

THE Apostolic Faith

EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH—JUDE 3

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Faith By DARREL LEE
the essential substance



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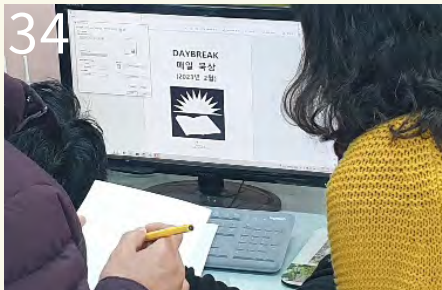
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VIEWPOINT

By Darrel Lee, SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL



How can this be?



A few months ago, I became acquainted with Lavon Brown by email. Even in written messages, she radiates enthusiasm for the Gospel and gratitude to God. The joy in her soul is infectious! Sister Lavon is planning to attend the Portland camp meeting this year for the first time, so if you have the pleasure of meeting her here, you will learn what I am talking about. I promise that you will walk away from her feeling encouraged.

Once you know her story, experiencing Sister Lavon's beaming smile and exuberant spirit could easily cause you to wonder, *How can this be?* Just over ten years ago, Sister Lavon lost one of her sons by homicide. In her testimony on page 18, she tells that when given the news every parent dreads, she turned to the only One who could help her. In God she found grace, strength, healing, and everything else she needed. In time, He also restored her joy in abundance.

Sister Lavon explains that healing from trauma does not happen overnight; it is a process that takes place over days, weeks, and years. Before losing her son, she already had a habit of spending time alone with the Lord every day, going to church weekly, and also attending camp meeting in Florida every year. These were all opportunities for God to supply her with whatever she needed from Him.

Sister Lavon says that she goes to camp meeting each year with a purpose to receive something from

God. Since we never know what a year will bring, she always asks God to prepare her for whatever will come next. One year at camp, God impressed upon her, "Thank God' is the answer." She put that lesson into practice right away. Whether dealing with business decisions, anxiety attacks, sickness, or anything else, she would start thanking God for His blessings. Soon, the challenges would evaporate! In their place was gratitude.

At another camp meeting, the Lord gave Sister Lavon the simple instruction, "Walk ye in it." She understood that God already had a plan for her life, and that she does not need to figure out why certain events happen or what would come next. She only needs to walk in the path God has planned for her, and reach out to help anyone God brings her way. That instruction has helped her to become a tremendous blessing in her Pensacola, Florida, community, especially to other families impacted by homicide.

How is it that an individual who has experienced such terrible tragedy can become a beacon of hope and joy? Only by the grace, hope, and help found in the Lord. We pray that Sister Lavon's testimony, and every other article in this magazine, will give you courage and confidence to walk the path God has set before you. We believe the Lord will help you all along the way.

Darrel D Lee

(Top) Lavon at the Garden of Peace and Hope.
(Middle and bottom) Lavon with her three grandchildren.

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Chapter 11 of the Book of Hebrews is often referred to as the “faith” chapter, but we can also think of it as the “evidence” chapter. A familiar definition of the word *faith* is found in the first verse of that chapter. It reads, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The word *substance* suggests something substantial that undergirds faith. It is like the unseen foundation of a sturdy home. Faith also has *evidence*—something that proves its existence.

Evidence proves what we cannot see

There are things in the world around us that we cannot see, yet there is evidence they exist. For example, we cannot see the wind, but we know it exists because we can see the effects of it. Jesus used wind as an example when he spoke to Nicodemus about being born again in John 3:8.

We cannot see love, but we see evidence when love exists. Romans 5:8 tells of the evidence that proves the great love of God for mankind: “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Though we cannot see God’s love, we are beneficiaries of it so we believe it exists.

We are aware that hate exists because we see the evidence of it in the world around us. In fact, our legal system now defines what is a hate crime. However, the Biblical characterization of hate is more expansive than the legal definition. Evidence of hate is often found in the actions it produces, though hate can exist even when it is not seen because it is in the hearts and minds of sinners.

Evidence proves the existence of faith

While the faith that existed in the individuals listed in Hebrews 11 could not be seen with physical eyes, evidence in their lives proved that their faith existed.

Enoch set the standard. God’s Word records that when Enoch reached the age of sixty-five and became a father to Methuselah, he began to walk with God. His faith had a definite starting point. He had a testimony that he “pleased God,” and it became evident to all that he was a man of faith. It became even more apparent

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one day when he “was not found, because God had translated him” (Hebrews 11:5). He did not die; God took him from this world to be forever with Him.

We see the evidence of Noah’s faith in the fact that he built the Ark in preparation for an event that had never occurred before—a devastating, worldwide flood. More than that, there is no evidence that rain had occurred either. However, Noah labored for many decades at God’s command. The Ark became evidence of his faith that what God had declared would happen, would indeed happen.

We read of the faith of Abram before God changed his name to Abraham. It made no rational sense for Abram to uproot his family in Ur of the Chaldees and head for an unknown destination. However, God had called him to come out “into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance,” and Abram went. He had to leave all that was familiar, and set aside the doubts of those around him who likely would have suggested that it made no sense for him to do so. But he obeyed God, and that was evidence of his faith.

Verse 30 of Hebrews 11 describes the fall of the walls of Jericho. We have heard it said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting a different result. No doubt there were some who watched the Children of Israel marching around the walls of Jericho day after day and found their action incomprehensible. For six days, the Israelites marched once a day around that city, trusting

in the promise God had given Joshua that the walls of Jericho would come down. The walls did not come down on the first day, or the second, or the third, but they kept on marching. And on the seventh day, they marched around the walls not once or twice, but seven times! That was evidence of their faith, and their faith brought results—the walls came down.

Faith has a foundation

Just as evidence of faith was apparent in the lives of the individuals in Hebrews 11, evidence will be apparent in our lives as well when our trust is in God. The foundation of our faith is rooted in that defining moment when we come to God confessing and repenting of our sins. The evidence of salvation is the peace of God that comes over us, giving us the settled assurance that He has not only heard our prayer, but has answered.

We cannot see salvation with our physical eyes, but we experience it. We know that God has done a work in our hearts, and we have passed from death to life. That initial witness of salvation is our foundation, and further evidence will become apparent in our thoughts, words, and deeds as we continue to walk with God, just as it did in the lives of the heroes of God’s Word.

Faith overcomes doubt

Looking at chapter 10, the preceding chapter in the Book of Hebrews, we see that the new converts being addressed in this

epistle had experienced doubts. Prior to Jesus’ ascension, He had promised to return to earth. These believers expected that to happen in their lifetime. They were anticipating His return and anxious for it to happen soon, but it did not. Jesus tarried, and before long, fierce persecution came their way. Verse 33 indicates that some became gazingstocks, while others were reproached and suffered afflictions. As a result, at times their faith wavered.

According to Hebrews 10:34, the writer himself had been in captivity, and perhaps was even then. Yet he encouraged those he was writing to by pointing out that although they had suffered and their goods had been plundered, they knew that in Heaven they had “a better and an enduring substance.” That *substance* was the undergirding of their hope and faith. He told them to look beyond the sufferings of their day to what was ahead.

We must do the same. No matter what comes in life, we must look to the outcome. While we anticipate the Rapture of the church, we look even beyond that event to eternal life in Heaven. Our faith in that great hope keeps us going, no matter what we face in this life.

The writer of Hebrews, presumed by some to be Paul, went on to encourage those early believers not to give up. He told them, “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while,



Faith exists in spite of variables.

and he that shall come, will come” (Hebrews 10:35-37).

“Hold on!” was what he was telling them. “I understand that you are in a warfare, and so am I. But the just shall live by faith! We are not of those who draw back. Keep holding on, keep pressing forward.”

Like them, we must hold onto the promises we have received, believe them, and patiently wait for their fulfillment. True faith withstands pressure. History has a long list of those who have suffered for their faith but persevered and triumphed. What existed within was substantial enough to help them withstand all kinds of challenges of life, and it will do the same for us.

Faith gives and receives

Faith is the means by which we give to God. Verse 4 of Hebrews 11 says, “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” He *offered!* We often think of faith as being what we need to receive from God. However, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not a selfish endeavor. If we are serving God only to obtain the best

things of life, we are going to be disappointed. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is rooted in giving. God gave His Son. We give God our hearts by faith. Abel offered God an excellent sacrifice, something his brother Cain was unwilling to do. Abel’s offering was evidence of his faith.

Hebrews 11:4 goes on to state that in response to Abel’s sacrifice, “he obtained witness that he was righteous.” He *obtained!* So, faith also is how we receive from God. We read in the sixth verse, “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). A “reward” is something that is received. So by faith we give and by faith we receive.

Faith is not feeling or seeing

Faith is not feeling. Occasionally we hear a song that says, “I just feel like something good is about to happen.” Of course, it is pleasant to feel that something good is coming our way, but it really makes no difference whether we feel that way or just the opposite. Feelings and emotions fluctuate! We do not measure faith by how we feel—feelings should not be the barometer of our faith. Faith exists in spite of variables such as emotions and circumstances. In fact, it often thrives in situations that seem far from positive.

For example, consider the man Job. He suffered extreme adversity, far beyond what any of us will likely experience. He battled discouragement and had many questions, but in spite of Satan’s emotional, financial, and physical assault, Job looked to God and said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15). That was evidence of his faith.

Faith is not seeing. Can you see what the rest of this day holds? Can you see what next month is going to be like? Can you project what next year will be? We do not know. Some people are optimists, so they anticipate good things. Some are pessimists, so their outlook is not so positive. Either way, we walk by faith and not by sight.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:18 that “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.” Therefore, when we deem conditions around us as unfavorable, we must remember that we walk by faith. We look beyond each unfavorable circumstance to something much more favorable—eternal life. That does not change.

