



THE  
**Apostolic Faith**

EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH—JUDE 3

JANUARY – MARCH 2025

**FORGIVEN  
AND FORGIVING**



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**Apostolic Faith**

JANUARY – MARCH 2025

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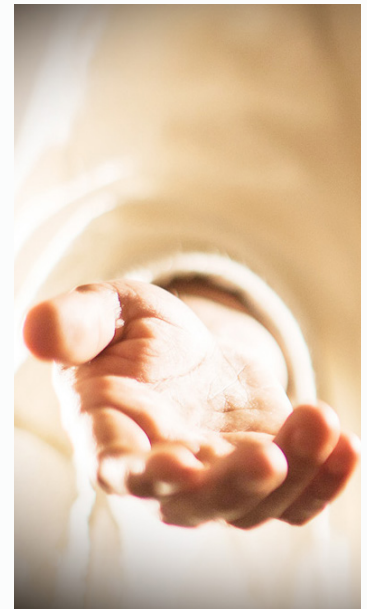
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## VIEWPOINT

BY SOLA ADESOPE,  
SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL

# “I’M SO GLAD I’M A PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD”



## GAINING A DEEPER APPRECIATION FOR OUR GLOBAL CHURCH FAMILY

H

ow many times have you had the privilege to sing the beautiful song, “The

Family of God”? Many of us have had decades of the blessing of singing it at our camp meetings and local churches. It reminds us that we are not alone in our Christian walks but are supported by many others who share our faith and love.

Recently, that song has taken on an even deeper meaning as my wife, Tolu, and I had the sacred privilege of representing the Apostolic Faith headquarters at several special events around the world. A week after the camp meeting in Portland, we were in Mid-Wales for the Western Europe camp meeting. We experienced such a wonderful time of prayer and fellowship there. From Wales we traveled to London and visited some of our saints who could not attend the camp meeting. We then went to Scotland and enjoyed fellowship with our saints in Glasgow

and Edinburgh, visiting the buildings where they worship. After that, we were driven to Aberdeen for the dedication of our first church building in Scotland. What a blessed dedication it was, as many of us in attendance re-dedicated our lives to God.

From Scotland, we flew to Nigeria to join the West and Central Africa (WECA) camp meeting, which also marked the 80th anniversary of our work in WECA and in Africa generally. One highlight there was the rapid completion of the new tabernacle roof. Just a few days before camp started, completing the roofing project was deemed impossible by human standards. However, we witnessed firsthand another beauty of the family of God: saints around the world united in prayer for the roof to be finished so the camp meeting could be held under it. What a sight it was to behold as saints worked day and night to accomplish the task! We were full of joy and thanks to God as

we gathered under the new roof throughout the camp meeting.

In September, Tolu and I attended our church dedication in Headingley, Canada. Our branch churches across Canada came together to support and finance the construction of the new building, as well as its dedication. It was yet another evidence of being part of a wonderful church family. Although I could not attend the dedications in the Dominican Republic and Japan, we heard similar reports from those locations of the love and unity that characterize our work globally. (Read more about all these events on pages 30-36.)

Upon returning home, I was simply overwhelmed by everything I had experienced. It left an indelible mark on me. Frequently, I find myself singing that beautiful song, “I’m so glad I’m a part of the family of God.” In a world that is often plagued by division, our church stands as a beacon of unity, transcending borders, languages, and cultures.





Though we are a tapestry of diverse people, we are united in our experience of salvation, our desire to live a holy life, and our determination to be faithful to the end. We are not alone in our corners of the world, but we are part of something bigger—the wonderful family of God!

As you read the articles in this magazine, may you have a renewed commitment to continue to be a part of this family. And if you are not yet part of it, we hope you will be inspired to join.



**LOS ALTO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**



**KAWASAKI, JAPAN**



**ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND**



**LAGOS, NIGERIA**



**HEADINGLEY, CANADA**

BY JOHN BAROS



# CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

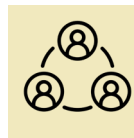
What does it mean to bear the likeness of God?

**T**hough there are many theories about the origin of life, God's infallible Word teaches that on the sixth day of Creation, God made man. Not only that, but the Bible tells us, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27).

An image is a representation or depiction of something or someone. When Scripture tells us we are made in the image of God, it conveys that we are a representation of Him. We are similar to Him, but not identical—we are not God.

Often, when we think of being made in God's image, our moral nature is what first comes to mind. Certainly, Adam and Eve, the first humans, were created in the moral image of God with righteous natures, having pure hearts and a bias toward holiness. However, Genesis 1:27 refers to much more than our moral nature—God endued man with several qualities that are in His likeness. Therefore, even after Adam and Eve committed the first sin, corrupting their righteousness, they continued to bear God's image. This is true for all of fallen man, so in essence, God has stamped His image on every human heart.

Understanding the ways in which humanity bears the image of God reveals part of the special purpose He intended for our lives in comparison with the rest of creation. Let's consider a few of them.



## We are relational

Man is a relational being in that he has a need for fellowship. Though the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are separate persons, they are united as one—they are relational. This Trinitarian aspect of God is mirrored in humanity as a group.

The word "man" can refer to a single entity, but also to a community of males and females. This is illustrated by Genesis 5:1-2: "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." We notice that "Adam" in this context refers to both male and female. In the Hebrew language, the word *Adam* means "man or mankind." Another way of stating this is "human or humankind." So, God created two genders in His own image.

In Genesis, chapter 2, we find further details regarding the creation of humans. After first creating Adam, God said, "It is not good that the man should

**GENESIS 2:7 STATES, "AND THE LORD GOD FORMED MAN OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND, AND BREATHED INTO HIS NOSTRILS THE BREATH OF LIFE; AND MAN BECAME A LIVING SOUL."**

The word translated here as "formed" indicates **shaping**, as a **potter shapes clay**.

As with God, man has the ability to think and reason. Humans are intellectual beings capable of taking in, processing, and acting on information.

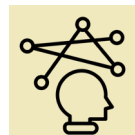
be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” He created Eve and then we read, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (verses 18 and 24). Though this speaks of marriage, it also reveals the Biblical truth that humans have a natural need for companionship.

God’s intention from the beginning was that the two human counterparts, male and female, would be lifelong marriage partners. However, when the first created couple sinned, breaking their relationship with God, they also damaged their relationship with each other. When God asked Adam if he had disobeyed, his reply was, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat” (Genesis 3:12). It wasn’t long after this, as we read in the next

chapter, that one of Adam and Eve’s own children murdered his brother. Often, we see that when a person severs his or her relationship with God, other relationships are impacted. This is a reminder that the best way to repair broken relationships among ourselves is to reconcile with God first.

Apart from marriage, we are social creatures who need to be part of a group. It is purposeful that the Body of Christ is a living organism with Christ as the head and believers as the members. We were not designed to live in isolation; we need each other. Being part of the body of believers makes us less vulnerable to the enemy’s attacks. As a group, we are able to encourage and support one another, hold each other accountable, and learn to serve and love God as well as one another. God

designed us in His image as relational beings, having a need for companionship, social interaction, and fellowship.



## We are intellectual

As with God, man has the ability to think and reason. Humans are intellectual beings capable of taking in, processing, and acting on information. In addition, we have the capacity to think an unlimited number of original thoughts. We contemplate philosophical questions, and this is one of the ways in which we differ from animals. Cats and dogs don’t ponder life’s big questions. Animals don’t wonder, “Why am I here? Where did I come from?” or “What is my purpose in life?” Humans do, because God created mankind with a capacity for higher consciousness or awareness.

Human beings have a consciousness of God—we are aware of him. In addition, man is a self-conscious being. We have an awareness of self and the capacity for self-evaluation and determination. We were not preprogrammed or prewired but have free wills and the power to make our own choices and act upon them.

The original sin was an act of free will. Though Adam and Eve were created in a state of innocence and knew no sin, they were intelligent beings with the ability to reason. They were fully aware of the decision they were making. When Satan tempted them, they *chose* to yield to temptation, disobey God, and separate themselves from His will. In essence, they were telling God by their actions, “We don’t want

## GOD CREATED TWO GENDERS IN HIS OWN IMAGE





to live by Your rules.” Adam and Eve knew what they were doing, and when we disobey God, we know it. God has given us a free will, and we are fully responsible for the choices that we make.



## We are moral

We have a moral awareness, or a sense of right and wrong. When we do something wrong, we feel guilt. When we see harm done to another human being, there is something within us that cries out and says it is wrong. That sense of justice is unique to man.

Adam and Eve’s act of defiance not only corrupted their own moral natures, but plunged humanity into a depraved condition. Every descendant of Adam inherited his corrupt or sinful nature, and was born with an inclination to do evil—to break God’s laws.

There is a trend in our world today to believe that humanity is inherently good. The theory is

that society corrupts man, and if society could be righted, man’s problems would dissipate. The Bible teaches just the opposite: only when the human heart is purified by cleansing it from sin will society improve. The reality is that fallen man, when left to his own devices, will only corrupt himself more and more. Without divine intervention, mankind is utterly wicked and eternally lost. There is only one remedy for sin, and that is the shed Blood of Jesus. Christ’s death on the Cross provided for our salvation—the forgiveness of committed sins—and sanctification, a cleansing from all unrighteousness. It is entire sanctification that eradicates, or purges, our sin nature, restoring our moral nature to be in unity with God.

**Satisfaction will only come when we fulfill our God-given purpose as bearers of His image.**



## We are spiritual

We are spiritual beings. This means that part of us will live on eternally after our mortal bodies die. King Solomon captured this concept well in Ecclesiastes 12:7. He said, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was,” speaking of the body, “and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” According to Zechariah 12:1, our spirits are formed by God. Zechariah said, “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”

In the account of man’s creation, we read of both the body being formed and the spirit being given by God. Genesis 2:7 states, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” The word translated here as “formed” indicates shaping, as a potter shapes clay, and the word “breath” has an alternate meaning of “spirit.” This account of man’s creation differs from that of all other living creatures. Whereas God spoke the animals into existence, saying, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature . . .” (Genesis 1:24), He fashioned man from the soil and breathed the spirit of life into him.

Because we are spiritual beings, we have the privilege of prayer and communing with God both here and in eternity.

## Other likenesses

In addition to the four qualities already named, God has endued

## MORAL AWARENESS

**A SENSE  
OF  
RIGHT  
AND  
WRONG**







*As spiritual beings, we alone are able to commune with God through prayer and worship.* As the Bible tells us in John 4:24, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” From the moment of salvation, our spirits are knit to God’s as “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). This bond is further strengthened when we invite God’s Holy Spirit to indwell us as we were designed to do.

In addition, as spiritual beings, we are meant to spend eternity with God. At the end of this age, all of creation will be destroyed except for the spirits of mankind. Our spirits will continue because it is God’s intention for us to be with Him forever in Heaven. Rejecting God’s offer of salvation will result in eternal separation from God in Hell. However, that is not what He wants for us. God did not create Hell for humanity; it was created for the devil and his angels (see Matthew 25:41). For us, God created Heaven, where our communion with Him will be eternal.

