

LIVING AS AN ALIEN

by

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“. . .I have been an alien in a strange land.”  
Exodus 18:3

Dedicated to the Lord who gave me Life,  
and my family: Nickee, Jayson, Jeremy, and  
Jaycob, who stood by me.

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are from the Authorized King James version.

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## LIVING AS AN ALIEN

### (Preface)

I studied the word of God and began to implement what I had read. I dared to believe the Word of God works by directly applying it to situations as they arose in my life. Soon, those around me began to act strangely toward me as if I were somewhat strange, alien.

James, a New testament writer said, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” (James 1:22) Reading the Word without acting on it is to deceive our own selves.

There was a time when I would read the Bible and feel good supposing that if I merely read the word my life would change, not so. Seeds planted in the ground will produce. I learned to plant the seed of the Word of God by receiving it, and attending to it by seeking to apply it to my life. What I learned was the application of the Word to my life is an act of faith. Jesus said in John 6:63, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.” Was He speaking only of the words He spoke directly in New Testament books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? The Spirit of God inspired the Old Testament prophets and New Testament writers to write His words. Jesus gave us apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the edifying, building up of the church. Thus, all of the words we read or have read in the Bible are the very Word of God.

The scope of this book does not address the subject of the Word of God on a large scale. What this book does address is the use of the Word of God in particular situations as related in this collection of short stories. These excerpts from the life of our family show how God's Word works in everything we do.

Sometimes Christians have announced in effect: "I was a pauper, now I am a king." or, "I was poor, now I am rich." Very little time was spent explaining, in terms easily understood, the middle ground between failure and success. What personal growth led to this blessing? Things just do not happen because happenings are the results of something. Otherwise, people have a tendency to build their experiences on someone else's final pronouncement minus the middle ground. Many persons including myself have, at times, built their houses on such undeveloped soil.

The Lord's Word enables us to walk in the realm of the miraculous. While experiences are unique to each of us, the Word is not. The amount of initial faith is not as important as how we use what we have when we resolve to begin our faith journey.

We, who accepted Jesus as the Savior, the Anointed One, having risen from the dead, the Son of God, are, or should be, partakers of God's promises. If we are partakers we rest in faith. If we think we must be an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, or a teacher in order to partake of His divine nature, forget it. His nature is for all of us who dare to believe and act on His Word.

David, the psalmist of old, said the following in Psalms 82:5, ". . . [A]ll the foundations of the earth are out of course." The fall of man in the garden of Eden spoiled all that was perfect. Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith countered the fall by giving up His life on the cross that we might walk in newness of life. We do not walk in the garden as

man did before the fall, now we are better off because the kingdom of heaven, the garden, is within us.

A Christian who actually speaks and lives by the Word of God is alien to Satan. Satan's devices fail when we accept, and continually apply by faith, the Word of God in our lives. If we are alien to Satan, what are we to the human race?

The foundations of the earth may be out of course, but we are standing on a firm foundation, Jesus the Son of God. Hey, in Jesus' day and time, people thought He was alien too! What stops us from moving ahead, applying the word of God and watching the results? Again, we are only alien to the heathen world, not to God! Dare to be found of God when He returns as one who is "Living As An Alien!"

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## BASKETBALL ANYONE?

While I was attending Portland State University in Portland, Oregon, I drove an activity bus for extra pocket change. Actually, my primary income was derived from driving a bus. My task one day was to take a bus to the Union Pacific Railroad station. Twenty or so folks would be waiting at a restaurant there for me to deliver them to the Portland Coliseum to attend a basketball play-off between the Portland Trailblazers and the Seattle Supersonics. These teams were head-to-head for the 1976 National Basketball Association championship. Portland was “Red-Hot-And-Rollin’” and energy among basketball sport fans was immeasurably high. The evening was fairly cool. I arrived on time at the restaurant. The people boarded the bus and we started for the coliseum. We arrived fifteen minutes later and found the parking lot was filled to capacity; however, I managed to get the people to the door and found a place to park. At that time the start of the game was about forty minutes away.

I thought that while the game was going on, I would put the time to good use. I would stay in the bus and do some school homework, and use

its dome lights to see what I was doing. This arrangement lasted for no longer than twenty minutes though, as the numbing cold from outside seemed to creep in from nowhere; the bus heater must have checked out last year. Incidentally, I found at least ten different ways to sit on a bus seat. Too cold and cramped to control my study plan, I put my books away, turned off the engine, locked up the bus, and headed for the main lobby. Watching the game seemed to be a good alternative to sitting in the bus. Although I was not much of a sports fan, being inside surely would beat the cold.

Getting through the crowd was an ordeal, it was a throng. As I headed toward the gate, I hoped because I was a bus driver the authorities might allow me to stand in the aisles and watch the game. I was halted at the gate. The fire Marshal had decreed no one was to stand in the aisles. What was I to do?

A quick check of my financial resources revealed a whopping \$1.50. I had a couple of choices at that point. One, stand there, or two, pray. This situation was fit for God's Word.

I had, a few days before, happened upon a very powerful promise found in Matthew 21:22. I read, "And all things soever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Previously, I sat before God, opened His word and declared, "Father, I believe this Bible to be the inerrant Word of God. I will do as it says. I will believe it no matter what. Teach me from your Holy Word by your Spirit. I renounce any and all teachings and traditions I have had to date so you will have fertile ground in which to do your good work. Amen."

I was stupid enough by worldly standards to do what I said, believe the Word. Thus, encouraged by the Word of God along with a heart full of faith and \$1.50, I asked God for a ticket to the game. With a very simple prayer, plain, with no elaboration I prayed thusly, "Lord your Word says that whatever I ask in prayer believing, I shall receive. I ask;

therefore, in Jesus' Name, for a ticket to the game and thank you for it in advance. Amen."

I immediately began to look for prospective ticket-givers. Was I kooky? No, I had prayed. I believed God had heard me and would give me a ticket. I began to look expectantly. God will not let His kids down no matter how old they are. I had no idea how the ticket would be manifested, but it would be manifested. I continued to thank and praise God.

I saw the ticket scalpers outside and wondered if they would let a ticket go for \$1.50. I looked at faces all around me. I was undaunted because God would provide.

The crowd thinned, and soon the lobby outside the gate was empty save for a couple of coliseum supervisors, known as "Redcoats" because of the red coats they wore, and myself. I was still confident.

Looking to my left, I recognized a fellow who attended a church across town. He saw me at the same time, and walked over to the turnstile where I was standing. We said the usual stuff.

"Hello, how are you?"

"I am fine. How are you?"

"The same."

He asked what I was doing. Did I have a ticket? I responded with, "Not presently," meaning "Not in my hand." He said he was holding two tickets for a couple of friends who were due in from Astoria, Oregon, a coastal town approximately ninety miles northwest of Portland. Together, they were going to watch the game. We talked for a few minutes. Suddenly, his wife walked by.

"Hi, Jay, have you got a ticket?" She asked.

"Not presently," I replied.

She told the guy to hurry up, the game had started. We could hear the crowd and the starting horns in the background. When she asked the

guy whether he had seen the couple from Astoria, he replied he had not. She left, returning a couple of minutes later. She saw her husband and I were still talking.

“Hey,” she said, “give Jay a ticket, the game has started!”

“Give me another five minutes,” he said in response.

My heart leapt, but I remained calm. After all, I knew this would happen. Three of the five minutes had not passed when the guy called to a passing Redcoat. The guy gave the Redcoat a ticket to let me into the game. The entire process took about thirty minutes.

We went in and sat down in a good seat location where we could see everything. When half-time came, the guy asked me if I would like something to drink. I said, “Yes.” and began to dig in my pockets for my \$1.50. The guy saw me and as he put up his hand said, “It’s on me, what would you like?” Wonderful! I had not asked God for anything to drink.

The game ended with the Portland team the decisive victors. The crowd cheered! I cheered too! The Lord had heard me and answered my prayer.