We read in Hebrews 11:27 that by faith Moses “forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.” How do you see something that is invisible? Moses endured by looking through eyes of faith, and we must do the same.

Faith is not reasoning

In the Gospel of John, we read of Thomas, the disciple of Jesus who initially doubted when the other disciples told him they had seen the Lord. He said, “Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe” (John 20:25). He was governed by logic and reason—he reasoned that those who have been crucified and put into a tomb are dead, and rising from the dead does not happen.

Well, it did happen! A week later, Jesus appeared before the disciples again, and this time, Thomas was present. Jesus told him, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). That was enough. Thomas’ faith took hold, and he just said, “My Lord and my God.” Then Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

When people have doubts, it often is because they forget that faith is not reasoning. It is not an

intellectual exercise whereby we can prove through some evidentiary formula that God exists, that Heaven is real, or that the Bible is true. Faith is a firm conviction that is based on who God is. It is something substantial that exists within.

We are among those who operate by faith rather than by depending upon human reasoning. We have that deep assurance and conviction that the record in God’s Word is reliable. For example, Hebrews 11:3 says, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” We know that God created this earth and ordered the universe. We do not need to prove that to be true through man’s methods in order to believe, because we read that “the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Psalm 19:1). We look at God’s handiwork and we believe.

Romans 1:20 states that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen. What a paradox—invisible, yet clearly seen! We have the evidence of the organized universe that NASA depends upon. We admire the scientists who can launch satellites into space and get them back, but more, we honor and worship the God who created the universe that functions so perfectly. Faith sees the invisible hand of God clearly.

Faith for a lifetime

Many people come to God when they are young, and then walk with Him throughout the remainder of their lives because they learn over time that their faith cannot be rooted in feelings, circumstances, or what they see or do not see. They learn to **look beyond the temporal to the**

eternal, and within to that calm assurance that God gives. They have a purpose not to be among those who draw back or waver, but among those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Whether you are young or older, you are building a testimony—your testimony of faith is still under construction. You want to be among those who can point back to the day that they prayed and then were sustained by God through all kinds of events, good or bad.

You may feel at times that your faith is small, but God’s Word states, “God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). We are also told that faith as a grain of mustard seed can move a mountain! So, do not minimize your faith. It is powerful! It has sustained you thus far since you believed, and it can sustain you through the days ahead into eternity.

If your faith is wavering or not what it should be, ask God to put something substantial in your heart that will undergird your faith. Then look to Him to give you the confidence to press forward, remembering that the power that created all that exists out of nothing is the same power that can take you through any circumstance of life.

Reverend Darrel Lee is the Apostolic Faith Superintendent General.



By Olulana Alofe

WHO AM I AND WHY AM I HERE?

God's Word answers the most common questions about who we are.

When I was about six years old, I had what some might call an “identity crisis.”

One morning, I told my mom that I wanted to change my name. My name is Olulana, but everyone calls me Lana, and that was a strange name in my elementary school. Nobody else had a name like mine. There were some boys named John, Joey, and Paul, but nothing like Lana. There were other unique names—we had one student named Shermini, and another from Israel was named Wasim—but my name

seemed especially odd because one of the other kids said it was a girl's name and made fun of it.

So I told my mom, “I want to change my name.” She asked, “What name do you want?” and I said, “John.” She said, “Okay, we'll call you John.” She gave me a smile. I was about to go out the door and she said, “Lana, you forgot your lunch bag.” I insisted, “No! My name is not Lana! Call me John.” She said, “Okay, John. Get your lunch bag.”

At school, I told my classmates, “From today, you call me John.”

Predictably, Paul stood up and said, “You're not John. Your name is Lana and your parents called you Lana. That's your name.” As we began to dispute the matter, our teacher, Mrs. Kurtzen, saw what was going on and came over. When we explained the problem, she told me something I had never heard before in my life. She said, “Your name is important. Your parents had a reason for giving you that name. So be proud of it.” I felt good about that. She helped me to have a sense of who I was and why my name mattered. I went home and told my

GIVING THANKS UNTO THE FATHER,

which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom

we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in

earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

COLOSSIANS 1:12-17

mom I wanted my name back after all, and she let me go back to Lana.

My brief identity crisis was rooted in a lack of understanding about my existence. There are certain basic questions that we all ask ourselves at some point: How did I get here?

My brief identity crisis was rooted in a lack of understanding about my existence.

Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I headed? Everybody in the world asks these questions, and some spend a great deal of money looking for the answers. Without the answers, we can hardly choose a name, much less know how we ought to live our lives. Secular society has a lot to say about these questions and may seem to have convincing arguments. However, if we want to know the true reason for our existence, only the One who created us will have the correct answer. Let's consider what God's Word says about these four basic questions that all people want to know.

How did I get here?

This age-old question has a simple answer. We read in the opening words of the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Then God said, "Let there be light . . ." and, "Let

there be a firmament . . .," and those things came into existence. That is how our world came to be. On the sixth day of the Creation, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost made a man in their own image. The Bible says that God formed man of the dust of the ground, then breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). God called the man Adam. From Adam's rib, God formed a woman, Eve, and they became the foreparents of every person on this planet.

That is a brief overview of how we got here, and it is simple enough for a child to understand. In fact, our primary department Sunday school students may have a more accurate understanding about the origins of life than many scientists. The Creation account is often one of the first things we teach children because the fundamental truths established there form the basis for the rest of our decisions in life. This foundation is essential for answering the remaining three questions about our identity because once we know that God created us, we can deduce that He has a purpose for us.

Who am I?

If someone asked me, "Who are you?" I might say, "I'm Lana," "I'm a father," or perhaps, "I'm a pastor." While those are true and important answers, they are not the most

important answer. When we are talking about the essence of who we are, there are only two answers a person can give: we are either a sinner, or we are a child of God. Everyone is born as a sinner, but we can become a child of God by repenting and receiving forgiveness of sins.

One of Jesus' parables illustrates these two answers very well. The parable begins in Luke 18:10, "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican." Once in the Temple, the Pharisee began to pray loudly, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." In other words, he began telling God about all his own good works, letting everyone know that he was a child of God. But being a child of God does not happen by doing good works; it is not about going to church, singing in the choir, or doing noble acts. To be a child of God, we must be born again. We must repent and experience God's saving grace. The Pharisee missed that completely! He was an identity thief because he tried to present himself as something he was not. However, the Pharisee returned home the same way he had come—a sinner.

Next, the publican began to pray. Unlike the Pharisee, the publican

did not pretend to be someone he was not. He knew who he was and openly admitted his identity to

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God. He prayed, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” That is the right way to go about answering that question, “Who am I?” Though we do not want to remain sinners, we must be honest with God before He can change our identity. That is what God did for the publican; Luke 18:14 says that he went home justified.

I thank God that in 1978, I made that choice too. At that time, I was eleven years old. My family had only been coming to church for a few months so I knew very little about God, but I could see something in the other children at Sunday school that I didn’t have. I knew I needed to be saved. After a service, I was praying and wanted to get saved so badly. I did the same thing that the publican did—I told Jesus I was a sinner. He reminded me about things I had done wrong, and I confessed them. One thing He brought up was a book I had taken from the library; I told Jesus I would return it. That day, Jesus saved me! And thank God, I’m still saved today.

When we pray and receive salvation, God changes our identity. Then, if someone asks, “Who are you?” we can say, “I am a child of God.” That’s the most important identity we can have.

Why am I here?

People spend a lot of time trying to figure out why they are here. Many have a sense of destiny and want to do something good with their lives. They may come to think their purpose is to be a leader, a life coach, an artist, an “influencer”—there are endless possibilities people will arrive at. However, there is one reason why we are all here, and it is stated in Revelation 4:11: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” That is why we were created—to please God.

The Bible has much to say about what pleases God. To begin with, we read that “without faith, it is impossible to please him” (Hebrews 11:6). That means it is not enough to just know about God, but we must also believe Him. And if we truly believe Him, we will do what He tells us we should do.

A life that is pleasing to God could be summed up in one word: holy. A holy life is one that is without sin, and that is how God wants us to live. He established this principle first with the Israelites in Leviticus 11:44, and Peter reiterated it to all believers in 1 Peter 1:15-16, “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” The word *conversation* here refers not only to the words that we say, but all aspects of how we relate to others. This includes relationships at church as well as at home, at work, at the store—everywhere we go.

Holiness is not an act that we put on sometimes; it is a way of life. God set the standard of holiness in His Word, and it is what pleases Him. We are here to live holy. That is the reason for our existence.

Where am I headed?

Every human being is headed toward eternity. However, not every human being is going to the same destination in eternity. There is eternity *with* God and there is eternity *without* God. If we are children of God, those who have fulfilled our reason for existence and are living holy lives that please Him, then we have an assurance of eternity with Him in Heaven. Like Job, we will be able to say, “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold . . .” (Job 19:25-27). Job was sure about where he was headed in eternity, and we can be too.

Those who are not saved are on the broad path that leads to Hell—eternal separation from God. If that is you, may God help you to repent and let Him change your identity from a sinner to a child of God. May God help you to live a life of holiness that is pleasing to Him, because it is His will for all to spend eternity with Him.

Tomorrow is not promised, but we have this moment. There is no need for an identity crisis when God has told us so plainly where we came from, who we are, why we are here, and where we are going. Let us take time now while we have the opportunity to make sure we have not missed the reason for our existence.

*Reverend Olulana Alofe is leader
of the Apostolic Faith group in
East Bridgewater, Massachusetts.*





By Rene Cassell

STIR UP THE GIFT

Is a spirit of fear restraining you from serving God fully? Here's the solution!