Being made in the image and likeness of God, we are blessed above all of creation. We have the opportunity to love and be loved by Him, to choose to serve Him, to partake of His holiness, to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and to be with Him for eternity. People look for satisfaction in many places—in success, wealth, fame, and vices to name a few—but they won’t find it in this world. Satisfaction will only come when we fulfill our God-given purpose as bearers of His image. ♦

man with several other attributes reflecting His nature. Among these are an appreciation for beauty, the ability to feel and express a wide variety of emotions, our sense of order, and our ability to create new things from the resources God has given us. We also have an extensive capacity for communication, which sets us apart from the animal kingdom. All these attributes in us are a reflection of God and clear evidence of His image stamped on our hearts.

## Our purpose

Knowing that among all God’s creation we were uniquely made in His image, we might wonder if we serve a special purpose. Though we can’t fully understand God’s motives for making us in the way He did, His Word reveals several reasons.

*As relational beings, we have the ability to return God’s love and enter into fellowship with Him.* More than anything else in creation, mankind is the object of God’s love, both as the human race and as individuals.

Throughout the Bible, we see His concern for humanity. We see that He continually comes to mankind and enters into relationships with us. This is demonstrated when we read that Enoch walked with God, Noah found grace in God’s sight, and Abraham was called the friend of God. It is apparent that we were designed to have an intimate relationship with our Creator.

*As intellectual beings with free will, we can choose whether or not to please God.* The Bible tells us in Revelation 4:11 that God is worthy “to receive glory and honour” and that all things were created for His pleasure. However, we have a unique opportunity to please God by our free-will choice to serve Him.

*As moral beings, we have the capacity to be holy.* As already stated, the shed Blood of Jesus will save and sanctify. It will restore our moral natures, bringing us into unity with God’s nature, resulting in lives that glorify Him. All that is required on our parts is to surrender our lives to Him and continue to submit ourselves to His will.



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BY ISAAC ADIGUN



# FORGIVEN & FORGIVING

Letting go of resentment lifts a burden, opens the channels of prayer, and frees us to move forward with our lives.

**F**

orgiveness is a glorious part of the plan of salvation. When we come to God in faith repenting of our sins, though we are guilty, He forgives us for Jesus' sake. He cancels our penalty, washes away our sin and shame, and fills our hearts with peace and the joy of Heaven. It is a wonderful feeling to be forgiven!

At the same time, being the recipient of God's forgiveness brings a responsibility that must be taken seriously. Jesus brought this out in the parable of the unmerciful servant, which is found in Matthew 18. He said there was a king who forgave his servant a debt of ten thousand talents. In turn, that servant refused to forgive a peer a debt of one hundred pence. This so angered the king that he delivered his servant "to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." Jesus closed the parable by saying, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (verses 34-35). With this parable, Jesus made clear a basic principle of Christianity: salvation brings with it the requirement of forgiving others.

God expects forgiveness to flow from the heart of every Christian—all those who have experienced His mercy and the benefits of His

love. Being slow to forgive can hinder our prayers and risk our relationship with Him. To maintain God's blessing on our lives, it is important that we understand what true forgiveness is and how we can achieve it in our daily living.

## What is forgiveness?

When we look at definitions for the word *forgiveness*, we find that in the New Testament, it is translated from the Greek word *aphiemi*, which means "to let go." A dictionary definition is "a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person who has harmed you, regardless of whether the person deserves forgiveness." To summarize, forgiveness means letting go of bitter feelings and our right to retaliate. This includes giving up any claim of compensation for the hurt or loss we have suffered.

Perhaps another way of understanding this important subject is to look at what it is not. Forgiveness is not passively waiting for the problem to lessen. It is not a game of pretense; it is not a cover-up for sin. It does not excuse the offender from the consequences of his or her actions. It does not mean ignoring the past and submitting to repeat offenses. Instead, it is a voluntary release of a legitimate debt.

For the Biblical standard of forgiveness, we can look to Jesus. While suffering on the Cross for sins He did not commit, He prayed for those who had rejected the truth and called for His crucifixion. He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Jesus provided the perfect example, and He is the

One we want to emulate in every situation.

## Who needs forgiveness?

Everyone needs God's forgiveness. The Bible tells us, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Many of us have called upon Him, confessing and repenting of our sins, and have received His forgiveness. This reconciled us to God, but there will still be times when He corrects us and we must apologize to Him, needing His forgiveness.

We also need forgiveness from those who come to us with an offense that we have committed against them. Even when we didn't mean to offend or were unaware that we had, we need to acknowledge the wrongs that we have done and make restitution when appropriate. God will help us in these situations as we keep a humble attitude. We are told in James 4:6, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

Likewise, those who have offended us need our forgiveness, and we must give it. It makes no difference who the offender is—a Christian, family member, friend, or enemy. It doesn't matter whether that person has lied, cheated, falsely accused us, or simply said the wrong thing. The Apostle Paul instructed, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Colossians 3:12-13). Forgiving as Christ did is not based on the offender or offense, but on His love and sacrifice.

When we have experienced God's forgiveness and the blessings that come with it, we can forgive others for Jesus' sake.

On the part of the believer, forgiveness must be present in every relationship, including that of husband and wife, parent and child, and employer and employee—both in extending and receiving it. It must also be present at church.

There will be offenses within our congregations. We are a diverse population with honest, legitimate differences in opinion, likes and dislikes, and emotions. Each of us sees things from our own perspectives, and as a result, we may offend each other from time to time as we interact. When this happens, the Bible enjoins us to extend mercy to each other. When writing to the saints at Ephesus, Paul said, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32). As we extend mercy to others, it is likely being extended to us, so it is best to forgive as we would want to be forgiven.

## When to forgive

Matters requiring forgiveness should be settled as soon as they come to light. It is not necessary to wait for an offender to come to us and confess before we forgive. We don't want to say, "He has not come back to me and apologized, so I can't forgive him." The standard for Christian forgiveness is higher than that. We are to forgive whether the other person apologizes, acknowledges the offense, or even realizes that an offense has occurred.

Delaying forgiveness will hinder our prayer lives. If we want our prayers to reach Heaven, we must make sure there is nothing between us and our Savior. That means there can be nothing

## WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

**FORGIVENESS is**

—● **LETTING GO OF BITTER FEELINGS**

—● **GIVING UP OUR RIGHT TO RETALIATE**

—● **A VOLUNTARY RELEASE OF A LEGITIMATE DEBT**

**FORGIVENESS is not**

—● **PASSIVELY WAITING FOR THE PROBLEM TO LESSEN**

—● **A COVER-UP FOR SIN**

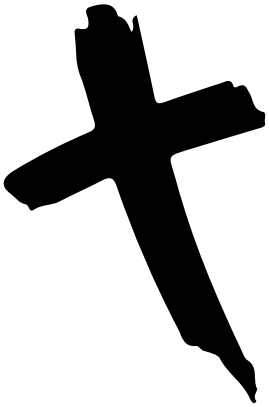
—● **IGNORING THE PAST AND SUBMITTING TO REPEAT OFFENSES**



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**JESUS** ON THE CROSS  
IS OUR **PERFECT** EXAMPLE  
OF **FORGIVENESS**

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“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”  
– Luke 23:34

between us and our brothers and sisters in Christ. If there is discord, we must attempt to resolve it. We want to make sure that to the best of our abilities, all channels are clear when we pray.

Waiting to forgive will hinder our walks with the Lord. Jesus said, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:14-15). God is patient with us in matters that are difficult when we are willing to be made able to obey. However, we don’t want to presume upon Him until our procrastination has turned to disobedience and sin. Ultimately, forgiveness is not an option; it is commanded.

In addition to forgiving promptly, we are to do so every time. The Apostle Peter once came to Jesus with the question, “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive

him? till seven times?” The surprising answer was, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21-22). Jesus wasn’t advocating that Peter keep a record and withhold forgiveness after the four-hundred-and-ninetieth time. If God had forgiven us of only four-hundred-and-ninety sins, we would be in trouble. Jesus meant that we are to forgive an unlimited number of times.

### How to forgive

In the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus’ warning was to those who “forgive not from your hearts” (Matthew 18:35). Forgiveness must be sincere; a mere pretense will give Satan a foothold in our lives. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about one who had offended, suffered the consequences, but continued to be ostracized. He said, “Forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him” (2 Corinthians 2:7-8). Our actions need to show that our forgiveness is genuine.

Where the other person is concerned, we don’t need to know if he or she is sincere or not. When someone comes to us with an apology or restitution, we want to graciously accept it. We need to forgive at face value rather than probe deeper. We can consider the apology a bonus, because the Christian standard of forgiveness is high—an offender doesn’t need to make amends to receive our forgiveness. It is not our place to judge someone’s motives, so we give people the benefit of the doubt and leave the question of sincerity to God.

We must also forgive wholly; there can be no partial forgiveness. This means laying down the matter and leaving it. God’s forgiveness toward us was

complete. Hebrews 10:17 tells us, “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” This is the forgiveness we want to mirror.

The act of forgiving can seem impossible when the trespass has caused us great distress, loss, reproach, or inconvenience. However, even in a situation that has affected us badly, God can heal us so that we have love in our hearts for that person rather than feelings of bitterness or resentment.

The account of Joseph is one example of the genuine and complete forgiveness that the grace of God can achieve. Joseph’s brothers hated him and ultimately sold him into slavery when he was a teenager. Not only did he suffer the hardships of slavery and separation from his family, but his new circumstances led him to be falsely accused and imprisoned. Yet, after all he went through, he was able to say to his brothers, “Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. . . . It was not you that sent me hither, but God” (Genesis 45:5, 8). God sustained Joseph during his trials and caused good to come from a seemingly hopeless situation. If we will entrust our pain and hurt to God while continuing to follow Him as Joseph did, He will bring about complete healing for us as well.

One practical tool that will help us forgive and heal is to pray for those who hurt us. Jesus said, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). Doing this will enable us to see the offender from God’s perspective as a soul in need of a Savior, and not as our enemy.

### Failing to Forgive

Withholding forgiveness can have a ripple effect that leads to many

### WHEN TO FORGIVE

As soon as possible.

**DELAYING  
FORGIVENESS  
WILL HINDER  
OUR PRAYER  
LIVES, OUR  
WALKS WITH  
THE LORD.**

disasters. It has the potential to cause permanent damage to our spiritual and physical lives, and the lives of those around us.

Harboring a grudge is spiritually, emotionally, and physically draining. Rather than internalizing negative emotions, we can pray, telling God about the matter and our feelings on it. He is best able to understand what we are going through and give comfort and direction.

A failure to forgive can also ruin relationships, and not just with the offender. People who are resentful are often caustic, sarcastic, and

Hebrews 12:15 to look “diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.” We need to be very careful not to let the root of bitterness grow in us—the earlier we take care of a problem, the better.

Where forgiveness is lacking, there will be speculation and suspicion. Within the church, this can lead to an environment where believers no longer have confidence in each other. When that happens, the Gospel work is stifled. For it to move forward, we must be united; we need to be able to pray together in one accord. Speculation can also open the door to murmurings, backbiting, and gossip—things that have no place among God’s people. We don’t want any part of hindering the Gospel message or sowing discord among believers. If we will surrender our burden of offense to God, He will help us become one who builds up in His house rather than tears down.