Where is the blessing if we pray and have no answers we can see? I will tell you, nowhere. A simple act of applying the Word of God to the situation brought results. The use of faith moves God. If we have faith we will do something with it. Friend, if we have faith we will ask. We do not need fire, an earthquake, or thunder and lightning to get God’s attention. A quiet prayer of faith gains results. God only needed the faithful cry of one person to accomplish great things. Remember the loaves and fishes?

Oh, the Trailblazers went on to win the NBA championship. One question: Who says God does not like a good basketball game?

## BINDING AND LOOSING

In Matthew 16:19, we read where Jesus was speaking to His disciples. He said, “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

I hate that devil Satan. I detest the pain he inflicts on people, using sickness, disease, ignorance, and hatred to influence men’s thoughts. He goes so far as to persuade some to commit terrible crimes. Satan hates humanity. What he hates even more are users of the Word of God, those who wear God’s armor. Do we not have the keys of survival identified in the referenced scripture?

I was working a part-time weekend job as a seating host at a local family restaurant. I left early for work. The morning was still dark and a very light fog lay over the area; however, the driving conditions were very good. Visibility was unlimited in all directions.

Thoughts filled my head with what Jesus had said about the keys of the kingdom. In response, I spoke as I drove. “Satan, you listen to me in the Name of Jesus! I bind you this day! I break your assignment against

my family and me. This binding includes wherever we are, whether at home, work, school, play, and all legal, physical, and financial areas. I do not give you place. I resist you with all that is within me. Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.” Then I said, “Angels of God who excel in strength, and encamp around the righteous to deliver them, you are loosed in the Name of Jesus to minister on behalf of my family and me according to the will of God. I consider it done.”

I spoke the Word of God in prayer and expected to see results. Expectancy in faith is combat faith. Without the Word of God, we can not survive. Then I prayed in the spirit, for it is the will of God concerning us. This kind of prayer is undefiled by trying to think up things and ways to pray. We speak as the Holy Spirit gives us utterance; that is, the ability to do so. I praised God because everything would happen as I had prayed, because the Word does not lie.

As I was praying in the Spirit I noticed in my rearview mirror two sets of headlights. I continued to pray, not giving them much thought. Not a minute and a half had gone by since I had bound and loosed, when suddenly a car came by so fast there was no time to react. Considering how fast the car passed me I guessed the driver was traveling at or over one hundred miles an hour. At the same time the car was going by, my car was abruptly displaced to the right. The passing car crossed into the space my car had occupied! After the speeding car passed, my car was abruptly moved back into the lane. All this took place in a split second. As I said earlier, I had not time to react. I did not at any time move the steering wheel. I had escaped certain death. The angels of God I had loosed just moments before, delivered me. I praised God all that day and each day since that time.

Friend, I have had many people tell me that scenes such as these only happens to some people; the other guy. When I speak of how God works, I get looks with one eyebrow raised. I know this: The Word of

God will work for those who dare to believe He will back His Word. Dependence on God's Word does not come over night. The most effective way to partake of His Word is to simply to decide that you will believe it and act on it. God will do the rest!



## CHICKENS ARE FOWL THINGS

I do not know if you have ever had the unique opportunity to drive “live-haul” for a poultry processing company or not. If you have not you have missed a genuine treat. You soon get that “cooped-up” feeling because you are working for “chicken feed.” On the whole, the job is nothing to “crow about.” Now, enough of that line of thinking; however, every now and then something different comes along to cause one to sit up, take notice, and understand many things are subject to change. The laws of physics, mechanics, and nature are subject to change as I learned one dark, wet night on a chicken farm in Oregon.

Three drivers clocked into work that night, and I was one of them. We prepared to travel to poultry a farm some sixty miles distant. We had two semi-trucks and trailers known as rigs, and one other truck I was to drive simply known as “the truck.”

Navigating through some of the farms we went to was difficult. This was partly due to the length of the big trucks, which had a combined truck and trailer length of approximately fifty-two feet. Sometimes the distances between the farm buildings were of such proximity we were unnerved as we drove between them. Other farms had small roads

leading to and from them; this farm had steep, narrow roads. One road was the hair-pin type; it had a very tight turn. The buildings, fortunately, were easily accessible. When we were in place we prepared our rigs for loading.

The Mennonite minister who owned the farm was occasionally seen winding his way through the chicken barn and around the trucks where we were loading to make sure that everything was going all right. We were picking up approximately twenty-five thousand chickens. We accomplished this feat in four hours or less due to those who “caught” the chickens. Actually, the chickens were not “caught.” Dimming the lights in the barns made the chickens think it was night; they simply went to sleep. “How do the chickens get to the trucks?” I am glad you asked.

The chicken catchers came from nearby towns. Working in those dirty, smelly, and sometimes wet chicken barns, the catchers would collect the chickens, six at a time, and bring them to the truck. The loaders then placed the chickens into the coops situated on the trucks. We worked in virtual darkness.

The coops stacked fifteen high and six across, made a total ground height and width of thirteen by eight feet. We secured the coops to the truck’s trailer with nylon straps. One tie-down strap secured each row of coops. There were thirteen rows of coops. The loads were dynamic; that is, they moved, shifting on the trailer while in transit from the farm to the processing plant. The arrangement could be quite scary. If the truck and its trailer leaned, the load leaned farther. Couple that with the natural twisting of the trailer as it was pulled through mud holes and irregularities in the road. One look into the rear view mirror made a person quickly decide not to use them again to see if everything was all right. We drivers kept our eyes straight ahead to reduce the scare factor.

The last chicken was in the coop, and the catchers left. We began to strap our loads down which took about thirty minutes. Around

midnight, the first truck began to leave. Driver number two followed the first; I brought up the rear.

The driver of truck one swung way out to the right to get as much room as he could so the trailer would track straight behind the truck. His turn was limited because there was a steep drop-off. There definitely was not enough room to get the whole rig straightened for an easy drive around that very sharp hair-pin turn.

The truck driver guided the truck forward. He tried to keep the right front tire on the crown or edge of the road. If the driver went too far to the right, he would go off the road and down a steep grassy hill and end up who knows where. Driving left of the crown would cause the left rear trailer wheels to run up over a low hill. The trailer wheels, running over the hill would cause the already precarious position of the truck and trailer to become unbalanced and roll over onto its side. If we did not think smartly, the situation could end in disaster. Get the picture?

The driver started down the incline. He was watching the positions of both the truck and trailer. Suddenly, the ground shifted under the weight of the truck and the right front wheel sank into the rain-soaked earth. The driver turned the wheels to the left as he drove the truck forward which made a bad situation worse. Ten feet of rut emerged; it seemed, from behind the tire. The load swayed precariously. The driver stopped the truck, set the brakes, turned off the engine and got out. Everyone was scratching their heads.

We investigated the situation to determine the seriousness of the affair. The right rear drive wheels of the truck had also begun to sink into the soft ground, causing the truck to lean, which caused the load to lean even further. This situation was fraught with danger. If the truck or the load, or a combination of both were moved forward at all, the entire rig, load, and all would fall on its side. The result would be some long hours picking up coops containing over seven thousand chickens, not to

mention obtaining the necessary equipment with which to right the entire rig. We needed a way to back the truck out of the rut.

The driver climbed back into the truck and started up the engine. He put the transmission in reverse and began letting out the clutch. The tires began spinning; he was stuck. The farmer said he had an idea.

The farmer said he was going to get his tractor. Soon, we heard the tractor's engine chugging as the farmer headed our way. The farmer drove the tractor around the corner of the barn, and we could see the headlights of the tractor he was driving. In a moment, he drove up in the largest tractor I had ever seen, a Massey-Ferguson. The tires were taller than me, and I am over six feet tall. The scoop on the front contained some very heavy, stout log chains. We hooked the chains onto the back of the trailer. The farmer got onto his tractor, and the truck driver got into the truck. The plan was to engage the reverse gears in the truck while the tractor pulled the truck out, or at least try.

When things were ready, the signal was given to the truck driver and the farmer to begin to pull the truck backward. Truck and tractor strained to no avail. We made several more attempts, nothing happened. The farmer disconnected the chains, said he would be back, and drove away. He returned a short time later driving a small crawler tractor.

