES WORLDWIDE.

BARBADOS CELEBRATES FORTY YEARS AT TICHBOURNE

The brethren in Saint Michael, Barbados, held four days of special meetings beginning on June 16 to commemorate forty years at their Tichbourne Road location. Reverend Michael Anthony, Eastern Caribbean District Superintendent, and his wife, Monica, were present for the anniversary celebration.

The theme for the meetings was taken from 2 Kings 4:24, "Slack not thy riding." Reverend Anthony spoke on this during the first service on Sunday. He reminded the congregation that though forty years had passed, they were not "home" yet. They were also reminded of the foundational Gospel experiences which allowed the work to be sustained.

A brief history of the Tichbourne Road church was given during the anniversary service, relaying that our work on Barbados began in 1967 when Algernon Blyden shared the Gospel with a few people. Services were held in a house for years while the saints worked tirelessly to acquire a church building. In July 1979, the church on Tichbourne Road was dedicated. Their current pastor is Reverend Edsil Parris, who has been serving in that capacity for twenty years.

We join the saints in thanking God for forty years at the Tichbourne location, and pray they will continue to be a light on Barbados as the Lord tarries. Δ

A NEW LEADER FOR SOUTHERN AND EASTERN UNITED STATES

Reverend Josephine McElveen was appointed as the District Superintendent of Southern and Eastern United States Work, replacing Reverend Eugene Segres, Jr., who has filled the position since 2008. Reverend McElveen was ordained and prayed over on July 13 at the Portland headquarters camp meeting, and an installation service was held on July 21 at the camp meeting in Century, Florida.



Ministers and the congregation pray for Rev. McElveen.

At the installation service, Reverend Edward Dixon, the pastor in Columbus, Georgia, presented Reverend Segres and his wife, Gertie, with plaques commemorating their many years of faithful service. Later, Reverend McElveen's testimony was read, relating how she was saved in Los Angeles, California, while her husband was in the military. After returning to Washington D.C., she began attending the Apostolic Faith Church with her mother-in-law. As a young wife and mother she was very sick, but prayed and God healed her. The doctors warned her that the disease was only in remission, saying she should expect to be hospitalized at least once a year for the rest of her life. That was in 1996, and she has been healed ever since. In 2006, God wonderfully saved her husband also, and he spent the last twelve years of his life as her spiritual helpmate until the Lord called him home in June 2018.

Reverend Bob Downey, Director of North America Work, preached the installation sermon, using Titus 1:1-9 for his text. He brought out that God chose Reverend McElveen for this position in part because she has been faithful in her service to Him. Following the message, the group prayed for her that God would guide her leadership.

Reverend McElveen was appointed to be the pastor of the Washington D.C. church in 2002, where she will continue to pastor while fulfilling her duties as district superintendent. Δ

NORTHWEST YOUTH CAMP

At various locations around the world, our churches hold annual youth camps where children, teens, and young adults can spend extended time learning about the Gospel. In the United States, camps are held during the summer months in Oregon, Missouri, and Washington, with young people from several of our church locations attending each one.

The 2019 Northwest Youth Camp was held July 29 to August 3 at the Mayfield Lake campsite in Mossyrock, Washington. Campers ranged from nine years old to college age, and combined with staff there were about 290 who attended from our churches in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, Canada. The theme this year was "Jesus Is Coming Again," with the key verses from 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

During the week, there was an in-cabin devotional time each day with lessons focusing on a different aspect of the camp theme. Topics included "Jesus Is Coming Again," "Be Ready Today!" and "Stay Ready." The final lesson was called "On Our Way to Heaven" and highlighted what eternity in Heaven will be like.

Each day after devotions, there was free time when campers could go swimming or paddle boating at the lake, make crafts, play sports, go down the giant waterslide, play board games, and more. Many also participated in tournaments for shuffle board, soccer, hula-hooping, and other sports, with prizes awarded to the champions on the final night of camp.

Chapel services were held every morning and on two evenings. The services featured very enthusiastic group singing, musical specials from the campers, instructive skits from the counselors, and many testimonies of God changing lives, including by some who received experiences at this youth camp. The chapel services always ended with a challenging message and then an opportunity to pray, and by Thursday, twenty individuals could testify that they had been saved during the week.

