

# The Apostolic Faith

Earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

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## Heavenly Treasures in Earthen Vessels

### FROM THE WORD

By Josephine McElveen

*God's plan is to use our ordinary lives for His eternal purposes.*

In 1947, a young Bedouin boy was taking care of his father's goats near the ancient settlement of Qumran, on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. One of the goats went into a cave, so the young boy threw a rock into the cave's entrance to get the goat to come out. He heard the stone hit something and make a shattering sound, so later, he and his companions went in the cave to investigate. There he found a collection of large clay jars, and inside seven of those jars were the ancient scrolls that we know today as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Up to that time, the oldest Old Testament manuscript in existence was dated about 800 A.D. But the scrolls that were found that day were more than 2,000 years old, about 200 years before Christ! That young boy didn't know that what he found was of great value, but God had preserved a treasure—His written Word—in those earthen vessels.

In 2 Corinthians 4:7, we read of another treasure in earthen vessels. That verse states, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the



power may be of God, and not of us." Paul was writing to New Testament believers in the city of Corinth. He was letting them know that they had something precious within them, but it was not there to bring glory to themselves. The vessel was not important; it was what was inside the vessel that was significant. Most treasures are put in very protected places—vaults, lock boxes, or places deemed safe—but God chose to put His treasure in fragile, earthen vessels. Paul's message to those believers in Corinth

concerns us. We too are the earthen vessels of that verse in 2 Corinthians, and if we let Him, God will make us into usable vessels of honor.

### Vessels made from dust

The Bible teaches that we were made from the dust of the ground. Dust consists of very small particles of matter. It has no value; those of us who are homemakers are always trying to get rid of it! But God created us out of dust. In Genesis 2:7 we read, "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." Because of the breath of God within us, "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Whether you are saved or unsaved today, and whether or not you recognize it, you are made of dust by the hand of God, and you are living because the breath of God is within you. The Word of God also lets us know that one day this earthly vessel is going to return to dust, and our spirits will go into eternity.

While we live here on this earth, however, we are God's dwelling place if we are His followers. In 1 Corinthians 3:16 we find these words: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" It is amazing that our great God, the Creator of the heavens and

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### FROM THE WORD

## The Promise of the Comforter

By Jack Chasteen

*The Holy Spirit draws sinners to repentance, and teaches, guides, and empowers believers.*

One of the last conversations that Jesus had with His twelve disciples before His death is recorded in John 14-16. It was an intimate occasion; they had just eaten the Last Supper together and Jesus had washed their feet. Then, He let them know that He would soon be departing and that they would face tribulation. He also told them that there was no need to fear. Everything would unfold according to the Father's plan and for His glory.

Among the many encouraging and inspiring words Jesus shared that night was the promise of the Comforter. This is the first mention of the Comforter in Scripture. It was a

new teaching for the disciples. Today, I would like to consider what Jesus revealed about who the Comforter is, the comfort He provides, and those who are comforted. In doing so, we come to understand that the Comforter is one of the most precious gifts ever given to the Church, and one we can depend upon.

### Who the Comforter is

In John 14:16-17 Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth . . ." We read in John 14:26 that Jesus said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost . . ." In these verses, the Comforter is identified as "the Spirit of truth" and as "the Holy Ghost." He is also at times called "the Spirit of God" and "the Holy Spirit" in the Bible. These names all refer to the same Person, so we can use them interchangeably.

The Spirit of God is revealed in Scripture from the very beginning at the Creation account. In Genesis 1:2 we read, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Continuing through the Bible record,

as historical events unfolded, the Holy Spirit worked to accomplish God's will in the world. For example, the Lordship of Christ was revealed to David through the Holy Spirit (Mark 12:36). At times, individuals were divinely appointed to proclaim messages to the world through the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21). When Christ came in the flesh, God revealed Him to John the Baptist through the Holy Spirit (John 1:33). And when Christ departed the earth, He promised that God would send the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost (John 14:17).

The name "Comforter" reflects the role that God's Spirit began to fill after Christ's ascension. Each member of the Trinity had a specific part in the redemption plan: the Father set forth the plan from the beginning of time, Jesus accomplished the plan through His perfect sacrifice, and then the Comforter came to carry out the plan in individual lives. When Christ died, rose again, and ascended to the Father, His work in the redemption plan was done. After He returned to the Father, the Comforter came to earth to help mankind in the saving work of Christ. The Comforter did not come

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## Viewpoint

By Darrel Lee

*Pursuing a path instead of a plan.*

Our lives are largely the product of choices we make. Whether positive or negative, the outcome of any choice outlives the process that produced it.

In my wife's testimony (see page 6), she tells how she made the choice to move from Portland to nearby Dallas in 1972. Debbie confesses that she did not have much of a plan upon arriving there but adds, "The Lord *did* have a plan." That is so true. God always has a plan. As Debbie experienced, we usually do not know what it is. Yet, when faced with life choices, we can count on Him to show us which path to take. One step at a time, we progress along His path, and eventually we see His plan unfold.

As a teen with an uncertain future, Debbie's process for making decisions was shaped by Scripture. She found guidance in Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." She was

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confident that God would direct her as she prayerfully looked to Him. Her process also included a camp meeting prayer service where she received a personal assurance that God was leading her to Dallas, sixty-five miles southwest of Portland. Though she did not know His plan, she followed His path.

Debbie became part of the Dallas branch church, where I would attend for the first time two years later. Seven years after her move, she was married and had a daughter and a son. It's now been fifty-two years, and the consequences of that choice continue to follow her. Of course, there have been many more decisions along the way, as well as times of prayer seeking divine direction. Some choices were of little consequence and others were of great impact. While she would not claim that every one was divinely disclosed, in hindsight we can plainly see that God directed her path and that He indeed had a plan.

Unlike Debbie, I was not raised in a Christian home and had not been taught to seek God's will for my future. However, as a newly saved twenty-one-year old, I began to pray that way. Soon I attended a service at the Dallas church. Then I was invited to lunch at the pastor's home, where Debbie was living at the time. That was no coincidence. It was God's plan! We both agree that it was a good one.

Along with Debbie's testimony, in this magazine you will read how God directed the steps of Timothy Kaibula (page 7), Christine Ampofo-Ansah (page 7), and others. As you seek God's direction in your own choices, He will do the same for you. The blessings you accumulate as His plan unfolds will far outlive the process.

Rev. Darrel Lee is the Apostolic Faith Superintendent General.



### FROM THE WORD

## Dig Your Well

By Peter Sletmoe

*Spiritual lessons can be learned from Isaac's purpose to dig wells as his father had done.*

In Genesis 26, we read about a time when there was a famine in Canaan. During the famine, Isaac sought refuge at Gerar in the land of the Philistines, just as his father, Abraham, had done in his day. God blessed Isaac there to such an extent that the Philistines became jealous and he was forced to move into the valley. Then, needing water to sustain his considerable household and livestock, he "dug again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which

his father had called them" (verse 18).

The Bible does not tell us how Isaac knew exactly where his father's wells were located. However, he was born in neighboring Beersheba and spent some part of his childhood in the area. Perhaps, on occasion, he had observed his father drinking from these wells or had seen servants watering the flocks from them. At the very least, he would have grown up

### It takes earnest prayer to get ahold of God and His promises, and that could be compared to digging a well.

knowing that Abraham had wells in the Valley of Gerar, and that those wells produced water.

After Isaac grew to adulthood and was on his own, it was his responsibility to find a source of water and tap into it. The water that Abraham had obtained could not do

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## Continued, Heavenly Treasures in Earthen Vessels

the earth, would choose to come and dwell within us.

The eighth psalm describes the excellency of God our Creator, “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens”

### This great God—the One who created the universe and even the galaxies that have not yet been discovered—decided to use man.

(Psalm 8:1). The Psalmist continues in verses 3-4, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” This great God—the One who created the universe and even the galaxies that have not yet been discovered—decided to use man. He said, “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet” (Psalm 8:5-6).

### Varieties of vessels

Earthen vessels come in all shapes and sizes, and they are not always shiny or pretty. Some may be attractive on the outside, others not so much. Some vessels likely look like they have been in use for a long time and others still look new. Some may even look broken and unusable! The same is true of us, as vessels. But no matter how the outside appears, our value as a vessel is not about us. It is all about Jesus, the One who is in us. He chose us. He told the prophet Jeremiah, in essence, “Before you were even formed in your mother’s womb, I called you. Not only did I call you, but I ordained you” (see Jeremiah 1:5).