We hooked up the chains between the truck and tractor. Again, the signal was given. As the truck and tractor strained to move the some seventy-thousand pound weight, the chain broke. We doubled the chains, running two strands of chain; again they broke. These chains were popping like hot corn. Then we triple-stranded the chains, again nothing happened! We had enough chain left for one more three-strand attempt. Up to this time the truck had not moved an inch in either direction except to rock crazily. All of us were very nervous, not to mention the driver of the truck who would make the wild ride of Mr. Toad if things really

turned sour. Our new plan was to call for one of those giant wrecker trucks if this final effort did not produce any positive results.

The situation called for something which, up to this point, I had forgotten. In the excitement I had forgotten about prayer. Nevertheless, I began to pray.

“Father, I thank you for saving me. I thank you for having made me your child. I thank you for your holy angels that excel in strength. I thank you for the angel of the Lord who encamps ‘round about the righteous to deliver them’ just like it says in Psalm 91. We need delivery! Angels, go in the Name of Jesus, according to His Word, ‘And all things whatsoever, when ye pray believe that you receive *them* and ye shall have *them*.’ Hold onto the chains and cause them to be strong. Cause the truck to be pulled free so we can go home. I thank you Lord for your angels. Amen.” I knew God had answered the prayer. Although the night was cool to cold, I felt a shiver of expectation and confirmation of the prayer I had just prayed. I praised God.

The truck and tractor were ready and the signal was given. Both the truck and tractor strained. There was an interesting atmosphere about the place. As the two pieces of equipment worked, I sensed a perceptible power which permeated the area and lasted for at least thirty seconds; no jerking of equipment, just a powerful straining. Suddenly, the truck began to roll backward. The tractor rolled forward tearing up the ground with its tracks, pulling the truck free!

How often do we forget we have ministering spirits assigned to us to do our heavy work? The angels ministered that night. I envisioned several angels working together to free the truck.

Does this sound far-fetched? I assure you, it is not; prayer changes things! We all drove home, and as I went I reflected on what had happened. I praised God and marveled about the angels. Have you ever really considered angels as one of God’s benefits?

## CROSSING A RIVER

What would you do if you found yourself on a river bank and absolutely needed to get to the other side? If you do not have a clue about just how to do it, you have yourself a full-blown problem.

In 1985, I was a member of the U.S. Air force and had completed two years of a four year recommitment. After completing my bachelor degree, I was preparing to enter a graduate degree program. I was also thinking about prospective jobs and did not have any idea where to begin.

I prayed to the Father one day and asked, "Where am I going to get a job after I leave the Air Force?" A thought assailed my mind, "Why are you worried about it now? You still have not reached that bridge yet, so do not try. The answers will be there when the time is right." The answer satisfied me for the moment. The truth was inescapable; therefore, I would continue school.

I entered graduate school with excitement. There was more freedom to delve into the books, and ample opportunity to really branch out and expand my horizons. To help expand those horizons there were

also the requisite classes we had to take to fulfill degree requirements. One such class was Advanced Aerodynamics where mathematics is its bread-and-butter, so-to-speak. The course of instruction would provide me with all kinds of head-scratcher material. The bottom line, the class would be tough because I am not a whiz-kid at math. Seriously, two-plus-two is complex math to me. Nevertheless, I signed up for the class thinking “toughing-it-out” was the answer.

For some reason I do not remember, I missed the first day of class. My close friend, Gary, had also signed up for the class. Since he knew I would not be attending that night, he said he would take notes and apprise me the next day what had happened.

The next day Gary found me, and looked at me with a serious expression on his face. Raising his eyebrows he said, “Get this!” He proceeded then to build a vivid word picture in my mind of complete disaster. What I saw were visions of catastrophe. “Uh-oh, I am done for,” I thought. “I hope I make it. Maybe I will drop the course. No, I will wait until the next class period to see how things really are. The course can not be as tough as Gary says.”

The next class period I attended confirmed Gary’s words and my worst fears. I would seek the school registrar at my earliest opportunity, and drop that class! Oh! I felt as though someone laid a ton of bricks on me. The professor so lost me with what he said I could not believe it.

I called Carol, the University registrar, at her home. Because she had helped me at various times over the telephone, she recognized my voice. I quickly explained the situation. I made an appointment to see her the next day for the purpose of dropping the class.

“Jay, things can’t be as bad as all that!”

“Carol, you know me. Generally, I am a very optimistic person. I wouldn’t be telling you all of this if it didn’t have merit.”

Carol encouraged me to attend one more class period before I decided for sure. I agreed to her suggestion, hung up the phone, and just sat there.

I had already thought of praying, but felt that this was even too tough for God. Can you believe this? I had been through many situations. God answered many prayers on behalf of my family and me, yet I thought this problem was too tough for God to work in my favor. A miracle was what I needed. My brain needed to be instantaneously packed with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of this highly complex math, by God. I was willing to be a good guinea pig.

Later, while reflecting on this event, I realized no one knows everything. One must not allow the situations of life to overshadow the knowledge that God is able to pull off miracles. Apparent impossibilities melt as He turns everything around for our success and His glory.

The writer Paul, in II Corinthians 8:12 stated, "For if there be *first* [emphasis mine] a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." I really do expect God to meet my faith on the principle concepts of the Bible. I was willing, yet totally deficient in math skills; therefore, willingness of mind made me a prime candidate for a work of God's power. I sat down to pray, "God, a year ago I asked you about a job; what kind I was going to have after I became discharged from the military. You told me then I need not worry about it as I still had to complete two more years of military service before I was eligible for discharge. Moreover, I was not to cross that river before I came to it. I agreed with you, but now I am in a predicament. I need the class in aerodynamics to complete my education before I leave the Air Force. I am not merely approaching the river; I am standing in the water! I have come to my extremity, and fully realize apart from you I can do nothing. I need to have a gift of wisdom,



knowledge, and understanding in order to complete this class. I do not understand one ounce of what they are talking about. You said in your Word for us to come boldly before the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need. Here I am. I believe to receive in my conscious mind the manifestation of your answer. I praise you and thank you for your saving Word. In Jesus Name, amen.” I left the house and headed for class.

The classroom was full when I arrived, and as class start-time was at hand, the professor stepped up to the chalkboard. For the next four hours we sat, wrote, and listened. We were going to have a take-home test. We were to break off into groups of three or four and develop an airplane as a project. The instructor based our grades on the project, the presentation of it, and the results of the take-home test.

Everything was still way out for me until about the three and one-half hour mark. Suddenly, I felt as though the weight lifted from me. I felt very light and peaceful. Simultaneously I thought, “I believe I can get a ‘B’!” This is quite a change from where I was before is it not? God had come through; all would be fine.

Gary was a close school mate. Through thick and thin, we would lend support to each other, offering encouragement to “keep-on-keeping-on.” This situation was no different. Gary was strong in math, and told me before to wait it out because everything would turn out fine. Gary had a problem: he needed a part-time job to defray some expenses, and the opportunity would cost him his study time. According to the ground-rules laid by the instructor, we could work together as required, so I offered to work the equations. Gary and I would compare notes later toward the end of the term. He agreed, so I went to work.

I purchased a hand-held calculator and learned how to use it to get my much needed answers. Working equations consumed my spare time except when I was with my family. I understood all I was doing. I also

understood my responses to the equations were wrong! Undaunted, I rolled the paper into a big wad and scored two points as it sailed across the room and into the garbage can. I began again, and this time nearly all the calculations were correct. Gary and I corrected those needing repair. I put the equations into readily understandable terms, which means anyone could read them without having at least a course or two in Egyptian hieroglyphics. I turned the papers into the class instructor after having given Gary his copy.

The day arrived for the presentations of our various class projects. Each member of the several groups had to present his or her portion of their group's presentation. I gave mine and sat down. I still had a confidence about the course; I would get at least a "B" grade. When I received my grade card, I was astonished to read that I had not earned the anticipated "B," but an "A" which far exceeded the vision I had had! The scripture in Ephesians 3:20 was true, where Paul stated, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly *above all that we ask or think* [emphasis mine] according to the power that worketh in us." What happened was beyond what I had asked. I had not specified a particular grade. I just wanted to pass the course, which meant a letter grade of at least a "C." God gave me wisdom to help Gary. Gary was also pleased that he also received an "A."