It is our prayer that the Bible teachings and prayer times from all our youth camps will have an eternal impact on the young people who attended. Δ

ESWATINI'S FIFTH CAMP MEETING

The fifth annual Eswatini camp meeting was held August 11-18, 2019. Reverend John Musgrave,

Director of Africa Work, was there to represent the Portland headquarters, and he travelled with leaders of the work in southern Africa including Reverend Newton Jaravani, the Zimbabwe board secretary and treasurer, and Kwaziso Bhosha, a Zimbabwe board member and the South Africa liaison for Eswatini. They were warmly welcomed by the Eswatini District Superintendent, Jameson Ntshalintshali.

The Kingdom of Eswatini, or Swaziland as many still call it, is a country of just over one



A service at Eswatini Camp Meeting 2018.

million people. The camp meeting was held in a large tent set up on a schoolyard, and since the convention takes place during an academic vacation period, some visitors were accommodated in the school dormitory.

About two hundred attended the opening service, which began with a children's program. During the week, congregants from Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe were active in every service, representing their countries well. The musical specials included instrumental solos, vocal solos and ensembles, and choir numbers, mostly in the Swazi language with a few verses in English. The sermon topics included "The New Man," "Partakers of God's Holiness," and "The Work of the Holy Spirit." At the Wednesday morning Bible teaching, two new board members were ordained: Fansile Mlangeni and Enock Hlophe.

Reverend Musgrave reported that every meeting ended with a rush to the altar and a good time of prayer. He stated, "I have observed that the Kingdom of Eswatini is indeed a beautiful country, but it is far surpassed by the beauty of the Gospel and the people of God here who embrace it." Δ

OUR CLASSICS

WHY CHRISTIANS SUFFER **42**

MIRACLES CHANGE A SALOON KEEPER'S HOME **45**

*I will remember the
works of the LORD:
surely I will remember
thy wonders of old.*



The *Lower Light* was a missionary sea vessel used from 1949 to 1960 in evangelistic trips along the northern Pacific coastlines of Canada and the United States. It is pictured above while docked at a port in Alaska.

WHY CHRISTIANS SUFFER

by REUEL GREEN

Originally published in the July 2005 edition of our magazine.

OUR RESPONSE TO THE TRIAL IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE TRIAL ITSELF.



A few years after preaching this sermon, Reuel suffered a stroke in his mid-fifties that caused permanent loss of speech and other major physical limitations. Despite this, he faithfully and uncomplainingly served the Lord in any capacity available to him for the rest of his life, which was more than twenty-five years. He is pictured above on his eightieth birthday.

EACH OF US WILL GO through suffering of one kind or another. It might be physical affliction, persecution, or reverses. That suffering may be something very incomprehensible to us. God never told us in His Word that He would give us perfect understanding regarding our trials. Faith does not need perfect understanding; it just trusts in God.

In Peter's writings we read: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (1 Peter 4:12). In the natural, when we are called to go through fiery trials, we wonder why. However, Peter said, "Think it not strange." The enemy will tell you that no one else has ever gone through anything like this. Do not listen to him!

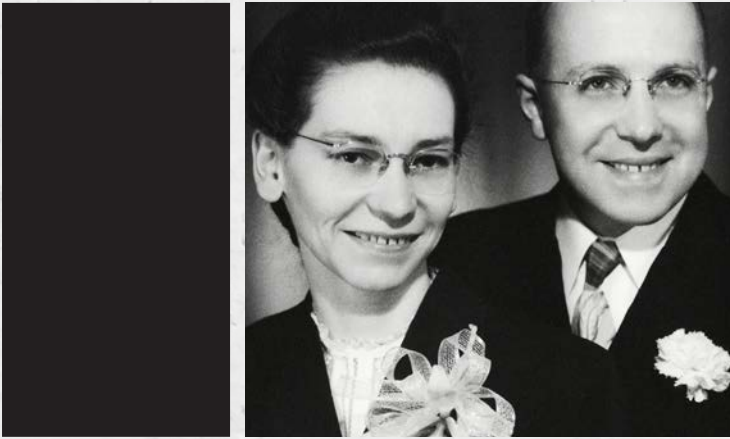
Peter went on to give a wonderful formula. He said that when we suffer, we should "rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:13). Do not complain about your trial. Rejoice!