## WHO NEEDS FORGIVENESS?

*Everyone* needs God’s forgiveness.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

— *Romans 3:23*



**WE NEED FORGIVENESS** from those who come to us with an offense that we have committed against them.

**THOSE WHO HAVE OFFENDED US** need our forgiveness, and we must give it.

**HUSBAND & WIFE**  
**PARENT & CHILD**  
**EMPLOYER & EMPLOYEE**  
**CONGREGATIONS**

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving** one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

— *Colossians 3:12-13*

## HOW TO FORGIVE

We must forgive **wholly**; there can be no partial forgiveness.

**God’s forgiveness toward us was complete.**

“Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

— *Hebrews 10:17*

### JESUS SAID:

“**Love** your enemies, **bless** them that curse you, **do good** to them that hate you, and **pray** for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”

— *Matthew 5:44*

condemning. Over time, as their thoughts towards others grow malignant, their whole view of life becomes distorted. Soon they are behaving unkindly and no one wants to be around them. If we find ourselves in a position where our thoughts are constantly turning to complaints, we need to ask God to examine our hearts and remove any resentment.

Another danger of holding resentment in our hearts is that it may fester into bitterness and lead to sin. We are warned in

## The benefits of forgiving

When we forgive, the result is like an ocean wave pouring over our souls and washing away all the pollution that offense has caused in our hearts. It brings the benefits of restored fellowship, answered prayers, and God’s blessing on our lives.

Are you struggling to forgive someone today? Let God lift your burden and free you to move forward with your life. ♦



**REVEREND ISAAC ADIGUN** is the Apostolic Faith District Superintendent of Western and Central Africa.

**FAILURE TO FORGIVE** is spiritually and emotionally draining. It can also ruin relationships. It can fester into bitterness and eventually lead to sin.

**FORGIVENESS** restores fellowship, lifts a burden, and allows us to move forward with our lives.

BY MARJORIE REED



# ENCOUNTERING JESUS

Like Bartimaeus, we can experience the power of Jesus in a real and personal way.



In Mark 10 we read about a man named Bartimaeus. He was blind and made his living by begging on the roadside outside of Jericho. Then one day, Jesus passed his way. At that time, Jesus was famous for the miracles He had performed. Bartimaeus cried out to Him for mercy, and Jesus healed his eyes and saved his soul. We read that “Jesus said unto him,

Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way” (Mark 10:52).

Though I’ve read this account many times before, as I was meditating on it recently, the Spirit of God reminded me, “You were like Bartimaeus.” My physical circumstances were very different than his—I was a little girl, raised in a Christian home in Newfoundland, Canada, and had no physical impairments. Yet, I can identify with his spiritual experience. He had *heard* about Jesus and the miracles He could do but had never *met* Him. I was a five-year-old girl who had heard about Jesus at Sunday school but also had never met Him before. Bartimaeus didn’t understand all that Jesus could do for him—he was just hoping to be healed of his blindness—but Jesus was capable of so much more. I also didn’t realize what Jesus could do until I opened my heart to Him, and then, like Bartimaeus, I found

much more than I had expected. I had victory in my soul!

The account of Bartimaeus is all about the power of Jesus Christ being experienced in a real and personal way. What happened to Bartimaeus is the same thing that happened to me, and the best news is that it can happen to each of us. Age, background, ability—none of these can prevent us from receiving what Jesus has for us. What matters is our hearts and the way we respond to Him. If we can recognize the opportunity He is presenting and respond the right way, each of us can experience the powerful, life-giving touch of Jesus.

## A divine appointment

When this meeting with Bartimaeus took place, Jesus was passing through Jericho on His way to Jerusalem. It is interesting to note that just a few days later, He would go to Calvary, bearing your sins and mine, as well as the sins of Bartimaeus. Jesus had His own burdens to carry, but that did not prevent Him from caring about the burdens of others.

As Jesus passed through Jericho, Bartimaeus was at the outskirts of the city, begging on the roadside. That day, he heard something different than usual—what sounded like a crowd coming down the road. At first, he did not know what all the commotion was about, but then he was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.

We might wonder, *What were the chances that Bartimaeus would happen to be on the roadside at just the right time to meet the Lord?* It wasn’t a chance at all—it was by divine appointment. God knew where

**BARTIMAEUS** made his living by begging on the roadside outside of Jericho.





Bartimaeus was and went to meet him.

This is encouraging because the same God who went to Bartimaeus will come to us. Wherever you happen to be hearing this message now is not by chance. It is by divine appointment. Most of us have our own plans for today, but God has a plan too. Jesus knows exactly where we are and He wants to meet with us. More than anything, He wants each of us to not only *hear* about this glorious Gospel, but to *experience* it, and it will thrill our souls if our hearts are open to receive it. Bartimaeus' heart was wide open, and what Jesus did for him thrilled his soul.

## Seek the Savior

We don't know how much Bartimaeus knew about Jesus, but evidently, he had heard that Jesus was a miracle-worker. However, when Bartimaeus began to cry out to Jesus, he wasn't addressing Him as just a miracle-worker. He called out, "Jesus, thou Son of David." That was a name for the Messiah, and Bartimaeus was acknowledging Him as such.

Jesus *is* a miracle worker, but more than that, He must be our Savior. If we need His help today, when we seek Him as our Savior, every problem we have will be settled. That doesn't mean that every obstacle will go away, but we will have Someone with us who can take care of them. We must first seek Jesus as our Savior, and receive His offer of salvation from sin, and then He will provide whatever we need.

## Ask for mercy

Although Jesus hears the faintest cry, Bartimaeus cried out with a loud voice. When people told him to be quiet, he cried out all the louder. He wanted to get to Jesus!

There is something to be said about a desire so deep that it

Jericho



"And when he [Bartimaeus] heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, **Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.**"  
– Mark 10:47



Jerusalem



is expressed with the type of intensity that was in the voice of Bartimaeus. It takes faith to ask for God's help. When Bartimaeus cried from his heart, his faith was expressed through his words. Bartimaeus probably didn't even realize he had faith, but he did. The Word of God teaches us that God has given a measure of faith to everyone. Glory be to God, that He would love us so much that He would drop faith in our hearts so we can seek Him and find what we need.

Bartimaeus was hoping to be healed of blindness. That was the need he brought to Jesus. And the cry of his heart was, "Have mercy on me!" Another way of asking for mercy could be, "Give me something I don't deserve!" Perhaps he didn't even know he needed salvation, but he knew he needed what Jesus had for him and he knew he didn't deserve it. When that prayer was done, he had more than he'd hoped for. He had salvation!

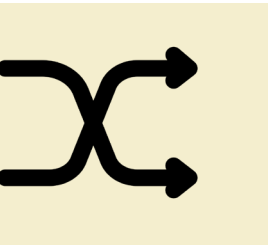
I can relate to this because the day Jesus met me, I didn't know I had sin in my life. Jesus had to show me my need. That evening, my uncle was at our house. He was a minister of



If we can recognize the opportunity He is presenting and respond the right way, each of us can experience the powerful, life-giving touch of Jesus.

Calvary





**HE SHOWED ME** that there are two voices that can speak to a little girl, and He told me not to obey the wrong one.

the Gospel, someone who had Jesus within and longed to share Him. I was already in bed for the night, but I heard my uncle ask my parents if he could pray. It breaks my heart to say this now, but when he started praying, I didn't like what I heard. Yet in that moment, Jesus met me at my point of need. He showed me that there are two voices that can speak to a little girl, and He told me not to obey the wrong one. Soon after that, I prayed, asking Jesus for something I didn't deserve, and He saved my soul. He changed my heart, and now I love to hear someone pray.

When we bring our needs to Jesus and ask for mercy with hearts that are open to what He has for us, we will leave rejoicing.

## Jesus is calling you

Think about the circumstance that Bartimaeus was in. He wasn't in a church surrounded by a band of believers. He was surrounded by people who shouted and told him, "Just be quiet!" It was as if to say, "Jesus doesn't have time for you." He sought the Lord under what could have been very discouraging circumstances. Yet, somehow he fixed his heart on the Savior. Then someone said, "Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee." Hallelujah! It always amazes and humbles me

## JESUS' CALL IS



PERSONAL



PRECIOUS



POWERFUL



**"Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee." - Mark 10:49**

when I read that the Son of God stood still and called for him.

If you are not saved, Jesus is calling for *you* right now. Can you fathom that? The Son of God is calling *you*! He's giving you the same kind of attention that He gave Bartimaeus. He loves you just the same way and He never changes.

Jesus' call is *personal*. He doesn't call a crowd; He calls an individual. There were several people in our house the night when I reached out to Him, but Jesus called me and showed me my need. That is also what He did for Bartimaeus, and that is what He will do for each one.

His call is also *precious*. We do not know when it might be our last opportunity to respond to His call. I do not say that as a fear tactic; that is the truth. God only promises us one call. He may call many times, but we need to recognize that His call is precious.

When Jesus calls, it is also *powerful*. I could never deny that moment at age five when the God of Heaven spoke to my heart. I knew it was Jesus and no one had to tell me.





## AN INVITATION



“If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” — John 7:37.



“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever” — John 6:51

**“It’s one thing to hear about an encounter with Jesus, and it’s another thing to experience the Christ of Calvary for ourselves.”**

If you have felt in the past that Jesus doesn’t have time for you, that is a lie from the enemy of your soul. Jesus desires to take time for you. He is calling *you*. His call is personal, precious, and powerful, and like Bartimaeus, we have a responsibility to answer the call of God.

### An invitation

To the thirsty soul, Jesus is calling: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (John 7:37). Are you thirsty for living water? No matter how long we have been saved, our souls should still thirst for God. To keep the living water overflowing in our hearts, we keep pouring our hearts out to Him in prayer so that He can pour in His Spirit.

To the hungry, Jesus says, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever” (John 6:51). Spiritual hunger is just as real as physical hunger. It is something God put in us. He is the only One who can satisfy our spiritual appetite because He is the Bread of Life, and He is offering it to us. In the physical sense, if I had only eaten one meal five years ago, I would not be alive today. We have to continue to supply our physical needs, and the same is true for spiritual needs; we have to continually partake of the Bread of Life. We must keep hungering after Him.

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” There could not be a plainer invitation. This verse is often shared with

sinners, but it was actually part of a message for the churches of that day. Some of the believers had backslidden and some had become lukewarm in their faith—they were no longer hungry or thirsty for God. That is dangerous, and that is who Jesus was calling.

In Revelation 22:17 Jesus said, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Now, there is an invitation that ought to bring us on our faces before God! Jesus’ call goes out to each one of us.

### Rise up

Imagine what would have happened if Bartimaeus had only asked for physical healing. In that case, he might not have received anything from God, but he certainly would have missed out on the greatest blessing. Thank God, that is not what happened! He surrendered everything to Jesus and the Lord saved his soul and healed his body.

