



THE Apostolic Faith

EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

APRIL - JULY 2022

Blessing in Brokenness

GOD CAN TAKE CARE OF THE
SHATTERED PARTS OF OUR LIVES
AND MAKE THEM INTO
SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

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God can take the shattered parts of our lives and make them into something beautiful.

BLESSING IN BROKENNESS

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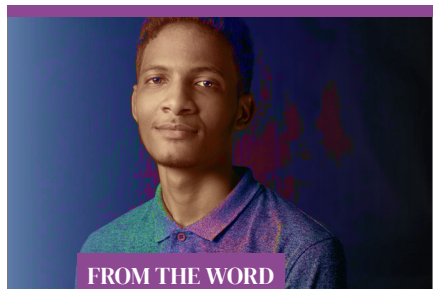
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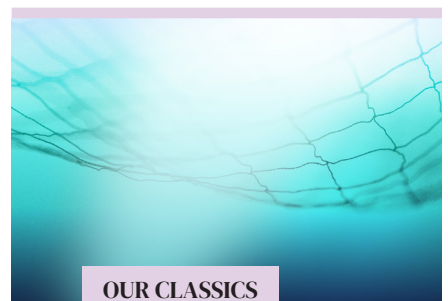
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VIEWPOINT

By Darrel Lee, SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL



TAKE ACTION

WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES ARE DISAPPOINTING,
THERE IS SOMETHING WE CAN DO.

In 2011, a young man approached Debbie and me at the Toronto Pearson International airport to introduce himself. Samson Jimaza was excited to be on his way to the first ever Newfoundland camp meeting, as were we. Beyond his modest enthusiasm, our initial impression of Brother Samson was that he was a man of action. You will learn more about him and his wife, Sister Tosin, beginning on page 26.

Brother Samson moved from Nigeria to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, in 2008, after Manitoba Immigration nominated him as part of their Skilled Worker Program. Upon arriving, one of his disappointments was his distance from the nearest Apostolic Faith Church. A greater one was the failure of the government to approve his wife's visa. It took ten years before she could join him there! In each instance, Brother Samson took action.

Action and patience are not often used in the same sentence, but with their immigration challenge, both were exercised with diligence. In their testimonies you will read of steps Brother Samson and Sister Tosin took during that decade.

Brother Samson also practiced each virtue when it came to attending an Apostolic Faith Church. He was determined to be a part of our church because of his experience as a new convert in Nigeria. The music, testimonies, unsolicited means of financial support, prayer before and after each service, sound doctrinal preaching, and wholesome living of participants were attributes which first drew him to the Lord. It all stood in stark contrast to his lifestyle prior to being saved. However, our nearest

church was several hours away from Winnipeg, and sometimes winter driving conditions prohibited travelling at all.

His prayerful attempts to secure employment closer to one of our churches failed. So what did Brother Samson do? He acted. He began holding prayer meetings and Sunday school in his apartment. Meanwhile, he read our literature and watched our services remotely. When more immigrants and students from the U.K. and Nigeria relocated to Winnipeg, he invited them to join him for those informal services. Soon more space was needed, so he arranged to rent a church. Over the past decade, the Winnipeg Apostolic Faith "group" that began with one individual, became a handful of people, and now numbers nearly one hundred. Under the direction of Canada District Superintendent Chris Hewlett, property has been purchased with building plans underway.

The experience of Brother Samson and Sister Tosin reminds us that disappointments are overcome by God's help and our determined actions. Our part is to pray patiently, whether called to wait on God or to move forward decisively according to His leading. Even when the outcome is uncertain, we are assured that God will have His perfect way in the end as we seek and follow His will. Our prayer is that you will be inspired by the message presented throughout this issue of The Apostolic Faith magazine and, by God's grace, rise above every disappointment. ■

From THE WORD

In the beginning was the Word, and
the Word was with God, and the
Word was God. — John 1:1

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WITHSTANDING TEMPTATION



By Darrel Lee

Temptation comes to everyone, but God's Word teaches us how to resist.

Since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, when Eve yielded to the serpent's suggestion to disobey God, temptation has been part of the human experience. No person born into this world is exempt.

Because Jesus, the Son of God, came to this earth and became a man, He too endured temptation. Three of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—provide an account of a time when Jesus was confronted by Satan and tempted to sin. From them, we learn that Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days. We are not given details about what happened during that entire period. However, Scripture does say that “afterward” Jesus was hungry, and then the tempter came, so perhaps all of the temptation happened in the last days or week of that period. Whatever the timing or duration of Jesus’ temptation, though, we know He was “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

Matthew and Mark relate that angels came and ministered to Him. Based on the verb tense of the word “ministered” in Mark’s account, it is apparent that the angels did not wait until the end of forty days to assist Him, nor will God wait until the end of our time of temptation to minister to us. He will come during the temptation! He will dispatch heavenly help, perhaps even before we recognize the temptation for what it is.

Temptation came to Jesus in three ways. On the physical level, Satan said in effect, “I will satisfy you.” On the emotional and intellectual level, Satan’s approach was, “Trust me, and do something radical.” On the spiritual front, Satan said, “Worship me.” However, Jesus triumphed over every form of temptation.

THE TEMPTATION TO SIN

While temptation comes in a variety of ways, the type of temptation we will consider here is different from being tempted to be discouraged, to feel overwhelmed, or to complain. We will look at the temptation to sin.

When one of our grandsons was about three years old, he watched a Veggie Tales video on the Biblical account of Adam and Eve in the Garden, portrayed by Larry Boy the Cucumber and his vegetable cohorts. In the video, the “Bad Apple” represented temptation. Our grandson happened to really like that character, and when the video ended, he announced dramatically, “I love temptation!” While his comment amused us, temptation to sin is not a humorous issue. Our grandson is old enough now that he would no longer declare that he loves temptation. Hopefully, he recognizes it when it comes. And we must recognize temptation when it comes our way as well.

Temptation does not necessarily arrive with

banners and trumpets to advertise itself. It comes to us much as it came to Adam and Eve in the Garden—subtly. However, no matter what form it takes, we can be sure of one thing: it comes! In James 1:14 we read, “Every man is tempted.” Temptations will come. James also admonished, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations” (James 1:2). Notice that he did not say “if,” but “when.” The joy that James alluded to here is not based on the fact that temptation comes, but on the outcome that results when the temptation is resisted.

WITHSTANDING TEMPTATION

It is possible to resist and overcome temptation. In 1 Corinthians 10:13 we read, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” If we look God’s way, His grace will provide us with what is necessary to help us withstand temptation.

The Bible records many accounts of individuals who faced temptation, and we see a contrast in how they responded. For example, consider Joseph, who ran from the immoral advances of Potiphar’s wife, though doing so put his life in jeopardy. She did accuse him, her accusations were believed, and Joseph suffered as a result. In fact, he ended up in prison! However, he kept his integrity and God honored him for that.

Joseph’s testimony stands in contrast to that of David and Bathsheba. David strolled on his rooftop as Bathsheba bathed at a distance down below. They both succumbed to temptation, and both suffered the consequences.

It takes deliberate action to overcome temptation, just as it takes deliberate action to receive salvation. No one is saved accidentally. When God calls after our hearts, there must be an acknowledgment that sin

Temptation does not necessarily arrive with banners and trumpets to advertise itself. It comes to us much as it came to Adam and Eve in the Garden —subtly.

has been destructive; we regret that we have sinned against God and defiled our character and integrity. In response to that deep regret, we turn away from our sins and repent. It is a very deliberate and conscious decision. It takes a similar deliberate and conscious decision to turn from temptation when it comes our way.

RECOGNIZING SIN

We start by recognizing sin for what it is. In fact, an awareness of sin is part of its scriptural definition. In James 4:17 we read, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” God establishes the standard and reveals it to our consciences so we know when we are going against what God commands.

Sometimes people ask, “What is sin?” God knows the heart and He is the judge in each individual situation, but Scripture does define sin. In 1 John 5:17 we read, “All unrighteousness is sin.” Romans 14:23 say, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” In simple terms, sin is knowing what God deems righteous, and then intentionally and willfully going against that knowledge.

While it is important to recognize sin as sin, we also must be careful not to identify as sin something that is not sin. There is a difference between sin and temptation. Learn to distinguish between the frailties of our human nature and the carnal nature. Don’t claim failure where none exists. Remember, Satan is the accuser.

The word “sin” has fallen out of favor in contemporary society, because the mindset in our society is that people should not be burdened with guilt. That perspective is found even in the religious community. However, we do need guilt! If we remove guilt, we set aside conscience. We set aside the Bible, which provides the standard of right and wrong. When there is nothing to identify

wrongdoing, we end up with the chaotic society we presently live in.

It is the sense of guilt and condemnation that will make sinners realize they are bound for Hell if they do not turn from their sins. We cannot say to them, “Don’t feel bad about sinning; just try to do better.” We would be offering a false hope. No, we must urge everyone who has not already done so to turn from their sins—to repent and turn to God!

SIN CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED OR EXCUSED

We live in a culture that tries to redefine sin in order to accommodate, justify, or excuse it. We hear it said, “Oh, that person was born that way; he cannot help what he is.” It is true that we all are

born

with a carnal nature. It is also true that some people’s tendencies or predispositions might be toward one sin and others toward another.

However, the fact that we were all “born

in sin and shapen in

iniquity” does not justify

our continuance in that state.

Vulnerability is not a justification, nor does it excuse sinful behavior.

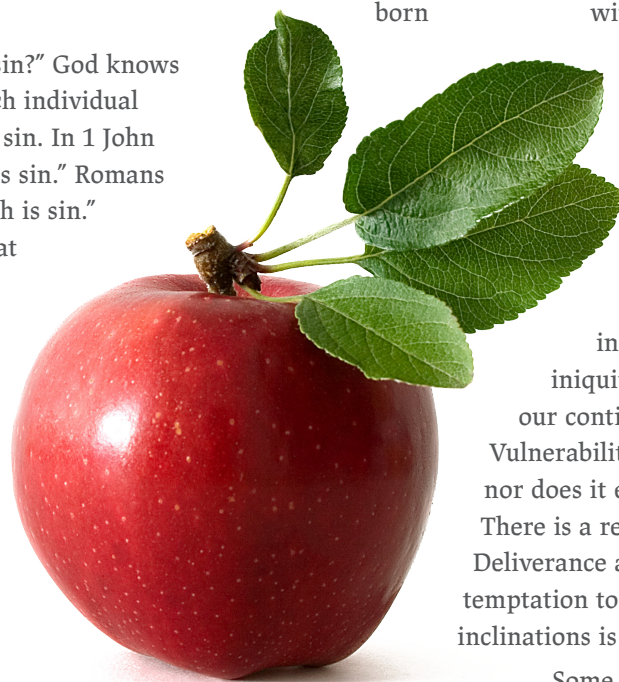
There is a remedy available!

Deliverance and victory over the temptation to act upon carnal inclinations is possible.

Some insist that certain sinful behaviors are merely a disease or an addiction.

However, people do not crave a disease. As a child, I had chicken pox, mumps, and a variety of other ailments. I did

not crave those diseases, nor did you crave any of the sicknesses you have experienced in your lifetime. Sin is far more than an “addiction” or “something one is born with.” It is yielding to the temptation to pursue behaviors that are harmful and wrong in the sight of God.



**SIN IS KNOWING WHAT GOD DEEMS
RIGHTEOUS, and then intentionally and
willfully going against that knowledge.**

It is true that some people's tendencies or predispositions might be toward one sin and others toward another.

However, the fact that we were all "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" does not justify our continuance in that state.