In writing to the Philippians, Paul gave a reason for suffering: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Philippians 3:10). Paul wanted to preach in Rome and in Spain—the thrill of reaching out for souls was in his heart. We would like to spread the Gospel, too, but the consecration must be there. If the Lord is to use us, He may prove us by suffering first. He may test us and see whether we are willing to be made conformable to His death.

Sometimes our suffering comes because we need to be chastened. The Bible teaches that parents should discipline their children, and that discipline may include chastening. Our heavenly Father sees that we, too, need chastening at times. We read in Scripture that whom the Lord loves, He chastens. (See Hebrews 12:6 and Revelation 3:19.) If we rebel against the chastening, we are rebelling against what we need.

Job is a wonderful example of one whose suffering was not chastisement. God told Satan that Job was "a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil" (Job 1:8). Yet look how he suffered! The devil will tell us "If you were perfect, you would not have trials. If you were where you should be spiritually, this would not be happening." Remember, the devil is a liar. We are to examine our hearts and ask the Lord to search us. If the suffering that comes our way is for chastisement, we want to take care of the matter. However, every time we suffer, it is not necessarily chastisement.

Satan observed that Job was a man of wealth, and that God had put a hedge about him. He proposed that if God would touch what Job had, Job would curse God to His face. Possibly Job would have done so if he had been serving God for material blessings. However, God was going to prove Job, and He let Job's possessions be taken away from him. Tragedies happened, one after another. What was Job's response? We read, "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,



Reuel and his wife, Ella, on their wedding day in 1950.

In Romans 8:28, we find a wonderful promise: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Circle that word "all."

Suffering prepares us to serve. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he said that God "comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."



Reuel and Ella with their only child, Cheryl, shortly after he accepted his first pastorate in Dallas, Oregon.

and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:20-21). Job recognized that God had given him all that he had. If God saw fit to take it away, He had a right to do so. Job had worshiped before and he worshiped after his great losses.

Next, Satan suggested that if Job suffered physically he would forsake God, so God allowed Job to be smitten with terrible boils. Then, in the midst of that suffering, Job's wife told him to curse God and die. However, Job's faith remained steadfast. In Job 19:25-26, we find these words: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." He stated, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). Down through the ages, these verses have encouraged Christians who were going through the fire. Because Job endured, we have some of God's most glorious promises to us. Job was suffering for your encouragement and for mine. Maybe you and I will have some suffering to bear for someone else. May the Lord help us if it comes!

When God directed Ananias to go to Paul, He indicated that Paul was a chosen vessel who would take the Gospel to the Gentiles. Then He added, "For I will shew

him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16). If we think we are going to serve the Lord in order to have an easy life, we think wrongly. God was calling Paul to go and publish the Gospel. One would think that the Lord would prosper a man like that—would give him perfect health and keep His hand of protection over him. It did not work that way, but the Lord allowed all of Paul's suffering.

In Romans 8:28, we find a wonderful promise: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Circle that word "all." If you are a child of God, all things work together for good. We hear accounts of people who have been afflicted, some of them right to the point of death. Can we trust God then? Paul said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Romans 8:35). He gives the answer: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (verse 37). We are not just conquerors, but more than conquerors!

Paul gives another reason for afflictions: to keep us humble. Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" and he did not like it any more than the rest of us would. Three times he asked for deliverance. God did not deliver him, but told him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." How did Paul respond? "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:8-9). Somehow it was revealed to Paul that this

Why CHRISTIANS SUFFER



affliction was to keep him from being exalted, and Paul accepted this as being from God and for his ultimate good.

There is a benefit, a blessing, that will result from our suffering. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12). Oh, what a day that will be! The Bible tells us that Jesus endured the Cross, looking ahead to the joy that was set before Him. That ought to be our goal also.

Suffering prepares us to serve. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he said that God "comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). We will not be able to preach the Gospel or to witness effectively unless we have first gone through something ourselves. We can better comfort the sick if we have been sick. We can better proclaim the promises of God if we have stood on those promises ourselves.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the writer tells how the heroes of faith conquered. However, in verse 35, the tenor of his discourse begins to change. We read of those who "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented" (Hebrews 11:36-37). Were those who did not accept deliverance any less heroes than those who were delivered? No, for their names are listed in the same chapter of the heroes of faith.