Are you ready to receive what the Lord wants to give you? It’s one thing to hear about an encounter with Jesus, and it’s another thing to experience the Christ of Calvary for ourselves. The Word of God is alive, and He is the same from generation to generation. The people told Bartimaeus, “Rise; he calleth thee,” and it is time for us to rise up now and tell Jesus, “I need You to supply my every need, and I give You everything.” A full surrender is the way to bring the blessings of Heaven. No matter what your need is, the same Jesus who met Bartimaeus and who met me as a child, will meet you today. ♦



**REVEREND  
MARJORIE REID**

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# A REDEEMED HEART and a RECONCILED HOME

A family that had been destroyed  
by sin was reunited by the Gospel.



BY CHRIS NKHATA

“He that hath the Son  
hath life; and he that  
hath not the Son of  
God hath not life.”  
— 1 John 5:12



In the small  
town of  
Kadoma,  
Zimbabwe,  
I was the  
firstborn

in a family of nine children. I was brought up in a Christian home, though we lacked a full understanding of the Gospel. The church we went to didn't preach a born-again experience of salvation. Despite this, my parents were true Christians and were sincere in their desire to serve God. In the mornings, I would hear them singing praises to God, and from a young age, that touched my heart. My mother taught me the Bible and at church, I learned to memorize Scripture. One of the early verses I memorized was, “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12). My father was a praying man. Over time, he became known as a prayer warrior, and people brought their concerns to him to pray about. My siblings and I would hear him praying earnestly in the early morning hours, again in the evenings before we fell asleep, and then sometimes at midnight. His prayers were powerful, and they touched my

I BEGAN IMITATING MY father's actions by spending time alone in the bush, praying out loud as I had heard him do.



soul, especially when they woke me at night.

While growing up, I was not serious about Christianity; I was just a churchgoer. However, I yearned to one day be just like my father, serving this great God and worshipping Him with my own wife and children. Without having any understanding of what that meant, I began imitating my father's actions by spending time alone in the bush, praying out loud as I had heard him do. My prayers were one-sided, because I didn't have a real relationship with God. However, developing this habit, along with being brought up in a Christian home, laid the foundation for later having a heart to seek God.

When I was twenty-one years old, I married a young lady named Ellen. We left God out of our lives, and there was no joy in our home, even after our daughter was born. When she was six months old, Ellen took her and returned to live with her parents, because our marriage was so unhappy. Left on my own, I began to lead a sinful life.

Then, by God's grace, when I was nearly twenty-four, someone invited me to an Apostolic Faith church service. I went and the minister preached on salvation as a born-again experience with the power to transform lives. He said God could change a person's heart, making him able to live without sinning. I was shocked by the message. I had felt privileged to have a background of attending

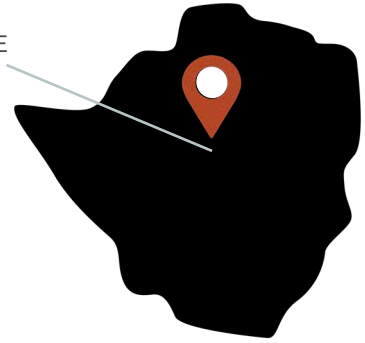
church, and yet I had never heard this. I realized I was lost in sin and said in my heart, "God, may You have mercy on me." The moment the sermon ended, I rushed to the altar and cried out to God, pleading for my soul. Altar workers surrounded me offering encouragement, and I prayed, "Lord, take away my sin and make me a true Christian like these people." God was so gracious; He answered my prayer and forgave my sins. His Spirit came into my heart, filling my soul with joy and giving me such peace.

In the days following, the family of God was so welcoming that I just sank in among them. The love I felt from the Apostolic Faith people in that small town was overwhelming. At the same time, their love caused me to miss my own family, and while I glorified God for salvation, it was with a broken heart. It had been more than a year since I had seen my wife and child. I cried out to God that He would reunite us, and He gave me the assurance that He would.

### **My marriage restored**

God created an opportunity for me to visit my wife at her parents' home. When I arrived, Ellen was surprised to see me and my daughter ran from me because I was a stranger to her. I told Ellen I had come first and foremost to apologize for the ways I had wronged her and then to invite her to return home. She was suspicious of

KADOMA,  
ZIMBABWE



my motives and didn't give in easily, but I insisted that Jesus had come into my heart and transformed my life. I told her, "I am not the man you once knew. I am a Christian now." At last, she forgave me and then I had to convince my in-laws that my intentions were good. God prevailed and they forgave me also, allowing my family to go with me.

From then on, our lives were very different than before. Salvation had done a powerful work in my heart, and I had so much love for my wife and child. I wanted Ellen to know God the way I did, but she knew little of the Gospel and was not interested. I prayed for her as she reluctantly attended church with me, and in time she too gave her heart to the Lord. After



« Left: Chris and Ellen's wedding in 1976.  
Right: Chris leaving for the job God provided.



receiving salvation, she told me, “I will never leave you again.” The family that had been destroyed by sin was reunited by the Gospel.

## Transformed by salvation

The state of my marriage was not the only change that salvation brought into my life. For one thing, my prayers were no longer one-sided. Praying was an opportunity to commune with God and receive instruction, guidance, and provision for all my needs. I received everything through prayer. When I needed a job, I sought the mind of God. When it was time to move to the next level in my career, I did not go to my supervisor for a promotion, but went to the Lord. And when I needed to go deeper in my walk with God, I went to the mountains and prayed, and He helped me make consecrations. As our family grew to include three more children, I enjoyed praying with them and encouraging them to have the type of prayer life my father had exemplified.

Another change in my life was that God helped me to focus my thoughts. This made me able to study, improve my education, and do well in the workplace.

When I first became a Christian, my education was limited to primary school. Then God helped me obtain a Junior Certificate. Working and studying left only a few hours each night for sleeping, but I

## My BA is the Born-Again experience.

leaned on God and He made it possible. Later, I took night school classes to complete my general education before pressing on and receiving an Associate’s diploma in



⤴ Above: Chris with grandsons Ephraim, Esau, and Jacob.

## I had a greater burden for souls and loved to share my testimony in prisons, in street meetings, in the small mining towns, and in my neighborhood.

Bookkeeping. Though I did not obtain a Bachelor’s degree, God gave me jobs that required one and then enabled me to do the work. This led me to tell people, even in interviews, “My BA is the Born-Again experience.”

### A deeper walk

While attending church, I heard messages on sanctification, the second work of grace that removes the root of sin from one’s heart. As I prayed for this experience, God showed me that I needed to make restitution for something I had stolen before being saved. I went to my former place of employment and told the manager about what God had done for me. Then I tried to pay for what I had taken, but he refused the money. Through tears, he said, “Give that money to the church and pray that God will do for me what He has done for you.” I went home praising God. Then, I continued seeking Him through prayer and consecration, asking, “Lord, make me holy,” and He sanctified me. He granted me

the grace to live a holy life in this present wicked world.

In time, I learned about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and began earnestly seeking God for this experience also. This became a special time of drawing closer to the Lord and deepening my prayer life. I developed such a hunger for more of God that I prayed day and night—at home, in the bush, and in the mountains. When I was about twenty-nine years old, God filled me with His Holy Spirit and I spoke in a language I had not learned.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit increased my desire and ability to tell others about what God had accomplished in my life. I had a greater burden for souls and loved to share my testimony in prisons, in street meetings, in the small mining towns, and in my neighborhood. I would come home from work in the evenings, sit down to dinner, and feel that God’s Words were burning within me. My heart would break for lost souls and the tears would begin to flow. Then I would tell my wife, “I can’t



eat. I am going out to tell others about Jesus.” Outside, I would walk up and down in the streets proclaiming the Gospel into the night air.

This was not a lost cause. One time, a neighbor approached me in the street saying, “I heard you talking about sinners going to Hell, and I am one. Help me.” Then he fell on his knees crying and praying. Right behind him, another man came, saying, “I heard you too. What can I do?” We went to the house of one of these men, and they called others to join us. I wasn’t a minister, so I just shared my testimony with the group. Then one by one, they fell to their knees praying, and God saved them.

## Answered prayers

Over the years, God has answered prayers too numerous to count. He brought most of my siblings into this Gospel. In addition, He has been the Healer, Protector, and Provider for my family. One time, I lost my job when the company I worked for became insolvent. At that time, I was about thirty-two and had a family of five to support. As a Christian, I wanted to trust God to supply all our needs. Instead of going to town and sitting with the unemployed hoping to be hired, I prayed at home. After seven days, God’s Spirit prompted me to go join the flow of workers entering the town at the start of the workday. I took my Bible and went, but then didn’t have a job to go to, so I sat down under a tree and read God’s promises. Then I prayed, “Lord, I need this job today for Your glory. If You give me one tomorrow, I might think it is a coincidence.” After a time, I felt a sudden urging to “Rise up! Go get your job.” I spoke to the security guard at a nearby building and was taken

to the manager. I told him, “God sent me here for a job.” He was surprised and asked two senior clerks for their opinions. They both said to hire me, and he gave me a salesclerk position. I went away rejoicing in what God can do! There was no application, no interview, and I eventually became a supervisor in that company.

Another answer to prayer took place when I was in my early forties. There were economic challenges in Zimbabwe, so I sought God for a job in South Africa. He provided a position at a car rental company as an administrative manager. However, the managing director did not have full confidence in my abilities and made the job probationary. In the first month, God miraculously secured my job by helping me accomplish something others had not been able to do. Then a second miracle took place. My managing director called me into his office and said, “You must be a Christian.” He told me that he had left God years ago, and now his wife had left him, and he was alone. I encouraged him to repent, saying God would restore his marriage. We committed to praying about the matter, and two days later, he called me saying, “Praise God; I’m born again!” Then he asked, “What can we do about my wife?” I said, “Let me pray about it and then call her.” It took several attempts to get past her father, convince her to listen to my testimony, and then persuade her to meet with her husband. However, they did meet, and when she saw how God had changed her husband’s heart, they were reconciled. They invited me to dinner afterward, and there was such joy in that home! Another marriage that had been destroyed by sin was restored by the Gospel.



*Above:  
After Ellen’s  
passing,  
in 2024  
Chris and  
Josephine  
married  
and are now  
serving God  
together in  
Malawi.*

## Retirement

After nearly twenty years at three different companies, I retired and was asked to oversee the Apostolic Faith work in Malawi. The need there was great, and I was thankful to have the ever-faithful support of Ellen working beside me in God’s vineyard. Then in January 2022, she went on to receive her reward in Heaven. That was a very difficult time, but through the prayers and encouragement of the saints, the Lord gave me the strength to press on. In time, God blessed me with another companion, Josephine, and she has proved to be a wonderful partner in the ministry.

I am so thankful that I found this wonderful Gospel that changes lives. God restored my marriage, gave me four Christian children, and has seen me through all of life’s challenges. Now my heart’s desire is to fulfill my assignment in Malawi, winning souls for Jesus. He has promised to keep me to the end, and I commit the remainder of my days to serving Him. ♦

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**REVEREND CHRISTOPHER MATEYU NKHATA** is the Apostolic Faith District Superintendent of Malawi.