God places each of us in situations and environments where we can be used by Him. Some are born in homes where they grow up in the Gospel—they are exposed to it from their earliest memories, and they give their hearts to God while they are young. That is not the case for everyone, but thank God, He is faithful. He has a plan for each vessel, no matter what our background, our age, or our earthly surroundings.

### Preparation of usable vessels

It takes some preparation for a vessel to be usable. Psalm 51:5 tells us that all of us were born in sin and “shapen in iniquity.” That is even true of outwardly righteous individuals like Paul. In his epistle to the Philippians, Paul

### We face a challenge today as never before.

### Society has accepted what God has rejected, and we must take a stand. We are not being political, but we are chosen vessels and we must deliver what is within us by speaking the truth.

described himself before he met Christ. He was well-educated; a top scholar of his day who had studied under the best teachers. He was of the tribe of Benjamin—in his words, he was “an Hebrew of the Hebrews.” He said, “Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless” (Philippians 3:6). We are told that there were over six hundred ceremonial laws in that era, but no one could accuse Paul of breaking them. However, in spite of all his admirable qualities, Paul could not be used by God until a change took place inside his heart.

That is true for us as well. To become vessels of honor for God, we must renounce our sin—we must be born again and become new creatures. When I was saved, my outer appearance did not change that much, but something happened on the inside. I became new! Until Jesus possesses the vessel, we are not going to be used by Him, because we are owned and under the control of someone else. The vessel may be beautiful, eloquent, or talented in other ways, but it cannot be a vessel of honor until it comes under new ownership.

Yielding ourselves to new ownership is voluntary; salvation is not forced on us. However, God will help us make the decision. God told the Children of Israel through Moses that they had a choice, and then He admonished them, “Choose life!” God will help us by sending conviction

upon our lives so we understand our need for Him. He will cause us to desire to take on that new ownership. When we repent of our sins and believe, God does a supernatural work of grace in our lives. The experience of salvation has no human fingerprints on it; it only bears the fingerprints of God.

Once we have been saved, we need to be sanctified. The nature of the vessel has to change; its purpose has to change. The vessel must be set apart for God’s use through consecration, and then God makes us holy.

God has a purpose in preparing vessels for His use—that He may be glorified. People may admire us or offer praise, but we must continue to give the honor to God because that is what we are designed to do.

### God’s care of His vessels

The fact that God is within us does not mean that we are without trials. Sometimes when people are newly saved, they have a false impression of what salvation will do. They may think, *Now that I am saved, life is going to be trouble free.* However, the Word of God says, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all” (Psalm 34:19).

Paul repeated that same message to the New Testament church. He wanted them to know that while they had within them a heavenly treasure, they were not exempt from troubles. He said, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). Notice that Paul said, “We are

### I remember a faithful man of God who had dementia. At times he did not even recognize who was sitting beside him, but he still gave a powerful testimony. There was something in him that dementia could not touch.

troubled; we are perplexed.” He did not say, “We might be.” Paul was saying, in essence, “There is deliverance. This trouble will not take us out; we just go through it.” To be effective vessels of honor, we need to understand that we are going to be perplexed at times, but we need not despair. God always gives the strength to go through.

Paul said they would be “persecuted, but not forsaken” and that also applies to us. We face a challenge today as never before. Society has accepted what God has rejected, and we must take a stand. We are not being political, but we are chosen vessels and we must deliver what is within us by speaking the truth.

Over these last few years, we have proved that God will help. We do not know what is ahead of us if Jesus carries. But whatever comes, we must not be discouraged. When God allows us to go through hard things, we are being given an opportunity to bring honor to Him. We are being used even when we do not realize it! And God is going to take care of His vessels; the enemy will not be able to destroy what is within us. The enemy may afflict the outward man, but he cannot go beyond what God allows. Remember that Satan had to ask God’s permission to afflict Job’s body. When we belong to God, He is going to take care of us—He will preserve the inner man. We can have that confidence.

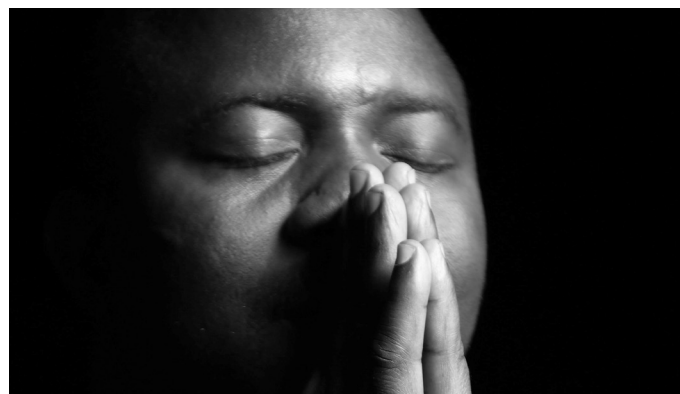
I remember a faithful man of God who had dementia. At times he did not even recognize who was sitting beside him, but he still gave a powerful testimony. There was something in him that dementia could not touch. There is something within us that illness or financial problems or job-related pressures cannot touch. We still have joy! That does not mean that every circumstance is enjoyable. We may have received a phone call that brought devastating news, but we still have the joy of the Lord. There is something within us that the enemy cannot touch.

Wherever God has placed us, He put us in that location for a reason. We can thrive there! We are not seeking the praise or approval of man; our purpose is to glorify God, and that can be done wherever we serve Him.

Today, no matter when, where, or how God may choose to use us, may we be vessels of honor! ❖



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## 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.”

## Continued, The Promise of the Comforter

to replace Christ; He came in Christ's stead, but not in the sense that Christ ceased to exist in the Church. Christ loves the Church and gave Himself for it. He is still "the head of the body, the church" (Colossians 1:18). The Comforter came to fulfill His part of the redemption plan by testifying of the truth (Jesus Christ) and establishing the truth in the hearts of those who believe.

In John 16:7 Jesus said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." When the disciples heard this, they did not understand how the

### Jesus had been walking with the disciples and they could literally take His hand. The Comforter does the same in a spiritual sense; He takes our hands and shows us the way.

Comforter could be of greater benefit to them than Jesus was. Jesus had walked with them, lived among them, taught them, and loved them. However, the Lord in His human form could not touch every individual. He would only cross paths with certain people, and we read about those amazing events in the Bible. Yet in this world of lost souls, there was a need to reach all people everywhere. The Spirit would be present in a measure and way that the world had not seen before.

### **The Comfort He provides**

The name Comforter is a translation of the Greek word *parakletos*, which some also render as "advocate" or "intercessor." It has a sense of "one who comes alongside and walks beside." Jesus had been walking with the disciples and they could literally take His hand. The Comforter does the same in a spiritual sense; He takes our hands and shows us the way. He comes alongside us to teach us, guide us, and ultimately deliver us from the situations that would otherwise destroy us.

It would be impossible to compile a comprehensive list of what the Comforter does for God's people because His work is limitless in nature.

Yet, in John 14-16 Jesus identified some of the important ways that He helps us, including the following.

**He abides forever.** John 14:16 says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." Jesus could not stay on the earth forever in His human form, but the Spirit of God comes to live with us forever. Verse 17 goes on, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Through belief in Jesus, the disciples had received a measure of the Spirit of truth, as all believers do when they are saved. Jesus used the words "he dwelleth with you" to describe that state. Yet, God wants us to have more. Jesus mentioned a different state, using the words "shall be in you." Having His Spirit "in" us indicates a greater measure of the Spirit than what is given at salvation. Christ's followers would come to know the power and influence not only of the Spirit *with* them, but in them.

**He teaches.** We read, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things" (John 14:26). The Comforter will teach us what we need to know about the Gospel—not man's failed ideas and empty philosophies, but the truth. He teaches us about Christ and what it takes to have Him in our lives. John also wrote of troubles that were coming, such as the spirit of antichrist, tribulations, and the "spirit of error." The

enemy of our souls wants to undermine God's work in our lives, and he promotes a spirit of error to deceive us. We need to have the Spirit of truth teaching us so we will not be deceived.