Stirring can do wonders in some situations. For example, where I live, cream comes in a can. When the can is first opened, all that can be seen is a lump of substance surrounded by a little liquid. In order for the cream to taste the way it should, it has to be stirred. It seems as though the more it is stirred, the creamier it gets. When I try to use the cream without stirring it first, it doesn't look right or taste right, and yet it has all the right ingredients. When it is stirred and creamy, I can pour it over a dessert, and it is delicious. But it must be stirred!

The Apostle Paul wrote to a young minister named Timothy, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:6-7). Timothy was one who was saved, sanctified, and baptized with the Holy Ghost. By all appearances, he would seem to be where he should be spiritually. He had everything necessary to be as effective as any Christian could be. Yet Paul advised him, "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee." We might wonder why Paul would write such a letter to one like Timothy. However, Paul wasn't telling him to seek God for something more; all the ingredients were there. Instead, he was encouraging

Timothy to let the fire that was already there burn more brightly.

Might it be that Timothy's heart needed stirring, because somehow fear was restraining him from serving God fully? There is a reason Paul wrote that God has not given us a spirit of fear. Whatever it was that hindered Timothy, Paul's message was clear. God has given us the tools to overcome fear: His power emboldens us, His love compels us, and a sound mind enables us to spread the Gospel message. If these are not currently active in our lives, we can stir them up through prayer.



Not given a spirit of fear

Fear does not always come from being in a dangerous situation. Often, the bigger fear people face is the fear of failure or rejection. We can see this type of fear demonstrated in the Parable of the Talents found in Matthew 25:14-30. Before leaving on a long journey, a lord distributed talents to three of his servants. The first servant received five and put them to good use. When the lord returned, he had ten talents to show for his work. The second servant was given two, and he used them to earn two more. The last servant was given one talent. Instead of doing something with it, he buried it and then later explained,



“I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth” (verse 25). This servant had a spirit of fear that kept him from laboring for his lord, and as a result he was cast into outer darkness.

A spirit of fear is not of the Lord. We read in Romans 8:15, “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption,

When worry over failure or rejection threatens to keep us from doing God’s will, we can be stirred by praying for confidence, and God will embolden us.

whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” When worry over failure or rejection threatens to keep us from doing God’s will, we can be stirred by praying for confidence, and God will embolden us.

A spirit of fear can also manifest itself as cowardice. Peter was one of Jesus’ twelve disciples and also part of His inner circle. Along with James and John, he was privileged to witness events that others never saw. He was present with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and also when He raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead. Peter knew firsthand the truth of the Gospel message and the power of God. Yet, at Jesus’ trial when accused by a young maid of being a follower of Christ, he denied it. He even swore when confronted the third time and said, “I know not this man of whom ye speak” (Mark 14:71). Peter was so afraid! In the face of opposition, he backed away when he should have admitted to and stood for the truth. However, one look from Jesus, and he regretted his error. He went out and wept bitterly.

Peter was restored through Christ’s love and later that love helped him to overcome his fear. After the Resurrection, Jesus met with His disciples and asked Peter three times, “Lovest thou me?” Peter’s reaction is recorded in John 21:17: “Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And

he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” Then, “Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” Compelled by love and powered by the Holy Ghost, Peter was able to lead the Early Church while withstanding every opposition.

We read in 1 John 4:18, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” When we are fearful of the opposition we might face in telling others about Christ, we can meditate on God’s love toward us. Our hearts will be stirred to share that love with others.

Jeremiah was another who was afraid. He felt inadequate to serve as a prophet and responded to

When God calls us to a task that seems overwhelming, we can stir ourselves by praying for a willing heart, and He will provide the ability.

God’s calling with, “Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.” God was not so much interested in Jeremiah’s abilities as He was in his willingness. He told Jeremiah, “Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee” (Jeremiah 1:6-8). When God calls us to a task that seems overwhelming, we can stir ourselves by praying for a willing heart, and He will provide the ability.

A spirit of power

Paul told Timothy that God has given us a spirit of power. If we question this, we can read the account of the three Hebrew children and ask ourselves, “What type of spirit did they have?” They were told to bow down to the image made by King Nebuchadnezzar or be burned alive in the fiery furnace. They could have

talked over the situation and decided to pretend. They could have said, “Let’s bow our heads, but in our hearts, we will pray to our God.” But no, they didn’t even cast a vote, because their hearts were already set. They had predetermined to trust in God’s power to deliver, either in this life or in the next. Therefore, they had no fear of the king or the furnace. They boldly told the king, “If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image that thou has set up” (Daniel 3:17-18).

What are we afraid of? Why do we allow being timid to hinder our work for the Lord? We have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power.

The time did come when they were cast into the fiery furnace—God allowed them to go through that trial. However, when the king looked into the furnace, he saw something astonishing. Though three men had been thrown in, he said, “Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” (Daniel 3:25).

What are we afraid of? Why do we allow being timid to hinder our work for the Lord? We have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power. We find in Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” When we receive the Holy Ghost, we receive power, and it is effective!

This enduement of power was something else that helped Peter. At the time of the Crucifixion, he had cowered with fear, but his behavior changed after he received the Holy Ghost. In Acts, chapter 4, we read that Peter and John got into trouble with the religious leaders after healing a lame man. They were arrested and taken before the high priest and elders to give an account of their actions. When asked by what authority they had healed the man, Peter did not cower this time. No, he boldly proclaimed, “Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole” (verse 10). The council marveled at his boldness. Then they threatened Peter and John, telling them to stop preaching Christ. They did not back down, but replied, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (verses 19-20).

What a change! The spirit of power destroys our fears and emboldens us to take a stand for what is right. Why would we fear the enemy with the Holy Spirit dwelling within us? He that is within us is greater than he that is in the world.



The spirit of power destroys our fears and emboldens us to take a stand for what is right. Why would we fear the enemy with the Holy Spirit dwelling within us? He that is within us is greater than he that is in the world.



A spirit of love

Another tool we can use in overcoming fear is having God's love in our hearts. This is no ordinary love, but one that is patient, kind, and without jealousy, pride, or selfishness.

It is described further in 1 Corinthians 13:5-7. God's love "is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." This is the spirit that God has placed within us.

This spirit gives us a love for the saints—every one of them. It also gives us a love for sinners. Though it is good to be ready for

It is God's love that enables us to take the Gospel message beyond our own homes to our neighborhoods, cities, countries, and the world. It helps us accomplish the work of the Lord.

Heaven, we should want to see others saved as well. God's love compels us to share the Gospel message with others, overcoming our fears of rejection, persecution, or inadequacy.

Talents, training, and experience are all good things to possess in ministry. However, nothing can take the place of the power of the Holy Spirit and a love for lost souls. I have been preaching for years, but if God's power and love were not with me, I would not be able to do it. I am too afraid to stand before people and speak, and experience has not helped with that. Every time I preach, I must pray and ask God for help. I must make sure that His power and love are stirred up within me.

When we don't have a burden for lost souls, we need to ask God to stir up His love within us, and not just for our own families. Paul wrote to the church at Rome, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Romans 10:1). It is God's love

that enables us to take the Gospel message beyond our own homes to our neighborhoods, cities, countries, and the world. It helps us accomplish the work of the Lord.

A spirit of a sound mind

God has given us another tool to help in overcoming our fears: the spirit of a sound mind. As ambassadors for Christ, it is important that we are careful in what we say and how we say it. Sometimes a person can get into trouble by saying the right thing, but at the wrong time or in the wrong place. However, we don't want a fear of saying the wrong thing to keep us from telling others about God through testifying, teaching, preaching or other means. We don't want a fear of failure or inadequacy to keep us from doing these things. Instead, we can thank God for renewing our minds, pray for His wisdom, and be sensitive to the Spirit's leading. If we will listen for and follow His advice, God will help us exercise good judgment and enable us to fulfill His callings.

Keep stirring!

As Paul continued his advice to Timothy, he said, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (verse 8). Are you afraid to tell what God has done for you? Has your testimony settled like the cream in the can? When my wife opens a new can of cream, she stirs the contents before setting it on the table. Then I stir it again, and again. The more I stir, the better it gets. That is like the Gospel. The more the gift within you is stirred up, the better your testimony will be, and the less ashamed you will be to proclaim the Good News.

You have all the ingredients, and God has given you the tools to overcome fear: a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind. Ask God to stir your heart today until the Gospel is bubbling over in your soul, ready to be shared with others.

Reverend Rene Cassell is the retired District Superintendent of Canada. He remains on the ministerial staff at our church in Bide Arm, Newfoundland, Canada.

WITNESS

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PAIN TRANSFORMED THROUGH PRAISE

God sustained Lavon following her son's homicide, and now He works through her in miraculous ways to help others.

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WANTED: ORDINARY PEOPLE FOR ORDINARY TASKS

What we can do will look different for each of us, but God will bless every effort made for Him.

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CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT FOR US

Submitting to God's will has brought Boniface a life of blessing.

PAIN *Transformed* THROUGH PRAISE

God sustained Lavon following her son's homicide, and now He works through her in miraculous ways to help others.

By Lavon Brown



Growing up, I had a limited understanding of the Gospel. Though my family attended church together for a time, while I was very young my parents went through some difficulties and ended up separating. My mom stopped going to church when I was about five years old, but she continued to send us children to different churches over the years, and I would often hear her praying at home.

Eventually, I also stopped going to church. By age twenty-one, I was a single mother with two boys, and was living with a man who was not my

I simply told the Lord, “I’m tired of sinning, Lord, I want You to save me.”

husband. Though I never drank or smoked, I loved dancing at clubs and sometimes would stay out all night. There was a time when I thought that lifestyle was fun, but the impact on me was not fun. Sin has terrible consequences, and I grew tired of that life. I wanted something better, and the Lord began to put heavy conviction on my heart.