# GOD HAS BEEN MY TEACHER

Sharon's car and shop were gone, but she learned lessons that remain.



BY SHARON ASHE

I went to the altar and asked the Lord to save me, and He did. I knew I was a child of God.

**B**

efore I was born, my father was saved at the Apostolic Faith Church in Los Angeles,

California. He met my mother at a camp meeting in Portland, Oregon, and after they married, they settled in his hometown of Key West, Florida, and raised nine children there.

My father was zealous about spreading the Gospel. He would preach about Jesus on the street corners and took our family to retirement homes to sing to the elderly and talk to them about the Lord. Unfortunately, there was no Apostolic Faith Church in Key West. We read the Bible and prayed together as a family, but it was only us.

My dad was very careful about the activities we were allowed to do. I wanted to fit in with the kids at school, but the restrictions in our home seemed to get in the way. So to me, the Gospel appeared to be all rules and regulations. Though I never went deep into sin in my youth, I also didn't give my heart to the Lord.

After graduating from high school, my plan was to work for two years and then go to



⤴ Sharon is water baptized by Rev. Darrel Lee and Rev. Darryl Northup at the 1996 Portland Camp Meeting.



## MY GOALS AFTER GRADUATION



Mercifully, God had other plans for my life. The funding for college fell through and I began a full-time job at a local retail store.

college. My goal for college was not to get a degree, but to be the most popular girl on campus. I purposed in my heart to do whatever it took, even ignoring my Christian upbringing if it got in the way of my achieving that goal. Mercifully, God had other plans for my life. The funding for college fell through and I began a full-time job at a local retail store.

In 1996, when I was twenty-one years old, my dad said our family would be attending camp meeting in Portland. The Lord had been talking to me and I decided that I would pray through to salvation if I went to camp meeting. But before we went, unexpected expenses came up and the trip had to be cancelled. I did not give it much thought until I heard my mother on the phone trying to purchase one ticket for a last-minute flight to Portland. Somehow, my father found out that I was intending to get saved, and he made a way to get me to the camp meeting. It was my first time away from the security of my family, but I knew God would somehow protect me and see that I made it to Portland despite having never traveled alone before.

I kept my commitment and after the first service I went to

the altar and asked the Lord to save me, and He did. Two days later, He sanctified me. Not much changed on the outside, but there was a big difference on the inside. I knew I was a child of God.

Back in Key West, I continued working in retail. After a few years, I was employed at a business owned by a very nice couple, and they promoted me to be their buyer. They paid me a good wage, yet somehow, I became dissatisfied. I felt I was capable of doing more and earning more. Although I didn't feel right about quitting, I decided to do it anyway. I opened my own store and at the same time, purchased a new car and a house. These were all decisions that I should have prayed about, but I didn't because I wanted my own way.

I learned the hard way why it is important to pray about major decisions and to follow God's leading. Before I even moved into my new house, I was unable to pay my bills. I ended up having to rent out the house while I slept on a cot at the back of my shop.

As I struggled to keep up with my bills, the Lord started talking to me about how I had left Him out of my plans. One day, the



**“YOU ARE THE KING OF GLORY”** came on the radio. I got on my knees to pray, and the Spirit came down and baptized me right there.

Holy Spirit convicted me and I felt the need to make sure I was still saved. I prayed, repenting of having gone my own way and ignoring God's direction. I asked God to forgive me and by the time I finished praying, I had the assurance that I was saved and sanctified.

A short time later, while I was laying on my cot one night, the song “You Are the King of Glory” came on the radio. I got on my knees to pray, and the Spirit came down and baptized me right there. I was so grateful for that. I had made such a mess with my foolish decisions, and I expected God would be upset. Instead, He had mercy and patience for me. God is so good and his love for me had not changed.

In 2005, Hurricane Wilma caused major flooding throughout our city. I lost my car in the flooding and then had to close my shop because people were only buying essential goods and services. It seemed like God was leading me back to the point where I had first veered from His plan—my car and shop were gone, and I moved in with my sister and took a job in retail again. I told the Lord, “This time, I will stay until You tell me to leave.” At one point another



store owner tried to recruit me, but I didn't even consider it. I had learned my lesson.

By that time in my life, I thought I knew a lot about sales, but I actually had a lot to learn, and God was the One who taught me. In His time, He led me into a management position at a new company. I was never trained for it, but God showed me how to do it. Every strategy that I implemented came from Him. Methods and procedures that my superiors should have taught me, God revealed to me and helped me to accomplish.

### DESPITE MY MISTAKES

God showed me mercy by allowing me to sell the house rather than lose it in foreclosure, and I thank Him for that.



into His hands—if He wanted me to keep the house, I knew He would make a way, but if it was not His will, I would let it go.

In a miraculous way, God did provide the funds to save my house and the foreclosure was dismissed. But eventually, He laid it on my heart to sell the house and pay back the debts that I owed, one of them being a personal loan that I had taken in order to purchase the house. Many years later, I still had not been able to repay it. I understood that I had obtained the house in ways that were outside of God's will, and I needed to make those things right. Despite my mistakes, God still showed me mercy by allowing me to sell the house rather than lose it in foreclosure, and I thank Him for that.

never own a house again, I know there is a home waiting for me in Heaven.

In 2016, a small Apostolic Faith church group was established in Key West, and we also have a Sunday school program with mostly children from Haitian immigrant families. I didn't know anything about teaching Sunday school when we started, but God has been showing me. He helps me with everything I do. Most of the children who come are not from Christian homes and some of them are already dealing with heavy problems. I feel honored that God has entrusted me to plant seeds of the Gospel in their lives. When I see them start to understand, it warms my heart. I absolutely love it.

I was also asked to lead our congregation's weekly Bible study and to preach once a month. I didn't feel qualified to do that either, but I told God I was willing if He would teach me what to do, and He has been helping me.

Recently, God also made a way for me to open my own shop again. This time, I did it His way, and I can see opportunities for Him to use the space to also help our Sunday school community. God's ways are truly higher than ours.

God has been so patient and so good to me. He has helped me to understand that what I want is not always best, but if I let go of what I want, then He can give me His best. It took me a while to learn that, but I'm thankful I understand it now. I am forever grateful for God's great love for me. ♦



*Left: Sharon with her Sunday school class. Right: Students hold up their classwork.*



*Right: The aftermath of Hurricane Wilma*



The house sold in just three days, and immediately I felt free! I hadn't realized that my financial debts were a burden that I carried daily. It was wonderful to know that my record was clear and my integrity was no longer compromised. And even if I

I had thought that without a college education, it would be impossible to advance in my career, but I found that when I stayed in God's will, all things became possible. Instead of taking credit for myself or relying on a degree, I knew that all the glory belonged to God.

One unresolved issue from my past was the house that I had purchased. Housing prices are extremely high in Key West, and in 2008 the market dropped and my house went into foreclosure. While I didn't want to lose it, I also knew that it had not been God's will for me to make that purchase in the first place. When I received the foreclosure notice, I got down and prayed until I knew I wanted God's will more than my own. I put the whole situation

**SHARON ASHE** serves as a minister at the Apostolic Faith group in Key West, Florida.



## JOSHUA HOPKINS

### Van Buren, Arkansas

There was a time when just the thought of camp meeting would bring conviction on my life, but now I give God glory and thanks for saving my soul.

I wasn't saved at a camp meeting, but in the days leading up to one. I was at home and depressed. I was angry at the people at church and had decided that I would never go back. However, I knew there was good fellowship during camp meetings. I started to think about all the people who would be there and that I wouldn't get to see them. Conviction really set in, but I tried to resist it.

I didn't want to listen to God and told Him to leave me alone. I reached for the remote to my three-disc CD player and hit disc 3, track 6. I knew what song would play and turned up the volume, planning to drown out the Holy Spirit. However, the song started playing and it wasn't what I expected. There was a soft piano prelude and then the words, "The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen could ever tell. It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell."

When I heard the words that God's love reaches to the lowest hell, I could just see myself in my mind's eye walking on a path, and I knew where I was going. I couldn't imagine that God still loved me, but the lyrics said that He did. I just prayed, "God, if You're there, save me," and He did. Thank the Lord. ♦



## MARIA GREEN

### Portland, Oregon

The Lord called me to a walk with Him when I was twenty-four, and I am thankful. I grew up going to church and learned the Bible stories. I also grew up knowing that Jesus died on the Cross, loving Him, and always wanting to please Him. However, I did not know about being born again and having a personal relationship with Him. I wanted to be a good person but could never live right no matter how hard I tried, and it was a little frustrating. Then, when I was in college, I met some friends who were not the best influences on me, and I gave up trying to please Jesus. I did things I later regretted.

About that time, God saved my brother and I saw the new way he was living. I was curious about this but wasn't sure it was for me. I attended some of the church music events that he was in and thought they were amazing, but nothing else registered with me.

After graduation, I got a job in the field I wanted to work in, I had a car, and I got an apartment in the cool part of the city. I should have been happy, but instead I was miserable and didn't know

why. One day, I was having a meltdown and was so confused about what was wrong. I talked to my brother, and he tried to tell me that I was under conviction, but I did not know what that meant. He also said there was a better way to live, but I was stubborn and didn't want to hear that I was a sinner. Then, while he was speaking, I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in the room. This was a feeling I recognized from when I was a child, and something inside me responded to it.

Over the next few months, I started reading a Bible, which had been in the bottom of a box in my closet. God saw that there was still something in me that wanted to do right, and He led me. As I read, I realized that God's Word is true and alive, and it challenged my stubborn thinking.

One evening, I was out with a friend and my brother called and invited me to church. I said no, but after hanging up, my friend decided to go home, so I showed up at church. At the close of the service, when it was time for everyone to stand for prayer, I felt the Lord's hand of conviction on me. The weight of my sins was so heavy that I could not stand up. It was amazing how God made the truth so real to me.

I didn't get saved that night because there were some things that I was not ready to give up. However, over the next couple of days, the Lord drew me until I was ready to do whatever it took. I prayed, giving up everything, and the Lord saved me. A short time later He sanctified me and filled me with His Holy Spirit.

I am grateful that I have the Lord. I would not want to live in this world without Him. ♦

# WHERE IS YOUR TREASURE?

Earthly possessions will pass away, but treasures in Heaven will last forever.



BY ROSIE LAMBERT

What we love is very important, and it reflects where our treasure is.

W

hen reading Matthew 6 recently, the last phrase of verse 21 really caught my attention: “For

where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” I noted that there is a connection between our treasures and our hearts. What we love is very important, and it reflects where our treasure is.

The definition of a *treasure* is “a quantity of precious metals, gems, or other valuable objects.” Usually, treasures have a high price tag, and once acquired, people will not easily part with them. Some are even considered “priceless”—too cherished to be sold at any price. These might include family heirlooms, time spent with loved ones, our health, and so forth. Anything that we guard carefully and count as precious can be considered a treasure.

In the lead up to those words in Matthew 6:21, Jesus taught, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do



“FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO.”