Vulnerability is not a justification, nor does it excuse sinful behavior. There is a remedy available! **DELIVERANCE AND VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION TO ACT UPON CARNAL INCLINATION IS POSSIBLE.**

When Adam and Eve sinned, God held them accountable; there were consequences. That is what we do with our children. We hold them accountable when they misbehave, and help them understand that there are consequences for wrongdoing. We understand that if we apply those consequences in a positive manner, it is less likely that our children will repeat the same action. On the other hand, if we excuse, justify, and send them on their way with no consequences when they have willfully done wrong, it is more likely that they will repeat that behavior again. It is also more likely that when they are older, they will repeat the behavior on an adult level and experience more severe consequences.

NO IMMUNITY TO TEMPTATION

Temptation appeals to our human nature, even after we are saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost. Although entire sanctification eradicates carnality, we do not become immune to temptation. We still have God-given human appetites. We still have the ability to make a wrong decision when temptation shows up. And temptation will come, no matter what our age or station in life. It will come in a form that appeals to our human nature or natural appetites.

As we have gone through life, we have seen some who considered themselves to be "bullet proof" in a sense. They felt they were above temptation. However, in 1 Corinthians 10:12 we read, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." It is imperative to be cautious, to be aware of the potential of being tempted, and to be on guard against it. In 1 Peter 5:8 we read, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." No matter how long we have been Christians, we must stay on guard.

A REMEDY THROUGH JESUS

Because Jesus endured temptation, He will help us when we face an assault from that "roaring lion," the enemy of our souls. In Hebrews 2:18 we read, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor [come to the aid of] them that

SINCE JESUS OFFERS HELP, there is no need to fail when temptation comes. Determine that you will keep your integrity.

are tempted.” When we think of Jesus’s suffering, we may think first of Him being beaten, wearing a crown of thorns on His head, and being crucified. We do not often equate temptation with suffering, but this Scripture does. Because Jesus endured the suffering of being tempted, He is able to provide a remedy for those who are also tempted, including you and me.

Realize what is at your disposal. Most people who become ill take advantage of an available remedy. Jesus provides the remedy. He comes to help all who are tempted, because He was tempted as we are. In Hebrews 4:15-16 we read, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Since Jesus offers help, there is no need to fail when temptation comes. Determine that you will keep your integrity. And remember, while the tempter comes to drag us down, the Lord comes to build us up. When temptation comes your way, view it as an opportunity to grow and learn. Temptation is not a sign that you are spiritually weak. It may be that God wants to prove to you the integrity that lies

within, and make you stronger still.

That was the case with Jesus. When Jesus went into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil, it was a divine appointment. He was led there by the Spirit because God the Father deemed it best that His Son encounter temptation. The point was not to see if Jesus would sin, but to prove that He would not. God knew His Son would triumph, and by so doing, would show us how we can be victorious as well.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ offers victory and eternal reward for those who stand fast in the face of every attempt of the enemy. God does not preserve us from temptation; He preserves us in temptation and delivers us out of it. In James 1:12 we read, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”

Thank God, there is power in the Blood of Jesus to save and keep the one who desires to be kept! Through His grace and strength, we can overcome temptation. ■

Darrel Lee is Superintendent General of the Apostolic Faith Church.



**God does not preserve
us from temptation; He
preserves us in temptation
and delivers us out of it..**



READY FOR REVIVAL

*Are we willing
to do what
it takes to
experience
refreshing
from God?*

God's Word is clear that the Lord wants to revive hearts. However, if we want this refreshing, it is necessary to consider what revival is and what is required if we are to experience it in our lives and churches.

WHAT IS REVIVAL?

The dictionary defines revival as, "A restoration to life, consciousness, or strength; a reawakening of interest." Synonyms such as renew, restore, rekindle, and reestablish amplify our

Adapted from the Ready for Revival Bible study series.

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HW 96-3 (short
version), Revival Bible
study series (full
version)

understanding. In the Old Testament, the word translated revive comes from a root word meaning, “to live,” which originally conveyed the idea of breathing. In the New Testament, the word has the sense of “to live again.” Revival implies something that formerly had life.

In a spiritual context, revival is not just a stirring, a momentary response to a great motivational speaker, a surge of spiritual excitement, or a series of evangelistic meetings. Revival has two parts—first a stirring and renewal of the people of God, and then a drawing in of sinners. It is a sovereign work of God in which He visits His people, restoring and reanimating them and filling them with the fullness of His blessings, which in turn results in the conversion of unbelievers. Perhaps it could best be described by the phrase, “times of refreshing . . . from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

A report from the Azusa revival in Los Angeles at the turn of the last century paints a vivid picture of a revival: “The altars are filled with seekers. Sometimes the meetings go on all night. People are slain under the power of God and sanctified, or rise up speaking in new tongues. In the meetings, you see the holy joy of the Lord in the countenances, and people are melted in the presence of the Lord, filled with His praises.” (From The Apostolic Faith Volume 1, Number 5.)

THE PREREQUISITE FOR REVIVAL

The Bible records several great revivals where people turned to God and gave up their sinful ways of living (see the “Great Revivals of the Bible” chart). In each case, specific steps were taken before the blessing of God could be manifested. One writer who explored the topic of revival asked the question: “Are we expecting that it will be God who will make the first move towards revival?” He also said, “If a farmer had broken no ground and had spread no seed, would he be justified in blaming God because he had no harvest? The people

who experience revival will be an obedient people. Secondly, the people who get revival will be a humble people. Thirdly, before a Biblical Pentecost there must be a praying people, a people waiting on God. Just as no man takes a running jump and in one leap lands on the top of the Rockies, but gets there by patient toil, so it is with prayer.”¹

Many Scriptures lay out the prerequisite for experiencing the renewing touch of God. For examples, see 2 Chronicles 7:14, Isaiah 57:15, and Hosea 10:12. We can be sure that as we do our part by learning and completing the requirements, God will do His part and send His blessing.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).



God does not preserve us from temptation; He preserves us in temptation and delivers us out of it..

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isaiah 57:15).

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you” (Hosea 10:12).

LOOKING BACK AT THE WELSH REVIVAL

An example of revival is found in reviewing the movement of the Holy Spirit that took place in Wales in 1904. Evan Roberts, a young theological student, felt strongly impressed by the Holy Spirit to return to his village and speak to the people of his home church. Arriving in town, he went to his pastor and asked to speak to the people. Though the pastor thought it was rather forward of Roberts to ask, he granted permission for the young man

to speak after the upcoming prayer service. When the prayer meeting was over, the pastor announced that if anyone wanted to stay, young Mr. Roberts had something he wanted to say. Seventeen people stayed, and Evan Roberts addressed them.

He gave them a simple challenge. He told those who were interested in revival to take three actions: to confess any known sin, to immediately put away any doubtful habit, and to restore any broken relationships. He said that he would be waiting, and invited any who were interested to meet him back there at the church in one hour.

The people left, and almost all returned an hour later. As they gathered, something happened among them. The presence of God was so tangible that they began to worship and pray with such fervency that news of what was happening quickly spread through the town. Soon the church was filled. The prayer meeting did not break up until early the next morning, and within a few hours, people returned and it started again.

The Holy Spirit began to stir hearts. People who had not been to church in years came, and as they entered the church, they would melt down in tears and plead for salvation. Hardened sinners melted like wax before a fire. Within just a couple of days, word traveled, and neighboring towns and villages started to experience revival. It spread to the cities, and within just a few weeks, taverns were emptied, brothels were closed, and churches were filled daily. The fire spread until much of Wales was brought to its knees in repentance at the Cross.

WHAT HINDERS REVIVAL?

It is evident that God can and will work miracles in the hearts of people who prepare themselves to receive Him. So, what hinders revival? Evangelist Charles Finney, who spoke and wrote much on the topic of revival, compiled a list of actions and attitudes he deemed as hindrances. His list included many sins that occur in the hearts of those who are far from God: envy, a critical spirit, unbelief, temper, slander, lying and deceit, cheating, hypocrisy, etc. Finney also named less flagrant attitudes that can creep into the hearts of Christians who are not spiritually watchful: a mind set on material things, a lack of seriousness toward

Renew your consecrations and promises to God.

Evaluate your relationships and mend fences where necessary.

View and pray for the fields that are "white unto harvest."

Invoke God to search your heart.

Voice your deep desire in regular and prevailing prayer.

Apply God's truth to your own life.

Lay aside anything that would hinder or distract you.

CLARENCE FROST SERMON EXCERPT

God demands the same standard today that He always has. He wants us to be careful about what we say. Once when I worked in this city, I said something about my boss. He really did have something coming, but it was not my place to say it. I did not say it right. I made some remarks about him. I went home. And God laid on the lash! I tried to talk God out of it, but He was not in that kind of mood. I put it off for days, but something told me I just had to go and make it right. You say, "That was fanaticism." Call it what you want to, but in those days the power used to fall just like rain. Sometimes one could not give an altar call, because of so many people already praying. If that is fanaticism, give us some more of it, God. We can stand quite a bit of that.

Clarence Frost in his July 1958 sermon, "Old Paths"

God, robbing God through wasted opportunities, a critical attitude, lack of love to God, ingratitude, doing spiritual duties casually, lack of concern for the lost, carelessness about one's Christian witness, and neglect of Bible reading, prayer, or church attendance.

GREAT REVIVALS IN THE BIBLE

The Bible records several outstanding revivals where people in great numbers turned to God and gave up their sinful ways of living. Each revival was characterized by a leader who recognized his nation's spiritual dryness. In each case, the leader took action and was not afraid to make his desires known to the people.

MOSES

- Exodus 32-33
- Accepted God's laws and built the tabernacle

SAMUEL

- 1 Samuel 7:2-13
- Promised to make God first in their lives by destroying their idols

DAVID

- 2 Samuel 6
- Brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem; praised God with singing and musical instruments

JEHOSHAPHAT

- 2 Chronicles 20
- Decided to trust in God alone to help them, and their discouragement turned to joy

HEZEKIAH

- 2 Chronicles 29-31
- Purified the Temple; disposed of idols; brought tithes to God's house

JOSIAH

- 2 Chronicles 34-35
- Made a commitment to obey God's commands and removed sinful influences from their lives

EZRA

- Ezra 9-10; Haggai 1
- Stopped associating with those who caused them to compromise their faith; renewed their commitment to God's commands; began rebuilding the Temple

NEHEMIAH (WITH EZRA)

- Nehemiah 8-10
- Fasted, confessed their sins, read God's Word publicly, and promised in writing to again serve God wholeheartedly

While Finney's list is extensive, other actions and attitudes can also hinder the outpouring of God's Spirit. Disobedience, love of self, and unresolved differences with others could be added to the list. One step that was taken before many of the revivals recorded in Old Testament history was the putting away of idols. We may relegate idolatry to pagan cultures, but anything that we regard more highly than God is, in fact, an idol. Are we willing to purge our lives of these in order to have God's blessing?

Removing potential hindrances to revival takes consistent discipline. We will need to consider how we are spending our time, what we are watching, what we are saying, and what we are thinking about. There is no point in asking God to give us more of

a hunger for Him if we are consistently engaging in activities that have nothing to do with Him. However, if we choose to make the effort to focus on God, we will find that He will bless us with a spiritual hunger when we ask.

We likely will experience resistance from Satan when we attempt to draw nearer to God or make adjustments in our lives necessary to bring God's blessing. He will try to dissuade us, but despite his attempts, we must take necessary steps to be sure our hearts are free from hindrances and to align our lives to receive God's blessing.

THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER

When we pray for revival, we must exercise

persistence. Accounts of revivals in years past give a key: God visits His people when they petition Him fervently and persistently. In James 5:16 we read, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The disciples, tarrying in Jerusalem for the promised blessing, "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14). There was nothing half-hearted or intermittent about their praying.

Visualize a package with many knots tied around it. If there was a \$1,000 bill inside, would it be worth the trouble of untying the knots? Would we give up after untying only one or two knots? The point is, if we want something badly enough, we will persist.

The Word of God instructs us in the qualities of successful prayer. We find that it must be accompanied by contrition (Psalm 51:17), it must be wholehearted (Jeremiah 29:13), it must be accompanied by faith (Mark 11:24), it must come from a righteous heart (James 5:16), and it must be accompanied by obedience (1 John 3:22).

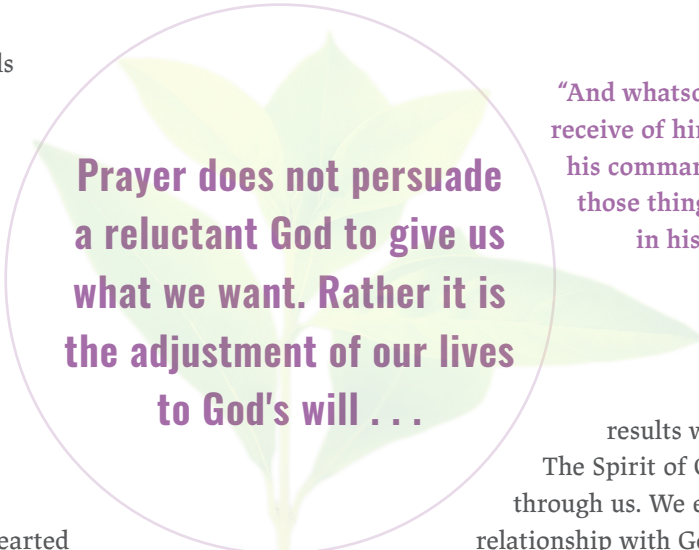
Prayer does not persuade a reluctant God to give us what we want. Rather, it is the adjustment of our lives to God's will so He can send the blessing He is longing to pour out upon us. It will take consecration and determination, but the results are life changing.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Psalm 51:17).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).



**Prayer does not persuade
a reluctant God to give us
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"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22).

THE RESULTS

What are the personal results when we are revived? The Spirit of God flows freely through us. We enjoy an intimate relationship with God and receive His direction in the details of life. We have a burden for souls and power in prayer. And, as a body of unified believers, we see the far-reaching benefits of being filled with the Spirit of God.

Let us join the Psalmist of old in praying this heartfelt prayer: "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6). The Lord will not disappoint us! ■

1 Leonard Ravenhill, Revival Praying, Ada, Baker Publishing Group, 2005.

POEM BY AMY CARMICHAEL

**O for a passionate passion for souls,
O for a pity that yearns!
O for the love that loves unto death,
O for the fire that burns!
O for the pure prayer-power that
prevails,
That pours itself out for the lost-
Victorious prayer in the Conqueror's
Name,
O for a Pentecost!**

Amy Carmichael, Public Domain

ARE YOUR SENSES SHARP?



By Isaac Adigun

We thank God for the five senses of the human body which He gave us in part for **protection**. These include **smell**, hearing, taste, sight, and touch. You have probably experienced a time when one of your senses was temporarily disabled, and the risk that presented. Perhaps your feet have gone numb from sitting in one position for too long, or you lost the ability to taste when you were sick. When something like that happens to us, we must take extra precautions to avoid an accident. If we cannot smell, then before eating we may inspect our food visually with more care or find

some other way to make sure it is not spoiled. The world we live in is full of hazards, so it is to our advantage to have all of our senses be sharp, to help us perceive and then avoid potential harm.

Our physical senses have a spiritual parallel. We live in a state of spiritual warfare with danger all around us—dangers of falsehoods, hypocrisy, and temptations, to name a few. These are the cunning devices of Satan, and he would like to destroy us. To help us avoid his traps, God has given us spiritual senses, and He wants them to be sharp at all times. Let us consider the different aspects of spiritual senses and what it means to keep them sharp.

Hebrews 5:14 says, “But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” From this we understand that the key purpose of our spiritual senses is to discern good and evil. Evil is what will harm us, and we must use discernment because it is not always clearly labeled for what it is. The devil is a liar, and he is an expert at wrapping up evil with a thin layer of something that appears good. Only God can help us recognize the truth, and He has given us spiritual senses for that purpose.

SMELL

My wife has an excellent sense of smell. One day, we returned home from church and she started running around the house saying, “I can smell gas.” I did not smell anything. We checked the places that could have been leaking gas and all seemed to be fine, but she insisted that she smelled something unusual. We decided to call a professional to check the house, and eventually we found out that the flue of our boiler had unintentionally been covered during a construction project. My wife was smelling carbon monoxide, which I was told is called a “silent

killer” because it usually goes unnoticed and is deadly. If my wife had not been persistent that day, we might have gone to sleep and never woken up.

Sin could also be described as a “silent killer.” I am reminded of the account in Genesis 4 when Cain was angry that his offering to God was rejected and Abel’s was accepted. God told him, “Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.”

Sin was nearby, yet Cain seemed unaware. God was warning him that he was on a path toward something dangerous. Sadly, Cain did not heed the warning. He failed to discern the danger he was in, and before long, he became the first murderer.

Our physical senses have a spiritual parallel. We live in a state of spiritual warfare with danger all around us—danger of falsehoods, hypocrisy, and temptations, to name a few.

Sin does not have a physical smell, but we might think of it as a “spiritual smell” when we discern in our spirits that something is just not right. We talk to many people during the course of a day, and even if everything we hear has been factually true, we may feel that something is amiss. We recognize the “smell” of gossip, backbiting, and complaints. Or perhaps we have found a new personal interest, and while it is not blatantly sinful, somehow it troubles our spirit. We should not ignore the nudges in our hearts that something is wrong—those are times to pray and find out what the problem is. God wants us to be sensitive to the presence of evil. My wife and I had to call a professional to find the source of the unusual odor, and we can call on God to show us the source of a potential spiritual problem. By His grace, we can perceive when sin is “at the door,” and we can remedy the situation.

HEARING

Imagine the challenge of being a pedestrian and not hearing. This is especially frightening for me to think of as a traveler in a country that drives on the opposite side of the road than what I am used to. When crossing the road, I instinctively look to the

right for traffic, but in the United States and other European countries, that is precisely the opposite of what one should do! When I travel abroad, I must be extra cautious, and if I could not hear the traffic approaching, the risk would be even greater.

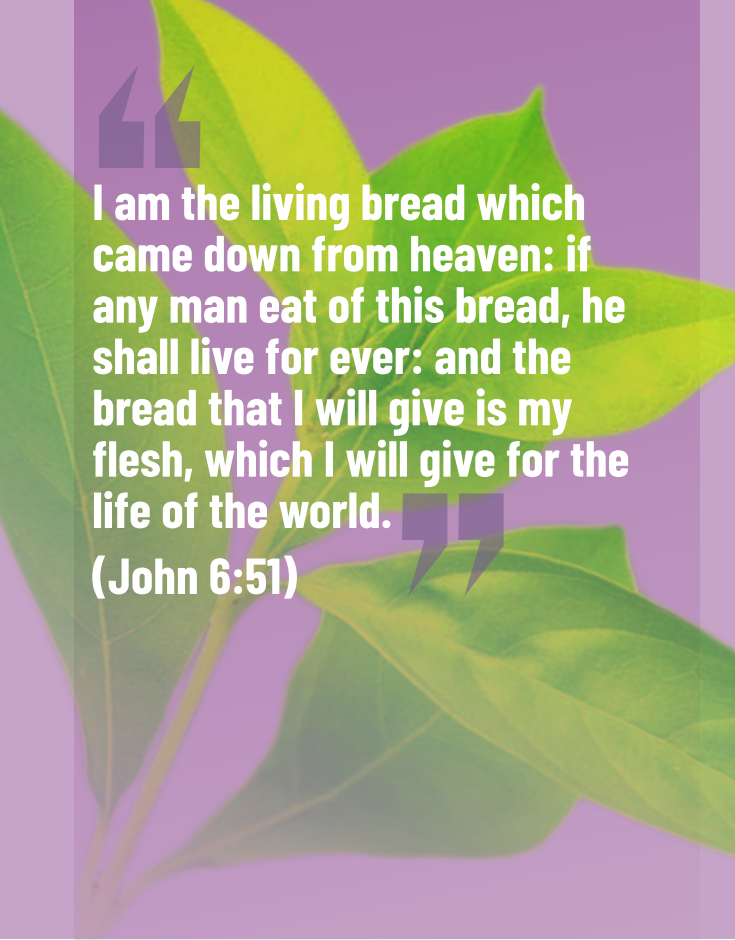
Spiritually speaking, if we do not hear well, we can be in terrible danger. Consider, for example, how we use our spiritual sense of hearing to detect false doctrine. An account from 1 Kings 13 illustrates this point well. There we read of a young prophet who had been given instructions by God, which he decided to obey. That was a wonderful start; however, an older prophet came and told him not to obey the instructions from God. That man was persuasive, saying, "I am a

prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord." The younger prophet believed him and obeyed the older prophet's guidance rather than what God had instructed. As a result, the young man lost his life. Even the older prophet felt remorse when he realized that the first instructions truly had come from God.

We still have people like that old prophet in the world today. Many of them are convincing because they do not think they are false prophets, but believe what they teach is true. They will quote the Bible, preach, teach, and talk as if they were sent from God. The Bible tells us, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." If Satan himself can appear as an angel of light, how can we survive unless we have the discerning Spirit of God? We must listen carefully for the Spirit of truth, diligently heeding what He speaks to our hearts and disregarding everything else.

We recall that Florence Crawford, the founder of our church, was dancing in a ballroom when she heard a Voice say to her, "Daughter, give Me thine heart." In the midst of the upbeat music and the festive atmosphere of that ballroom, suddenly God spoke to her. She said that when she heard it the first time, she continued dancing, but after the second time the atmosphere changed, and after the third time she left. How thankful we are that the Lord spoke to her! She heard God, she obeyed what she heard, and more than one hundred years later, we are still beneficiaries of her service to God. That is an example we want to follow.

God still speaks today. Whether audibly or inaudibly, God communicates in a way that we can understand. The way He speaks to me may be different than the way He speaks to you, but He will speak. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). He wants us to hear, and when we do, He wants us to take action.



I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.
(John 6:51)

TASTE

Perhaps many of us have had the experience of accidentally taking a drink of milk that has gone sour, with the instinctive response of spitting it right back out. That instinct is good because drinking spoiled milk could make a person sick.

A greater challenge is to recognize food that is bad for the body but does not taste bad. There are certain foods that are almost universally liked—chocolates, vanilla ice cream, and frosted cakes might be at the top of that list. Most of us would agree that these all taste wonderful, but what tastes nice is not always good for the body. People who have food allergies understand this very well, since they can become severely ill by eating foods that taste great. Each of us has to learn to recognize the taste of foods that will be helpful and harmful to our bodies, even though it may not be obvious.

The Bible indicates that the soul can taste as well. Psalm 34:8 tells us, “O taste and see that the Lord is good.” When our souls get a taste of God, we want more! One who has experienced the joy of salvation

will instinctively desire more from God, and in seeking Him, we find that the Gospel not only tastes good, but it is the best nourishment for our souls.