God makes up the difference in our apparent weaknesses. He abundantly gives to us of his stores. He gives this abundance to all who accept the challenge to live by faith. Therefore, *nothing* is impossible! I praised Him again and again. My attendance and passing of this course shortened the normal time to complete graduate requirements by three months. Success in that course allowed me ample opportunity to begin teaching at the University before my discharge from the military. I am nothing special, but I dared to take God at His Word. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the writer of Hebrews has powerfully

stated in chapter four, verse sixteen, the following: “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

## EASY DOES IT

I do not suppose that many of us think about what being a supplying joint really means. Ephesians 4:16 says, “. . .[F]rom whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” If you are like me, you might be saying to yourself, “Wow, that is a neat scripture all right, but what does it mean?” Perhaps the following story will dispel all questions.

I was working for a freight subsidiary of a large railroad company. Another fellow, whom I will call Paul, worked with me. Together, our job was to load and unload trailers onto and off railroad flatcars. The job was potentially dangerous because the trailers were at times suspended overhead, held in the grasp of the giant machine known as the “Packer.” Trailers weighed anywhere from twelve to fifty thousand pounds depending on whether or not they were full of freight.

The night was clear and the air crisp as we began loading the empty trailers onto the flatcars. My job that night was as ground man; Paul drove the Packer. We communicated with each other through the use of hand signals. We had to wear gloves because of the sharp steel edges on the trailers and flatcars.

Frequently, I would have a small rest while Paul picked up the next trailer. I put the time to good use by simply praising God. Since flowery words or phrases were not necessary, I prayed, "Praise you Lord!" "Hallelujah to Jesus!" "I thank you for forgiving me of sin!" Do you see what I mean? Thanking Him for anything and everything I could think of was the least I could do for the One who had given me so much.

Sometimes the surface of the cars did not have good places to stand. In those cases I would stand on one of the couplings that tied railcars together. One car in particular not only did not have a flat place to stand; the coupling was of an unusual shape. I had to perch precariously on a high point of the coupling. I balanced myself by holding onto a three-eighths inch thick skip plate. The skip plates were approximately fifteen inches wide and five feet long. When laid down, the plate's length afforded contact between each car; therefore, we could drive from one car to another.

I gave the signal to Paul with my left hand telling him to start raising the trailer into position over the railcar. He lifted the trailer to a height of about six feet over my head. When the trailer was in position the signal would be given to lower the trailer toward the car. Paul slowly lowered the trailer. While Paul followed my commands I watched a pin on the bottom of the trailer that, when fully engaged in the lock mechanism, would secure the trailer to the flatcar. As the trailer was guided into position I was fully unaware anything was wrong until a terrific pressure was exerted on the fingers of my right hand. I looked quickly to see what happened.

I was still holding onto the end of a skip plate. I had folded my fingers over the three-eighths thick end described earlier. The forward bottom edge of the trailer was in perfect alignment over the end of the skip plate and was resting on my fingers. I tried to jerk my hand free; nothing doing. The whole thing was very much like that cartoon where the cat gets its paw caught in a vise; regardless how it tries it can not get free. I tried to jerk my hand free a couple of times to no avail. I thought by this time the pressure had severed my fingers in the glove. I gave Paul the signal to raise the trailer, and he did so immediately. At the time, he had no idea of my difficulty. As he lifted the trailer the pressure eased; I jerked my hand free. I jumped from the coupling to the ground. I yanked the glove off my hand and saw that my fingers were still there, but all of them were flat and totally numb.

I must stop here to ask a question: What would you have done if you were in my situation? Scream? Why? At this point let us discuss a vital concept. Are you aware that when we speak our mind listens? In other words, in a stressful situation we are unable to think clearly. Simply stated, we take leave of our senses and the screaming begins, but thank God, there is a solution. Surviving catastrophic circumstances depends upon filling our spirits with the Word of God.

When we spend time reading and studying the Word of God, our spirit fills up with His Word. The Holy Spirit has something He can use to help us get out of a tight spot. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we can speak the Word of God with authority. In my situation praise was the answer; screaming certainly would not do. I began to praise God *aloud*. Now back to the story.

I praised God saying, "Thank you Jesus for healing my hand!" It felt like a bat. "Thank you for healing me!" My fingers were flat. "Thank you Jesus!" "Jesus is my healer!" "Praise God!" "Thank you for my fingers!" "Thank you for protecting me!" As I praised God I was

totally unaware of anything going on around me. Only praise escaped my lips. Paul, by this time, realized something was drastically wrong. He stopped everything and jumped approximately ten feet to the ground. He ran over to me imploring me to see what had happened. I could not answer. As I continued praising God, He spoke. In the regions of my mind, clear, concise words like thoughts not of my own began to be apparent as I was praising Him. "Put your hand under cold water!" I went to the utility room, turned on the cold water, and thrust my hand into the stream. I sank to my knees as waves of nausea overwhelmed me. Again the Lord spoke, "Get to the hospital!" I stopped praising long enough to say aloud, "Okay," but stayed on my knees. Again and more persistently He spoke, "*Get to the hospital!*" This time I obeyed. When I asked Paul to take me to the hospital, he agreed.

A day in eternity seemed to pass before we arrived at the door of the hospital's Emergency Room. I was not afraid. The peace that engulfed me seemed like a warm blanket. The attendant took me into the waiting room. While sitting there I had a most unusual experience. I felt as though my spirit had left my body. Actually, I looked through spiritual eyes like on a television screen. I saw myself sitting there with at least ten angels standing in a semi-circle in front of me, heads bowed and hands folded. I must point out here that for years I had had trouble identifying with God. I tried to grasp the concept that the Spirit of God lives within those who call upon His Name. I now realized this to be true; my life changed. The angels were surrounding where God was; He was in me. Our spirits were one not two. David, the psalmist, wrote the following in Psalms 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." This scripture came to me and the full realization of it hit me. My heart filled with this revelation, and tears began to course down my cheeks. I knew God loved me. What a

glorious revelation! The sound of a nurse's voice cut through my reverie. She had come to take me to the examining room.

As I lay on the table waiting for the doctor to come in, a thought came to me, "They are here," meaning the angels. I could sense their presence. Again, tears coursed down my cheeks. I praised God.

The doctor sent me to the X-Ray room for some pictures after he finished his examination of my hand. When the developed pictures were returned the doctor looked at them. He said the bones were neither broken nor cracked. He bandaged my hand and excused me from work for the rest of the night. Feeling had returned to my fingers without any pain. Oh, I forgot to mention that the skin on the tops of my fingers became scuffed when I pulled my hand free.

Paul drove me back to the job site to get my car. After we returned to the yard we walked out to the Packer. The trailer was still suspended in the air. We climbed onto the railcar to see where my fingers had been. To our shock we saw the distance between the bottom forward edge of the trailer and the skip-plate was a scant three-eighths of an inch. Friend, my finger bones are nearly one-half of an inch thick.

The morning after the incident, I kept an appointment the hospital had made for me to see an Orthopedic surgeon. The doctor looked at my fingers and hand, and instructed me to return in a few days. The scabs that had formed on my scuffed fingers fell off three days later leaving no scars. The next time I visited the Orthopedic surgeon, he expressed amazement. He said he did not know, nor could he explain, why I still had my fingers. I told him why and to chalk-it-up as a patient's story. He looked at me with a blank stare. Within a week my fingers had returned to their original shape without complications.

I related the incident to my parents. When I told my parents about the angels, my dad said the angels bowed their heads because they were sorry I went through as much pain as I had. I agreed.



Remember, God *does not* cause things to happen to His children. My inattention led to near disaster. Concentrating more on the position of the pin than my hand nearly cost me my fingers. The Lord saved me from a problem I created.