**He reminds.** The Scripture continues, ". . . he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). These days, I have a hard time remembering many things, but the Spirit of God is faithful to remind me. He whispers to my heart, "Remember what God has done for you," and, "Remember what the Scripture says." That is the type of help He gives.

Jesus had brought His disciples to the way of righteousness when they believed and followed Him, but the Spirit of God would keep them in that way. He will keep us too; the Comforter continues what Jesus started. We need not worry about doing everything on our own. The Comforter will lead us, remind us, and help us stay in the way of righteousness.

**He testifies of Christ.** In John 15:26, Jesus said, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." The Gospel is about Christ. All things point to Christ: the Father pointed to Christ; the prophets pointed to Christ; John the Baptist pointed to Christ; and the Holy Spirit points to Christ. In fact, we are also called to point others to Christ. We have not seen Jesus as



## The Comforter

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the disciples did, but we have the Comforter who points us to Christ. When we look back on how God brought us to salvation, we can recognize the ways the Spirit witnessed to us of Christ. His work of testifying of Christ did not stop when we were saved; He continues to reveal Christ to us, helping us to grow in the faith that we might be witnesses to others.

**He reproves.** Though the promise of the Comforter was primarily to Jesus' followers, sinners also benefit from His work. John 16:8-11 says, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and

### We do not know the future, but God does, and He can reveal what we need to know about the future through the Comforter.

of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." The great sin of the unsaved is that they "believe not" on Christ and thus reject Him. The prince of this world (Satan) has been judged, and judgment will also fall upon all who reject Christ. In mercy, the Spirit calls all to follow Christ so those who respond will not be judged with the enemy. To the Church, the Comforter comes as a Helper. To the unbelieving world, He comes to convict people of sin and point them to the Savior.

**He guides.** We read, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13). We have a Guide for the decisions in life that we do not know how to make, situations that we do not know how to handle, and topics that we do not understand. We do not know the future,

### The nature of the power that comes from the Comforter is entirely different than the power that dominates in the world.

but God does, and He can reveal what we need to know about the future through the Comforter. We need divine direction in our decisions and in our prayers every day, and He will guide us.

**He empowers.** Though this benefit was not mentioned in Jesus' conversation with His disciples after the Last Supper, He later promised that the Comforter would empower the Church to be witnesses of the Gospel. At His ascension Jesus said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This promise was first fulfilled on the

Day of Pentecost when 120 sanctified believers were filled with the Holy Ghost. Through that experience, they were empowered to serve God with a greater impact than they ever had before.

The nature of the power that comes from the Comforter is entirely different than the power that dominates in the world. Being filled with God's Spirit is not like an academic or intellectual advantage; it was said of the early Christians that they were ignorant and unlearned, yet today we have great words recorded in Scripture by them. Nor is this power like having political or financial influence. After receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter said to a disabled begging man, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee" (Acts 3:6), and that man was healed! This power is not charisma or some social power to influence others. In fact, those who encouraged me the most spiritually over the years were just common men and women, filled with the Spirit of truth. The power given through the Comforter is far greater than any earthly power. It is power to fight spiritual battles, and all the forces of Hell cannot prevail against it.

### **Recipients of the Comforter**

Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter . . . whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him" (John 14:15, 17). This indicates plainly that the Comforter is not sent to the lost. He is sent to those

who love God and keep His commandments. This is one of the requirements to receive the Comforter. While sinners benefit from the work of the Spirit calling them to repentance, only those who repent and turn away from sin can enjoy the many other blessings of the Comforter.

In John 14:12 we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father." The disciples must have wondered how anyone could ever do greater works than what Christ did, but He had the Church in mind—a multitude of individuals who would preach the Gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit. Imagine what God could do through a church of Holy Ghost-filled individuals—not only in our own lives, but for our families, places of work, communities, and beyond! I believe God would add to the Church daily, just as He did for the Early Church.

Thank God for sending the Comforter. Today, we have the privilege and the responsibility to avail ourselves of this wonderful promise from God. If you have been missing out on any aspect of His work in your life, seek Him today with your whole heart and you will surely find Him. ❖

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## Continued, Dig Your Well

him any good; he needed to get his own supply. He could have picked up a shovel, wandered out into the desert, and started digging in any location. Instead, he went to where he knew his father had found water before.

Spiritually speaking, each of us has a well that we need to dig. To obtain salvation, our deeper experiences, and daily guidance, we need to seek God until we reach the Source of living water. It takes earnest prayer to get ahold of God and His promises, and that could be compared to digging a well.

Someone who has never dug a spiritual well might wonder where to begin, how to go about it, when to do it, and what to expect along the way. By looking at Isaac's actions in re-digging his father's physical wells, we can gain spiritual insight concerning all these questions.

### Where to dig

Isaac grew up in a family where his father had obtained water by digging a series of wells. When it was Isaac's turn to find water, he went to where he knew there was water before. Spiritually speaking, we can do the same. There have been saints who have gone before us, digging a series of wells. We know they found water because we have seen them enjoying the benefits of the Gospel, and we can follow in their footsteps.

Many of us can point to individuals in our lives who were like Abraham, doing everything they could to set us up for

What will we do with the Gospel? We want to keep digging, praying, and tapping into the living water. Not only will God's blessings flow in our own lives, but we will be examples for the next generation to follow.

success in the Gospel. These are people who dug spiritual wells, showing us the way. My father was like that. I am no stranger to the Portland campground; I grew up around there. I can remember many camp meetings where I spent time out by the fishpond after services waiting for Dad and Mom to finish praying. I count it a blessing to have grown up in a home where I never had to wonder where my parents were when church was over. If you needed Dad, he was at the altar getting ahold of God; he was digging a well.

My grandmother was another who showed me how to dig a spiritual well. She came to church and prayed meeting after meeting, and it was clear that her prayers reached Heaven. One Tuesday evening, my family was giving her a ride home after church, and the two of us were in the backseat. She leaned over and whispered, "I haven't been feeling well lately, but I got prayed for and I'm looking forward to a healing." Why did she tell me that? She was showing me how to dig a well. Years later, I had to dig that well for myself. I arrived at the Portland camp meeting feeling burdened because I was afflicted. I went up on the platform and two ministers came to pray for me. The three of us started up a well-digging operation, and it was not very long before we hit water. I had walked onto the platform unwell, but I walked off healed. When I followed the example of my grandmother and sought God, I experienced the same result that she had.

Many other faithful saints have gone before us, and we need to ask ourselves what we are going to do with all those wells they dug. Are we going to let them run dry or are we going to take advantage of what we have seen and heard? What will we do with the Gospel? We want to keep digging, praying, and tapping into the living water. Not only will God's blessings flow in our own lives, but we will be examples for the next generation to follow.

### How to dig

Through Isaac, God wanted to fulfill the promises He had made to Abraham and his descendants. For that to happen, God needed to lead Isaac back to Beersheba where his faith would be strengthened by the memory of God's faithfulness to his father. It doesn't appear that Isaac knew where God was leading; he was just digging wells. However, as he went from one well to another, he traveled in nearly a straight line to where he needed to be. God was moving Isaac into a position where He could pour out a blessing on him, just as He had moved Abraham many years before.

Young people sometimes wonder how everything in their lives is going to work out. They wonder how God is going to fit all the pieces together, guide them in the right direction, or resolve the challenges ahead. However, Jesus said, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:31, 33). If we will keep our focus on God through prayer, He will direct our lives, and we can trust Him to lead us according to His will.

As a young person in high school, I was trying to figure out how to live for God. I had the best upbringing in the Gospel, but watching Dad and Mom serve the Lord was different from actually doing it. I knew I wanted to be close to God and led by Him, but did not know how to get to that place. One Friday evening after church, I was at the altar bench, but not really praying. My chin was in my hands and I was looking around a little. An older brother named Ray Roll leaned over and said, "Young man, if you want

something from God, get down on both knees, close your eyes, and pray like you mean business." Since then, I have had ample time to prove that out, and it works. Getting down to business with God in prayer changes things.

Whether our need is for sanctification, healing, direction, or a closer walk with God, if we will keep digging, He will help us. He will use our time in prayer to align our wills to His, moving us into a position where we can receive His promises.