Jesus said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:51). Like the manna that was given to the Children of Israel, Jesus, who is the Word made flesh, is our Daily Bread. God’s Word is meant to be our spiritual sustenance. It tastes good to the hungry soul, and it also satisfies the deepest longings. There are some other things in this world that can also “taste” good—popular music, movies, and other such attractions may seem enjoyable. However, anything that is not from God is ultimately bad for our souls. When our spiritual sense of taste is able to recognize what is from God for our nourishment, we will be able to feast upon what God has given, and it tastes good.

SIGHT

In 2 Kings 6 we read the account of Elisha and his servant being surrounded by the armies of an angry king. The servant panicked, but Elisha responded, “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.” Then Elisha prayed, “Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

In this instance, Elisha’s servant could only see physically, but Elisha could see more. Perhaps some of us look at our current circumstances and only see trouble, problems, needs, and challenges. If that is the case, we can pray, “Lord, open my eyes.” Through the eyes of faith, we can look past our trials and see Jesus on the other side.

We need to have the sense of sight that Moses had. Hebrews 11:27 says, “By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.” We need to see as Joshua and Caleb did—they saw the giants and the walled cities with their physical eyes, but they also saw the fulfillment of the promise of God with their spiritual eyes. We need sight like David’s; he saw Goliath just like his brothers did, but David saw him in comparison

to the Lord and asked, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (1 Samuel 17:26). When we have that kind of spiritual sight, we will not be afraid when we face trials and tests in this life, but by faith we will see the victory!

TOUCH

Each of the senses has a unique set of functions, and touch brings a personal element that the others do not have because touch relies on physical contact. A warm embrace can convey more comfort than spoken words or a written message ever could.

In the spiritual sense, I immediately think of the importance of the touch of Jesus. One example is the woman with an issue of blood, who only touched the hem of Jesus’ garment and was healed! Being able to make contact with Jesus and experience His touch made all the difference.

Once, I received an invitation from the British Prime Minister to attend a meeting at Number 10, Downing Street. I felt it was a special opportunity and wanted to make it a historical occasion. I took a Gospel tract with me and purposed in my heart to shake the hand of Prime Minister Tony Blair, give him the tract, and let him know that our church was praying for him. However, upon arrival, I found out that many other faith leaders had been invited as well. There were over a hundred people in a big drawing room, and my chances of making contact with the Premier seemed small. I knew he would enter the room at some point, but I didn’t know where or when, so I prayed and asked Jesus to help me. Most of the guests were visiting and helping themselves to the snacks and drinks, but my mind was on one thing: I wanted to meet the Premier. And the Lord answered my prayer! The Premier came close by me, so I extended my arm to him, shook his hand, and told him, “I am Isaac Adigun, from the Apostolic Faith Church, and we are praying for

sense of touch? It is sad when someone gives a good, warm embrace and it is not appreciated, and some may be like that with Jesus. He wants to embrace us and bless us. He wants us to experience His cleansing touch, His healing touch, His quieting touch, His illuminating touch, His reassuring touch—His touch can meet any need! Yet some are not interested. They may come to a church service feeling unsatisfied and miserable, and leave the same way, even though Jesus is there to give the touch they need.

Jesus wants to touch us even today, if we will only reach to Him through prayer.

SHARPENING OUR SENSES

How sharp are your spiritual senses? If you have struggled to discern good from evil in the past, you can ask God to sharpen the senses He gave you. Hebrews 5:14 says that they must be “exercised,” and God can teach us how to do that. He will make us sensitive to the presence of the enemy so that we will take precautions when we recognize that he is at work. Likewise, we can be sensitive to the leading of God’s Spirit, quick to understand and obey what God would have us to do. In a world that is filled with sin and deception, God has given us spiritual senses to discern what is right and true, and He will help us do that as we look to Him. ■

This message was given while Reverend Isaac Adigun lived in London, England, and served as the Apostolic Faith District Superintendent of the United Kingdom and Western Europe. In 2021, he moved to Nigeria and was appointed as District Superintendent of West and Central Africa.

UNIQUE, YET UNIFIED

*Enjoying harmony
within our differences.*



By Steve Mixer

As I sat in a recent church service listening to a song by a vocal trio, I realized it provided a good illustration of unity. The singers were in unity, not because they were singing alike or in unison, but because they were in harmony with each other. They sounded wonderful together, each singing his own part.

The family of God was designed to work together in this same manner. Though we were created as unique individuals, God desires for us to come together in Him to encourage one another and further the Gospel.

In the fourth chapter of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul exhorted believers to strive for unity among themselves. He said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (verses 1-3). In these and subsequent verses, Paul revealed how to obtain godly unity, cultivate it among ourselves, and preserve it until we are brought into perfect harmony in Heaven. If we will gain an understanding of unity and follow Paul's advice for achieving it, we will benefit by being a more supportive and productive body of believers.

WHAT IS UNITY?

The dictionary definition of unity includes “being together or one with an individual, group, or thing.” This does not mean being “one” in every way. “Unity” is not the same as “unanimity,” which is when everyone in a group has the same opinion, and it is not “uniformity,” where everyone acts or looks alike. It is possible for two or more people to achieve unity when there are noticeable differences among the individuals. One example is in the workplace. It is not unusual for employees to come from varied backgrounds and have differing beliefs, opinions, and personalities. Yet when all follow the ideas and protocols established by management about how to conduct their work, things tend to go well; there is unity.

Another example is marriage. Spouses can differ greatly and still have a successful union. Often, new couples find they have different strengths and weaknesses, ways of doing things, likes and dislikes. When I was dating my future wife, Merrill, and we began to talk about getting married, she asked if I enjoyed traveling. We were both just nineteen years old, but by that time she had already traveled a couple of times internationally and had even lived abroad as a foreign exchange student. I told her I loved to travel. On several occasions, I had been to the beach, which was eighty-five miles southwest of my family home in Portland, Oregon, and to our church youth camp in nearby Washington State. One of my favorite places to go to was a little community in Mitchell, Oregon, about a four-hour drive southeast of Portland. It had a population of less than two hundred people, and there was not a lot going on there, but that is what appealed to me. My brothers and I loved to load up our dirt bikes and go to central Oregon to camp outdoors and ride the dusty trails in the hills around there.

Shortly after we married, I took Merrill camping in that area, and it did not go as I had imagined at all. I had thought we would be very happy riding trail bikes together, but I was really wrong about that. I learned my wife would much rather travel to Madrid, Spain, than to Mitchell, Oregon.

Even though over subsequent years, our tastes have become more aligned, at that time in our lives my wife and I were not in unity on that particular



There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.



Ephesians 4:4-6

issue. However, we did have a common bond that was more meaningful to us than any differences we had, and that was a deep love and devotion to each other and to God. We also had a unified goal, which was to serve God together.

When people share a common bond and purpose, they can achieve unity despite their differences.

OBTAINING GODLY UNITY

The common bond that brings people into unity with God and other believers starts at salvation. When we confess our sins to God and pray with repentant hearts, turning away from those sins, He forgives us. Through the Blood of His Son Jesus, sacrificed for us, we are washed clean. At that moment, we become part of the Body of Christ, united with other believers through God's Spirit.

Paul described the special bond that believers share in this way: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all,

and in you all" (Ephesians 4:4-6).

At salvation, we become part of the same body—the Body of Christ; we have the same Spirit in us—God the Holy Ghost; and we share the same hope—eternal life in Heaven. God's Spirit becomes our Teacher and Guide, leading each of us into the same truth. As we submit to His ways, we are brought even more closely into alignment in faith and purpose. This is a bond more powerful than any that can be experienced outside of the Gospel. It transcends all other relationships, including familial, ethnic, social, economic, academic, and professional. Unity among God's people is something to be appreciated and nurtured.

CULTIVATING UNITY

Paul understood the value of unity that comes from God. The second verse of his exhortation concerning this unity (Ephesians 4:1-3) contains some good

advice on how we can cultivate it with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

First, our approach should be "with all lowliness." Each of us must have an attitude of humility. This includes preferring others above ourselves. It also includes listening and appreciating another's viewpoint before responding. The more we practice humility, the more harmonious our church environment will be.

Second, we need to exercise "meekness," which is not the same as timidity or weakness. In the Old Testament, we read that Moses was a very meek man. Yet he confronted Pharaoh many times and withstood the angry complaints of the Israelites who were unhappy about their circumstances in the wilderness. Moses showed meekness in that instead of defending himself against attacks, he took everything to God in prayer, seeking His will. God helped Moses, and He will do the same for us too.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Psalm 51:17)

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13)

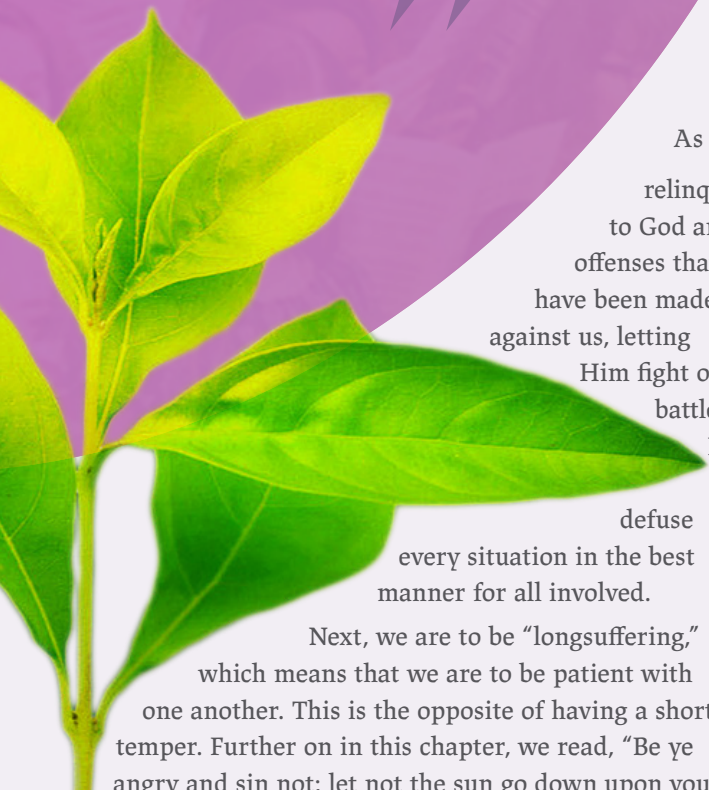
"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." (Mark 11:24)

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)

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manner for all involved.

Next, we are to be “longsuffering,” which means that we are to be patient with one another. This is the opposite of having a short temper. Further on in this chapter, we read, “Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath” (verse 26). When a conflict with another believer causes us to feel anger, we are to attempt to reconcile with that person rather than ignore the situation. If we are longsuffering, we will be able to let go of our anger and resolve the matter. If not, ignoring the conflict will not cause it go away but will only allow resentment to build, making the matter worse. Like dirt swept under a rug, unresolved issues tend to pile up until eventually they cannot be ignored.

Another reason to be longsuffering with fellow believers and reconcile our differences is that we want to be in a position spiritually to exemplify God’s righteousness. Other people will notice if we are angry with another believer. Some will simply observe that

there is strife, while others will take sides. Either way, God is not glorified.

Strife among a few in a congregation can result in disunity among many. Therefore, it is important that we attempt to resolve any conflicts among ourselves quickly.

Lastly, we should be “forbearing one another in love.” The word forbear means “to hold oneself up against,” or figuratively, “to put up with.” We should always be kind, considerate, and loving toward fellow believers. It may be more difficult in trying times, when we need to exercise patience, to also show love as we forbear one another. However, this is when it is most needed. As we extend grace for each other’s faults, always assuming the best of motives and intentions, we can expect that same grace will be extended to us.