Matthew 6:21





not break through nor steal.” Jesus’ advice in these verses is very practical. He was pointing out that it is foolish to prioritize earthly treasures because they are short-lived. They can be taken away from us at any time. Even if they are never stolen or lost, we still must part with them at the end of our lives. And even if our children can enjoy them after us, eventually all of it will be lost because Scripture teaches that one day everything in this world is going to burn up. We read, “The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10). Since all the material things around us will be destroyed, they are not a lasting investment. On the other hand, what we gain in Heaven will be secure for all eternity.

Jesus also warned against trying to prioritize both treasure in Heaven and on earth. He said it’s not possible. In Matthew 6:24 He said, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” We can’t have it both ways. If we don’t choose to value eternal things and make them our priority, our attention will go to earthly things and they will become most important to us. One will always win over the other.

Since our hearts and treasures are connected, we can understand that loving the right things will help us follow Jesus’ instruction to lay up treasures in the right place. The focus has to be on our hearts.

## A personal gauge

As I meditated on Jesus’ words in Matthew 6:21, I thought of four things that could help to reveal where my heart is. This

list can be used as a gauge for anyone interested in investing in what matters most.

**Love for God’s Word.** When I was growing up, my dad loved Scripture and he quoted it constantly. While he was making breakfast, getting ready for work, walking through the house—he was always quoting Bible verses.

Seven years before he died, he suffered a major stroke and his left side was paralyzed, but with God’s help he learned to walk again. He tried to go for a one-mile walk every day, and sometimes in the middle of it he would feel like he couldn’t go on. Then he would quote Joel 3:10, “Let the weak say I am strong,” and he could finish. His life verse was Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,” and his last words before he passed away were, “This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24). Having a father like that really affected me. He helped me see the value of Scripture and I have learned to love it as he did.

Do we read the Bible every day? Do we cherish it? Psalm 119:105 says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” God’s Word is eternal and it gives us the most critical guidance that we need in life. When we take time to know and understand it more deeply, and apply it to the way we live, we are investing in eternity.

**Love for God’s house.** How much do we love God’s house? How much effort are we willing to exert to be there, or what will we refrain from doing in order to be there? Psalm 27:4 says, “One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.” And Psalm 122:1 says, “I was glad when they said unto me,



### LAY NOT UP TREASURES in the earth.

*They can be taken away from us at any time.*

### DO NOT TRY TO PRIORITIZE BOTH TREASURE in Heaven and on earth.

*No man can serve two masters.*

Let us go into the house of the LORD.” We are glad to come to God’s house because that is where God so often speaks to us through songs, testimonies, His Word, teachings, and in prayer. It is a way for us to encourage others as well, which also has eternal value.

**Love for prayer.** At certain times, like during camp meetings and special meetings, I find it easier to spend time in prayer. After camp meeting last year, for a couple weeks we had very few services, and I found myself thinking, *How should I spend my time now?* The Lord spoke to my heart the Scripture that says, “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest . . . if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Philippians 4:8). That guidance was so helpful for keeping my mind on Him and maintaining a spirit of prayer even though our church schedule changed.

Do we love to spend time in prayer? We read in James 5:16, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” When we’re praying, we’re laying up eternal treasures in Heaven.

**Love for souls.** How valuable is a soul? There is nothing we could give in exchange for a soul. One soul is more valuable than anything in the entire world, and even more valuable than all of it put together. Proverbs 11:30 says, “He that winneth souls is wise.” We read in James 5:20: “He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death.” The value we place on souls will directly



### Love GOD’S WORD.

### Love GOD’S HOUSE

### Love to PRAY.

### Love SOULS.

impact how much we invest in winning them for eternity.

Our love for the things of God matters a great deal because it reveals where our hearts are. Where our treasure is, that is where our hearts will be. If we ask God to cultivate these areas of our lives, the natural outcome will be that we will lay up treasures in Heaven.

## What to do with earthly treasure

Having treasures in Heaven doesn't mean that we cannot also own things of value here on earth. Some believers have many possessions and plenty of money, and there are many examples of such individuals using their resources to advance God's kingdom.

The Bible gives instruction for what to do with earthly wealth. Psalm 62:10 says, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Many of us have heard the advice, "Hold it with a loose hand." If we have something of earthly value, we want to be ready to let it go at any time should God require it. In 1 John 2:15 we read, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is not *having* but *loving* the things of the world that is harmful. We must not allow anything to compete with our love for God.

Lot's wife is an example of one who valued earthly possessions too much. In Luke 17, Jesus was speaking to his disciples about His return and told them, "Remember Lot's wife." She was living in Sodom when God decided to destroy the city because of its wickedness. Lot's uncle, Abraham, interceded for his family, so God sent angels to rescue them. However, the family did not want to leave their home. Lot's sons-in-law did not believe what the angels had said and he lingered rather than quickly obeying. Lot, his wife, and two of their daughters had to be taken by the hand and pulled out of the city. They were told not to look back at Sodom, but Lot's wife did look back and she perished.

Sodom was located in the well-watered plains of Jordan and it was likely very beautiful. Lot's family initially pitched their tent toward Sodom and eventually ended up inside the city. It could have been that they were leaving behind a beautiful home there. We know for sure that they had two daughters and sons-in-law there, and Lot's wife didn't want to leave. Her treasures were there, her heart was there, and consequently she did not obey the heavenly instructions and was destroyed with the city.

Jesus told us to remember Lot's wife so that we will not repeat her mistake. If God has blessed us with some nice things that we enjoy, that is wonderful, but we still need to be ready to let



**"IF RICHES INCREASE, SET NOT YOUR HEART UPON THEM."**

Psalm 62:10

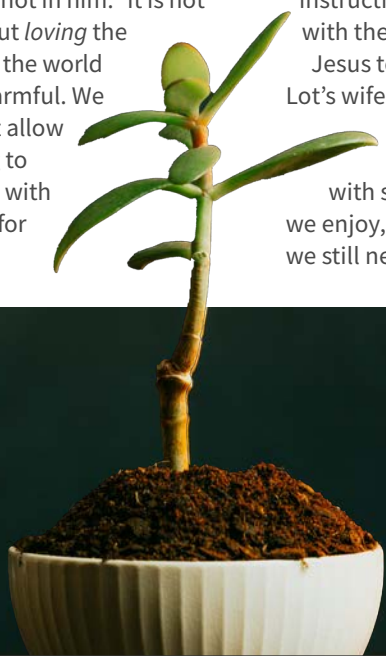
go of them in a moment. The Lord could return at any time, and we must be prepared to leave everything in this world behind.

## The best investment

When we choose to serve God and make our investments in Heaven, we often end up improving our lives on earth, too. For example, Matthew 6:33 says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." If we will seek God first, He will also take care of our material needs. We read in 1 Timothy 4:8, "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." A godly life brings benefits both now and in eternity. Our greatest reward will be in Heaven, but thank God for the many blessings He gives us here also. He is so good.

Where is your heart? Where do you spend your time, thoughts, energy, and money? Every day, we make investments—both earthly and heavenly. Let's remember that all our material possessions will one day be gone but our reward in Heaven will be everlasting. Let's lay up treasures in Heaven today. ♦

**ROSIE LAMBERT** worships at the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon, where her husband serves as senior pastor.



**EVERY DAY, WE MAKE INVESTMENTS—BOTH EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY.**



**SASHA BURTON**  
Port Angeles, WA

I was not born into a Christian home, but I'm thankful that God saved me when I was in the ninth grade. Just before that, a friend of mine was saved at youth camp, and that made an impression on me. When we got home from camp I could see a difference in her. I saw that God was real.

Then one night when my parents were fighting at home, instead of walking around the block like I usually did, I decided to pray. I knew that God had done something special in my friend's life and that He could do something special in me, too. I'm so thankful that I took advantage of that. I prayed at my bedside and the Lord came down and saved me. That night, He changed my life completely. I used to use foul language and I dressed terribly, but God changed my desires and the way that I live. I can hardly believe that was almost twenty years ago now, and God has kept me.

When I was younger, I thought I would never get married, or that if I did get married, I would probably get divorced like others in my family. But God did not let that happen. He gave me a good husband, someone that I can depend on and pray with, and we have a Christian home. I didn't have that as a child but I'm so thankful that I have it now and that I can pass it on to my children. I thank God for everything He has done for me. ♦

# 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.”*

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# DEDICATED TO GOD'S SERVICE

Saints in the UK, the Dominican Republic, Canada, and Japan rejoice as new church buildings are dedicated to the work of the Lord in 2024.

## UNITED KINGDOM: ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND



**T**

he saints in Aberdeen rejoiced on August 4 at the dedication of the first Apostolic Faith Church in

Scotland. This was the culmination of years of fervent prayers for a permanent place of worship.

About one hundred were in attendance for the service, which began with the orchestra playing “He Is Here,” followed by the choir singing “Glorious Is Thy Name.” Then Mark Mfandarahwa, Western Europe District Superintendent, welcomed everyone and recognized special guests, including Juliet Aina, in whose home the work began.

As the service continued, Francis Odudu, the Regional Superintendent for Mainland Europe, offered the opening prayer. During the announcements,

Reverend Mfandarahwa gave a brief history of the work in Aberdeen. It began in 1998 when John Aina moved his family from Nigeria to Scotland and began holding Sunday services in his living room. The Ainas were young and raising a family, but that did not keep them from fully dedicating their lives to God’s service. They made sacrifices to provide services and meals in their home and to travel to other cities sharing the Gospel.

By 2001, the group had increased from four to fifteen. As attendance continued to climb, it became necessary in 2002 to move the services from the Aina home to a rented hall. That same year, Seun Ogunleye emigrated from Nigeria to attend school in Scotland. He became instrumental in growing



*Above: Scenes from the dedication day. Top Right: (left to right) Pastor Matthew Ibukun with his wife, Juliet, and Rev. Sola Adesope with his wife, Tolu.*

the work by inviting fellow students to the services. Soon, the congregation began sending buses to shuttle students from various campuses.

When John Aina died in January of 2006, his wife became the group's leader. Later, leadership passed to Winifred Eboh and then to Matthew Ibukun, who is the current pastor. During those years, the congregation grew steadily and produced two offshoot groups: one in Glasgow and the other in Edinburgh. The growth necessitated several moves from one rented space to another. The saints prayed, longing for a permanent place of worship, and God answered those prayers with the purchase of the Kingswells Parish Church in 2024.

The service continued with the choir singing "Surely the Presence." Then Reverend Ibukun gave the Scripture reading from Solomon's dedication prayer in 1 Kings 8:33-39 and Victor Idowu sang "Bless this House." The message by Superintendent General Sola Adesope was taken from 2 Chronicles 6:20-21. He focused on the function of the house of God as not just an ordinary building, but one set apart for God's purposes and glory. He also brought out that a dedicated house is useless without dedicated people. Everyone was encouraged to consecrate their lives fully to God's service as the Ainas had done.