When I told my mom that I wanted to get saved, she told me to go to the Apostolic Faith Church in Pensacola, Florida. My mom put me in touch with Sister Rosalie Scott, who was the pastor there at the time, and the next Sunday I went to the morning service with a friend. When it was time to pray, I simply told the Lord, “I’m tired of sinning. Lord, I want You to save me.” God did not disappoint. He forgave my sins and filled me with His love. It was so wonderful, all I could say was, “Thank You, God!”

The next time I went to church, the older saints told me I needed to go deeper with God and be sanctified. I did not understand what that was, but I was desperate for more from Him. They prayed with me at the altars saying, “Tell the Lord to cleanse you,” and I prayed, “Lord, cleanse me! I need to be clean.” As I said those words, the Lord started cleansing me and He sanctified me. Then the saints asked, “Are you ready for the baptism—the Holy Ghost?” As I continued praying, I visualized Jesus on the Cross and all I could say was, “Thank You, Jesus! Thank You for dying on the Cross for me!” Soon, I started

(Left) Lavon with her son and mother at the Garden of Peace and Hope; Lavon speaks at the garden dedication ceremony.



Me and My Sons



(Above, left to right) Lavon at the Garden of Peace and Hope; Lavon as a young mother with her two sons, Labar and Darin; Darin's military photo; Labar in 2012.

speaking in a different language, the evidence of the infilling of the Holy Ghost. In less than a week, God had saved, sanctified, and filled me with His Spirit.

As soon as I told my mom I was saved, she fell under heavy conviction. Every time I would go over to see her, she was in tears, and I knew the Lord was talking to her. After a week, I was with her when she finally started to pray. Right in her home, she surrendered everything to the Lord and He saved her! The next church service was on a Tuesday, and my mom and I went together, both saved. Soon, more people from our family saw what God was doing in our lives and they started coming too. It was a time of revival and it was exciting.

Everything changed for the better

My life totally changed after God saved me. I became a new person. The way I dressed and talked changed, and so did the way I was raising my children. Our whole environment changed. I separated from the man I had been living

with, and the Lord graciously worked everything out for me to be able to move into a new house with my boys. The type of friends who used to come around were also not around us anymore. Instead of their influence, God gave me new good friends, and I went to the seasoned saints at church for advice about how to live and raise my children. Our calendar became filled with Sunday school, Bible study, youth service, camp meeting, youth camp, and youth

The Lord also taught me that His mercies are new every morning, and if I ever make a mistake, I can go to Him right away in prayer and make it right.

conference. My mom and I also started helping in different areas at church, so we were there often. She said she wanted to redeem the time she had lost while she was away from the Lord.

My mom told me that her turning away from God had

happened in part because she had slacked off from reading the Bible and praying regularly. Now we

I learned that forgiveness is very powerful, and if I let go of offenses, God will bless.

both understand the importance of having daily communication with God and constantly feeding on His Word. The Lord also taught me that His mercies are new every morning, and if I ever make a mistake, I can go to Him right away in prayer and make it right. In time, He also taught me the need to forgive others. Even after being saved, there were some wounds that I carried because of things that had happened in my childhood. When I asked the Lord to help me forgive the people who had wronged me, I was able to grow even more in my relationship with Him. I learned that forgiveness is very powerful, and if I let go of offenses, God will bless.

A walking miracle

In August of 2002, my younger son was diagnosed with cancer



at just fourteen years old. He was getting ready for a new school year and was planning to play football. During a physical check-up, it was discovered that his lymph nodes were swollen, and then an x-ray showed a mass that shouldn't have been there. More tests were ordered, and after about a week, the doctor gave us the results: "It is cancer." My heart broke at the news and I started crying. At that point, I had to trust the Lord in a way I never had before.

My son was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma Stage 4B, which is the final stage. The cancer had spread throughout his body. While discussing the next steps with the doctor in his office, I turned to my son and said, "You are healed in the Name of Jesus." Thank God, at youth camp that summer the Lord had saved my son. I remember praying, "Lord, if You can save him, I know You can heal him." I asked for prayer at every church service, I called on friends and family to pray, I contacted the church headquarters—we had everybody we knew praying. As I sought the Lord, faith began to grow in my heart that God would heal him. In fact, the next time x-rays were taken, I asked the doctor, "Is the cancer still there?" They laughed at that, but I was serious. I was expecting to see God work.

My son started chemotherapy within a month of his diagnosis. After the first treatment, a more detailed type of scan was done, and the doctor told me there was no cancer found in the scan. I responded with, "What did you say?" and He stated it plainly: "No cancer found." I had to praise God right there in the hospital room with my son! Then I started calling people to give them the victory report. The doctor cautioned me

to wait until they could verify the results, but test after test showed the same thing—he was healed! To this day, my son is a walking miracle. God even allowed him to pursue the career he wanted in the military. We were warned that cancer is a disqualifying factor, but today he is a Gunnery Sergeant and has served for over fifteen years.

God turned my pain into P.A.I.N.

About ten years later, our family faced another trial when the Lord allowed my oldest son to be taken from us. On what seemed like a

When I got home that day, I knelt down to pray and thought, Is this for real? It was real. I believe that if not for God, I would have lost my mind.

very typical day, I got a phone call that my oldest son had been shot. I could not believe what I was hearing, but I went immediately to the scene where it happened. When I arrived at the scene, I found a white sheet over his car and I knew he was gone.

I don't know how I made it through that day, but it seemed the Lord put a covering over me so that I was able to withstand it. I remember some of my loved ones commenting, "Wow, you're taking this so well," but it was only the Lord helping me. When I got home that day, I knelt down to pray and thought, *Is this for real?* It was real. I believe that if not for God, I would have lost my mind. The pain was too much for me. But God was with me that whole day and every day since, and He has given me peace through it all.

After my son's death, I had to help the Florida State attorney resolve his case. Not everyone can bear being that close to the details of their child's homicide, but I was determined to do it for my son, and God helped me. He has enough strength for us to do so many different things, and I praise Him for that. I also thank God that I did not once feel hate toward the young man who took my son's life. I know that is only possible because I have God's love in my heart.

In the years since then, I have learned that God has a reason for everything that happens in our lives. Nothing is by accident or by

chance, but it is all in His plan. There had been a lot of violence in our neighborhood leading up to my son's death, and I felt led to attend a city-wide prayer walk to reduce violence in the community. Afterward, a group of concerned parents wanted to do even more, so we started a group that would eventually be named Parents Against Injustice and Negligence (P.A.I.N.). It is a support group for families who have been affected by a homicide. Our core members are all believers and our purpose is to lift up the name of Jesus to people who are hurting.

Emotional trauma can be every bit as powerful as the physical impact of a major accident. After a major accident, a person will



usually be sent to an emergency room, then be moved to an intensive care unit, then a regular care unit, and sometimes also a rehab center before going home. Emotional trauma also requires an intense healing process, and that is what we want to help with—emotional and spiritual healing. I am not a specialist and I don't have degrees from an educational institution, but I do have experience and I have the love of God in my heart that I can share with others. I simply tell people

“If something happens and you start feeling bad, just start thanking God.”

what God has done for me and what He can do for them, and I pray God will use that to bring them deliverance. I tell them that even when the sadness is overwhelming, God is good and He is greatly to be praised. In Him we can find rest, peace, and hope for a better tomorrow. He has everything we need.

One thing I often share with people is a lesson God taught me about the power of thanking God. I call it the “Thank God Remedy.” I tell them, “If something happens and you start feeling bad, just start thanking God.” Thank God that the sun is shining; thank God that He woke you up another day; thank Him for the food you have to eat. Thanking God is something so small, but it is so big. It changes our perspective and opens a way for God to work in our lives. When we do not know what to do, “thank God” is the answer.

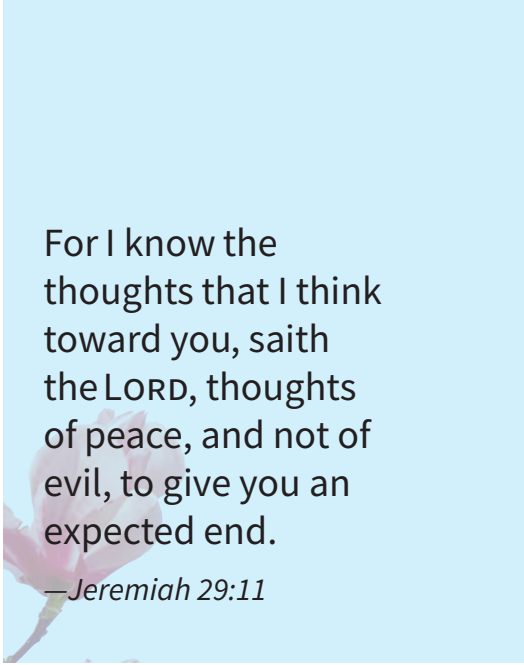
A place to find healing

In 2014, the Lord gave me a vision for a place called “The Garden of Peace and Hope,” a memorial

for homicide victims and a place where grieving families can go to find healing. Often people go to a gravesite or a makeshift memorial, but the Lord impressed upon me the value of having a quiet, peaceful place to reflect on good memories and joyful times. The other members of P.A.I.N. agreed that it was a good idea, so we started pursuing it.

Not knowing how much would be involved, I thought it might take a year or so to create the garden. However, I soon realized that there were major obstacles to overcome, including at least \$170,000 in funding and getting approval from local governments. Yet, the Lord has opened doors in miraculous ways. It took a couple years, but the City of Pensacola finally gave us permission to develop the garden on public land. Then we needed blueprints for the design, which can be very expensive. Again, the Lord provided: my cleaning business had a client with an architecture office, and he offered to do the blueprints for free. Later I spoke with our mayor, Grover C. Robinson IV, and when I asked if he could help with the project, he said, “Sure, Lavon!” We then held a meeting with the mayor and some officials, and they agreed that the City could get the project started by laying the foundation and putting in some benches. There are too many details to tell it all, but it has been amazing to see God move so many individuals to accomplish His will. Truly, the favor of God is better than a pocket full of money.