PRESERVING UNITY

We have been given the wonderful gift of unity with God and His people. We have a special bond and fellowship that unbelievers cannot experience, and it is worth preserving. Paul said this takes, “endeavouring,” which means to put forth effort. One effort each of us can make is to take personal responsibility for maintaining peace and harmony within the family of God. This starts with each of us as individuals. We must submit to God’s Word and His will when interacting with fellow believers, and then support others in doing the same.

God’s plan for His people is that we work together in unity, encouraging one another in the faith, until our fellowship is made perfect in Heaven. Paul said, “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). ■

Steve Mixer has served as a minister of the Apostolic Faith Churches in Portland, Oregon, and Murphysboro, Illinois, and as pastor of our church in Sacramento, California.

WITNESS

And all bore him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? - **Luke 4:22**

26 **APART, BUT NEVER ALONE**

30 **"GOD COMPLETELY CHANGED MY LIFE!"**

32 **BLESSING IN BROKENNESS**

36 **EVIDENCE**

APART, BUT NEVER ALONE

God led this young couple to salvation and then to each other, and sustained them through a decade-long immigration struggle.

By Samson and Tosin Jimaza (Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada)

SAMSON

I was born into a polygamous family in rural Nigeria, the first boy of the eight children on my mother's side. We never read the Bible at home, but my mother had a basic understanding of Christian teachings and a sincere desire to please the Lord. She did her best to teach us children the right way to live. We also went to church services and Sunday school regularly, and even to some early morning prayer meetings, but our understanding of the Gospel was incomplete.

Looking back over my childhood, I can see many times when God reached out to help me find the truth. When I was seven years old, my mother bought me an illustrated children's Bible to encourage me, and later on, an uncle also bought me a Bible. They planted these seeds with the hope that I would live a godly life. At age eleven, during a Good Friday service, a video was shown about the Crucifixion and the Holy Ghost convicted me of my sins. I prayed that night and the Lord made a change in my heart.

However, not realizing what this meant, I did not

guard the experience and the joy in my soul did not last. Around that same time, I received a Light of Hope magazine from the Apostolic Faith Church, but I never read it. Now I can see that these were all ways that the Lord was seeking after my lost soul.

During my high school days, I became rebellious. I began drinking, hanging out with the wrong people, and going to parties and bars. The community came to know me as a troublemaker because of the problems I stirred up at school and elsewhere. Once, the police arrested me and I spent about two months in jail. There, I fasted and prayed, promising God I would turn away from all my sinful habits. But immediately after my release, I was right back to my old way of life. I was miserable.

Thank God that in all my turmoil, I had a mother who was on her knees praying for me. One day, as I was fleeing her home because the police were after me again, she asked me, "What do you want to make out of your life?" That question broke my heart. Her piercing words haunted me everywhere I went, all the time. I became restless under Holy Ghost conviction. Sleep vanished from my eyes and nothing appealed to me anymore.

An uncle of mine had been sponsoring my college fees, and when he passed away, I had no funds to continue my studies. In addition, my school asked me to leave because of the problems I had been causing. So in 1993, at the age of nineteen, I decided to move out on my own and relocate to another state. In mercy, God

did not allow me to succeed there. I only encountered greater difficulties and confusion. Through it all, the Lord spoke to my heart countless times, letting me know that if I would only surrender to Him, He would put back together the pieces of my broken life.

That same year, I was invited to an Apostolic Faith Church. I had walked by the building many times without giving it any notice. However, at my first service there, I was immediately impressed by the orderliness and solemnity of the meeting. I was not used to church services where the choir members were organized, the ministers had such nice decorum, and prayer was included before and after the service. The music and the testimonies were so pleasant to my thirsty soul, and the simple message of salvation

put me under great condemnation. I was not saved that day, but I kept attending until one day, at the altar of prayer, I surrendered my life to God and He miraculously saved me. What a great change God made in my life that day! The joy of the Lord that flooded my soul was indescribable. My burden of sin was gone and I felt light

and free; I felt as if all the money in the world had been given to

me! The smile on my face told what a transformation the Lord had performed in my heart. Salvation is real!

After that day, there was a new song in my heart, and there was no more alcohol, fighting, or deceit. Old things had passed away and all things had become new. The Lord also helped me to make restitutions to my parents and others for all my past wrongdoing, and I started sharing my testimony with everyone I came in contact with.

Hungering for more of God, I loved reading the testimonies and articles in the church magazines, tracts, and other Gospel materials, as well as listening to recorded sermons. These all facilitated my spiritual growth, and God also provided godly associates who were constantly praying and encouraging me in the faith. In time, as I sought to draw closer to God, He sanctified me and filled me with the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

After walking with the Lord for a few years, He opened the way for me to return to university, more than ten years after I had finished high school. God provided everything for me to successfully complete my undergraduate and then postgraduate



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degrees. Then in 2008, God opened another door for me to relocate to Canada. This was a new challenge in many ways, including that the closest Apostolic Faith church was a seven-hour drive from my new home. In addition, my wife's immigration to Canada was unexpectedly delayed for many years. Despite the isolation, the Lord was with both my wife and me during that period, and He sustained us. Many were praying for us and my church leaders also encouraged me by sending Gospel materials. Thank God, today we have a loving group of believers who worship together in Winnipeg and are making plans to build a church here. In 2019, God also made a way for my family to join me in Canada.

It is amazing how God saw me as a poor farm boy in Nigeria, and in His great love pursued my heart until I surrendered and received His gift of salvation. He took me from death to life, and it is my deepest desire to serve and please my Lord who has done so much for me. ■

ATOSIN
t home when I was growing up, we were taught to pray and we always went to church. However, our church did not teach us how to have real victory. Many times I felt condemnation in my heart for my sins and would beg God for forgiveness, promising not to do them again, but before long I would find myself doing the same things. It was an ongoing cycle of defeat.

While I was still young, the Lord led my mom and an older sister to an Apostolic Faith Church. Soon I decided to follow in their footsteps, and eventually three more siblings and my father joined us. The Lord was leading our paths to a church where we could learn the truth found in God's Word.

Upon arriving at the Apostolic Faith, I loved the services. The music from the choir and instrumentalists was beautiful, and the Lord used that to reach out to me. During a prayer meeting one day, I repented of my sin and the Lord saved me, and I continued praying until He sanctified me and also baptized me with the Holy Ghost and fire. This was the starting point of my relationship with God.

Our family was so happy to be among the congregation of Heaven-bound believers. The Lord blessed us greatly, provided for our needs, and healed and protected us.

In time, the Lord led me to marry my husband, Samson. Before we were engaged, he had already begun the process of immigrating to Canada, which meant that my name was not included in his immigration application. Our plan was for me to apply after he was approved. He was accepted and moved to Canada in 2008, and returned to Nigeria for our wedding in 2009. Shortly after that, however, my immigration application was denied. By 2010, three more applications had been denied. This was extremely challenging, though we were grateful that God provided a way for him to return home during summers.

Years passed while we waited for my immigration to be approved. Despite times of loneliness, the Lord kept our home, and ultimately we saw how God used our difficult circumstances to teach us to trust Him more. In the most trying times, God gave many precious promises. We especially held to the wonderful assurance in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." It seemed those words were echoed repeatedly in church services, songs, radio broadcasts, and elsewhere, and we both felt as if God was speaking that promise directly to us. This was a source of encouragement that strengthened our faith and walk with the Lord.

We never dreamed that my immigration would take ten years to complete.



It was not until 2019, after three years of virtually

no updates, that I received a phone call from the Canadian consulate inviting me for an interview. Even at that meeting, the interviewer threatened to deny the application again, but we persevered

in prayer and the Lord prevailed for us. It was amazing how quickly the details were processed and the application was approved, and then God also provided the funds for relocating in a miraculous way.

The Lord reunited our family and today we are together, happily serving the One who has done so much for us. He blessed our home with three beautiful, healthy children and has provided for all of our needs abundantly. We are thankful that during the ten years of waiting, our faith was firmly anchored and rooted in Him. It can be difficult to understand why God allows our trials, but in the end, Samson and I could see that God used all circumstances for good in our lives. He taught us many spiritual lessons, including how to better understand the difficult situations that others go through, and ways to support and encourage them. We also learned to confront every situation with the weapon of prevailing prayer. Without what we went through, we could not have understood the wisdom and goodness of God's ways as we do now.

Today, I am fully persuaded that what God has promised, He is able also to perform. I thank Him for His great love to me, and I know He can save and keep anyone who will yield to Him, because He did it for me. He has been gracious, merciful, and compassionate, and He hears and answers our prayers. My desire is to keep walking with Him until I see Him in glory one day. ■

Samson and Tosin Jimaza worship with the Apostolic Faith group in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, where he is the group leader.



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, contact us and request the tract entitled "Starting Out."

GOD COMPLETELY CHANGED MY LIFE!

A Filipino pastor tells how God guided him to the truth.

By Wenifred R. Lucero Raniag

My parents raised me with high moral standards. We believed in and feared God, but we did not read the Bible or understand much about salvation. I thought that if I went to church, my soul would go to Heaven after I died, and that was my only purpose in attending. My father was a strong disciplinarian, and since I was one of the oldest children in the family, he insisted that I be a good example to my younger siblings. Due to my strict upbringing, I never had a chance of becoming involved in activities like smoking or drinking. Even in my teen years, my life revolved around school and home, and I was only allowed to spend time with a few chosen friends.

After high school, I qualified for a scholarship to pursue my college education and moved to a school in another part of the Philippines that was very far from my hometown. Being alone and far from my family motivated me to start attending Sunday worship services regularly. Though I knew almost nothing about the Bible, the people at church were the closest thing that I had to a family, and I appreciated being with them. My friends



all thought I was a godly person, and even I believed that to some extent. However, there still had been no change in my heart.

In December of 1980, during my last year of college, a friend invited me to the Apostolic Faith Church in Bagong Sikat, Munoz Nueva Ecija, Philippines.

When I went for the first time, I felt a warm welcome from the people. As the congregation started singing, God spoke to me through the messages of the songs. Tears began flowing and I heartily joined in the singing. The sermon that day was about salvation, and right then, I saw myself for the first time in the light of God's Word. I understood that even though I attended church, my soul was lost. During the altar call, I immediately went forward to pray. I had a deep desire for God to give me what the people in this church had. I confessed all my sins to the Lord and asked Him for forgiveness, and when He forgave me, a heavy load of sin was lifted from my heart. I could feel the presence of the Lord with me and I was so happy! After I went back to my dormitory, my heart was still overflowing with joy.

Soon, I started reading the Bible seriously for the first time in my life. The church I had grown up in

had given us written texts to encourage us, and I discovered that my favorite messages were actually from Scripture! This was the beginning of my journey with God, to really know Him and walk in His ways.

At that time, I also explored the Apostolic Faith Church's teaching materials. After I read about entire sanctification, I began seeking that experience. I prayed, "God, cleanse me from all my sin." My sins had been forgiven, but I needed the inner cleansing of my sinful nature. Sometimes I would pray through the night, seeking the Lord. Then one Saturday afternoon when I was alone in the church, I yielded all of my life to Jesus and He sanctified me. I continued seeking God, and before I graduated from college, He also baptized me with the Holy Spirit. Oh, the joy in my soul! Through these experiences during my senior year, God completely changed my life. These also gave me a strong foundation for serving God and overcoming the challenges of life that would come.