### When to dig

Isaac likely already had a supply of water on hand when he arrived in the Valley of Gerar, but that did not deter

For someone who has never dug a spiritual well, the best time to start is now. One day soon, Jesus will return for His Church, and it will be too late.

him from re-digging that first well. Inevitably, there would come a day when the canteens would be empty, the sun would be hot, and the livestock thirsty. He knew that was not the day to begin digging.

Similarly, we don't want to wait until our supply of living water is dangerously low or we are in a crisis situation before we start praying in earnest. We need to be in the habit of seeking God daily for guidance, our needs, and victory over sin. The more often we look to Him regarding our everyday challenges, the better prepared we will be to face the larger issues that come along in life.

A good opportunity for digging is before and after church services. Many have received their deeper experiences in the prayer room before church or at the altars afterward. Praying among God's people can boost our faith, because it guarantees that God's presence will be felt. Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Praying together also gives us the opportunity to exhort, encourage, and support each other as we seek God.

Of course, God can meet us anywhere and anytime—at home during our regular devotions, at work, or even on our lunchbreak at school. One year while I was in high school, I decided to spend my lunch hour reading the Bible and praying in an attempt to draw closer to God. I wanted to dig a well. At first, I chose a place on the bleachers, but that was too noisy. Then I moved to a tree next to the track. It was perfect because it had low branches, and I could climb up inside and have some privacy. I did this for some time, and it became the bright spot in my day. I hid away, reading and praying, and the Lord met me there. As I dug, the Lord used that time to strengthen my relationship with Him and ground me in the Gospel.

For someone who has never dug a spiritual well, the best time to start is now. One day soon, Jesus will return for His Church, and it will be too late. We want to heed the advice of Isaiah 55:6, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

### What to expect

By re-digging his father's wells, Isaac accomplished something valuable: he overcame the enemy. When Abraham passed away, Isaac received the inheritance of the first-born son. All the wells that had belonged to Abraham were now his. However, he needed to show up and claim them. This was not easy, because there was an enemy. We learn from the account in Genesis that when Isaac re-dug the first well, "the herdman of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours." Isaac moved on and re-dug the second well and the same thing happened: the Gerar herdsmen "strove for that also." If Isaac had given up,

We have been taught that when we come to the foot of the Cross and surrender our lives to God, He transforms us completely.

in effect, he would have been handing over to the enemy what was rightfully his. Instead, he persisted and re-dug a third well, "and for that they strove not" (verses 20-22).

We too have been blessed with an inheritance worth claiming. We have been taught that when we come to the foot of the Cross and surrender our lives to God, He transforms us completely. He gives us victory in Jesus, making us able to live without sinning, and we don't want to give that away. If we are going to hold on to it, we must go where others have dug, and dig for ourselves.

Just as Isaac faced an enemy, when we set ourselves to seek God, the devil will be there trying to discourage and distract us. Remember, an enemy would not waste time stopping up a well that does not produce water. When Satan opposes us, we can press forward in confidence, knowing that God will be faithful to us as He was to previous generations.

God's promises to us are abundant: salvation, guidance, provision, healing, and much more. However, like Isaac, we must claim them before they will benefit us. Dig a well today and see what God will do in your life. ❖



Peter Sletmoe is a minister at the Apostolic Faith Church in Grants Pass, Oregon.



GERAR

ESEK

SITNAH

REHOBOTH

BEERSHEBA

# Light Reflectors

By Dave Green

*There are many ways in which God can use us to bring the Gospel Light to others.*

There are many references to light in the Bible, including both physical and spiritual light. Spiritual light represents goodness, truth, and life, while darkness represents evil and death. These provide a helpful illustration of Biblical truths.

During His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told His listeners, “Ye are the light of the world,” and instructed them, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14, 16). One thing to note here is that we are not the *source* of the Light. We read in John 12:46 where Jesus said, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” Jesus is the Source of the Light. Our church has made that fact our logo, so we often see “Jesus: The Light of the World” on our buildings, publications, and other places.

While we are not the original source, in a sense we are reflectors of the Light. John the Baptist was a good example of this. The Bible says of him, “He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light” (John 1:8). John was a special individual with a unique position in history, which was to reflect that Light before the Source was revealed. Even after the Source was revealed, John continued to reflect that Light. We want to do so as well. The same charge of reflecting that Light has passed on down through the generations to all of us.

The following verse in the first chapter of John says, “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). This states that God will enlighten everyone who comes into the world, and we know that He doesn’t need us to do it. He can certainly enlighten individuals directly. Yet, so often He chooses to use reflections of His Light.

As I contemplated different types of reflections, some of the creative ways that God can use us to bring His Light into the lives of others came to mind. Here are a few examples.

## Glimmering streaks

A couple years ago, my wife and I moved to the Oregon City area, and since then we have been blessed to have a seasonal view of the Willamette River. Periodically, I notice reflections on the water that I wasn’t aware of in the past.

For instance, at night I can see a sprinkling of lights on the other side of the river—not many, but a few. I noticed early on that when the lights reflect on the river, they create long, glimmering streaks of light on the water that are quite noticeable. In fact, the actual lights don’t seem to capture my attention as readily as the reflections they create. I’m sure there is a scientific explanation for why this happens, but regardless of that, my eyes are frequently drawn to those streaks of light on the river.

The United States has historically been referred to as a Christian nation, but we grieve that our societal values have strayed far from what could be considered godly. That said, most Americans still know something about Jesus. The Bible continues to be the best-selling Book of all time in this country, and statistics indicate that approximately 91% of American households have at least one Bible in the home. The average is thought to be around four Bibles per home. Sadly, too many of those Bibles sit on shelves or in drawers and are never read. Those unused Bibles remind me of the lights across the river from my house. God’s Word is a direct revelation of Himself, yet so many don’t care to open and read it. However, the streaks of reflected light can really grab attention, and that is what we want to do.

It’s been said that we may be the only “Jesus” that some people around us see. There may be people in our circles who have multiple Bibles in their homes but fail to read them. However, when they’re exposed to someone who reflects the Light, that may catch their attention. In particular, when dark times come, they may look back again and again, asking, “Is that reflection still there?” By God’s grace, it’s still there every time. That is the type of reflection we want to be of Christ.

## Focused beams

Another type of reflection is a focused beam of light—for example, the type of beam created by a signal mirror that



is used for emergencies. Mirrors of this type are generally small and allow someone to create a focused bar of light that they can wave to get attention. Signal mirrors are remarkably effective. People have been rescued from dangerous situations because they were able to draw attention to their location with something as simple as a mirror.

Along the same lines, a few weeks ago I was sitting in the back row of the balcony at church, and my eyes were drawn to three or four flashes of light coming from the platform. It turned out to be light from the chandeliers reflecting off a musician’s tie clasp! A clasp is very small, yet at just the right angle, it sent a bright flash of light that caught my eye. Focused reflection is powerful.

Where we live now, we cannot see the sun as it sinks toward the horizon. Instead, we see a cluster of houses on the southwest face of Mount Scott, about seven miles away from us. The houses are positioned in such a way that as the evening progresses, the setting sun will shine off a window here and there. Two or three will be so bright that they seem like spotlights! They will shine for a while and then start to fade as the angle of the sunlight shifts, and then other windows nearby will begin to shine brightly. Again, that focused reflection catches my attention.

This reminds me of how the Lord sometimes uses us as a focused reflection in someone’s life, to shine the light of His love in a special way. One example of this from years ago is the testimony of Brother Chic Beasley. Prior to his conversion, he evidently was a cantankerous individual, for he later described himself as “a railer and a blasphemer.” He worked at a furniture factory, and one day a young believer started working there too. That young man simply lived a Christian life before his co-workers, but God used him to reflect the Light to Brother Chic in a focused way. God arranges those circumstances; He does the angling and aiming so that our lives will reflect the Light to those who need it. After a period of time, Brother Chic took the young man by the arm and asked, “What church do you belong to?” He replied, “I don’t belong to any church. I’m just a Christian.” God was truly at work, and before long, Brother Chic surrendered his life to the Lord.

In Brother Chic’s case, we know who God used to reflect the Light and who it was directed toward. Often, however, we don’t know those things. For instance, a brother in our congregation testifies how before he was saved, God drew him to the point where he decided he needed to go to church. When he made a phone call to get a ride to church, he accidentally dialed the wrong number, and the person who answered the phone said, “Jesus loves you.” That was a focused reflection at just the right moment! The brother from our congregation and the person who answered the phone probably will not know each other until they meet in eternity. Just think—in Heaven, we too may meet people that we had no idea were impacted by the way we lived for God. When we are walking in obedience to Him, God arranges those moments of focused reflection for His good purposes.