Are you wondering about how the foregoing situation fits into the scripture about a supplying joint? My brother, Steve, spent the day fasting. My wife, Nickee, prayed for Paul, because he liked to smoke marijuana and get “stoned.” Nickee prayed Paul would have quick reflexes and be fully aware of everything. My mother prayed in the spirit all day. I walked around praising God. None of us knew what the other was doing. Responding to the leading of the Spirit was what mattered.

## EDUCATION: WHO NEEDS IT?

I do believe, from personal experience, we Christians give serious consideration to our present circumstances. By circumstances, I am talking about our present job, where we live, or whether we should go to college. We ask, "Is what we are doing the will of God?" That question can lead to confusion if left unanswered. We could find ourselves so muddled we do not do anything. We may become aware of an inner urging to do something in a particular area. Unfortunately, we do not always recognize the urging as God's leading. The urging is somewhat like a persistent thought. No matter how we try to turn it off, by thinking either consciously or unconsciously, "I am *not* going to do that. Yech!" The thought will not leave. To resist God's leading because of our ignorance of not knowing what to listen for is one thing, to resist not doing something about it if we do, is another; thus, our confusion remains. Why? God's Holy Spirit is gently trying to guide us toward success. If we listen and respond, the nagging will leave; peace will

replace the confusion. I was one of those who failed to recognize the signs and every time the topic of education came up, I stiffened. “Who needs it?” I would say. I did. Because of my stubbornness, I spent seven years going nowhere.

There was a particular manager where I worked. He told me he had seen many sharp, potential managers. Unfortunately, due to the fact that that person lacked a college degree, there was no way any management positions would open up to them. I thought, “There is that word again, education.” I put on a good front by telling myself, “I do not want to be a manager anyway.” Incidentally, I was praying for God to lead me. I later realized I was my own worst enemy. I wanted to progress, but I hampered Him at every turn by placing stipulations on just how He was to accomplish His answer to my pleas. The biggest stumbling block was my own hard head; only God could crack this nut.

In 1982, my wife and I attended in Portland, Oregon, the first-ever, worldwide communion service. Kenneth Copeland Ministries, Fort Worth, Texas, sponsored the event. Through broadcast by satellite, people from all over the world joined in on this great happening. Their hearts were knitted in the common bond of faith. The giant communion service crossed denominational lines, doctrines, and traditions. The event underscored in the hearts of those who participated the undeniable truth that Jesus *is* Lord.

Great healings took place, physical as well as spiritual. God bound up the brokenhearted; the down-trodden He lifted. His joy was in that host. Linked by satellites and remote television outlets, the unprecedented magnitude of this holiest of occasions burned deep into my soul. While there in the midst of it all I heard the Spirit of God quietly say, “You *are* free.” Free from what? Free from me! Free to allow God to work. Free to serve Him. My wife sensed healing for the family, too. I had never experienced an awesome move of God such as this evidenced.

My wife and I began to notice an indication from God through prayer, study of His Word and meditation, that certain aspects of our family's life were about to change.

One morning, my wife awoke and told me of a dream she had during the night. She said the following:

“I was walking alone along a beach on a beautiful sunny day. The glistening white sand of the beach stretched out before my eyes. As I walked I felt such peace. Then a commotion arose. I saw a volcano rise out of the water until it towered over me. It began to spew ash, smoke and flames. Immediately I felt fear; for my family and me. I turned and ran down the beach to get to my family. We had to get out of there! I woke up. I immediately knew what the dream meant: serious trouble would occur at the job where my husband worked. A most ungodly restlessness would be evidenced there.”

A short time later my employer lost a contract. We were represented by the local Teamsters Union under a collective bargaining agreement. The company slated to take our place was non-union. Union and non-union groups generally do not mix; therefore, we were sitting on a powder keg. Because I had consented to teach the non-union shop people how to do the job we were losing, a few of my co-workers began breathing out threatenings against my life. There is nothing like a tense situation to bring out the best in people. Since I had already decided against training the new company's employees, my co-workers had wasted their words.

During my four years with the company, I had prayed continually for each of my co-workers by name. The man who directly threatened me was one of them. I was not afraid or belligerent. I merely told that him not to threaten me. I turned the matter over to God. Two years later that

man was picked up for driving while drunk. He became drunk again and was involved in an auto crash that broke his neck. The guy lived, but would never drive a truck again because of his drunkenness. I must stress here, I do not believe God engineered the accident. I do believe the man brought the sentence upon himself.

Nearly two months later, I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force Reserve. Three months after that both my wife and I felt compelled to re-join the U.S. Air Force. I terminated with the company, received a conditional release from the Reserves and re-enlisted in April of 1983. Believe me, up to that point, military service was the farthest thing from our minds. I did not re-join for the money. Most people know the enlisted military is grossly underpaid. Rather, I rejoined because of the leading of the Lord. The justification for the move soon became apparent.

Within one year after going back into the Air Force, the company I had worked for shut its doors. The company became plagued by a stark lack of business. Due to large debts and fiscal mis-management, the company did not pay its employees for a period of one month. The workers were desperate. My wife's Spirit-inspired dream had come to pass. We praised God for sparing us that difficulty.

I desired to be an Air Force officer, but I needed a formal education to be one. Fortunately, I was able to transfer some hours from a school I had attended years before. The likelihood of getting to officer school before the maximum age cut-off was a long-shot, but I would try. I enrolled in Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's College of Continuing Education located on the Air Force base. I could work all day and go to school all night. My wife and I committed this to the Lord. We knew He would lead and open the doors.

On the first day of class we had a visitor from the University. He outlined some stiff financial restrictions that created immediate financial problems for me. I was attending school on the Veteran G.I. Bill through

the Veterans Administration. Because of the G.I. Bill, the government would pay for my schooling as long as I maintained a good grade point average. The problem lay in the fact that the V.A. did not disburse funds for school until the end of the semester. The University wanted a full one-third of the current semester's costs up front. Not having funds to defray the cost of this requirement meant I would have to drop out of school, and I had hardly started! The visitor told me, "Nothing is impossible. See me tomorrow at the office."

I arrived at the school's office the next day as instructed. The visitor had had to leave before I got there for another destination on his itinerary. He did not leave; however, without giving the school registrar instructions on my behalf.

The visitor said I could continue school if we observed the following: All transactions were to be discreet; no broadcasting allowed. I was to submit to the school, immediately upon arrival, the education check from the Veterans Administration. The purchase of books was a separate arrangement. Nothing was illegal. This special allowance would dissolve if I voiced the arrangement, or my grades did not reflect that I was deserving of the unmerited favor. Interestingly, after I completed school, any further allowances for any other students ceased.

I continued attending classes. I worked eight to ten hours a day. I attended classes at night carrying a six to twelve hour class load. Additionally, I held, at one time, two part-time jobs, and supported a family of five. To do justice to all required strict discipline. Priorities had to be established and maintained. With the help from God through prayer, success was possible. God had opened the door for school; I would not disappoint Him.

I liken my opportunity to go to school to a story I heard concerning a mother cat and her kitten. A mother cat stood on the corner of a busy intersection with a kitten clutched in her teeth. In the center of the

intersection, a traffic police officer was giving direction to the motorists. The officer would signal the traffic when it was safe to enter and pass through the intersection while he, at the same time, held back cross-traffic. Through his guidance all traffic proceeded safely. The police officer spied the cat holding her kitten. He held up his arms to signal to the motorists in all directions that everyone was to stop immediately. The cat then proceeded unhindered diagonally across the street, walking directly under the police officer's outstretched arms. When the cat had safely reached the other side of the street, the officer motioned the next line of traffic to proceed.

We may never know just how many times Jesus has stopped the traffic of life so we may pass through safely. Ways that are opened to you are for you. Principles may seem to be the same as others, but not precisely. The path of life upon which you tread is unique to you. I viewed myself in the role of the cat. God allowed me to pass where no others had. The priorities I set were as follows: first, God; second, family; third, regular job; fourth, school; lastly, my part-time job. My wife and children were very supportive. The hours spent in school and working seemed endless; therefore, any time spent with my family was quality time together. Sometimes, I would express how tired I was of being gone so much. At other times, my wife would express the same thing. In all cases, we consoled one another with the fact that as each term of school was completed we were nearer our goal; graduation and discharge from the Air Force.