Today, the Garden of Peace and Hope is a beautifully landscaped area with walkways and benches that overlook a pond, and soon we hope to add a memorial monument inscribed with the names of homicide victims. I meet many families who are broken and need deliverance, and my prayer is that



For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

—Jeremiah 29:11

I cannot understand everything God does, but He has shown me that He has a plan for my life and I just need to walk in it.

in this garden they will find a place of refuge, peace, healing, and salvation, to the glory of God.

Walking in God's plan for me

It is strange to realize that if my son were still alive, I would not have had the opportunity to help so many others. I cannot understand everything God does, but He has shown me that He has a plan for my life and I just need to walk in it. I cannot bring my son back, but I can choose to reflect on all the good memories I had with him and be joyful in that, and I can try to help anyone God brings my way.

I am so thankful that God walks with me and talks with me all through life's journey. On happy days, difficult days, and every day in between, I have to thank God because He is good all the time. He has given me unspeakable joy and I can't help but praise Him for the favor He has shown to me. Thank God!

Lavon Brown attends the Apostolic Faith Church in Pensacola, Florida.

WANTED: ORDINARY PEOPLE FOR ORDINARY TASKS



By Cheryl Paulsen

What we can do will look different for each of us, but God will bless every effort made for Him.



My mother was sixty-nine years old when she had a heart attack while working at our church headquarters office. Twenty-two hours later she had another, and she went to be with the Lord. During those intervening hours she said, “I don’t think it’s my time to go, but if it is, I’ve done what I could.”

We understood that her phrase referred to the account in Mark 14 of when Mary (the sister of Lazarus and Martha) anointed Jesus’ feet. That occasion is also recorded in Matthew 26 and John 12. Just days before Jesus was crucified, He had a meal at the home of Simon, a man who had been a leper. While He was there, Mary brought an “alabaster box”—possibly a flask with a long neck—that was filled with costly ointment. In Bible times, it was not unusual for wealthy people to anoint their guests with a couple drops of expensive ointment. However, Mary broke the neck of the flask and poured out all of the contents on Jesus’ head and feet. (Guests reclined on couches as they ate.)

The cost of the ointment was equivalent to a man’s annual salary, and its purchase may have taken all Mary’s savings. The disciples, particularly Judas, were indignant, mentioning that the money could have been given to the poor. But Jesus said, “Let her alone . . . She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying” (Mark 14:6, 8).

During Jesus’ ministry, Mary had chosen to sit at His feet and listen to what He was saying. Might she have realized that He was going to die to offer redemption to all people? Maybe. Whatever she understood, she poured out the ointment in love and devotion.

Mary did not do this to be great or make a name for herself. She seized a one-time opportunity and acted upon it. Yet Jesus said, “Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her” (Mark 14:9).



My mother was a quiet person who was happy to stay in the background. She would not have considered herself great. Yet she worked in the church office, was a pastor's wife, was secretary to our church leader, cared for my father for thirteen years after he was disabled by a stroke, and handled many other responsibilities. She did what she could.

What does it mean to do what we can? For each of us it is a little different. But let us consider some aspects that could be included.

Routine tasks. Are the responsibilities we have in the church tasks, or are they privileges? Perhaps they are both! And sometimes they may seem menial to us. It is possible to perform church assignments out of habit—teaching Sunday school, being an usher, helping clean the church, singing in the choir, mowing the church lawn, driving the Sunday school van, and so forth. Yet faithfulness in any area of the Lord's work is vital.

Our employment and home responsibilities also may be part of doing what we can. Regular and prompt attendance at our work, making a house a home, consistent and caring discipline of children, being a kind neighbor, and many other life activities can be done as “unto the Lord,” and thus bring glory to Him.

What we have talents to do. God is pleased when we make ourselves available for His service in our areas of talent. If our profession is carpentry, it might be possible that we could help on a church building project. Someone with good cooking skills can take meals to families going through a difficult transition. People who are outgoing and can easily talk with new acquaintances could be helpful as church greeters or with evangelistic efforts. Musical ability can be improved by practicing and then used for God's glory.

What we do not feel qualified to do. This area might be a little more challenging! Have you ever been asked to do something in the Lord's work that you felt you were completely unqualified for? Or has the Holy Spirit prompted you to speak when you wanted to remain silent? These are the times when we must lean hard on the help of the Lord. Perhaps He is more able to bless our efforts than when we seem to be “qualified” for something.

Someone once asked a veteran minister if he still became nervous when he was going to preach. He said, “Yes, but after a while you realize that the Lord has always helped you, and you know He will help you again.” If doing what we can is something we feel unqualified for, God will help us.

What we do not want to do. Consecration is tested in this area. Perhaps we have been cautioned not to say,

“I'll never do _____ [some specific action].” Doing what we can may include tasks that we dislike, at least in the beginning. One lady who has now gone to Heaven was once talking about a specific city and said, “I'll never live there!” Later, her husband was asked to be the pastor in that city, so she went to live there. She even came to like it!

Giving up what we want to do. Maybe sometimes doing what we can will mean giving up what we want to do in order to fulfill God's will for us. Our church music director tells that when he was seeking for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, God asked him to consecrate not to play music anymore. It was difficult to yield to God—music was his livelihood and he loved it. Yet when he did surrender and tell God he was willing to give it up, God gave him more music privileges, including opportunities to shine his light to hundreds of young people at the schools where he has taught music.

Thinking again about my mother, she did many tasks that I'm sure she did not want to do or felt unqualified for. When we lived in Tacoma, Washington, there was a church remodeling project. Our Portland leaders were planning to sell an old pickup from the church vehicle fleet, and Dad thought it would be helpful if it was used first in Tacoma. At times, Mom was the chosen person to drive that old pickup and obtain materials from suppliers. Tacoma has steep hills, and the truck had a stick shift. One day she had a load of lumber, and when she started forward after waiting for a traffic signal, the load began to slide out. Mom had to back the truck down the hill and take another way to the church. I suspect that doing what she could was a challenge that day!

It could be good for us to look around and notice some tasks that we could do for the Lord. If we do what we can, our actions may not be told throughout the whole world as in Mary's case. However, God is keeping a record, and He misses no detail. He will be certain that we are properly rewarded. Are we doing what we can?

Cheryl Paulsen serves as the Corporate Secretary for the Apostolic Faith Church at the world headquarters in Portland, Oregon.



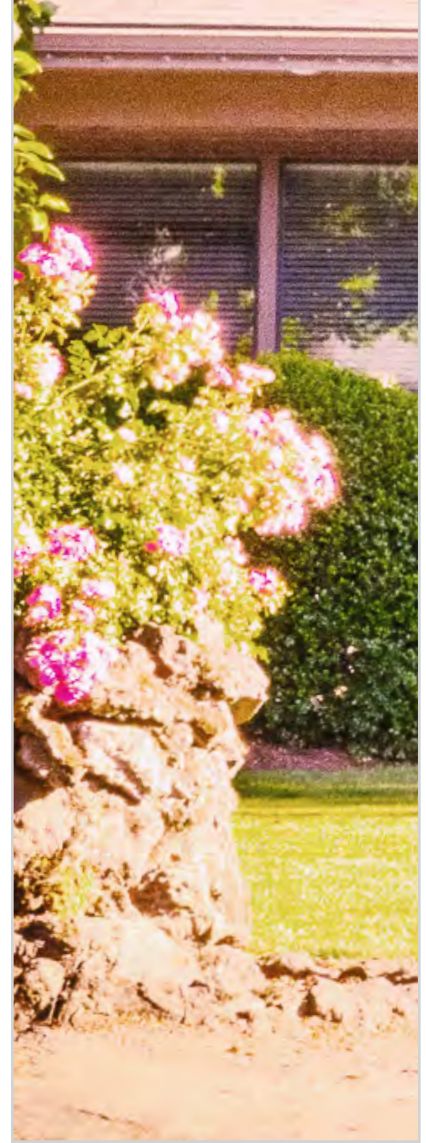
CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT FOR US

*Submitting to God's will has brought
Boniface a life of blessing.*

By Boniface Banda

When I was a small boy, my parents learned about the Gospel while living in Mazabuka, a town in the southern part of Zambia. From that time on, they took us to Sunday school. Our family moved around because of my father's employment, but eventually we settled in Lusaka and went to the Apostolic Faith Church there.

Even though I was taught the Word of God and went to Sunday school, I did not surrender my heart to God as a child. However, the seed of truth had been planted in my heart, and I knew when I was not doing right. The Holy Spirit convicted me, yet I did not turn to God.



My prayer was simply,
“God be merciful
to me, a sinner.”

I had many friends and along with them experienced different vices that we thought would make us happy. However, eventually I became tired and depressed because of my sinful life. At age twenty, deep conviction was on my heart and I had no peace. The church was holding a youth rally, and I went with my heart set on receiving Christ. After struggling with sin, I wanted to get to the right way which offers God’s peace.

At the altar call, the people around helped by praying with me. My prayer was simply, “God be merciful to me, a sinner. Forgive me.” With that confession, I surrendered

everything to God, and He did forgive me. That was wonderful! When finished praying, I stood

After a few days of prayer and consecration, God helped me to pray through and receive that experience, which gave me power to serve Him.

up to leave but the people there encouraged me to go back to the altar. I did and began to feel a deeper desire to pray again, and God sanctified me. My heart was truly filled with joy! When I went

home that night, my heart was so full that I could not stay there, but instead went back to the church and spent the night there.