## Cumulative glow

We may feel we’re too small and insignificant for God to ever do something great through us, but another

important type of illumination is cumulative reflection. This is something we are often exposed to, though we may not think much about it. For example, because my wife and I built our home in a historical area of Oregon City, there were civic ordinances that placed limits on how many windows we could have and how large they could be. Most of our windows ended up being near shade trees, so we have almost no direct sunlight into our house. Consequently, I had assumed that the house would be fairly dark, with little natural light. However, as we were finishing construction, I was pleasantly surprised at how much natural light we do get. Even though there’s little direct sunlight, the sun reflects off trees, walls, and other objects to create an abundance of cumulative reflection that glows into the house.

Another example of this is the tabernacle on our Portland campground. The interior is lit with fluorescent tube lights, but if you look at the ceiling of the main auditorium, you will see no visible light sources. The light is all reflected off the ceiling, and the building is bathed in light. Each board in the ceiling is insignificant by itself, but all together, they create a glow that illuminates the entire room. Likewise, each of our lives alone may not seem significant in the world, but as part of the Body of Christ, when we all allow God to reflect His love through us, there is a type of cumulative effect. And what a difference it makes! Together, we can have a major impact in neighborhoods, cities, and ultimately the entire world.

## Mirror images

Many of us have seen how still, smooth water reflects a reverse image of whatever is around it. Photographers have extensively documented the beauty of this type of scene, and I am blessed to be able to see it frequently because the Willamette River upstream from the falls is somewhat of a reservoir. Sometimes the water is glassy-smooth, and in it we can see images of the hills and terrain from the other side of the river. Of course, when the water is troubled, that image quickly goes away.

As we go through life, we savor the times when the Good Shepherd leads us beside still waters. Yet, we know that the Lord will also allow storms to come our way, and sometimes they can seem overwhelming. He may calm the storm or He may allow it to continue; either way, we know that He can provide peace in the midst of the storm. It is truly incredible when a storm is raging all around us, and we suddenly realize that God has carved out a place of peace for us. I cannot help but think that those looking on can see an image reflected in that place of peace—an image of God. Regardless of what is going on around us, we can be mirrors of Him in a lost and dying world.

Jesus is truly the Light of the world, but God has purposed for each of us to be reflectors of that Light. May we let our lights shine before men in every possible way. ❖



*Dave Green is a Sunday school teacher and musician at the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon.*

# Evidence

OLUWOLE AJAYI | CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA



*Personal testimonies of victory.*

There is power in the Blood of Jesus to save, heal, and keep. A few years ago, I started having trouble breathing through my nose. I didn’t think it was anything serious and paid little attention to it. However, with time, it got worse and breathing became very difficult. In January of 2022, I went for a medical checkup and the doctor told me I had a growth inside my nasal cavity. I was referred to an Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT)

specialist who did a biopsy. He also recommended a scan of my nasal area, neck, and chest. I asked why all of this was necessary, and the doctor told me to prepare myself and my family for bad news. He said that in his eighteen years of experience as an ENT doctor, he had never encountered a growth of this kind that was not cancerous. Other medical accounts indicated that only one in a thousand was without cancer. He said the tests were to determine if the cancer had spread to my lungs.

I told the doctor that if there was one chance in a thousand, my case would be that one. And if the odds were zero in a thousand, my case would be the first. I also told him to expect his own first experience of a cancer-free growth. He was surprised by my reaction and asked what gave me such confidence. I replied, “It’s not me who is bold, but Jesus within me.” The doctor said, “We will see,” and I

returned home and prayed. I got on my knees and told the Lord, “You gave me those bold words. I know You will bring them to pass.”

The doctor called me the following day and asked if I was able to sleep. He explained that patients who receive the type of news that I did usually have trouble sleeping. I told him that I had cast all my cares upon Jesus, as the Bible instructs us to do, and I was sleeping fine. He said I was a strange person! However, he later called with the test results, which showed no cancer. He was amazed, and I was able to share the Gospel with him. I told him that the salvation of my soul and Jesus dwelling within me made all the difference in my life.

I had surgery on April 13, 2022, to remove the growth, and now, to the glory of God, I am healthy. I dedicate the rest of my life to serving Him.

# Confidence and Peace I Never Expected

By Debbie Lee

Debbie learned that she really could trust God with everything that is precious to her.



I was born into a large extended family whose lives revolved around church. Both sets of my grandparents started attending the Apostolic Faith when my parents were young, and most of my relatives were saved and worshiped there too.

My mother had been raised in a family that sang together. So as I was growing up, whenever her side of the family was together, my aunt or grandmother would invariably sit down at the piano and start to play. Everyone would gravitate to the piano and we would spend hours singing in four-part harmony. I loved it! An unspoken rule was that you never sang the same part as whoever was next to you. My siblings and I sang together as well. From early on, the message of those Gospel songs touched my heart. My parents also faithfully took us to church and Sunday school, and encouraged us to memorize chapters of the Bible.

In spite of all of that, some situations came up that troubled me and made me feel that I needed help from the Lord. I could see a contrast in the way people lived—those who loved the Lord and those who did not. There was peace and love in the lives of some of my family, and I wanted what they had. When I was about seven years old, I prayed after a children's service in Medford, Oregon, and the Lord met me in such a special way. I've never been able to forget the peace that came into my heart. I knew God was real and could hear and answer my prayers. When it was time to go home, I did not want to leave the altar of prayer.

A month before I turned thirteen years old, our family moved to Portland, Oregon, and during that transition I ended up switching to a new school four times. That was extremely difficult for me because I was very shy. In the moments when I felt alone, I would desperately pray for help and could feel the Lord's presence with me.

God provided me with good Christian friends as I entered my high school years, and my social life revolved around church. The young people were really seeking the Lord and it was a great time. Among my friends at school, there was also a "Jesus movement" going on that was kind of a fad, but what I was experiencing wasn't a passing fad. The Lord was leading me along. During that time, as I was praying with my friends one day, He sanctified me.

I still had some growing up to do in those years, and learned a few lessons the hard way. A couple of times, I wavered in my convictions, wanting to fit in and please my friends, but I quickly found out that didn't pay. I'm so thankful the Lord

I never thought any trial could be a blessing, but through that experience I learned that I really can trust God with everything that is precious to me.

found ways to keep me on track. I really wanted to be kept.

At one point, several of my friends chose to turn away from the Lord and they invited me to join them in activities that I knew I shouldn't do. The "Jesus movement" had come and gone, and I felt a responsibility to show them that what I had was real. I thought, *What if I am responsible for their souls? And if I turn back on the Lord now, what if I never again feel what I felt as a young child?* During those

years there were some struggles and times of loneliness, but the Lord helped me through that too.

The camp meeting after I graduated from high school, I had the opportunity to move to Dallas, Oregon, and help out with the Sunday school there. The pastor was Brother Earl Phillips and one of his daughters was my very close friend, and they invited me to move in with them. When I talked to my pastor, Brother Loyce Carver, about moving, he suggested I pray about it. He mentioned that sometimes people move about and lack direction, and that can become a lifelong pattern. He said that if I were going somewhere to help, responsibility came with that decision, and that I should be dependable. I prayed and asked the Lord to direct my future. As I was seeking Him quietly by myself at the altar, once again He met me in a very special way. He filled me with His Holy Spirit. A month later, I relocated to Dallas and moved in with the Phillips family.

Other than the assurance that the Lord was leading me to move, I didn't have much of a plan after I arrived. However, the Lord *did* have a plan. I had more growing up to do and needed to learn some patience. I was encouraged by the Phillips to "seek first the kingdom of God" and to "delight thyself in the LORD." They told me not to just talk about it, but to actually trust the Lord with my life and wait on Him. Those were invaluable lessons.

In time, the Lord brought the man I was to marry right into the Dallas church on a Sunday morning. Darrel had recently been saved and was attending college nearby, and he soon became part of my group of friends at church. Though I never believed in fairy tales about marriage, I had witnessed people in loving relationships and I longed for that. I dearly loved one of my grandfathers and was using his godly, loving example as a pattern for what I was looking for. Darrel and I both spent time in prayer, making sure we belonged together, and God was so good. He answered my prayers beyond my expectations. Darrel and I married on Valentine's Day in 1976 and have been blessed in so many ways over the years.