Stephen was the first Christian martyr. Herod then slew James with a sword. Next he took Peter and was going to kill him also, but the Lord miraculously opened the prison gates, and Peter walked out a free man. Was Peter more of a hero of faith than James? Does Peter stand any higher in God's estimation than James? No! God can make us heroes of faith even if He never heals or delivers us.

In 2 Corinthians 1:8-9, Paul refers to a time when he felt "pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life." But he determined that his trust would be "in God which raiseth the dead." God is able to raise the dead; He is able to take care of us when we are pressed beyond measure. God is able to take care of us when the last breath is leaving our bodies. Our God is able!

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus requested, "Remove this cup from me." However, He added a bit more to His prayer, saying, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). It was God's will that Jesus go to Calvary; it was God's will that Jesus give the last measure of His physical strength unto death that we might be saved.

Today, can we say, "Thy will be done"? May God help us to anchor our faith in God, and trust Him when the times of testing come! Δ

■ Reverend Reuel Green was an active minister and pastor of the Apostolic Faith Church for more than twenty-five years. The Lord called him Home in August of 2002 at age eighty-two.

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MIRACLES CHANGE A SALOON KEEPER'S HOME

by EARNEST CATON

FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS FATHER LED ERNIE INTO A LIFE OF MISERY AND ADDICTION. THEN GOD INTERVENED!

MY FATHER WAS A SALOON KEEPER, as were his father and grandfather before him. I thought I would eventually follow in their steps, but God performed a miracle in our home.

As a child I spent much of my time around my father's saloon. I can't remember when I was given my first drink of liquor, but as a little boy I used to climb onto those high stools, and when the glass was passed around, I had a drink with the rest of them. I was literally taught to sin from my youth, but even when young, I was saddened by that burden of sin.

My parents loved their children, but there was no peace or happiness in our home because of the quarreling and fighting that went on. We did not read the Bible, and we never prayed. I had been to Sunday school a few times when I was young, but I didn't want that kind of life. I wanted to be tough like my dad.

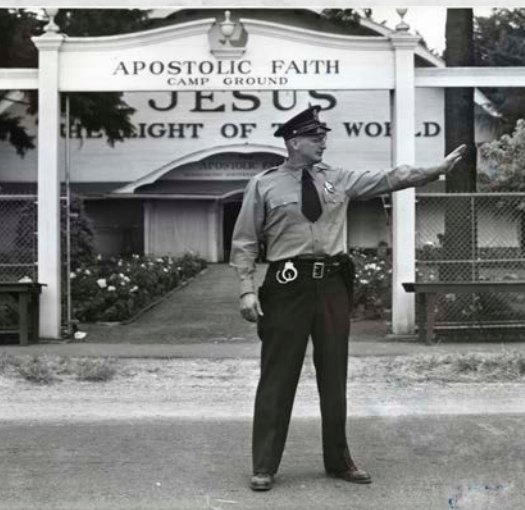
One day, my dad and uncle had a terrible fight. My uncle tried to shoot Dad, but the gun misfired. After that, Dad decided to sell out and move our family several hundred miles away. I saw my father go down in bitter defeat, as he tried in his own strength to get away from sin. He found out the hard way that it couldn't be done without God's help.

As I grew older, my dad said to me many times, "You won't live very long in this world, so get the best you can out of it." I tried to follow that advice, and soon the

things of this world became my gods. I thought I was having a wonderful time, but the habits of sin quickly fastened onto my life to the extent I couldn't get rid of them. I began to realize I was a defeated young man, and I wanted a way out of sin. I knew that my dad's way out hadn't worked, and in great love and mercy, God let me hear of His saving power.

One day, my aunt and uncle showed up at our front door, and what a message they brought! They told us that after we had moved, they met some people from the Apostolic Faith Church. When they heard the Gospel story, my aunt and uncle prayed and were born again. They were set free from the old life of sin and defeat. My uncle said he had come to our home to ask my father's forgiveness. This impressed me greatly and gave me a glimmer of the light of salvation.