After my college graduation, I had to decide if I would return to my hometown to look for work there. That had been my intention, but I was worried that if I returned, I could no longer attend the church where I had heard the full truth about the one true God who loves me and who had changed my life. Thank God, as I prayed about what to do, He led me to a job where I could continue attending Apostolic Faith services. Later, for a period of time God opened an opportunity for me to work abroad in Saudi Arabia. That country is very closed to the Gospel, but God made a way for a few other believers and me to hold Bible studies even though bringing Bibles into the country was not allowed. God truly works in wondrous ways, and I was able to worship Him in a foreign land and feel His presence with me.

Another major decision in my life was choosing a life partner. I sought God's guidance and prayed, "God, please lead me to someone who could share in my spiritual growth and be the love of my life."

God really answers prayer! After more than thirty years of marriage, my wife and I are still serving the Lord happily together. In 1995, I gave up my job and entered into fulltime ministry as a pastor, and since then our family has continued to prove the promise in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." God has blessed us and supplied our needs, even things we did not ask for. God has kept our family, and He has been our strength, our Provider, and our Healer. We have consecrated our lives to Him and our desire is to remain faithful until we see Jesus face to face.

... right then, I saw myself for the first time in the light of God's Word. I understood that even though I attended church, my soul was lost.

I thank God for the opportunity to be a part of His work in different ways over the years. In my early days, I remember being part of a team that would visit our outstations and branch churches to encourage and strengthen the believers in each place. At those meetings, I personally witnessed God working in wonderful, miraculous ways. I saw and experienced that God is real, and He is alive! It was true back then and God is still alive and working today.

At a recent Philippines youth camp retreat, we experienced a mighty outpouring of His Spirit again. At that time, God impressed upon me that I will see Him very soon, and the need to pray for my unsaved family members. It was an inspiration and a challenging message, and my heart's desire is to remain faithful, to finish the course God has set out before me, and to make Heaven my home one day. ■

Wenifred Lucero is a member of the Apostolic Faith Philippines Board of Directors and the pastor of our church in Raniag, Isabela.

BLESSING IN BROKENNESS

God can take the shattered parts of our lives and make them into something beautiful.



By Linda Spinas

Many years ago, I read a story about a church in Europe that had a beautiful stained glass window situated high above its sanctuary. One day, a powerful storm came through and shattered the glass. The congregation was unable to reproduce the panels, but all the pieces were collected and stored in the church basement. One can imagine that being in the sanctuary without the stained glass window must have continually reminded the parishioners of the beauty that had been lost. What had once been a source of joy had turned into a point of grief.

A craftsman from a nearby village heard about the damaged window and asked for the shards that had been collected. They were given to him, and he began

to fashion a new window from all the tiny broken pieces. Two years later, he shared the final result with the church, and it was even more beautiful than before! The new window was more intricate because the pieces were much smaller. Though it was a complex and delicate project, in the hands of a good craftsman, the restoration came out better than the original.

This story is a beautiful illustration of the blessing that can come from a time of brokenness. In life, every one of us will experience some degree of brokenness. It might be a heart that is broken, or a home, or hopes and dreams. We may be left wondering how we will possibly continue on, and whether life will ever feel normal again. Sometimes, life will not go back to how it was before, and we will have to live with a new normal.

It may not seem that brokenness and blessing can really go together, but they do when we have Jesus in our lives because He is the Master Craftsman. Without Christ, the trials of life can be devastating, but if we choose to give our broken pieces to Him, we will find that He can put them back together in a way that will honor and please Him. Let's consider just a few of the blessings that can emerge from a time of brokenness.

PRECIOUS PROMISES

During any trial, one of the best things to do is to read God's Word, because it has so many promises that offer help and encouragement. Verses that we may not have given much thought to before can become treasures to us when we realize their meaning in a time of trial. Here are some of my favorites.

Psalm 34. This entire Psalm offers great comfort, but especially verse 15: "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." How wonderful to know that God hasn't lost sight of us when we are in distress. He sees us, He knows what is happening, and He says, "My ears are open unto your cry." We may not even know what to pray, but according to this verse, if all we can do is cry out, God will hear.

Verses 18-19 continue, "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth him out of them all." While some people avoid situations that seem messy or painful, God does not. He draws near to us, joining in our sorrow. He becomes a part of whatever we are going through, and He will deliver us from all of our trouble. We will not find this assurance anywhere except in God.

Isaiah 41:10. "Fear thou not; for I am with

thee: be not dismayed: for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." When we are feeling afraid, it can help to remind ourselves that God is never afraid, and His message to us throughout Scripture is consistent: "Fear thou not." God is also never surprised. He knows what is coming and already has a plan to see us through. He has promised to strengthen, help, and uphold us.

Isaiah 43:2. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." This verse reminds me of how a parent might comfort a hurting child with the words, "It's going to be okay." Children feel relieved to hear words like these from a trusted source, and here God is letting us know that whatever we go through, it's going to be okay. In fact, it will be better than okay because God has promised to be with us! We are not going to be overwhelmed by a spiritual battle.

Sometimes I wonder why the disciples, when caught in that storm at sea, asked Jesus, "Carest thou not that we perish?" Could they have perished when Jesus was with them in the boat? Is it possible that Jesus would either watch them all sink, or else sink with them? It is not possible! Similarly, with the Lord by our side, we will not be overcome by the storms of life.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who 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." When we are hurting, God wraps His loving arms around us and lets us know

that He will see us through. What a comfort! This promise is not just the case in some, but in all our tribulations. Then, if we meet others who are going through something similar, we will have credibility when we tell them God is able to see them through, sharing from our own experience of how God preserved us.

GOD'S GRACE AND STRENGTH

Paul the Apostle once had a wonderful experience of being taken up to the third paradise and seeing incredible things. Then, lest he be exalted above measure, God allowed him to have a "thorn in the flesh." Paul asked God three times to remove that problem; he really wanted it to go away. Yet God said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." It was clear that this ailment was going to remain with Paul. It was his "new normal." Yet, his response was: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

One of the hardest things about being broken is that we feel so weak. We like to feel capable of handling our challenges each day, yet sometimes we may find ourselves unsure how to even put one foot in front of the other. Paul learned that those are the times when he was truly strong because he had to depend on the strength that only God could give. It is a marvel that God's grace can help our weaknesses to the point that they become strengths!

FELLOWSHIP

Several years back, a friend told me that she was going through some health challenges. At one point she confided, "Linda, I feel so terrible." I felt badly for her at the time, but I felt even worse when I was facing the same health problem shortly thereafter!

I called her and asked if she had any advice for me. She said, "I looked at others who have suffered with this, and I knew that if they made it, I could too." Before the call ended she added, "By the way, when you feel really low, don't complain, because later when you feel better, you'll really regret anything negative that you said." That was great advice.

If we know others who have been through what we are facing, it can help to reach out to them. They can empathize with us and give advice for navigating the challenges ahead, and may also become close friends through the shared experience.

PATIENCE

Most of us prefer to have broken things fixed right now. In fact, sometimes "now" feels too late! However, when things are broken in our lives, God does not always put them back together quickly. He may want us to learn a lesson in patience.

James 1:2-4 says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." In other words, we can

actually be glad when life gets rough, recognizing that the ultimate result will be that we are made perfect before God. The very trials that can cause us to question what God is doing, can also cause us to look to Him and search His Word for help. As we patiently hold on in faith, God will refine us and make us perfect. How remarkable is the work that patience does!

PRAISING

The Bible tells us, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Years ago, God really impressed that admonition on me, so I started looking for difficult situations to praise God in. Soon enough, one came. It was a snowy winter night in Minnesota, and the road conditions were very bad.

It may not seem that brokenness and blessing can really go together, but they do when we have Jesus in our lives because He is the Master Craftsman.

While driving home alone, I took a corner too fast and skidded right into a ditch. The car landed so low that no one could see me, and I had no way to call for help. To make matters worse, I had neglected to wear boots! There I was, alone in a ditch, in the middle of a snow storm, about three miles from home and with thin shoes on my feet.

In that moment, a realization came that this was my opportunity to practice thanking God “in everything.” It may not have been very joyful, but as I started to crawl out of my car I said, “I praise You, Lord, for letting me get in this ditch. Thank You, Lord, that there is a reason and a purpose in this . . .” Before I even got up to the road level, a truck pulled up! The driver just happened to have seen me go in the ditch. He called roadside assistance, and they called highway patrol to block the freeway exit while a tow truck pulled my car out. I was home before my husband even had to worry about where I was! I was amazed, and at that point the praises came much more easily. It works to praise the Lord!

In times of adversity, some people have a tendency to blame God for what is happening to them and to push Him away. This is a serious mistake, because God is the very One who can help us the most, and He wants to do that. Praising God inspires faith in our hearts and brings Him into our situation. Isaiah 61:3 says that God will give “the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” If we are feeling heavy-hearted, praising could be the very way He will lift our burden, and that is just the beginning of what He can do.

ETERNAL GLORY

A while ago, my husband and I did a remodeling project at home. We had to choose flooring, appliances, cabinets, colors—so many decisions that suddenly consumed my time and energy. It occurred to me that when we experience a trial of brokenness, concerns like these do not seem important at all anymore. We begin to weigh issues in the light of eternity, when our kitchen flooring

and cabinets will not matter. Our focus shifts to where it should be—on God’s purposes and plans, and making sure we are in alignment with Him.

What exactly is God’s purpose? Romans 8:28 gives us an idea: “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.” God’s purpose is to do something good through us. During this lifetime, we will not receive a full explanation of all the good He is doing, but what we do have is His assurance that no matter how it appears, He will use all our circumstances for good.

In 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, Paul spoke of some of his trials and how he was at times perplexed, persecuted, cast down, and bore in his body the Lord’s death. Then in verse 17 he said, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” In the midst of our darkest trials, we need to turn our eyes toward Jesus and let the things of this world fade away. Not only is God working our trials for good, but our trials are working for us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” We may not see the benefits now, but when we get to Heaven, Jesus will be able to show us what we gained through our trials.

THE GREATEST BLESSING

No matter what challenges we face in life, a “new normal” will be even better than the “old normal” when it brings more glory to God. That is truly our greatest desire in this life and the greatest blessing we will receive. As we trust Him with our broken pieces, we will see him mend them into something good. ■

Linda Spinas is a member of the ministerial staff at the headquarters Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon.

EVIDENCE

PERSONAL TESTIMONIES OF VICTORY



LEROY

On many occasions, both my family members and I have experienced being healed from troublesome illnesses, and I want to tell about one of those instances when God intervened. As a young engineer, I faced many challenges at work and was under a lot of pressure. At times, my job caused me great physical and mental strain. Making matters worse, I often suffered from severe migraine headaches. These would start in the early afternoon with a flickering in front of my eyes. Then throughout the day, this would increase until sometimes I could barely see well enough to drive home.

On days when this happened, I would drive home and go straight to bed, and then lay in the dark for hours. I could not bear light, loud noises, or the smell of food. It was usually a relief to get to the next morning, but I would be exhausted and famished. In that condition, I still needed to go to work, and would manage as best I could.

One day while traveling, I was seized with one of these migraines. It came at an inconvenient time, and I did not know what to do. However, the local pastor was called, and I was prayed for. In a short time, the symptoms were gone; I felt completely well. I had asked for prayer many times before, but had never experienced anything like this. I was not aware of it at the time, but I had been completely healed!

That incident took place many years ago, and I have hardly had any kind of headache since. I have often had a great workload in the years that have followed, but God has given me strength and endurance. I am grateful to have experienced lasting relief. — *LeRoy Tønning (Stavanger, Norway)*



VICKY

Lately, I was doing some life-review, going over memories, and it took me back fifty years to when the Lord saved me and I came into this church.