I gave up hope of becoming an Air Force officer. Meeting the requirement of having a degree and being in attendance at the U.S. Air Force Officer Training School by the time I reached thirty-fifth birthday would be physically impossible. I endeavored to get as much education as possible. I would make the four years in the Air Force count and obtain my degree. Our goal was for me to be honorably discharged, and

secure a good job with a major aerospace company. All would be accomplished with Father God in charge as Lord of our family. We could not lose.

The Lord helped me overcome obstacles as they presented themselves. The obstacles would appear only to disappear when the Word of God was applied to them. The obstacles I am talking about were such things as grades, comprehension, time to study, attendance at work, and quality time with my family, just to name a few. Jesus gave us the authority, as recorded by Matthew 17:20, "And Jesus said unto them...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard see, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

During the four years spent to completing my degree, I experienced success after success in the Lord. Constantly keeping the whole affair before God was the key to success. Indeed, I realized that God was interested in what I was doing; He just wanted to be a part of it. When priorities are kept, one can not keep from winning, especially if a person makes Jesus the Lord of their endeavors and seeks His leadership. Making Jesus the Lord of all is a conscious attitude, the bending of the knee, the full acknowledgment of God's sovereign place in our lives. I graduated from the University with both Associate and Bachelor degrees. I went on to study for and receive a Masters of Aeronautical Science degree. I applied for and received the opportunity to teach as an adjunct faculty member at the University I had just attended.

All of the education I received was a key to open the door of a major aircraft manufacturer. Strange, I spent seven years telling God what I did not need. If I had submitted to Him earlier, He would have had someone more pliable to lead. Only God knows what blessings I missed during those seven years.



Education comes in all forms, but the most frequent lessons are learned in the school of life. If we let God, however, temper those lessons with His Word, we will be successful in whatever we do. Through all of the education I received in the classroom I have learned one thing among many; temporal education is old news by the time you hear it. Education that stands the test of time, I have found, is the Word of God. The Word is always alive, current, and ready to be used in our daily lives to kick down the walls of ignorance. Formal academic education may not be for everyone, but we certainly need an education in God's Holy Word. If we do not apply what we learn in God's Word to the situations we face in our life, how can we be successful? I do not see that we can. What do you think?

## FISHING

One hot, sultry, day, I sat on the floor of the cockpit of a U.S. Air Force high performance T-38 aircraft. The Air Force uses that aircraft to train pilots to fly in the advanced stages of their training. The place where the pilot sits, so-called the cockpit, was small and had some very difficult areas to work in and around even for the very experienced maintenance person. The aircraft I sat in that day was one of several hangared together. Sweat ran in rivulets down my face, and the palms of my hands were sweaty; holding onto tools was nearly impossible.

My job was to replace eight of the cables on the aircraft rudder brake pedals. When the pilot pushes on the top of the pedals the brakes are activated; thus, causing the aircraft to stop moving. Changing the cables was a snap, and adjusting the cable tension, frustrating.

Holding onto both ends of a short piece of string and pulling the two ends away from each other is an illustration of tension. The harder the string is pulled the more taut, or stretched, the string becomes.

Another example is a guitar string. The guitar string is stretched, tightened, by simply turning the keys; more stretching means higher tension. The increased tension will result in an audibly higher tone when the string is plucked or strummed. The brake cables do not have keys; instead, there are swedges, sleeves, and barrel nuts.

Swedges are little balls of steel clamped onto the ends of the cable. The swedges fit into the sleeves, or holders, and have threads like a bolt. The sleeves have a slot on the side through which the cable passes. The swedge is seated in a hollow area on one end of the sleeve. Next, the sleeve containing the swedged cable is threaded into the barrel. The swedge is secured within the confines of the barrel.

The sleeves and barrels are threaded together which will eventually, when turned by a wrench, begin to tighten the cable. A tool is used to measure the correct tension. When the proper tension is reached, a steel piece of wire called safety wire is inserted into the slot on the sleeve and out through a very tiny hole in the tube. The final step is to double the wire back together and twist the ends around each other. Using safety wire prevents the sleeve from turning. The cable end will not come out, and the pilot will always be able to stop the aircraft. The job of putting wires in the barrel is where I went fishing.

I was unable to merely slide the wire through the sleeve and out the small hole for two reasons. One, the slot was very deep and, two, a severe bend would have to be made in the wire to get it through the hole. I worked nearly all day on the eight cables trying to get the safety wire in place. I was very frustrated.

I prayed, "Dear Lord, I need an idea how to get this wire down the slot, and out through the hole. I thank you for the idea in advance. I ask it in Jesus' Name." Within moments the answer came. A thought was given to me to bend the wire to look like a fish hook. Using a pair of pliers, I bent the wire end to look like a hook. slipping the end of the

wire into the slot, I began rotating the wire to allow the wire end to go through the hole. The idea worked! I did the same thing with the second group of cables as I had with the first. Finally, I finished job. I praised God. I had several opportunities to teach other people this God-given technique, and it saved them substantial time, too.

If I had called on God at the very beginning of the job I would not have wasted so much time. Sometimes it seems as though we Christians do not call on God until we are thoroughly frustrated. One thing is clear: God will not intervene unless we invite Him. He waits until we are ready to be saved before He gives us an answer. After asking, we must wait for the answer rather than asking the question while running away before the answer is given. What is a possible result of not listening? We may exclaim that God never talks to us. We need to be open to His answer. We need to wait for it and respond in accordance to that answer.

I like being helped by God. Maybe a difficulty has arisen in your life. Always “tackle” the situations of life with the Word of God. You will “net” much success, and be “hooked” for life.

## I LOVE YOU

Parenting is the toughest assignment ever undertaken by an adult. Adults were not born parents, but were born as children who grew into adults. The task of we adults who become parents is to teach our children through the years while they are with us how to live successfully in our society.

*What* to teach children is co-equal with *how* to teach. We may think we know what to teach, but we may not know how to teach; therefore, we need wisdom. To love and to receive love is essential for proper development, and we must not only know we are loved, and we need both to tell and be told we are loved. God taught us a valuable object lesson on the subject of love through our second son, Jeremy.

Jeremy was a powerhouse of energy when he was between two and four years of age. Whooping and hollering, and jumping up and down, he would run through the house; thus he gained the nickname, mega-mouth. If there were things to get into, Jeremy found them. One night, for

example, I rose to ready myself for work. I walked into the kitchen and stood stock still staring with amazement at the scene before me. Every pan and lid had been taken from their place in the cupboard and scattered on the floor. I noticed the light was on in the bedroom where Jeremy, and our youngest son, Jaycob, slept. Upon opening the door I was again amazed for there was Jeremy, scissors in hand, having just given Jaycob and himself a haircut. Jaycob's hair was not in bad shape, but Jeremy had cut his locks up to the top of his forehead; he looked like a punk rocker.

Nickee's ability to cope with Jeremy's behavior was becoming increasingly less. One day Nickee and I sat talking about what to do with him. How were we to deal with this difficult child? Corrections of any kind and commands for him to be quiet did not get his attention; the wild cat screams went on continually. Nickee confided to me she very much loved Jeremy but felt dislike, at times, for him to even be around him because of the aforementioned. She said she knew her feelings were wrong, he was her son, but what was she to do? Nickee needed solid answers not some pat answer to make her feel good. We turned our attention to the Word of God.

In the book of I John 3:20 we read the following: "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Nickee's heart condemned her because she did not seem to love Jeremy, but the Word said that God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. In other words, nothing escapes God's attention, and He is able to take care of hearts.

Nickee needed a serious dose of wisdom because she did not know what to do to remedy the situation. Again, God's Word provided the answer in James 1:5-7, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is

like a wave of the sea driven with the wind tossed. For let not that man think he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” We also read I John 3:22-23, “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment.” Nickee wanted to love Jeremy, and she wanted to meet the commandment of the Lord. We discussed the fact that forgiveness is love in action. We also knew God would answer because of what we read in I John 5:14-15, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” The Lord had just given us a scriptural package of information and instruction from His inspired Word. Armed with the Word, Nickee left to talk to the Lord.