We continued living in Dallas and had a daughter and then a son. When our children were young, we were blessed to have my Grandma Friesen spend time in our home. She had experienced tragedy as a very young woman; her mother and two sisters died of tuberculosis in her care. My grandma also contracted the disease but was miraculously healed of it. She would tell us how her mother was such an encouragement in spite of her circumstances. Later, Grandma suffered more loss when two of her adult children died suddenly of heart attacks, and soon after, her own husband passed away. Despite all of that, she said she had so much to be thankful for. I marveled at her attitude! I was blessed by those testimonies.

I knew from my grandma's experiences that hard times can come to good people, but somehow I still expected that if we did all the right things, nothing bad would happen to our little family. However, when our children were still young, God allowed something to come our way that was very difficult. Once again, I desperately sought the Lord over a period of several months. One day, He showed me that He was aware of our situation and understood our pain and sorrow. With that, the heaviness lifted a little. At camp meeting that year, the Lord encouraged me with the words of a song, "God will make this trial a blessing, and the whole wide world will see." I didn't care about the whole wide world seeing, but was grateful for the peace and assurance that our family would be okay. God also gave me the promise that He would keep that

The Lord took a timid, insecure child and has given me a confidence and peace that I never expected. I'm protective of what He has done for me; I would not trade that for anything.

which I had committed unto Him. Many years later, I can say that He has kept His Word on all accounts. I never thought any trial could be a blessing, but through that experience I learned that I really can trust God with everything that is precious to me. God has been so faithful.

In 2014, I faced a different type of trial. On the last Friday of camp meeting, I was watching all of my grandchildren and some children from our extended family when I tripped on the threshold of a door and severely broke my ankle. It was scary, but the Lord was right there to help. I ended up having a couple of surgeries, was in a wheelchair for three months, and then needed a lot of physical therapy. It was hard to go through, but the Lord showed me His love in many ways. I was grateful that I never had infections or any other complications. Friends and family were so kind to help by visiting, bringing meals, and offering other types of support. I also appreciate that the experience made me aware of physical challenges that others face all the time.

At a recent doctor's appointment, after checking my ankle the doctor said, "You know, this is really a good healing. I see this injury all the time, and I don't see it heal up the way yours has." Right then, I thanked the Lord again. When I hurt my leg, I didn't know if there would be permanent damage or how it might affect our lives. I'm thankful that the Lord had a plan and that my ankle healed well, and I don't want to take that for granted.

My life has been so blessed. The Lord took a timid, insecure child and has given me a confidence and peace that I never expected. I'm protective of what He has done for me; I would not trade that for anything. He has led me so far, and by His grace, I want to be faithful all the days of my life and to be the type of godly example that others were to me. ❖

*Debbie Lee worships at the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon, where her husband serves as Superintendent General.*

## Evidence



GRACE ILECHUKWU | BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

God is great! He is a wonderful God. He's the Father of the fatherless. He's the Husband of the widow. Twenty years ago, my husband died, and I didn't know what to do or where to go. There was bitterness in my heart, and I was angry, but the people of God were

praying for me. There is love in this Gospel. In the process of time, a woman of God said to me, "Go to God. Pour yourself out before Him. Pour out your anger and bitterness." I went to God, but instead of pouring out my anger and bitterness, I started praising Him. He came down and comforted me, and He gave me a song: "The God of Abraham."

Looking at my son, who was just two years and eleven months old at that time, I sought God. I prayed, "You will help me train my child." Then I thanked Him. God trained my son from primary school to secondary school to university to a second degree. God made provision for all his schooling. I give God all the glory. He also gave my son a job in Geneva. I thank Him for everything.

After my husband died, I told God, "I'm married to You. You will take care of me. You will provide for me," and God has done that. I've never lacked anything because God is good. When I come to a crossroads, I open my Bible to the Book of Ruth. I tell God, "Naomi didn't turn back, but went to the people of God. If You could help her, You can help me get to the end." God has been faithful. I thank Him for His care and love toward me.

## Evidence



GORDON OLSON | RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, USA

I am so thankful that the Lord would save a backslider. After all the blessings in my life, I should not have sinned against Him, but I'm thankful that He forgave me.

God used the COVID pandemic to bring me to my knees. While the churches were closed, I would listen online to the Portland webcast. Then I would go to our church, which was empty, and pour out my heart to God. I would cry out to Him, saying my hidden thoughts out loud. During one of these prayer meetings in early 2021, God sanctified me. I am thankful for that experience.

A few months later, on Mother's Day, I heard a sermon, and one little part of God's Word touched me in a powerful way. It was, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Psalm 23:6). That put faith in my heart. I drove to the church and as I pulled into the parking lot, there was a song playing on the radio that said, "Holy Spirit, come and fill this place." It was conveying the message, "We want You here." I walked into the church singing that song and knelt at the altar. There were no loud prayers or anything like that; the Holy Spirit just filled my heart and I spoke in a language I didn't understand. I called my wife and said, "I've been filled with the Holy Spirit," and she replied, "I don't understand a word you are saying."

In 2021, I was sixty-four years old, and God sanctified and baptized me. I am so thankful.

## Evidence



KIM LEWIS | MOBILE, ALABAMA, USA

Growing up, I was raised in the Apostolic Faith Church and was a "PK"—a preacher's kid. I had generations of uncles and aunts who went before me in the Gospel. I was even named after my aunt Dolly Walker, but I tell people to just call me "Sister Kim" because I can't walk in her shoes! But I have such a wonderful heritage.

I am thankful for that heritage, but as a young girl I was rebellious. I didn't want any part of it. I didn't want my folks planning my life for me or controlling me at prayer time, Sunday school time, church time, and all of that. I had my life all planned for myself. I did want to go to Heaven, but I didn't think I could be left behind when I had so many Christian great-great-relatives in my family. I used to think, *When the Rapture takes place, I'm going to hold onto Mom's ankle.* Thank God, I learned that it takes more than that to get to Heaven. You have to be changed! As a young girl at age fourteen, I knelt down in the church at 262 Lafayette in Brooklyn, New York, and I was changed! That was in 1972, and thank God He has been faithful to me ever since and I won't turn back.

There is great joy in this Gospel. To live for God is the best experience that anyone can have. He is worthy and He deserves the glory.

# I Found More than I Hoped For

By Christine Ampofo-Ansah

While Christine viewed the Lagos camp meeting as a travel opportunity, God had other plans.



When the Lord found me, my life was on course for disaster. I had been born into a nominally Christian home in Ghana, so we went to church for holidays and special occasions. However, we did not know God's power to free a person from sin. As a youth, I easily succumbed to peer pressure to do sinful things because I wanted to be part of the group. I had a terrible, uncontrollable temper and my heart was full of hatred even for people I met for the first time. I was living in darkness and sliding fast into destruction.

Looking back, I can see ways that God was working in my life throughout my childhood. One of my aunts attended the Apostolic Faith Church and we would spend holidays with her during our school vacations. Whenever we went, she would take us to services with her. I did not know much about the church, but I loved the hymns so much that I would copy some of my favorites onto my handkerchief so I could sing them at home. God was planting His love in my heart little by little.

## An opportunity greater than I realized

Around age twenty-two, I learned that a group from the Apostolic Faith was preparing to attend a camp meeting in Lagos, Nigeria. I had never left Ghana before and I thought it sounded like a nice opportunity for a tour of Lagos. Since I wasn't a church member, a friend advised me to start attending a Bible class at a location near my home, just so the church would agree to take me to the camp meeting. I was full of excitement, looking to enjoy the world to the maximum. However, God was orchestrating a different plan. He was wooing me to Christ.

At the Bible classes, the Holy Spirit started convicting me of my sins. I saw happiness and contentment in the lives of the people at church, something I did not have. They did agree to take me to the camp meeting, but by that time my mind was far from going on a tour—I needed to receive what these believers had. It was at the Anthony Village camp meeting of 1982 when I asked for forgiveness of my sins and God saved me. Though I was looking for an adventure, instead I found something beautiful, something wonderful—I found a Friend in Jesus. I never left the campground during that trip, but stayed and prayed through to sanctification, and then was water baptized before I left. Back in Ghana, I continued seeking the Lord and after a couple of years, He gave me the mighty baptism of the Holy Spirit. Oh, what joy!