I had been raised in a family that had a faith, but it was definitely not the Gospel, because anything was accepted—they smoked, drank, and swore. However, I prayed all the time, and God answered a lot of those prayers. By age nine, I knew I wanted to be a nurse. There were many things I prayed about concerning that, and the Lord led me.

In fifty years, I have proven the Lord over and over again. There have been some difficult times, but God has been with me. After my spouse left me, the Holy Spirit checked my heart and said, “You have to forgive Danny.” I said, “O Lord, I have earned these feelings; I deserve to own them.” He just said, “No, you need to forgive him.” I got down to pray, and couldn’t, but the Lord helped me. I prayed and prayed, and then He put such forgiveness in my heart toward Danny. The experience was so real and powerful that it reminded me of receiving salvation, sanctification, or the baptism.

God has given me good times too. I have such a praise in my heart for what God means to me.
— *Vickee Martin (Portland, Oregon)*



The Lord knows how to talk to our hearts, and I am thankful for that. Shortly before my eighteenth birthday, while I was in a

backslidden condition, the Lord cornered me up. I was raised in this church and knew the right way, but in my teenage years was trying to play both sides and it didn't work. I tried to convince myself that things were okay, but fear would just grip me. Finally, on a Wednesday morning, all it took was just going to my parents and saying, "I need you to pray with me. I'm not right." After a few moments in prayer by my parents' bedside, the Lord came down and saved me.

About four years later, the Lord was convicting me because I didn't have my sanctification. Camp meeting rolled around, and finally I just had to put in the work on my knees. On the last Friday night of camp meeting, the Lord came down and sanctified me.

The Lord has given me a wonderful Christian wife and two sons, and we are able to serve Him together. I am thankful for this Gospel and don't ever want to be ashamed of it. —*Caleb Copko (Portland, Oregon)*



As a child, I was taken to a German Lutheran church. I did not understand what was being said during the services, so I would just

count how many times the minister raised his voice up and down, up and down. The important thing, though, was that I was in church.

When I was about ten years old, we were living in Illinois, and my dad did not have work. My uncle, Elmer Luka, lived in California, so Dad decided we would go there. We moved to Los Angeles, and that is where I became acquainted with the Apostolic Faith Church.

My first Sunday school teacher was Opal Hanlin, and she taught those Bible lessons well! I started to understand why Jesus died on the Cross, and that I needed to make a decision and get right with God. However, when I was a teenager, I approached my dad one day and said, "I don't want this. It is not for me. I want to do my own thing."

I did do my own thing for a while, but though I did not want the Lord, He wanted me. He spoke to my heart and called after me, and somehow, in the big city of Los Angeles, I ended up dating a man whose grandmother went to the Apostolic Faith. How did that happen? And how did it happen that on a date, we would end up talking about camp meeting in Portland, Oregon? It happened because the Lord was seeking after me. At age twenty-five, I got down on my knees and prayed, and the Lord did what He had always said he would do; He saved me. Later, he also sanctified me and gave me the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

After that, some important decisions came along. I was twenty-five and felt the need for a husband, but did not see very many men around the church. I got on my knees and was serious with the Lord. All I said was, "Lord, I want a man who I can love, and who will serve You with me." I did not have a long list; it was just two things. The Lord knew I was serious, and He gave me the right husband. We have had a wonderful marriage, and we have been blessed with three children.

Difficult situations have come up in our lives. Sometimes there was not quite enough money to go around or the car broke down. One time the transmission started going out on my car, and my husband prayed, "Lord, what are we going to do? We don't have enough money." Do you know what happened? I parked the car in the parking lot at work and someone stole it. They didn't know the transmission was going out. The insurance company paid us the full amount, and we were able to buy a car that would hold three infant seats. We filled that car up. The Lord sees our needs and takes care of us.

I know that if I keep my hand in the Lord's hand, He will guide me through life.

— *Karen Lambert (Los Angeles, California)*

WORLD REPORT

*Let the heavens be glad, and let the
earth rejoice: and let men say among
the nations, The LORD reigneth.*

- 1 Chronicles 16:31

**39 NINE BAPTIZED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY IN
INDIA**

**39 NEW CONVERTS, CONGREGATIONS, AND
CHURCHES IN ROMANIA**

**40 TWO UNITED STATES CHURCHES
REDEDICATED**



SHORT TAKES

Brief reports from our churches worldwide.

NINE BAPTIZED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY IN INDIA

Families from our congregations in the Andhra Pradesh region of India rejoiced on Christmas day as they gathered at the headquarters church in Kaikavolu. They were not only thankful for our Savior's birth, but for gifts they received in celebration of that event. Through donations, God made it possible for Pastor Raju Rayudu and his wife, Suvarna, to hand out warm blankets to 170 families. In addition, each child was given a wrapped gift to take home and open. The blankets were especially needed as many in our congregations are elderly and this winter has been one of the coldest they have experienced in years. In the services held since then, the testimonies have brought out how thankful the

families are for all that God has provided, including these blankets and gifts.

On New Year's Day, the saints in India rejoiced again as they met at the headquarters church for a combined service. The sermon focused on the end times and being ready, and at the close, more than one prayed through to salvation! Following the service, nine recent converts expressed their desire to be baptized in water, including some who had just prayed through. A water baptismal service was held for four from Kaikavolu, four from Pedapudi, and one from Durganagar. Afterward, Pastor Rayudu said, "We are so blessed to know that these have been added to the family of God and we pray they will seek their deeper experiences." ■

NEW CONVERTS, CONGREGATIONS, AND CHURCHES IN ROMANIA

In January, a team led by Reverend John Musgrave, Director of Romania Work, made the first mission trip to Romania since the COVID-19 restrictions began. They visited the four regions of the work to encourage the saints, hold church services, and conduct minister meetings.

The team found enthusiasm for the Gospel in every region. At the close of the services, there were many who sought salvation, their deeper experiences, or to be anointed and prayed for. During the trip, two water baptismal services were held for recent converts and one man prayed through to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

In the southern region, a new congregation has formed in Radovan as a result of God's healing power. Back in 2020, our workers learned of a new convert who had been bedridden for two years after a spinal injury had left him paralyzed. They went to his house to offer

encouragement as well as anoint and pray for him. They left not knowing the outcome, but the Lord undertook and the man was healed! Since then, he has become an evangelist, sharing the Good News in nearby towns.

With the help of the leaders of our work in that area, he

has been able to organize and hold services. A room was built onto the back of his house for use as a church, and when our team visited and held a service there, sixty-five attended.

Among the Romania congregations in our northern and southern regions, three churches have been under construction this past year. At our Vanatori Neamt location, the church has been completed and services are

being held in the new building. Reverend Musgrave said it was very nicely done. Only a few projects remain for the church in Humulesti, and in Capu Dealului, the foundation has been laid. The saints in Romania are looking forward to holding dedication services for the Humulesti and Vanatori Neamt churches in the near future. ■



TWO UNITED STATES CHURCHES REDEDICATED



A special rededication weekend was held at the Apostolic Faith Church in Fort Worth,

Texas, on December 10-12. During the previous winter, Fort Worth had experienced unusually cold weather, resulting in frozen pipes bursting in the church building and causing extensive damage. The building was not useable while it was being repaired, and after it was restored and beautifully refurbished, the congregation wanted to rededicate it to God's service.

During the rededication service, Ozell Byrd, the longest-attending member of the Fort Worth congregation, gave an overview of the origin of the church. The building had been a machine shop until 1995, when Reverend Pearl Lockett Jr. purchased it for use as a place of worship. The first service was held on April 30 that same year, and then after renovations were made, the official dedication took place on May 5, 1996. Reverend Lockett served as the first pastor with his wife, Doris, by his side. When he retired, Verena McElroy worked with the youth until 2011 when Reverend Ernest Marshall and his wife, Joyce, moved to Fort Worth and he became the pastor. Today, the Fort Worth congregation is looking to God to use the newly renovated building for His glory. ■

In Orlando, Florida, special meetings were held February 16-20 and included a rededication service on Sunday. The rededication was to commemorate the purchase of the church in March

2008, and the repurposing of it from a three-bedroom home to a place of worship. The celebration was also to honor God for enabling the congregation to pay off the mortgage on the building in October, seventeen years ahead of schedule.

During the service, Reverend Glory Thomas, who has been the Orlando pastor since 2003, shared briefly about the grace of God in leading many to bless the congregation's efforts in purchasing, rezoning, repurposing, and paying off the building. He said the Lord sent financial, physical, and spiritual blessings their way when they needed it most. One example was when a man visited and asked to pay tithes. When directed to the tithes box, he asked for a larger envelope. It was not discovered until later that this man had put thousands of dollars in the tithe box! The

money came just in time to finish the renovations before the zoning permit would have expired.

For the dedication message, Superintendent General Darrel Lee took his text from Daniel 1:8. He said Daniel and his friends had an original purpose to serve God,

and they stood fast. In contrast, the property in Orlando was repurposed for God's use. He reminded the group that their mission and goal as individuals should be to ensure that their lives are purposed, or repurposed, to serve and glorify the God of Heaven.

Following the rededication, Reverend Thomas said he and his wife, Carmen, along with the congregation, are grateful for the support of God's people throughout the world. Though the group in Orlando is not large, they have accomplished much with God's help. ■



OUR CLASSICS

Heaven and earth shall pass away,
but my words shall not pass away.

- Matthew 24:35



CATCHING THE CALL

AS A TEENAGER, HUGO DECIDED TO CHANGE HIS GOAL FROM PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL TO WHOLEHEARTEDLY FOLLOWING JESUS.

By Hugo Sams

My birthplace was the Dominican Republic, and during my early years, I lived with my grandmother who was a fine Christian lady. She would get me up at five o'clock every morning, and we would read the Bible and sing together. Because of her, I learned about the Gospel while I was very young.

From the first through the seventh grades, I was sent to a private school, and the studies were all in English. Also, as I grew, I became very active in sports. The national sport in the Dominican Republic is baseball. Many of us young people hoped to be professional baseball players. By the time I was fifteen years old, I was considered to be a star at baseball and seemed to have a fair future in sports. Some of the government teams wanted me as a player. My involvement was leading me into the things of the world, but the Lord plucked me as a brand from the fire.

In September 1953, I was walking down the street in Consuelo when suddenly, I began to cry. I tried to control the tears, but could not. I went to the park and sat down under a tree, wondering

what was happening. Then I clearly heard the Voice of God say, "I am calling you." Immediately I arose and went to some friends, telling them, "Tonight will be the end of my life in sin."

Revival meetings were going on in Consuelo, and I went to church. When the message was finished, I went forward and prayed. I cried out, asking God to forgive me and save my soul. God was faithful. He lifted the burden and Heaven opened. Something precious came into my soul, and for the first time ever, I began to say, "Praise the Lord. Thank You, Jesus!" It was a glorious night.

God put it in my heart to give up playing baseball. The people who lived in my vicinity could not believe that God had saved me and that I was willing to give up everything to follow Him. A crowd set out after me as I went to my home the evening I was saved, but what God had done in my life was real—He had wonderfully changed me. For two years, the young men I had played ball with awaited my return with my uniform, but I told them, "I meant it with all my heart, and I am going through with Jesus."

A month after I was saved, the Lord marvelously sanctified my soul. Oh, I am praising God for that! A month later I was baptized in water, and I remember promising the Lord that I would go all the way with Him. Two years later, the Lord wonderfully baptized me

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with the Holy Ghost and fire. The Gospel has surely changed my whole life, giving me a life of victory. Thank God that He helps us to find shelter in Jesus Christ! As long as the world goes on, the temptations and cares of life destroy the lives of many people, but I am sheltered in Jesus Christ.