The following morning, I realized that my life had been totally changed. The desires that I’d had before just disappeared. I parted with my old friends, and when there was peer pressure from other youths, God helped me to overcome and gave me a longing to be in His house. My mother noticed the change in me and it was a great relief to her. My relationships with my siblings also became stronger because God helped me to be a person who could be trusted and depended upon.



Left: Boniface and Esther Banda at home in Lusaka with their three sons and nephew in 2023.

Below, clockwise from top: Resting during a free afternoon at the 2005 special meetings in Munyumbwe; A group photo after youth activities; With the late Davison Makinku at the Southern Province camp meeting; A young people's prayer group called "Joshua's Band"; The Bandas on their wedding day in 2007.



Later I went to a camp meeting with the purpose to seek the baptism of the Holy Ghost. After a few days of prayer and consecration, God helped me to pray through and receive that experience, which gave me power to serve Him. Before I was saved, I had ambitions of becoming a musician and traveling the world, but the Lord had a better plan for me. In time, I became involved with music at the church. I was also able to teach Sunday school and later was asked to preach. Eventually, God would see fit to have me travel the world doing His work.

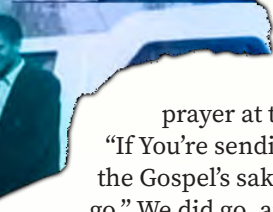
Over the years, God has been with me in many situations. Once, I was weak and bedridden for almost a month. At that time I had been working for a bank as a temporary employee. While I was ill, the bank called offering fulltime employment. They were opening a new branch and wanted me to work there. I asked God to give me strength, and after a few days I was able to go. Soon I realized that I was not just able

to get out of bed, but God had completely healed me. I worked at that bank for ten years.

In 2007, God gave me a Christian wife, and we serve Him together. We also have three boys. God has been with us through the challenges of life, including a great deal of poverty. The Bible says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33), and that promise has been fulfilled for our family. God has brought us through and blessed us in many different ways. We cannot boast of having

large amounts of this world's goods, but Christ is sufficient for us.

In 2012, the bank transferred me from Lusaka to Chongwe in the eastern part of Lusaka Province. This was a big change for our family because Chongwe is a rural area without all the



Meanwhile, the bank I was working for was sold, and I was among those who were laid off.

However, we decided to stay in Chongwe and continue serving God there. Then in 2019, our district leader, Brother Timothy Kaibula, was called to be with the Lord, and I was ordained as the District Superintendent for Eastern Africa. That was not expected, but I submitted to God's call, knowing that He will guide me in any responsibility that He gives me.

One of the key lessons that God has taught me is that this spiritual journey requires total dependency upon Him. There have been times when I tried to find my own way, but then I would end up struggling. However, if we are fully dependent upon God, He will help us. We may try to find quick solutions to our problems, but the only real solution is serving Christ.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not an experiment or some theory—it's real life! It transforms a person and pushes that one to serve Christ better. That urge to do my best for God is within me, and I hope to receive the crown of life one day.

Reverend Boniface Banda is the Apostolic Faith District Superintendent of Zambia, and pastor of the church in Lusaka.

amenities that are available in the city. My

prayer at that time was, "If You're sending me there for the Gospel's sake, I'm ready to go." We did go, and by the grace of God, He helped us start a branch church there. We began by worshipping as a family and inviting children to learn Bible stories. Later, as we invited more people, we worshipped in different homes and then rented a classroom in a school. Eventually we began looking for our own land and were able to obtain a plot and build a simple structure on it. The church is still under development, but a little light is shining there.

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."



ROTIMI AINA

LAGOS, NIGERIA

I told God, **“You alone know how to deliver me. I have faith in Your power.”**

At that point, I expected the driver to take me back to the church, but instead of turning around, he continued straight. When the woman and I protested, the other passenger produced a gun and told us to be quiet and cooperate.

EVIDENCE

I thank God that He saved me in my youth and also sanctified me and filled me with His Holy Spirit. I am also thankful for His daily presence.

On February 16, 2023, I was preparing for the night guard duty at the church. I packed a bag with money and a change of clothes, planning to buy fuel for the church on the way. As I made my plans, I was unaware of how much I would need God’s protection.

I boarded a transportation tricycle that was to take me to the church. However, the driver stopped before reaching the destination to collect my fare. There had been a currency change earlier that day, and he rejected the old notes that I gave him. He demanded the new notes, which I did not have. As the discussion dragged on, another tricycle pulled up and the passenger asked what the issue was. After hearing the problem, he invited me to ride with him, so I switched vehicles. Then another passenger, a woman, joined us.

At a filling station just past the church, the attendant refused to accept my old notes or exchange them. At that point, I expected the driver to take me back to the church, but instead of turning around, he continued straight. When the woman and I protested, the other passenger produced a gun and told us to be quiet and cooperate.

As we approached an unpopulated area, the man with the gun took my bag and told us to get out. He led us to a vehicle with four other kidnap victims inside. They drove us through the night to a gated compound. Then we were taken inside a house where there were gang members. We could hear the cries of others and see that there was no means of escape.

In the morning, we were taken outside one at a time and then to a room where gang members were waiting. On the way, I looked around to learn where we were and saw some political posters. I realized we were in Kogi State and there was no hope but to pray. I told God, “You alone know how to deliver me. I have faith in Your power.”



I just prayed,
**“O God, it was Your
work that I was
on my way to do.
Everything is in
Your hands.”**

Inside the room, a ritualist banged charms on my head and rubbed them on my body while others watched. Then he became confused and called for someone. A second ritualist came in and recited incantations over me. He also became perplexed, and the two of them left the room while I prayed desperately.

They returned and announced that I could not be used for ritualistic purposes and should be released. Some in the room disagreed and said they should try another method. I just prayed, “O God, it was Your work that I was on my way to do. Everything is in Your hands.”

They placed me in isolation for three days and then a man came in with a syringe and extracted blood from my arm into a bottle. Several hours later, there was an uproar in the house. I could hear people crying, running, and shouting. Six gang members had carried the bottle that contained my blood, and four of them died in an accident. The other two were in the hospital.

Before dawn, I was taken to a car and driven away. I continued praying and eventually we arrived in a populated area. One of the men opened my door, handed me my bag and phone, and told me to get out. I started praising God!

I called a brother and told him I had been kidnapped, and he told me to wait while he called a nearby pastor. I thank God for the love in the Apostolic Faith Church. This pastor who I didn't know came and took me to his home, where his wife was already preparing a meal for me. Other church members came with toiletries. After I had eaten and cleaned up, they insisted that I stay and rest rather than go home. They helped me report the incident to the police and then paid for a chartered vehicle to take me home. I was so thankful for the care taken to get me home safely. As I arrived, many saints were waiting for me and praising God on my behalf.

When in trouble, call on God! No other power could have rescued me from such a place. May He continue to guide me. One day, I want to partake of that Heavenly city.



ELLEN MORGAN

PORTLAND, OREGON

Jesus is everything to me. He has rained down so many blessings on me since the day I was born. My parents were faithful and took me to church all the time when I was a child. I didn't like coming in from playing outside to get ready for church, but it was good that they took me. At church the Lord showed me His love and planted songs in my heart.

I did not get saved while growing up, even though the Lord was faithful to call after my heart. I can remember Brother John Friesen coming from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Richland Center, Wisconsin, to preach. His preaching was powerful, and I would feel conviction, thinking he could see the sin in my heart, but I resisted God's call.

Later, while I was going to college in Madison, the Lord would bring songs to my mind, and I would sing them. They would ring true in my heart, and I would think, *I shouldn't be singing this song; I am not a Christian.*

One year, I went to the Midwest camp meeting with some of my friends, and the Lord gave me another chance. I thought I was just going on vacation to a place I had always enjoyed as a child. However, the Lord talked to me during every meeting. In the last young people's service, He posed the question, "What if you become a Christian? What if you gave your heart to Me?" I responded, "I don't know what that would be like," and He said, "You won't know until you try it." I prayed that day and gave my heart to the Lord and He has been with me ever since.

The Lord is my all-in-all. He walks with me every day and gives me a song. When I wake, there is always a song running through my mind and it continues all day. He also gives us the beauties of creation to enjoy. When I see the flowers and trees, they remind me of how much God loves us. The Lord has been so good to me, and I love Him today.



ROXIE RAE

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

If I had to give one word to describe what God has been to me, it would be "faithful." I was raised in a Christian home and had godly parents who set a great example for me. They took me to church, and there I had many wonderful Sunday school teachers and mentors. At home and at church, I was shown love and had good examples to follow.

However, I am sorry to say that when I got to college, I became very busy and focused on the things of the world. It was a time when I should have been seeking the Lord more, but unfortunately, I began seeking the world. Before long, there was sin in my life, and I knew it. I tried to hide it from everyone, because I was involved in church work, teaching Sunday school and participating in the music. Many times the Lord was faithful to remind me that I needed to get right with Him, but I would always think, *I can't*. Of course, that was the enemy lying to me.

God continued to faithfully speak to my heart, and one night I got on my knees in my apartment and called out to the Lord for help. He saved me and set me free that night. I had been hiding so many things that I had felt I could not come clean, but when the Lord saved me, He gave me the strength to make things right with everyone.

That was twenty years ago, and the Lord has given me victory. I am so thankful for all He has done, and I want to hold on to the end and thank Him face to face one day.

WORLD REPORT

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A JOYOUS OCCASION AT THE MOZAMBIQUE HEADQUARTERS DEDICATION

Construction of the new church building took more than ten years to complete, but it has exceeded expectations!

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SHORT TAKES

Brief reports from our churches worldwide.



A JOYOUS OCCASION AT THE MOZAMBIQUE HEADQUARTERS DEDICATION

Construction of the new church building took more than ten years to complete, but it has exceeded expectations!