Nickee related that during her prayer she poured out her heart to the Lord. She told him everything that came to mind about the situation and of her feelings toward Jeremy. At last, she was through praying and ended the prayer with, “Now what, God?” No answer was given to her then, so she left the room.

A short time later, while I was sleeping, Jeremy began one of his wall-eyed tantrums and was soon out of hand. Nickee said that suddenly the Lord spoke up in her spirit and she heard the thought-words, “Get Jeremy, take him up in your arms, and hold him securely; do not let him go. Very quietly tell him you love him.” Nickee did exactly as the Lord instructed. Jeremy was a veritable wildcat, and he fought, kicked, screamed, cried, and threw his arms. Holding onto Jeremy was no small feat for my wife who is a slightly-built 135 pound woman; however, she held onto him and quietly told him she loved him. “Jeremy,” she said in measured tones, “I love you.” At last, Jeremy began to quiet himself and

was soon lying relaxed in my wife's arms. Nickee told him one more time she loved him and let him go play.

Jeremy threw about four to five tantrums in the ensuing days, and I had an occasion to hold him twice. Each time we held him we gently told him we loved him. We saw the last of the tantrums from Jeremy.

We learned from the situation with Jeremy that we needed to tell him we loved him as much as he needed to hear the words of love from us. We also learned the power of the wisdom of God. We sought counsel with the greatest counselor of all time, God our Father, for the answer to our situation. The result was unmitigated success in the Lord.

We have three wonderful, God-given, sons. Our sons have been taught the Word of God from the time they were born, and we have been through many situations with them. Each time Nickee and I have sought God's wisdom in any situation He has never failed to help. God's wisdom is the only answer to the storms we face as parents in life.

If we do not place the desire for the manifested wisdom of God high on our list of parental tools, we will fail. We can not rely on our perceptions of what is right in the eyes of God. Furthermore, wisdom must be practiced to be effective, and through practice we become skillful in wisdom in every area of our life.



## HERE KITTY, KITTY, KITTY

Sometimes, in the course of this fast-paced life in which we live, we lose perspective of just how interested God is in every aspect of our life. He considers everything about us as important. Every facet of our life is open to the Lord. He is ready to show Himself strong to all that call upon His Name. He is strong down to the minute detail of our love for an animal.

“Animals are worthless things,” one said.

“God does not have time to worry about them,” stated another.

To these statements I ask, “If God is not interested, please tell me why He talked about such animals as sheep and birds?” Simpler life forms interest God. I did not always think that way, but an occasion presented itself that forever changed the way I think about such things. I had forgotten the words written in Hebrews 4:13, “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

We had our cat, Pogo, since he was a kitten. He liked to wander around the neighborhood at night. He would return in the morning for some food and a long cat-nap to recuperate from his journeys. When I would get up in the morning to get ready for work, I could hear him outside making a lot of cat talk. I would let him into the house. Arching his back and rubbing against my leg seemed to be his way of thanking me. Looking at me with sleepy eyes, he would make “meow” and “murm” sounds. Tail standing straight up in the air he would “meow until I fed him.” Pogo was a pretty neat cat.

I had become accustomed to Pogo’s meowing outside the windows. One particular morning; however, I did not see or hear Pogo. Thinking he would be around later, I finished dressing and headed off to work. At noon I returned home for lunch. My wife asked me if I had seen Pogo that morning. When I replied that I had not, she expressed her concern that the cat had not been home. We more or less shrugged it off, thinking Pogo would return that evening.

Upon arriving home for the evening my wife informed me that Pogo was still nowhere to be found. We grouped up and went out to search the neighborhood. Our search was fruitless. After our excursion we considered the possibility that Pogo had been trapped. The Security Police squadron on the Air Force base where I was stationed set out live-animal traps. Base security wanted to reduce the population of stray animals roaming around on the base. The base Security Police delivered the captured animals to the animal shelter. In the unfortunate event that no one adopted the animal or claimed it as their pet, the animal would be terminated. If the animal had a collar it would be stripped of it even if it was an identification collar; the owner would never be called. My wife called the Security Police Desk Sergeant inquiring whether a cat answering the description of ours had been reported. The answer was a

flat, “no.” She left our name and address anyway with a request that if the cat’s whereabouts became known, to please let us know.

During Pogo's absence, I experienced a strong inclination he was trapped. Each of the houses on the base had a storage area located next to the carport. I went out one night, and quietly walked around to several of the areas softly calling Pogo’s name. Animals had been known to become trapped in the storage areas if they had been in there investigating. Again, the search was fruitless, except we knew for certain where the cat was not. My wife had a thought to contact the Animal Shelter, but it seemed like such an impossible thing she put the thought out of her mind.

During the night, about four days later, my wife had a dream that Pogo was outside on the kitchen window-sill meowing to get in. She awoke, and rising immediately, went to the kitchen fully expecting to see and hear the cat. The cat was not there, nor did she hear it. Frustrated, she went to the back door and opened it. She looked out into the darkness and up to the stars that seemed to twinkle on that clear, warm, quiet Arizona night. As she stood there, indignation rose up in her that her cat was gone. Nickee has always viewed God as the One who could do anything. She exclaimed in a passion-fired prayer, “God, I want my cat back and I want him back *now!*” She turned, closed the door and went back to bed. She felt no differently. There was no need to feel anything. God, unbeknownst to Nickee, had already begun moving seeming impossibilities on her behalf some twenty miles away in Phoenix, Arizona.

A woman and her father left their home in Phoenix during this same time frame and made their way to the local animal shelter to look around. She wanted to see if, perhaps, her brother’s cat had been picked up and taken there. The father was not fond of cats, but reluctantly went along at his daughter’s insistence. The woman and her father arrived at the

shelter late in the afternoon. The two parted company and made their way down the halls peering into each cage hoping to discover their missing cat. Several cats at a time were crammed into small cages. The conditions were less than favorable even on a good day. Suddenly, the father stopped in front of a particular cage. Peering into the cage he saw a lone cat occupying the entire cage. The cat was large, fat, and dirty. He could tell the cat had worn a collar by the way the hair lay on its neck. Although the father normally was not your run-o'-the-mill cat fancier, he took a particular liking to this one. He called his daughter to him. She made her way to the front of the cage where her father was standing and looked into it. The woman immediately sought an attendant to let her in to see the cat. The attendant unlocked the door, went in, got the cat and gave it to the woman. The cat was skittish, nervous, and obviously fearful. The woman sought to purchase the cat, but was informed the shelter was preparing to close their doors for the day. The cat was scheduled for disposal the next day. Reluctantly, the cat was given back to the attendant. Although they had not found their cat, both the woman and her father resolved to get this one. They would try to find its owner. Before the woman and her father left, personnel at the animal shelter agreed to put a hold tag on the cat to stave off its death until they returned to buy him.

The father gave the woman a ride to the shelter the next day to buy the cat. After purchasing the cat, the woman asked how it had gotten to the shelter. The shelter personnel informed her that police from a particular Air Force base had delivered the cat to them. The woman and her father went home. She immediately set about to contact the Security Police Desk Sergeants on each of the two Air Force bases located nearby. Interestingly, she started with the base where I was stationed. The Desk Sergeant, according to the woman, was not very cooperative; however, after about thirty minutes on the phone, he finally began to search their

records. She learned from the desk sergeant a woman had called about a cat just a few days before. The woman obtained the telephone number, ours, and made the call.

“Hello,” my wife answered.

“You don’t know me, my name is. . . .” She disclosed her name. “Did you lose a cat?”

“You found my cat?” My wife exclaimed.