After I was saved, my life completely turned around. My family noticed the change and were amazed. I used to fight with my elder brother constantly; my heart was full of hate and I would stop at nothing to avenge myself when I felt he had mistreated me. But God took the hatred away and instead I had peace. Even if my brother intentionally provoked me, I did not respond in anger anymore.

Some of my friends noticed that I wouldn't do the sinful things we used to do, and they thought I was no longer fun to be with. However, Jesus quickly brought me new friends in the Gospel who were likeminded Heaven-seekers. The year after I was saved, I was invited into one of the church choirs, and I so enjoyed that experience. I was able to bond with other young people as we prayed together, laughed together, and even cried together when necessary.

## God's choice is always best

As a young girl, I had a fairytale idea of marriage, expecting my prince charming to come riding on a horse

with a rose in hand. Whenever I prayed about marriage, God pointed me to a certain man, but he seemed too serious to me and did not fit the romantic ideas I had in mind. I knew him well because we were both in the choir, at the weekly all-night prayer meetings, at midweek services—I saw him everywhere. Though he was not what I had imagined, God knew better than me. I followed His leading and married Joseph on December 26, 1992, and I can say that our life together has truly been blissful and joyful. God's choice is always best.

My husband and I hoped for and expected children, but year after year we waited and no children came. Though we brought the matter to God in prayer, we received no answers from Him.

During that time, I developed very terrible and painful fibroid tumors. At times, I could hardly move. One evening when I was alone in the house, my condition took a turn for the worse. The pain became so intense that I barely managed to crawl to the entrance of the house and beckon a neighbor to call my husband, who came and rushed me to emergency. Once in a hospital bed, doctors and nurses evaluated me, and then a junior nurse entered and without uttering a word began to tend to me. Nobody asked her anything as she skillfully did her job, occasionally looking at me in a certain significant way. The next day, feeling better, I asked for the junior nurse so I could thank her, but was told there was nobody working there who matched that description. I tried again during the evening shift and again the next day but I received the same answer. I came to realize that in that agonizing situation, God had comforted me by sending help in the form of an unknown junior nurse.

In 1999, I underwent surgery to remove the fibroids, but the doctor was unable to remove them all and the pain persisted. Thank God, in His time, He did remove the fibroids and I was finally free from those excruciating pains. My miracle came in 2004, and I have never had a recurrence up until now. God brought the complete healing.

In our culture, people tend to pressure newly married couples when there are no babies after a year or two. Yet somehow, God helped us through and we continued being completely content. In God's own special way and in His own good time, He blessed us with a set of twins. At long last, God did answer our prayers, and though we prayed for one, He gave us two! Our God is wonderful.

Even before we had our own children, I always loved working with little ones and especially enjoyed the children's services. When I was first saved, I watched in wonder at the teachers who marched on the platform with the students for their performances. I thought I could never ever do that because I was too shy, but after my experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I found so much joy in leading and conducting them through their performances. All the shyness left me! I started teaching Sunday school in 1995 and eventually was asked to assist in the leadership of the youth department, where I am grateful to still be serving to this day.

## Going through a fiery trial with Jesus

In 2017, I noticed a small rash on my husband's back. It did not seem concerning at the time, but it turned out to be a skin disease which has no cure. It affected his whole body and seemed to make him age very fast. This was very distressing, and though we prayed earnestly, nothing changed.

While dealing with that skin disease, his legs began to swell to almost double in size. I became so worried that I couldn't sleep; I would wake in the middle of the night just to see if he was still breathing. Often, I sneaked out to our little family prayer room and read the Bible or songs about faith and healing, and then would pour out my heart to God in prayer. Though I was burdened, I didn't want my husband to see me cry. I knew he needed encouragement and I wanted to be strong for him. The agony of seeing a loved one suffer is something only God can fully understand, and somehow He gave me the strength and the fortitude to withstand it. There was always a Presence whispering to me, "It shall be well."

In the midst of that, one night my husband was struck by a terrible fever—it was typhoid. I never saw anybody shake as violently as he shook that night. "Prepare a funeral," came thoughts from the devil, but just as surely, Jesus whispered, "I'll never leave you nor forsake you." In our fiery trial, Jesus was the "Fourth Man" in the furnace with us. He was always there to hold me fast, so much so that many people did not know the extent to which the fire was burning.

I sent urgent prayer requests to our churches and expected his condition to improve because the children of God were praying. However, the trial was not over. My husband woke up in the middle of the night with yet another sickness. I rushed him to the hospital and for almost two weeks sat by his bed, looking up to God. One night, his blood pressure suddenly dropped dramatically. His nurse looked panicked, and soon about six doctors were attending to him and whispering so I would not hear. Even so, the Friend who sticks closer than a brother was whispering to me once again, "It is well."

On a day when all seemed dark, as I was walking across our bedroom wondering when all this would end, Jesus spoke to me: "I'll heal him and his latter years will be better than his former." From that time, I finally began to notice signs of healing. Slowly but steadily, the swollen

legs began to reduce, the skin disease started clearing up, and the typhoid left. The day he finally stood in church to preach again, my eyes welled up with tears of gratitude to God, the God who heals and restores. Words fail to express my love for God, and I could never repay all He has done for me.

I thank God very much for bringing me into this wonderful Gospel. I did not come seeking Him. I came looking for adventure, but instead I found a Friend in Jesus. And what a Friend He has been! My path has not been easy, but Jesus has been with me every step of the way, and in the hardest times, He carried me. His love can never fail, and today I am still basking in His love. ❖

Christine Ampofo-Ansah (also known as Anna) is an Apostolic Faith minister and the deputy head of the youth development department at the Ghana headquarters church in Accra, where her husband serves on the Ghana Board of Directors.

## OUR CLASSICS

# Impacted by God's Power to Heal

By Timothy Kaibula

*A miracle in a friend's life was a turning point for Timothy.*

Thank God for the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that shone on my path early in life! I grew up in a home where my parents did not know God. My first knowledge of Him came during my early primary school years when one of the teachers taught us about God being the Creator of the world. This started a yearning for God in my young life and I began going to church. I grew to love the church activities and took part in them all through my teenage years. Unfortunately, all this activity was without me having any actual knowledge of what it meant to be truly born again.

In February 1980, a friend of mine was involved in a traffic accident and had resulting spinal problems. He was invited to the Apostolic Faith Church and was anointed and prayed over, and God healed him. I had heard that Jesus healed people during Bible times, but that was the first time I saw someone actually experience such a thing. It made such an impact on me that when this man invited me to church, I agreed to go along with him one Sunday. This was the turning point in my life.

The first time I went to the Apostolic Faith Church, the people of God welcomed me and the Word preached appealed to me, but I did not respond. However, on a following Sunday, a sermon taken from Mark 5 touched my heart. Through it, God revealed a lot to me about my past life. I gave my life to God that day, and He saved me. Peace came to my heart—peace like I had never known before. All the turmoil and unrest inside me were gone.

I am glad that the Lord has kept me ever since. I have had trials and tests, and at times the burden has not been easy, but God has always been there to sustain and help me. In 1981, I had jaundice, and for two weeks I continued to work. A doctor friend saw me and advised me to go to the hospital. I declined, telling him that God would heal me. My boss resented my presence at work because she thought the condition was contagious. One day, I closed myself in the office pantry and prayed. As I consecrated, I felt as if cold water was poured over me, and I was healed instantly.

In 1990, my wife had pulmonary tuberculosis. Oh, how God drew near to us during that difficult time! Prayer requests were sent to the people of God both locally and abroad. While I was praying and consecrating to the Lord, God gave me the assurance that my wife would be healed. One of the consecrations I made was to stand in the gap and serve God faithfully in my life. I wish to confirm that God can heal all manner of diseases, for He healed my wife.

I am grateful to God for the privileges He has accorded me to serve in different capacities in the church. On May 9, 1992, I was asked to take over the duties of overseer after the late Reverend Robinson Sanana passed away. I was so overwhelmed that I wished the ground could open and swallow me up. I felt unworthy to take over such a responsibility, but immediately God reminded me of the consecration I made during my wife's illness. I had no alternative but to submit to the leading of God. It is my earnest desire that the will of God be paramount as I attempt to discharge these duties for His honor and glory. I realize that without God I can do nothing.