The long-awaited dedication of the Mozambique headquarters church in Chimoio took place on Saturday, April 15. Those in attendance included Superintendent General Darrel Lee and Reverend John Musgrave on behalf of the Portland headquarters, as well as District Superintendents Isaac Adigun of West and Central Africa, Onias Gumbo of Southern and Eastern Africa, Boniface Banda of Zambia, Antonio Castilho of Angola, Chris Nkhata of Malawi, Edmond Makwiramiti of Lesotho, and Confidence Nemaungani of South Africa. Several government officials were also present, including Tomas Chithango, who was instrumental in acquiring the property for the new church. These were all warmly welcomed by the Mozambique saints and their District Superintendent, Francisco Chatisso.



The new headquarters church is located adjacent to the current church lot. For over twenty years, the Chimoio congregation has been worshipping in a small wooden structure with metal roof. Though it was well maintained, it did not have the capacity to hold the numbers who attend the annual Mozambique camp meeting. During the 2023 camp meeting, there was standing room only inside the church, with scores remaining outside. By comparison, the new church building accommodated everyone, and impressed the guests with its construction quality, functionality, and beauty.

Before the dedication, Reverend Chatisso shared part of his testimony, which included some of the history of the work in Mozambique. In 1990, he was among a group of ministers identifying themselves as part of the Apostolic Faith Church. That year, he attended the camp meeting in



(Left) Photos of the new church building, the ribbon cutting, and the dedication service.



Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, and realized he had not previously understood or received real salvation. Before the camp meeting was over, he prayed through to salvation, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then he returned to his local group of ministers and shared that their doctrinal understanding was wrong, and they were not even saved. Those who heard his report—about twenty ministers—subsequently prayed and received salvation and later their deeper experiences.

At that time, a civil war was being fought in Mozambique and large gatherings were prohibited. Reverend Chatisso asked the local General to allow the group to meet for prayer, and he granted permission to hold worship services! The group met in a grass hut where the current wooden church with metal roof now stands.

The dedication service alternated between Portuguese and English being interpreted in Shona. To begin, everyone assembled in front of the building where a ribbon was stretched between two of the porch pillars. The Provincial Secretary of State, Stephan Mpiri, held the ribbon as Reverend Lee cut it, dedicating the church in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This was followed by a roar of “Amen” from the crowd. Then everyone filed into the spacious sanctuary.

As people took their seats, the choir sang beautifully “When I Go.” After congregational singing, Reverend Gumbo offered the opening prayer.

Next, a brief history of the construction process for the church was read by Alfonso Jose Simango, the Mozambique Board Secretary/Treasurer. He said the first stone was laid on August 5, 2012, by Reverend Chatisso, and construction began. The congregation gave their full support to the project, volunteering their labor when funds ran short. After the completion of the masonry

for the ground floor, work stopped for several years as funds were lacking for the roof. There was an additional setback in March of 2019 when Cyclone Idai struck, destroying thirty-five percent of what had been accomplished. Construction resumed in early 2022, and the outer walls were completed. Then once again, the project was halted due to a lack of funds. In September of that year, John Musgrave visited the site and was moved by the plight of the congregation. On behalf of the Portland headquarters, he promised that every effort would be made to finish the church, and it was. The history report closed with a statement of appreciation to God first, and then to all who helped see this project through to completion.

After announcements, Reverend Lee greeted everyone and explained the source of the funds that completed this project. He said that in April of 2022, an assessment of worldwide needs was stated in a letter that was sent to pastors in various regions of our work. In response, churches in Nigeria, North America, Scandinavia, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere sent contributions to help complete projects worldwide, including this one in Mozambique.

The government officials also spoke. Francisca Domingos Tomás, the Manica Province Governor, thanked the congregation for taking the initiative to build the church. She said it is sure to add to the betterment of the community. The Provincial Secretary of State said he felt God’s peace when he entered the building and is thankful it will be shared with others. He hopes to return to the church many times.

The service continued with a vocal solo. Then Reverend Banda read 2 Chronicles 5:11-14 for the Scripture reading. A choir number preceded the sermon, which was taken from 2 Chronicles 5:1. Reverend Lee brought out that when construction of the Temple was finished, the building was not truly complete because it was lacking God’s presence. Just as Solomon prayed for God’s glory to come down, so must we. The congregation was also advised that more important than the dedication of a church is the dedication of the hearts of the people who worship there. Everyone was admonished to dedicate their lives to God.

The service closed with a dedicatory prayer offered by Reverend Castilho. Then the congregation went to prayer as the officials were given a tour of the new building. In addition to the sanctuary, prayer room, and restrooms on the main floor, there is an administrative area upstairs with three offices, a kitchen, pantry, and restrooms. We thank God for how He has exceeded expectations in blessing the work in Mozambique!

SHORT TAKES

Brief reports from our churches worldwide.

Daybreak Curriculum for South Korea

Reverend Jeong Min Kim, District Superintendent of South Korea, recently finished translating two more months of *Daybreak* devotionals into Korean. The *Daybreak* series is a chapter-by-chapter study of the Bible, which eventually will include three years of daily devotional commentary.

In addition to translating, the South Korea headquarters church in Seoul has also acquired equipment for print production. Once each translation is complete, a team of workers prints, trims, and binds the material in lesson books, and then ships them to our six churches in South Korea. On April 4, Reverend Kim said, "I am happy to be able to make two monthly meditation books and distribute them to each region in Korea. Everything is by God's grace. Please pray for us."



We thank God for the unified approach that Reverend Gumbo, Reverend Adigun, and Reverend Banda have taken. As they continue to labor together and follow God's order, we know His blessing will follow.

Peru Remote Meeting Touches Hearts

The first combined remote meeting among the Apostolic Faith groups in Peru was held on April 15. The meeting was hosted by the Combayo church and included brethren from Iquitos, Peru, as well as Brazil, Chile, and the United States.

Throughout the meeting, music was provided by the Peru congregations. A testimony was shared by Rick Olson of Tucson, Arizona, who had visited Peru in 2012 and 2014. He told how he was once addicted to marijuana, but when he gave his life to the Lord, a radical change took place inside him and he no longer wanted sinful things. Later, he was asked to work in the printing department for our church headquarters in Portland, and he was thankful to have worked there for twenty-one years.

The message was given by Reverend Sam Ajayi, Director of South America Work, who took his text from Luke 19:1-10. He drew a contrast between how the Spaniards treated the Inca King Atahualpa, and how Jesus treats mankind. The Spaniards sacrificed others to become rich, while Christ sacrificed Himself to make us rich. At the close of the meeting, everyone was encouraged to seek the Lord and receive spiritual riches from Him.

This gathering was an encouraging start for the bi-monthly meetings in Peru. We pray that through this medium the Gospel message will continue to touch hearts from the Andes to the Amazon of Peru.

(Top to bottom) Rev. Boniface Banda, Rev. Enock Simfukwe, Rev. Darrel Lee, and Rev. Onias Gumbo at camp meeting in Lusaka; Workers in South Korea print and trim lesson books; Prayer time in Combayo, Peru.

Consolidation of Eastern and Southern Africa into One District

On April 13, during the East Africa Camp Meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, a decision was made to redraw some Apostolic Faith geographic boundaries in Africa. The decision was the result of a discussion between Reverend Isaac Adigun, District Superintendent of West and Central Africa, Reverend Onias Gumbo, District Superintendent of Southern Africa, and Reverend Boniface Banda, District Superintendent of East Africa. The three concluded together that all will benefit by consolidating the Southern and East Africa districts into one district, with headquarters in Harare, Zimbabwe. That means Zambia, as well as Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, will all be combined with the many Southern Africa countries to form one Southern and Eastern District. Reverend Gumbo will be the district superintendent, and Reverend Banda will continue to lead the work in Zambia and work with other East Africa countries in coordination with Reverend Gumbo.

OUR CLASSICS

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LOGGER FINDS A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Sitting in a barroom, I heard the words,
“Pete, where will you spend eternity?” But
there was no one sitting nearby!



By Pete Friesen

LOGGER FINDS A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Sitting in a barroom, I heard the words, “Pete, where will you spend eternity?” But there was no one sitting nearby!

As a child, I was taught about God, but for a long time the Gospel just never appealed to me. When I was about thirteen, I went to the altar to pray, and the Lord showed me some marbles I had stolen. He I never thought about serving the Lord. Nobody could convince me that you could be a Christian and enjoy living.

asked me about making restitution and I refused. I left the altar and didn't pray again to get saved until I was over forty-three years old.

I went through high school as an amateur boxer and a football player. I should have been happy

because I was young and healthy. I had all the things that young people want, but there was something inside that was never satisfied.

When I got out of school, I went to work in the logging camps. There I lived just like the rest of the loggers. I came to town and drank, fought, and got into all kinds of trouble. I never thought about serving the Lord. Nobody could convince me that you could be a Christian and enjoy living. When I visited my mother, I would go to church with her. But as soon as the service was over, I would walk out the door. She asked me about going to church more often and I said, “Why should I go when it makes me so miserable? There are all kinds of places I can go where I can really have a good time.” I didn't

realize that God was convicting me when I went to church.