Along with the other troubles in our home, my mother had stomach cancer. The doctors told her that six months was the most she could possibly live. I was the oldest child in the family, and with five younger brothers and sisters, I wondered many times what would happen to us when Mother died. During their visit, my aunt and uncle told us that God could heal Mother and remove every trace of that awful disease. That fall, Mother asked Dad if he would take her to Medford, Oregon, so she could spend her last Thanksgiving Day with this aunt and uncle who had been



Ernie Caton (second from left in the group photo) and fellow police officers on security duty at Portland camp meeting.

born again. We arrived before the holiday, and my aunt and uncle soon began to tell us more about Jesus. They told my mother that God could save her soul and heal her.

For some reason, I didn't feel comfortable in that house. I was a smart aleck teenager, and the Christian lives I saw there made me miserable. I didn't realize that the misery I had was conviction for the sin in my life. When I felt I could take it no longer, I left that home for a few days.

As Thanksgiving Day drew near, I knew I should go back and be with my mother, because I was sure it would be her last holiday with us. What a miracle I found when I returned! Jesus had saved her and healed her of that awful cancer. As I sat across the dinner table from her that day, I watched in amazement as she ate a hearty meal. She had not been able to eat solid food for months, and there she was, eating anything she wanted. I kept saying to her, "Mother, what in the world are you doing? You will be screaming and crying with pain!"

She answered, "Son, while you were gone, I visited the Apostolic Faith Church. Those people of God prayed for me, and Jesus saved my soul, and He healed my body. Our home is going to be different now."

As I watched her, God spoke to my heart and let me know that my mother had found something I needed. She asked my dad and me if we would go to church with her that evening. I thank God that we went.

I will never forget that night. As I sat in the church and heard the story of Jesus, I realized I had come into contact with the truth. I heard that Jesus could come into a person's life, take out the sin and misery,

I will never forget that night. As I sat in the church and heard the story of Jesus, I realized I had come into contact with the truth. I heard that Jesus could come into a person's life, take out the sin and misery, and give him a new life. That was what I wanted.

and give him a new life. That was what I wanted.

When the service ended, I went forward with my dad, and we knelt at an old wooden altar bench. I didn't know what his decision would be, but I knew I was through with sin. I poured out my heart to God and asked Him to give me what He had given my mother. What a change took place! The burden of sin lifted, and the Lord put peace and joy into my heart. In an instant of time, He cleaned up my life and took away all desire for liquor, cigarettes, fighting, and all else that was evil. Sin no longer had me bound. That same night the Lord saved my dad. Our home was changed into a Christian home. What a miracle!

Years later, my mother became ill, and my sister insisted she go to the doctor. After X-raying my mother, the doctor said to her in amazement, "What in the world has happened to you? Part of your stomach is gone. It is a beautiful operation! It is the cleanest job I have ever seen. You don't even have an incision mark!" Mother told him, "Jesus operated on me. He did the job." The Lord had done perfect work.

I have had the opportunity of proving the Lord's faithfulness in many hard places, and He has never failed me. I love the Lord, and I praise Him for the hope of Heaven that is in my heart. Δ



Ernest Caton was a worker at the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon, and went on to his heavenly reward on August 14, 1977.

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.

1. **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.
2. **REPENTANCE** is a godly sorrow for and a renouncing of all sin. Isaiah 55:7; Matthew 4:17.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **DIVINE HEALING** of sickness is provided through the atonement. James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24.
7. **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.
8. **THE TRIBULATION** will occur between Christ's coming for His Bride and His return in judgment. Isaiah 26:20-21; Revelation 9 and 16.
9. **CHRIST'S MILLENNIAL REIGN** is the 1000 years of peaceful reign by Jesus on earth. Isaiah 11 and 35; Revelation 20:1-6.
10. **THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT** is the final judgment when all the wicked dead will stand before God. Revelation 20:11-15.
11. **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.
12. **ETERNAL HEAVEN AND ETERNAL HELL** are literal places of final and eternal destiny. Matthew 25:41-46; Luke 16:22-28.
13. **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.
14. **RESTITUTION** is necessary, wherein wrongs against others are righted. Ezekiel 33:15; Matthew 5:23-24.
15. **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.
16. **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.
17. **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 5414 SE Duke Street, Portland, Oregon 97206, U.S.A. or visiting our website at www.apostolicfaith.org. Before these magazines are sent out, they are always prayed over for the healing of the sick and the salvation of souls.

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Jesus
THE LIGHT of THE WORLD