One of my early privileges in the Lord's work was playing the trumpet. When a group of Gospel workers would visit a town for special meetings, fifteen or so of us would march through the town playing our instruments. This would generate interest and draw a crowd for the meetings. People would hear and follow us to the church.

At the age of twenty-one, I married, and my wife and children are all in the Gospel. God blessed our home because He was the center of our lives. For thirty-four years I worked in a large sugar factory in the city of La Romana. I was a foreman there for twenty-one years. When I began considering retirement, my employer wanted me to stay on, and my supervisors offered again and again to raise my wages and give me all kinds of incentives.

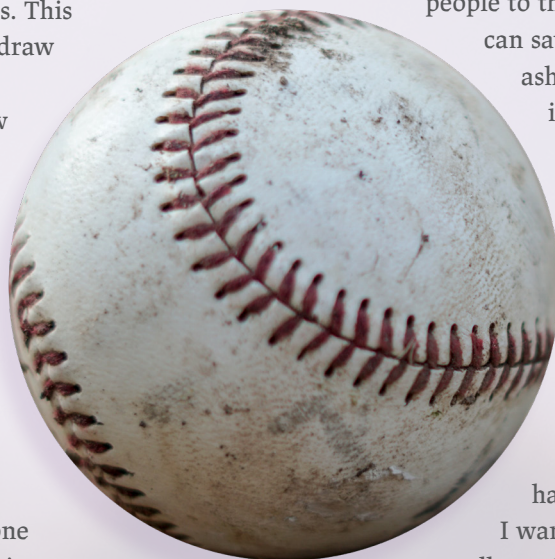
But I had put in my years of work and was ready to retire from that. Now when I go by the factory, I do not even look to see if smoke is coming from the chimney.

At the age of twenty-four, the Lord called me to the ministry. Later I was asked to be the first national youth leader for the Apostolic Faith churches in the Dominican, so I was in charge of the youth activities for about twenty-eight churches. Then in April of 1994, God gave me a further trust to keep in the Dominican Republic. I was called to be the district superintendent of the Apostolic Faith churches in the Dominican, and I mean to be true to that trust. I would not change my title to be the president or the king. It is good to lead people to the paths of righteousness, and I can say as the Apostle Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation."

Thank God for the power there is in the Gospel! I can recommend Christ to any person. He has been real in my life. I have peace and joy and happiness, and I want to live in the center of His will so I can hear when He speaks to me.

As I look back at the years that have passed, the memories are sweet. I want to keep going forward until Jesus calls me Home, because the Gospel is more than life to me. It is my strong desire to be faithful and true to God. ■

Hugo Sams was District Superintendent of the Apostolic Faith churches in the Dominican Republic from 1994 to 2001. He passed away on May 26, 2001.



LET DOWN YOUR NET

Trusting God worked in Bible times, and it will work today.

By Cynthia White

In Jesus' earthly ministry, He went about doing miracles and wonders, and preaching and teaching about the Kingdom of God.

The hearts of the people were blessed, and crowds followed Him wherever He went. In Luke 5, we read that on one occasion, "as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the lake." The ships were empty, because after fishing all through the night, "the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets" (verses 1-2).

As Jesus walked by, many people were following Him. They came with hungry hearts, eager to listen, and He saw an opportunity with the two empty boats. What a wonderful God we serve! He can make much of what little is available around us. The Bible tells us in the next verse that He boarded one of the boats and instructed the owner, Simon Peter,



to "thrust out a little from the land." Then He sat down and taught from the boat, so that everyone could see and hear Him.

Though the people surely listened intently, Simon might not have wanted to hear a sermon right then. He'd had a rough night and was probably tired and discouraged. He and the other fishermen had taken their vessels out the day before and toiled all night without catching anything. These were commercial fishermen who depended on the income, so they'd had a bad day. But Jesus knew all about that, and so He had engaged Simon's boat for His pulpit.

When Jesus finished preaching, as the people were going away, we read in verse 4 that He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Simon could have found reasons for not doing what the Lord asked. He could have said, "This is not the right time of day," or, knowing what had happened the night before, "I've already tried that; the fish aren't biting." But the Master was speaking. The One who had made the sea and the fish that swim in it knew the situation, and He was in control.

The Lord is still in control. When He calls us to do something, we simply need to obey, even if the task doesn't make sense or seems impossible to us. When we make excuses such as, "The timing isn't right" or "I am not able," we miss out on the blessing He has for us as a result of doing His will.

God wanted to do something in Simon's life that would change everything, but this required trust. Simon's first reaction was to say, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing," but then he yielded to the Lord's will and added, "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net" (verse 5). He took a giant step of faith, and God richly rewarded him! The Bible tells us in verse 6 that he and the other men went fishing, "and when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake." What a catch!

God had blessed Simon for his faith and obedience, but more than that, Jesus said to him, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men." Then Simon and his partners, James and John, "when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him" (verses 10-11). Eventually, these three became the Apostles, Peter, James, and John, and won many souls for God's Kingdom. A step of faith will not only impact our lives, but the lives of those around us as well.

Looking through Scripture, we find many others who took a giant step of faith and obeyed God when circumstances pointed to doing otherwise. They too witnessed God's miracles, received His blessing, and became a blessing to others. If we will follow their examples, we can expect the same.

Noah, in his day, was called upon to build an ark, because there was going to be rain. Though he had never seen rain, he did not ask, "Lord, what are You talking about?" He did not say, "This does not make sense to me." Instead, he placed his trust in God and obeyed. When the floodwaters came, he and his family were spared—eight souls in all—and the human race was preserved. God is still calling

today, for men and women, boys and girls, to take that giant step of faith for Him. Only He knows how many lives will be impacted if we do.

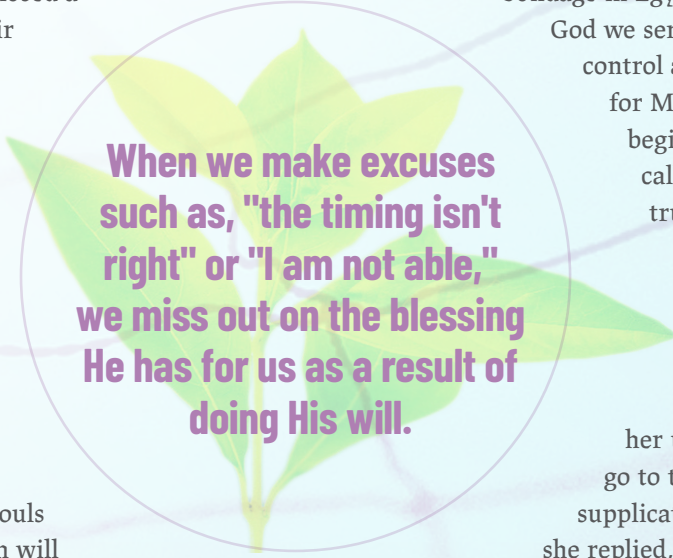
How might things have been different if Jochebed, the mother of Moses, had trusted in herself and not in God? When the Egyptian Pharaoh said that all Jewish males were to be killed at birth, she hid her newborn for three months. But babies cry, and she could not keep him quiet any longer. What could she do? She put her faith in God, placed her son in a basket at the river's edge, and witnessed a miracle. Her baby was spared when the Pharaoh's daughter saw him in the river and took him in as her own son. Later, when Moses became a man, God used

him to deliver the nation of Israel from bondage in Egypt. What a mighty God we serve! He is always in control and had a purpose for Moses' life from the beginning when He called on Jochebed to trust Him.

Esther was a Jewish queen whose people were about to be slain. When her uncle urged her to go to the king and make supplication for her people, she replied, "All the king's servants, and the people of the

king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or women, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days" (Esther 4:11). Nevertheless, as she thought on her uncle's instructions and fasted and prayed, faith took hold. She went in before the king to plead for her people, and as a result, the Jewish nation was saved.

Are we afraid to trust God when He asks certain things of us? Do we make excuses and say, "That won't work"? Trusting the Lord worked in Bible times and it will work today. Some might say, "That



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was yesterday," but He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. What He did then, He wants to do now; He still expects His people to take giant steps of faith.

If you find yourself in a place where God has not yet called you to a specific task, look around. If God is calling your brother or sister to something, give them a hand. Help someone else take a step of faith until your own call comes from the Lord. In the account in Luke 5, when Peter, James, and John were instructed to let down their nets, the catch was so great that they needed help. We read in verse 7, "They beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink." What a miracle! Those who helped were as blessed as those who were called.

One day years ago, my husband said to me, "I want to move to Chicago, Illinois." I was pretty comfortable in the Virgin Islands, but I prayed and was willing to hear what God would say to me. Then, during our morning devotions, God gave us these words from Galatians 2:9-10: "... we should go unto the heathen . . . only they would that we should remember the poor." I questioned, "The heathen?" I did not understand the Lord's direction, but this was my husband's step of faith, so I went along to help him. We moved to Chicago in 1961, and after we had been there a short time, I realized there were many people in the area who did not know Jesus. I prayed, "Lord, this is what You meant."

Our hearts were especially burdened for the neighborhood children because many of them did not attend Sunday school. The Lord provided a place where we could gather with the boys and girls each Sunday and teach them of Jesus' love for them. From that small start, the Lord began a work and it grew.

Then, in 1988, the Lord called my husband home, and I was at a loss. There were a few saints in Chicago and there were still souls who needed to be saved. My heart went out to them, but what could I do? God told me to trust Him and He called me to continue the work. I wanted to obey the Lord, but it was a giant step of faith for me. I said, "Lord, You know I am afraid of even speaking in front of people." I made more excuses, but they would not stand in the sight of God. He kept speaking to my heart, and at last I said, "Yes Lord, I will let down the net. I will do what You want me to do." I called Reverend Loyce Carver who was the Apostolic Faith General Overseer at that time, and he granted me the opportunity to pastor the group in Chicago. It was my privilege to continue in that role for fifteen years.

What is the Lord calling you to do? Let down your net, take that step of faith, and He will help you. ■

**What He did then, He
wants to do now; He still
expects His people to take
giant steps of faith.**

Cynthia White pastored
the Apostolic Faith
Church in Chicago,
Illinois, from 1988 to

2003. This excerpt was taken from a
message she delivered in a Portland youth
service a few days after her retirement. In 2006,
she went home to her reward in Heaven.

A STATEMENT OF BIBLE DOCTRINE

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

THE DIVINE TRINITY consists of three Persons: God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, perfectly united as one. *Matthew 3:16-17; 1 John 5:7.*

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

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

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

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST is the enduement of power upon the sanctified life, and is evidenced by speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. *John 14:16-17, 26; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4.*

DIVINE HEALING of sickness is provided through the atonement. *James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24.*

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

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

CHRIST'S MILLENNIAL REIGN is the 1000 years of peaceful reign by Jesus on earth. *Isaiah 11 and 35; Revelation 20:1-6.*

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT is the final judgment when all the wicked dead will stand before God. *Revelation 20:11-15.*

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH will replace the present heaven and earth, which will be destroyed after the Great White Throne Judgment. *2 Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 21:1-3.*

ETERNAL HEAVEN AND ETERNAL HELL are literal places of final and eternal destiny. *Matthew 25:41-46; Luke 16:22-28.*

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

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

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

THE LORD'S SUPPER is an institution ordained by Jesus so that we might remember His death until He returns. *Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23, 26.*

FOOT WASHING is practiced according to the example and commandment Jesus gave. *John 13:14-15.*

You may obtain additional information about these doctrines and learn about our other publications in both English and foreign languages by writing to the Apostolic Faith Church at 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