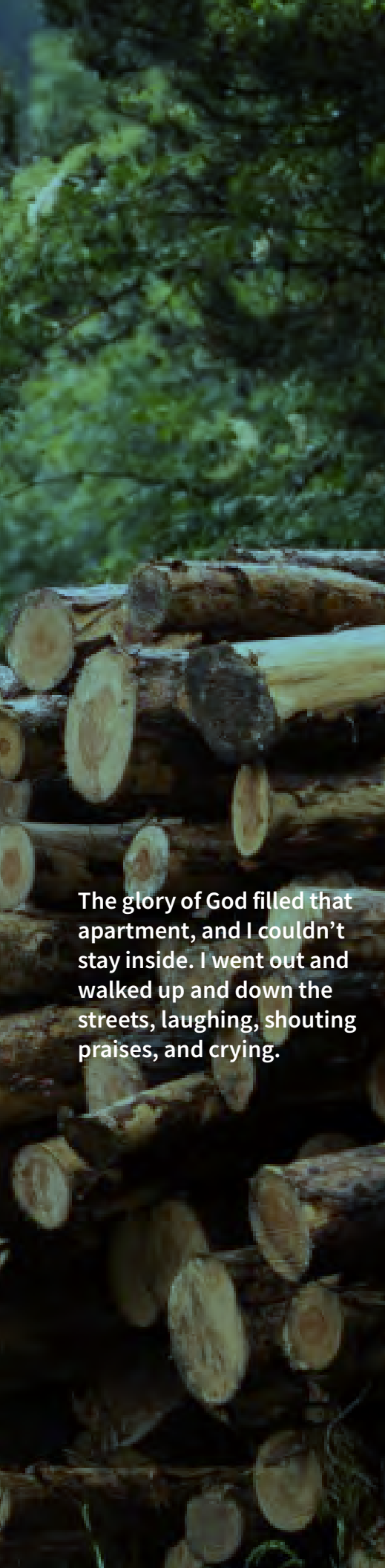
I was ambitious and worked hard. I made a lot of money, and I spent a lot of money. Then one day, everything changed. I had

Although I was never one to be afraid, that afternoon I was terrified. I was afraid I was going to die before I could get to church and pray.

been doing construction work on the overpasses of the Interstate 5 highway into Medford, Oregon, and when the job ended, I didn't know what to do next. On a Saturday afternoon I was sitting in a bar watching a football game on television when I heard a Voice say, “Pete, where will you spend eternity?” The stool beside me had been empty, so I turned to see who had sat down, but no one was there. Then, as I turned back to the game, I heard the Voice again. This time it said, “What difference is it going to make out in eternity who wins that ball game?” Right then I knew Who was talking, and I got up and walked out of that place.

Although I was never one to be afraid, that afternoon I was terrified. I was afraid I was going to die before I could get to church and pray.





The glory of God filled that apartment, and I couldn't stay inside. I went out and walked up and down the streets, laughing, shouting praises, and crying.

I went to church the next Sunday morning, but at the close of the service, it seemed there was no way I could walk down the aisle to the altar of prayer.

Sunday night found me back in church, and as the congregation was singing the final song, a man came and asked, "Pete, wouldn't you like to go pray?" That was all it took; I went to the altar and started to pray. I kept praying until God came down and saved my soul. A wonderful transformation took place; He made a change in my life. The habits and appetites of a lifetime were gone in a moment, and I had a brand-new outlook on life.

At home, one of the first things I did was dig in my suitcase for the Bible my mother had sent me years before. It was still in the original box, unopened. That night I started to read it and couldn't get enough. Then in the middle of the night, I woke up, turned on the light, and instead of lighting a cigarette and getting a drink, I opened the Bible and read more. I told the Lord, "How can I do what You say in the Book if I don't know what is in it? I need to know."

After I had been saved for a few weeks, I heard that I needed to be sanctified. I knew nothing about that experience, but one night sitting there in my apartment, I realized something was lacking in my life. I told God, "You know what I need. You know I want it, so please give it to me." Right there the Lord sanctified me. The glory of God filled that apartment, and I couldn't stay inside. I went out and walked up and down the streets, laughing, shouting praises, and crying. Finally, I told the Lord, "You'll have to stop blessing me. I just can't hold any more."

I went on that way, so happy in the Gospel. Then one night in a mission meeting, a brother who had a disability got up and testified. He could hardly speak or be understood, but the Lord told me, "There's a testimony I can use because it has My Spirit on it." That man had the baptism of the Holy Ghost and I didn't. Right there I realized how much I needed that experience. I didn't understand what it was and had never seen

As I walked into church that night, I told the Lord, "If any power falls around here tonight, some of it is going to fall on me, because I'm going to be here."

anybody receive it, but a hunger sprang up in my heart.

A few days later, the pastor of our church asked me if I wanted to go with him to the Midwest camp meeting. He said he had room and the Lord told him to take me. I said yes and went with one purpose in mind—I wanted to receive my baptism. The camp meeting started on a Saturday night, and I prayed that night, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. By Wednesday I was getting discouraged. However, as I walked into church that night, I told the Lord, "If any power falls around here tonight, some of it is going to fall on me, because I'm going to be here."

I had my own ideas about receiving the baptism. I was never one for a great deal of noise. I felt that when the Lord baptized me, I would just speak a few words in another language and that would be it. I wasn't interested in a lot of demonstration; I just wanted the

experience. That night, the Lord showed me that He was going to baptize me in His own way. Then He said, “Now will you let Me baptize

It really didn't make any difference to me if I lived or not. I knew where I was going if I died, and I tell you that's a wonderful feeling.

you?” I said, “Amen,” and that's the last I remember. Afterwards, I asked those praying with me, “Did I leave this tabernacle? It felt as though the roof lifted.” Well, I had the baptism and that was the important thing. It has been a wonderful experience, something every Christian needs.

I moved to Roseburg and went back to work felling timber. One day I met with a terrible accident—a tree fell on me. I knew I was seriously injured because I couldn't get up. They got me on the stretcher and called an ambulance. When we got to the hospital, the doctor said I would not live through the night. Our pastor in Roseburg was already there and prayed for me. Before I went into a coma, I told him, “It's all right, where I'm going it won't hurt anymore.” I felt the presence of the Lord and it really didn't make any difference to me if I lived or not. I knew where I was going if I died, and I tell you that's a wonderful feeling.

The nurse on duty that night said she called the doctor two different times to come and cover me and take me out of the room because I was gone. However, the Lord spared me, and I was still alive when morning came. The nurse said, “There was a Presence around your bed last night, a peace that I have never felt before in all my nursing experience.” I could tell

her, “Yes, the Prince of Peace was here last night.”

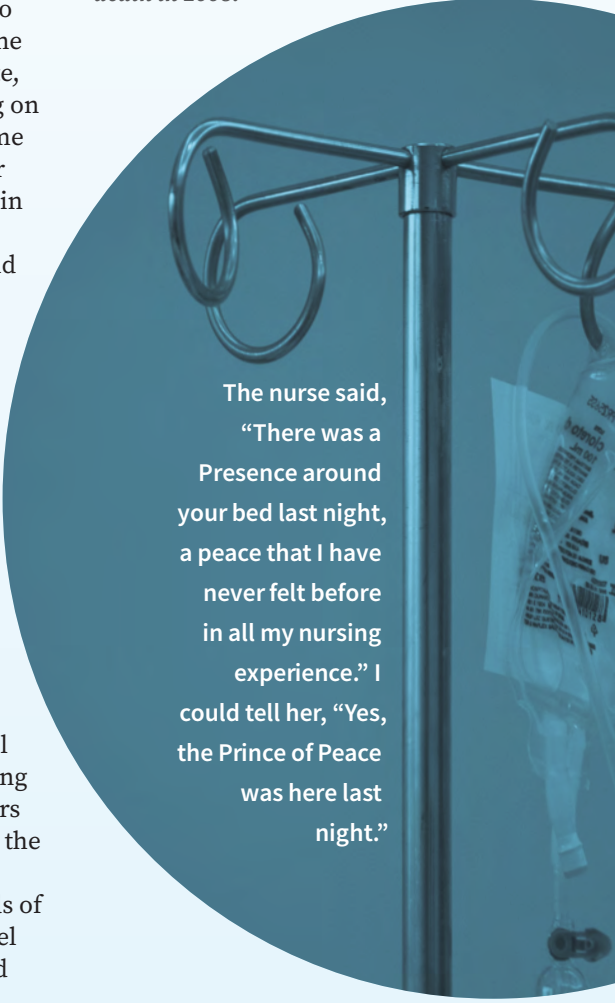
I had been torn up so badly that nobody expected me to live. My back was broken in three places. Most of my ribs were broken or torn loose from the backbone, my shoulder was smashed, and my spleen was ruptured. I don't know what else was wrong inside, but the Lord came down and healed me. Two months after that accident, I was back to work.

Over the years, I've found that I can go to God with all my problems. One time I bought a house to remodel and sell, but then couldn't work for a few months. By the time I got the house finished, the economy was in such a state that banks weren't lending money to finance a house of that kind. The real estate broker told me, “Pete, there is no way to get financing on that house.” I said, “I've got some notes coming due in about four months and they must be paid in full. I've got to get cash for this house.” I went to the church and started to pray. I prayed each day until one Friday afternoon when the Lord said to me, “The house is sold.” That was it as far as I was concerned. I didn't know how it was going to work out, but I knew the house was sold. The latter part of the next week, the broker called and said the house was sold. When I went to look at the contract, he told me, “This is the best contract possible.” The buyers not only paid cash, but they paid the full listing price. I ended up doubling my money at a time when others were happy to break even. Yes, the Lord takes care of His people.

I have proved God in all kinds of situations. You know, the Gospel is the only thing I've ever found

that gets better with the using. Shortly after I was saved, some of my old acquaintances told me that the Gospel would get old, and I would soon be back drinking and carousing around. They were wrong. Today I love the Gospel more than ever because I know a lot more about God. I know how He can work, and I know what He has done for me. The Gospel makes life worth living and I intend to hold on to it for the rest of my life.

Pete Friesen was a minister of the Apostolic Faith Church and served at Fort Smith, Arkansas; Eureka, California; and Portland, Oregon. After retiring, he volunteered at the world headquarters printing plant until his death in 2008.



The nurse said,
“There was a
Presence around
your bed last night,
a peace that I have
never felt before
in all my nursing
experience.” I
could tell her, “Yes,
the Prince of Peace
was here last
night.”

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