Following the message, Reverend Ogunleye gave the dedication prayer, asking that God let His fire fall in Aberdeen and never burn out. Then the choir sang "To God Be the Glory" and Ola Balogun, the Regional Superintendent for Scotland, offered a prayer of benediction. The service concluded with a wonderful time of prayer around the altars.

With deep gratitude to God and a sense of joy and rejoicing, the Los Altos Apostolic Faith Church was dedicated on September 8.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: LOS ALTOS, SAN PEDRO DE MACORIS



The service was marked by a spirit of worship and was led by Cristian Tapia, who founded the work in his home almost ten years ago. An opening prayer was offered by Esperanza Tapia, and the music included a song from the San Pedro de Macoris combined choir and a solo by Luis Mey, another founding member of the congregation.

The sermon was given by District Superintendent Deivys Pichardo. Referencing Psalm 84 and Matthew 16:17-19, he spoke about the need for personal dedication and consecration to reach the lost. He emphasized, "We must have a call to evangelism and zeal for God," and declared that sacred place was to be consecrated as a center of worship and communion with God.

This inauguration is the result of a collaborative effort by the dozens of Apostolic Faith congregations spread across the small nation of the Dominican Republic. They look forward to continuing to walk alongside the saints in Los Altos, supporting each other in times of joy and in the challenges that will come. One who attended the dedication said, "United in our mission and connected in our faith, we move forward with hope and determination toward a future filled with blessings and opportunities for spiritual growth and service to our community." May this church building be a tangible reflection of their faith, inspiring great revival in Los Altos.



*Top: District Superintendent Deivys Pichardo speaks at the dedication.*

*Above: Scenes from the dedication service.*





## CANADA: HEADINGLEY, MANITOBA



To God be all the glory for the much-anticipated dedication of the Apostolic Faith Church in Headingley. A member of the congregation summed up how everyone felt with the comment, “We have prayed and looked forward to this weekend that is now finally here. Our hearts are bursting with joy and thanksgiving to God Almighty!”

The work in Headingley started in Winnipeg when three families began worshipping together in 2010, led by Samson Jimaza, who is now the pastor. In November of 2020, God provided the means for purchasing land, and construction of a church began in May of 2023. The building was completed on May 31 of this year and the congregation is delighted to have a permanent place of worship.

Nearly 370 people gathered on September 22 to celebrate the dedication, and a spirit of joy filled the sanctuary as the orchestra played “We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise” and the choir followed with “Great and Marvelous.” After an opening prayer by Akin Ajayi of Ibadan, Nigeria, the choir sang “Battle Hymn of the Republic” and “Oh Canada” in appreciation for the freedom of worship in that country.

Chris Hewlett, the Canada District Superintendent, gave remarks, acknowledging those who helped with the building project through their labor,

offerings, and prayers. He also praised God for this milestone, saying, “This is the Lord’s doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. Let us desire that the everlasting God of Heaven be exalted and present as worshipers gather in this sanctuary from Sunday to Sunday to honor, worship, and glorify Him.”

The service continued with the Scripture reading from 2 Chronicles 7:1-3. Then the choir sang “Bless this House” before Reverend Adesope brought the message. Reading from 2 Chronicles 7:15-16, he spoke on “The Function and Purpose of the House of God.” He said, “We dedicate this house as a place of forgiveness, prayer, and refuge. May it be a lighthouse where the standard of God’s Word is upheld, and may it also be a soul-saving station.”

Following the message, Reverend Hewlett gave the dedicatory prayer, after which the congregation sang “My Faith Looks Up to Thee.” Then the benediction was given by Marjorie Reid, who is the pastor in Langley, British Columbia, and was instrumental in overseeing the construction. The service concluded with a wonderful time of prayer around the altars. As individuals reconsecrated their lives to God, a sweet Spirit was present to bless and uplift.



*Top: The choir sings at the dedication service.*

*Middle: The congregation numbered over 350.*

*Bottom: (left to right) The Reids, Hewletts, Adesopes, and Jimazas.*



## JAPAN: KAWASAKI, KANAGAWA

The dedication of a new church building for our Kawasaki congregation was held on November 24. Seventy years ago, the first Apostolic Faith Church in Japan was dedicated after missionaries Arthur and Miriam Allen established a congregation in Tokyo. Eight years later, in 1962, a church building was established in Kawaski. When the Tokyo building was sold, a building was constructed in Kawasaki and dedicated in 1971. Earlier this year, it became necessary for that building to be demolished and replaced due to current needs and earthquake safety regulations. This new building had been the vision of Hidehiro Ouchi, who was pastor of the congregation for many years. Though Reverend Ouchi passed away several years ago, the Japanese Board of Directors and Yoshiki Ohno, the current pastor, followed through with his vision. They completed the new building to the glory of God.

Every seat in the sanctuary was filled as the service began with the reading of Psalm 70:4, "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified." This was followed by an opening prayer by Reverend Ohno. Then the congregation sang "Amazing Grace."

The service continued with South Korean District Superintendent Kim Jeong Min and his wife singing a vocal duet of "Grace." They sang each verse in one of the three languages of those present: Japanese, Korean, and English. Later, Philippines District Superintendent Fernan Fiegalan and his wife also provided a song special, "In Christ Alone." The



Holy Spirit was beautifully present during these special numbers as they sang for God's glory.

Before the dedication sermon, Reverend Ohno presented a Bible reading from 2 Chronicles 7:11-16, a portion of King Solomon's prayer at the Temple dedication in Jerusalem. The sermon was given by Director of East Asia Work Bill McKibben, who attended with his wife, Lori, on behalf of the world headquarters. Reverend McKibben took his text from 2 Chronicles 5:13-14, describing the glory and presence of God which filled the Temple as the priests and people worshipped after the Ark was placed in the Holy of Holies. Those attending were challenged not only to pray for God's glory to inhabit the new building but, more importantly, to inhabit each of their hearts. Following the sermon, the congregation sang the hymn "Praise the Lord" and then Reverend McKibben offered the dedicatory prayer.

To conclude the service, representatives from the construction company were honored. The visitors and local saints all left rejoicing in the goodness of God for providing this new place of worship. ♦



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*Top: A group photo after the dedication service. Middle: The exterior of the new church building. Bottom: (left to right) The Fiegalans, McKibbens, Ohnos, and Kims.*

# MARKING 80 YEARS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

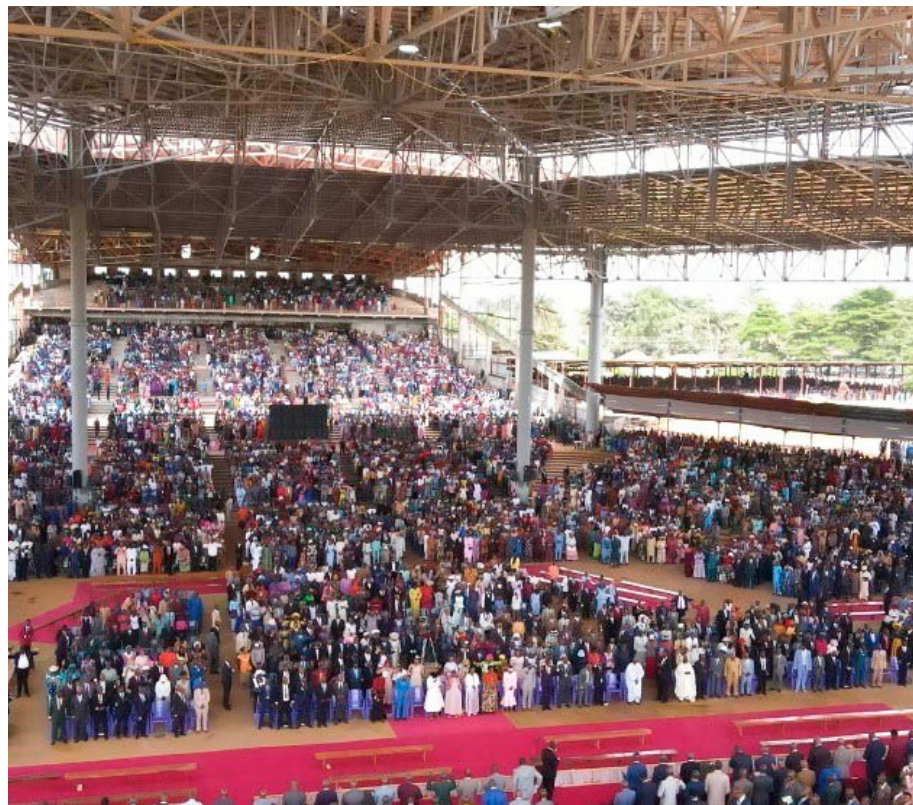
Recounting victories of the past inspires hearts to continue in the faith.

T

he 2024 camp meeting held in Nigeria was a special occasion marking the

eightieth anniversary of the Apostolic Faith work in West and Central Africa (WECA). The convention was held August 11-25 at the Faith City campground, with the added excitement of being the first meetings held under the new tabernacle dome. Well over 20,000 people attended, traveling from near and far, including Superintendent General Sola Adesope and his wife, Tolu.

The morning service of the opening Sunday began with a processional that included the choir and orchestra members presenting “O Mighty God” as they marched onto the platform, followed by the ministers. Then WECA District Superintendent Isaac Adigun welcomed the congregation and declared a day of thanksgiving for the miracle of the completion of the tabernacle roof. He asked all to stand, and then for several minutes everyone collectively praised God for His marvelous works. Reverend Adigun later explained that the new dome was completed “on the wings of faith.” It was done in five months, without one accident, without solicitation of funds, and amidst economic and security challenges. He



concluded his remarks with, “If God can build this tabernacle, He can undertake for your needs also.” (Visit the Apostolic Faith WECA YouTube channel to see a video of the new roof.)

The service continued with the orchestra playing “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” followed by the choir singing “Praise the Lord for He Is Gracious.” After congregational singing, WECA Board Member James Tifase led in prayer, asking God to pour out His blessings during the camp meeting.

The message was given by Reverend Adesope. He first



*Above: The congregation stands under the newly completed tabernacle roof.*

extended greetings on behalf of the saints at the world headquarters in Portland and then expressed appreciation for God and His people who make sacrifices for the Gospel. He noted that the work in Africa began as a tiny seed—prayer meetings in the home of Reverend Timothy Oshokoya—but has grown to produce many churches worldwide.

The sermon was titled “The Power of Praise” and was taken from Psalm 150:1-2, which includes “Praise God in his sanctuary. . . . Praise him for his mighty acts.” The congregation



## PHOTOS FROM THE CELEBRATION

was encouraged with the words, “We are in the right place at the right time. We are in God’s sanctuary by a mighty miracle. We have reason to sing and shout His praises.” The message concluded with a plea for the saints to use the tabernacle as a place to spark a renewed love for the Gospel. A wonderful prayer session followed.

On Monday morning, a dedication was held for a museum on the campground that highlights eighty years of Apostolic Faith history in Africa. A large crowd gathered outside the front doors and listened to a brief introduction and exhortation to continue the legacy set by the first leader of the work in Africa, Reverend Oshokoya. He created the motto “Africa for Christ” and later changed it to “The World for Christ.” Today, the fruits of this endeavor are seen all over the world in congregations that have roots in Nigeria.