Jesus is my Savior, Healer, Counselor, and Keeper in every situation that comes my way. Praise be to Him! Words cannot suffice to thank God for His grace He has extended. My earnest desire is to serve the Lord faithfully until He comes or calls me home to Heaven. ❖



Reverend Timothy H. Kaibula was the Apostolic Faith District Superintendent of Zambia and East Africa Work from 1992 until his death on June 1, 2019. He is remembered for his love of sound doctrine and prayer, and for always challenging the young people to "keep the ancient Words."

# Blessings Abound at First Togo Camp Meeting

Over three hundred attended the camp meeting, including visitors from all ten Togo branch churches and six nations outside of Togo.



The year 2023 brought a milestone to our churches in Togo: the first Apostolic Faith camp meeting in Togo was held December 24-29.

In anticipation of the event, for several weeks the Togo saints held prayer meetings concentrated on seeking God's direction, blessings, and protection. One particular concern was the government's policy barring religious conventions within the city. God undertook and

sent a brother to offer the use of his school complex as a camp meeting site. The buildings provided lodging and a large tent served as the place of worship.

A ministers and workers conference preceded the camp meeting, taking place on Saturday, December 23, with fifty-six in attendance. It was led by Johnson Okpo of Lagos, Nigeria, on the topic of "The Church and Spiritual Qualifications." First, he reminded those present that the true Church is made up of individuals whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. He added that the redeemed are given victory to live pure, exemplary lives in accordance with God's Word. In addition, he stressed the need for unity among the brethren, saying it enables the Church to fulfill its purpose. The conference concluded with prayer around the altars as many searched their hearts and deepened their consecrations.

The official opening of the camp meeting took place on Sunday, December 24, with the theme "O LORD, Revive Thy Work" taken from Habakkuk 3:2. There were 321 in attendance with representatives from all ten branch churches in Togo. In addition, delegates came from the Republic of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, and the Western and Central Africa (WECA) headquarters.

The morning message was given by the Togo Country District Superintendent, Francois Adechi Bobo. Taking his text from Isaiah 26:19 and Ephesians 2:1-2, he asked the question, "Are you ready for revival?" He said sinners are spiritually dead, but through repentance and forgiveness can be made alive. He also encouraged believers to allow God to revive anything spiritually dead in their lives. He named some of the things that hinder revival and said these can be removed from one's life through prayer and consecration. At the close of the service, the altars filled as seekers rushed to pray.

In the evening, a concert was held and all who attended were blessed by the praise and worship of God through music. Many in the audience were visitors of varying religions. Earlier, Gospel workers had gone throughout the local area extending invitations and

received a good response. That evangelistic effort continued through the remainder of the camp meeting.

Monday was set aside as a day for sharing, following the example given in Acts 4:35: "And distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Through God's provision, many donations had been made of clothing and accessories. These were made available for all campers to choose from.

The camp meeting continued daily with morning teachings and evening evangelistic services. These brought inspiring messages, testimonies, and music. Among the sermon topics were "Salvation," "Sanctification," "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost,"

His blessings abounded: ninety-eight souls claimed salvation, forty received sanctification, and twenty-six were baptized with the Holy Ghost. In addition, forty-seven were healed of various ailments.

and "Christian Unity and Brotherly Love." During the testimonies, the redeemed proclaimed the power in the Blood of Jesus to save, sanctify, and fill with the Holy Spirit. They also told of God's mercy in healing all manner of diseases and delivering from dangers.

Following each service, many went to the altars and sought God with fervent prayer. The result was that His blessings abounded: ninety-eight souls claimed salvation, forty received sanctification, and twenty-six were baptized with the Holy Ghost. In addition, forty-seven were healed of various ailments.

We thank God for His many blessings poured out during this first Togo camp meeting, and pray that His Spirit will be received and established in the hearts of all who attended. ❖

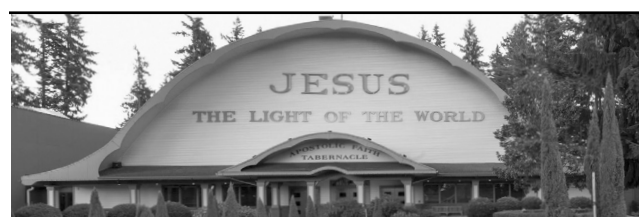
# Portland Campground Storm Damage

Damage from a recent ice storm will require major repairs.

An ice storm swept through the Pacific Northwest from January 13-19, 2024, causing three tall trees on the Portland campground to fall. The result was major damage to several cabins, the shared laundry facility, a water line, and the fence that partitions the front and back areas of the campground. Thankfully, none of the trees hit the tabernacle, though one did fall within inches of it.

A fourth tree near the tabernacle was identified as showing signs that it would soon fall, so workers tied it with large ropes for reinforcement. The Lord helped it to stay standing until winds subsided enough to bring in a 140-foot crane and have it safely removed.

Workers identified some other trees on the campground that were also endangering church buildings, and on January 22 a team began the process of removing them. They will be replaced with shorter evergreen trees, which likely will eventually reach the height of the tabernacle dome. Interestingly, that height is about how tall the recently removed trees were when the campground was purchased over one hundred years ago. ❖



This is a publication of the Apostolic Faith Mission of Portland, Oregon, USA.

For more resources, visit our website at [www.apostolicfaith.org](http://www.apostolicfaith.org).

## A Statement of Bible doctrine

We believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible, and endorse all the teachings contained in it. Following is a summary of our basic doctrines.

- **The Divine Trinity** consists of three Persons: God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, perfectly united as one. Matthew 3:16-17; 1 John 5:7.
- **Repentance** is a godly sorrow for and a renouncing of all sin. Isaiah 55:7; Matthew 4:17.
- **Justification** (or salvation) is the act of God's grace through which we receive forgiveness for sins and stand before God as though we had never sinned. Romans 5:1; 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- **Entire Sanctification**, the act of God's grace whereby we are made holy, is the second definite work and is subsequent to justification. John 17:15-21; Hebrews 13:12.
- **The Baptism of the Holy Ghost** is the endowment of power upon the sanctified life, and is evidenced by speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. John 14:16-17,26; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4.
- **Divine Healing** of sickness is provided through the atonement. James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24.
- **The Second Coming of Jesus** will be as literal and visible as His going away (Acts 1:9-11) and will consist of two appearances. First, He comes to catch away His waiting Bride. Matthew 24:40-44; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. Second, He comes to execute judgment upon the ungodly. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14-15.
- **The Tribulation** will occur between Christ's coming for His Bride and His return in judgment. Isaiah 26:20-21; Revelation 9 and 16.
- **Christ's Millennial Reign** is the 1000 years of peaceful reign by Jesus on earth. Isaiah 11 and 35; Revelation 20:1-6.
- **The Great White Throne Judgment** is the final judgment when all the wicked dead will stand before God. Revelation 20:11-15.
- **The New Heaven and The New Earth** will replace the present heaven and earth, which will be destroyed after the Great White Throne Judgment. 2 Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 21:1-3.
- **Eternal Heaven and Eternal Hell** are literal places of final and eternal destiny. Matthew 25:41-46; Luke 16:22-28.
- **Marriage** is a covenant between one man and one woman that is binding before God for life. Neither person has a right to marry again while the first companion lives. Mark 10:6-12; Romans 7:1-3.
- **Restitution** is necessary, wherein wrongs against others are righted. Ezekiel 33:15; Matthew 5:23-24.
- **Water Baptism** is by one immersion "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matthew 3:16; 28:19.
- **The Lord's Supper** is an institution ordained by Jesus so that we might remember His death until He returns. Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23,26.
- **Foot Washing** is practiced according to the example and commandment Jesus gave. John 13:14-15.

You may obtain additional information about these doctrines and learn about our other publications in both English and foreign languages by writing to the Apostolic Faith Church at 5414 SE Duke Street, Portland, Oregon 97206, U.S.A. or visiting our website at [www.apostolicfaith.org](http://www.apostolicfaith.org). Before these papers are sent out, they are always prayed over for the healing of the sick and the salvation of souls.