After the dedicatory prayer, Reverend Adesope cut the ribbon and everyone entered for a guided tour. The exhibits consisted of photos, memorabilia, and literature chronicling the work from 1944 to the present day. The museum showcased what God has done, and is sure to inspire the next generation to move the Gospel forward, should the Lord tarry.

That evening, a documentary was presented that related the history of the Apostolic Faith work in Africa through photos, videos, and narration. Testimonies were shared of the Gospel pioneers in WECA, including their powerful conversions, faithful service, and miracles of provision and guidance. It was a reminder of how far God has brought His people, and an encouragement

to carry on the legacy they left. (Visit the Apostolic Faith WECA YouTube channel to watch the documentary.)

The annual camp meeting concert held on Saturday, August 17, also highlighted the eightieth anniversary. The program was presented by 550 choir and orchestra members and incorporated narration, trivia, historical performances, a children’s choir, and a sing-along session. Highlights included “How Great Thou Art” from the choir and orchestra, “Every Time I Feel the Spirit” sung a cappella, and “Africa Must Be Saved,” featuring the children’s choir. At one point, a number of musicians who have been in the work for over forty-five years were honored for their service. It was noted that the music department began with just two musicians and has grown to include over four thousand across the WECA region.

Another original film production was shown on Monday evening, August 19. This was a dramatization of the life and ministry of Reverend Oshokoya. The film vividly portrayed his unwavering dedication to the Gospel, highlighting the sacrifices he made to spread the Word of God. His life continues to inspire, encouraging the saints to remain steadfast in their faith and commitment to God’s work.

The entire camp meeting was marked by powerful messages, fervent prayer, and God’s outpoured blessings, including over four thousand who were saved, over two thousand sanctified, and nearly one thousand who were baptized with the Holy Spirit. In addition, more than five thousand experienced healing. Praise God for His abundant blessings! ♦



*Top to Bottom: An aerial view of the new tabernacle roof; Rev. Sola Adesope cuts the ribbon at the dedication of the WECA historical museum; Scenes from the camp meeting services.*





# FACING CHALLENGES

You'll have to exert yourself in order to succeed spiritually!



BY LOYCE CARVER

**A**

ll of us face challenges in life. Many of us find our jobs demanding. Perhaps we are dealing with raising children, making ends meet on a restricted income, or pursuing further education. Nothing worthwhile comes easily, so we put forth some effort to meet the challenges that come our way.

There is one challenge, however, that is vastly more important than any other we will face. And that is the need to fit into God's plan for man's existence. We might ask ourselves, What is life all about? What is our purpose for being? The Bible tells us that all of creation was created for God's pleasure. Revelation 4:11 says: "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." We are included in that phrase, "all things."

## The original challenge

We were created to honor God and bring pleasure to Him. When we set ourselves to do that, however, we'll face spiritual obstacles. Some of them will come in the form of withstanding direct confrontation with the enemy of our souls. In Genesis we read of the first spiritual confrontation. God spoke the world into

existence. He created Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, and breathed into them the breath of life. He gave them only one commandment: Take of all the fruit of the trees of the garden except of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And yet that one commandment was challenged by Satan.

Eve had a personal confrontation with Satan. We read in Genesis 3:1-4: "And he [Satan] said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

Satan challenged what God said then, and he challenges what God says now. Would Eve believe or disbelieve God? Would she listen to the plain commandment that God had given or would she listen to the serpent?

One of Satan's methods of challenging people is to turn things around. He tries to make the good look bad, and the bad look good. For example, he would like to make people think that Christianity is a way of boredom, unhappiness, and restrictions. Ask those who have lived a real Christian life through the years and they will say that

it's none of those things. But how the enemy would like to make people believe that lie!

Since that first encounter in the Garden of Eden, Satan has been out to destroy anything that would glorify God. The conflict isn't over. But between that sad beginning and God's ultimate victory, between this point and the moment when we enter into Glory, there's something for us to do. And that is for us to personally accept the challenge of fitting into God's plan for mankind.

## Choose to serve God

The first step in accepting that challenge is to turn our lives over to God. We know that God's love reaches out to all mankind. John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins, that we might be freed from them—forgiven. But we must repent of all wrongdoing and accept the provision His love has made for us.

Satan may challenge our intent to give our lives over to God by saying, "You don't want that. Think of what bondage you would be in!" Or, "You won't have your prayer answered. You're too unworthy." But the Bible says that God is no respecter of persons. He calls all men everywhere to repent. When we reach out to God, confessing and forsaking our



**WHAT IS LIFE ALL ABOUT? WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE FOR BEING?**

The Bible tells us that all of creation was created for God's pleasure.



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He would like to make people think that Christianity is a way of boredom, unhappiness, and restrictions.

sins, He will give us a new life in Him, and it will be a blessing and a joy to us.

We read in 1 Kings 18:21 how Elijah challenged the people of his day to come to God. The Children of Israel were confused and backslidden, away from God, and entrenched in the worship of Baal. He said to them, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

A simple statement, a simple challenge. Elijah told the prophets of Baal to build their altar and pray to their god. He would build his altar and pray to God. And the one who answered by fire would be acknowledged as the true God. The people agreed, the false prophets built their altar, and prayed for hours. They did everything they knew to cause their god to bring fire down, but nothing happened.

Elijah was not afraid. He knew God would answer him. When the Baal worshipers had tried and failed, Elijah made his altar. He placed the sacrifice on it, and had twelve barrels of water poured on top. Then he stood back and prayed, "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." Elijah had a desire for these people. He wanted them to fit into the plan God had for them. He wanted them to be a glory and a pleasure to God. And God answered Elijah's prayer by sending fire from Heaven. God may not send fire from Heaven to persuade us to give our lives to Him, but He is vitally concerned that we choose to serve Him.

**Choose to live carefully**

Once we have been born again, we will face the challenge of learning to walk with Christ. We're told to be careful what we learn. It makes a difference in our spiritual progress! Some look into one doctrine and then another, study one man's philosophy and another man's ideas. Be cautious! We are to believe the message only if it aligns exactly with God's Word. Paul told Timothy to "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them" (2 Timothy 3:14). Notice the little hint thrown in there: everything you hear may not be the right message. We must be careful what we hear and who we hear it from. As we walk in the light of God's Word, the light grows brighter and brighter (see Proverbs 4:18). It becomes all the more clearly apparent to us how we ought to live, in spite of every enticement of Satan to confuse us or make us pull back.



**THE FIRST STEP**

in accepting that challenge is to turn our lives over to God. We know that God's love reaches out to all mankind. John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Another challenge we face as Christians is to make the right spiritual decisions. God gave us the ability to make choices, and He gives us a free will. The challenge is to make decisions that will bring glory to God and be a spiritual benefit to us now, and for eternity.

We have many examples in the Bible of people who made decisions that brought positive results. In Acts 16 we read that Paul and Silas were in jail because they had healed a young woman possessed with an evil spirit. Did they complain and bemoan what had happened to them? No, they chose to pray and sing praises to God. They glorified Him in the blackness of that dungeon. They were doing what He ordained they should do. What was the result? God sent an earthquake, delivered them, and the jailer and his family were saved that night. The situation that faced them was a challenge, but they made the right decision.

No doubt Satan tried to tell Paul and Silas, "Look where you are. God obviously has forsaken you." But they didn't listen to that voice. We will have some trials to face. We don't know exactly what the outcome will be,

but we know the One who does know. If we accept the challenge to listen to the right voice—not the wrong one that tells us to feel sorry for ourselves, and give up—we will have victory.

There are people out there that tell us the Gospel isn't real, that no one can be saved, or that we cannot be victorious over sin. But our challenge is to listen to the still, small Voice of God that says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Satan comes to tempt us and say, "You can't do it. You shouldn't do it. Go

join the crowd." But we can say, "I will do what is right." If you do, you'll find victory.

### Choose to be an overcomer!

As heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, He will help us to successfully meet the spiritual challenges that come our way. We have a rightful heritage, an inheritance in Heaven that will not pass away. Think of it! Some people live in expectation

of inheriting another person's estate. They plan how they'll handle it, what they'll do with it. But we have something beyond all of that. We have an inheritance reserved for us for all eternity—if we let God have His way in our lives.

Doesn't that make facing the challenges worthwhile? ♦

**REVEREND LOYCE CARVER** was the leader of the Apostolic Faith work from 1965 until 1993. He passed away in 1996.

## A DAUNTING DILEMMA



**WHILE WE FACE A VARIETY** of challenges in life individually, there are some that can only be confronted as a group. In 1930, Apostolic Faith workers faced an overwhelming dilemma concerning the headquarters church and office building, located at Sixth and Burnside in Portland, Oregon.

The crisis arose when the city proposed a plan for widening Burnside that would take twenty feet from each side of the street. This loss would mean extensive alterations and numerous difficult changes to the south side of the church building. The rented stores on the main floor would have to be reconstructed, the building entrance changed, and cloakrooms moved to the annex. Also, the whole interior would need restructuring, including adding a balcony in the church sanctuary to compensate for lost seating.

Though these alterations seemed great, not one compared to the problem of tearing down and rebuilding the exterior brick wall. It seemed that every option would ruin the appearance of the building, because no duplicate brick was available and a substitute would give a patched look.

As the problem lay heavy on the hearts of Gospel workers, they prayed and God gave inspiration. They would separate the outer wall from the building, demolish the required twenty feet, and move the wall across that space to reattach it. If accomplished, this would be an extraordinary feat—the exterior wall was one-foot thick, forty-four feet high, and one hundred feet long. In addition, it stood twelve feet above the sidewalk over plate glass front windows. Could such a wall be moved successfully? City engineers said no and house movers declined the job.

Prayer over the matter continued, and a member of the congregation who had supervised the original construction of the building drew up plans for this unique project. Though he had never moved a brick wall before, William Paulson worked out an ingenious system of constructing parallel tracks on heavy timbers. Solid steel rollers would be placed at intervals under the wall and run along the parallel tracks while custom wedges kept the wall from swaying. Meanwhile, surveying instruments would gauge the wall's movement so that it would fit into its true position.

The moving of the wall began at 8:00 o'clock in the evening with members of the congregation on the scene watching and praying. Still others were at home praying throughout the night. The move was

accomplished by means of jacks, operated by volunteers who were mainly musicians from the choir and orchestra. Their understanding of rhythm aided greatly in the success—the jack handles had to be turned at precise intervals, perfectly timed to electric, colored lights.

By 5:00 o'clock the next morning, the move was complete, and the wall had been placed within one-sixteenth of an inch of the exact position desired. By God's help and guidance, this seemingly insurmountable challenge had been overcome.

We may not be called upon to move a wall, but many of us will face challenges in the Gospel that seem overwhelming. We can trust that if we will take the matter to God in prayer and move at His command, He will work on our behalf. ♦



# 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](http://www.apostolicfaith.org). Before these magazines are sent out, they are always prayed over for the healing of the sick and the salvation of souls.

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*Jesus*  
THE LIGHT *of* THE WORLD