During the next few minutes the woman unfolded the story to my wife. She described the cat and the situation. She told Nickee how sickly the cat was and how she had nursed it back to health over a period of about two weeks before she began calling the base. She offered to let us come see it that evening. My wife agreed, and called me to let me know what had happened; she was ecstatic. We drove nearly thirty miles to see the cat. When we arrived at the house the woman let us in, and showed us the cat. Immediately we knew it was our Pogo. The only charges we paid were the shelter fee and long distance telephone calls of about thirteen dollars. The cost was a small price to pay to have our pet returned. We drove away praising God. From that day onward my wife, when referring to the cat, calls Pogo her miracle cat. Indeed it was!

## NEED A NEW JOB?

The adversary can be quite sneaky. The only way a man or woman of God can succeed against the adversary is to stand firm in the Word of God. No matter what the situation, declare to yourself and the adversary that your prayer requests are granted when you pray.

The promises of God apply to any circumstance one may encounter. The scriptures says what it means and means what it says; therefore, when scripture says, “whatsoever” it means what ever. When the scripture says, “whomsoever” it means anyone. What I am saying, is the only thing limiting the evidence of the power of God in our lives is us. In first John 5:14,15, we find the following: “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that *if we ask anything according to his will*, [emphasis mine] he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”

I know what God’s will is; it is whatever is in the Bible. I know He hears me because what I request in prayer is His will. If my request

is not specifically mentioned in the Bible, I continue to absorb God's Word. I compare my particular desire with such things as love; that is, does my desire violate the law of love? I ask myself if my desire is motivated by selfishness.

As I pray, I ask the Lord to give me the assurance, a solid sense that what I am asking for in prayer is indeed in line with the Word. On the other hand, if I sense a red light the action is to stop and go no farther. Overriding the red light and using brute force; that is, making things happen by trying to help God, may garner some results because I prayed and asked for whatsoever; but at what cost? The costs we pay are, at times, either direct or indirect. Here is an example: We decide we want a new car. Praying and asking for a new car is not wrong. We may have enough money to purchase a car, but not enough to have that top-of-the-line gold-plated, diamond encrusted vehicle we have always wanted. Regardless of the cost, the dream car is purchased because we just know God's will is for us to have the best.

We obtain the car of our dreams. Afterwards, we sit at home staring out of our living room window at that monstrosity wishing we had bought the small car of lesser expense. The car we now have was bought on credit and is a millstone. We are miserable! We can not believe what is happening to us. After all, we had prayed "whatsoever" as the Word had said; therefore, everything would work to our good, our dreams would be fulfilled. The situation did not turn out for the best, and now a question arises about just how God answered the prayer. The problem was never Him; but us. We were not prudent. What does the Bible teach? Prudence. All things may be lawful, but not profitable. The top-of-the-line car was the best, but the money was not there to pay for it. While wisdom was telling us to wait until we had the money, we sought to satisfy our desire; thus, we sit in misery. Do you catch a glimpse of what is being said here? If we pray according to His will, His answer is

manifested in the here-and-now, the temporal world. When we make prudent decisions, we can rejoice because what we asked for in prayer was according to the Word and will of God and we receive a peaceful, joyous, unhindered answer. Possessing the knowledge I just spoke, of I asked the Lord for a new job.

I was a member of the U.S. Air Force at the time, and a workcenter supervisor in a phase inspection facility. Our task was to bring aircraft in from the flightline, open them up and take a serious look-see into the inner workings of the aircraft. The heavy inspection process would identify problems of varying degrees of seriousness and complexity. All problems discovered during the inspection were resolved so the pilots could fly the aircraft with confidence. We lived by a particular axiom: when there is sweat on the ground, there is no sweat in the air. The job was very demanding.

After three years in that supervisory capacity, I became tired of it and wanted another job. I approached the powers- that-be and made my request known. I received the response, “You are too valuable, we can’t let you go.” Have you ever heard that before? I went to God about it.

When I went to God, I simply prayed, “You have to get me out of here!” I just stated the facts. I knew God had heard. I wanted an immediate manifestation. Yesterday was soon enough. I was confident that God would indeed provide the answer.

A vacancy became available in one of the other workcenters, called Post Dock. Given the opportunity, I would work on the flightline. I liked the idea, because this group put the final touches on the airplane. More importantly, there would be a lot less stress. I went to the boss again and let him know that I wanted to fill the vacancy at Post Dock.

“Read my lips! You are *not* leaving!” My boss exclaimed.

“I have already appealed to a higher power.” I retorted.



I turned and left the office. The result of my words to him that day became apparent a few days later.

I was about to get off duty, when I recognized a fellow walking toward me. He was a member of the crew that belonged to Post Dock. The guy asked me when I was coming to their end of the woods. Meaning, when was I going to leave my current assignment and go to work with them? I told him that it was just a matter of time. He said he had heard a very strange thing about me.

“Just what have you heard?”

“That you prayed to *God* about this!”

I told him that what he had heard was correct. I had prayed to God, the higher authority. He looked at me and shook his head; he was not a Christian.

A few days after the previous episode, I was feeling fairly tense. I had not left the area, yet I still knew God would open a way. Some things, I knew, just take time; however, I breathed, “Oh Lord, please hurry!”

As I sat at my desk pre-planning activities for the next day, the General Superintendent approached me.

“Have you ever thought of going to work in Quality Assurance?”

Quality Assurance was simply known as, Q.A.

“Yes, I would like that very much, but what about Post Dock?”

“A personnel shift has filled the job, but I will do what I can to get you into QA. I think that your talents would be better suited to that job than at Post Dock. I’ll see what I can do.”

“That sounds good to me. Whatever you can do is certainly appreciated.”

“I’ll check on it and get back with you.” Then he left.

To go to Quality Assurance would be a step up on the ladder. I would belong to an autonomous organization that answered directly to the

Deputy Commander for Maintenance, DCM, whom was responsible for all maintenance involving aircraft at that particular Air Force base. The group carried a lot of clout. Quality Assurance was responsible for assuring the quality of work performed in all maintenance areas. The job meant greater responsibility. Before anyone could receive consideration to become a member of QA, they had to have demonstrated their proficiency in their career field. “Lord,” I asked, “are you sending me to Quality Assurance?”

A day or so later, on Thursday afternoon, I saw a Q.A. inspector I knew. I walked over to where he was inspecting a portion of an aircraft. We became involved in a conversation about Q.A. He asked me if a job in his organization interested me. The organization was looking for someone to fill a vacancy.

“It might as well be you,” he said.

I immediately called the Chief Inspector of QA and asked if I could apply for the job. The Chief said that he would look into it. The time was one-thirty in the afternoon. At three o’clock, I received a call from the Chief. He had approved me for the position I sought. After many thanks, I hung up the phone. I felt like floating. I had not even had an interview!

On Friday morning, I went to see the Superintendent of Quality Assurance to confirm the job.

The Superintendent was in his office. I knocked on the door.

“Come on in, Sergeant Roll, what can I do for you?”

“Hi, Chief, I just came to confirm the job in your organization. I talked with Sergeant Smith yesterday, and he told me that everything was approved. When do I report?”

The Chief wordlessly reached in to his desk, pulled out a baseball cap with the letters “QA” on it meaning Quality Assurance, and tossed it across the desk in my direction.

“Report here at seven-thirty Monday morning ready for work.”

“All of this has been cleared through the General Superintendent, huh?”

“Well, if he hasn’t said anything after he gets back from the afternoon meeting, I think you might say something about the move.”

“Sounds good to me,” I said. “I’ll talk with him and get back with you. I’ll see you later, sir.”

“You bet, Sergeant Roll! Glad to have you aboard.”

“Thanks again for the job!” I turned and left.

I knew if the General Superintendent did not say anything to me he obviously did not know anything about my transfer. Upset, is what he would be when he learned that QA management approved me for the job. I would have been, were I in his shoes. QA should have coordinated the transfer activities before giving me the nod of approval.

At one-thirty, the same afternoon I informed the Superintendent of my new assignment. He was, as I expected, less than enthusiastic. He promptly left to educate himself on the sudden turn of events. The Superintendent knew that a change was immanent; but did not know exactly when.

After the dust settled, so-to-speak, I transferred two weeks later, not the following Monday as the QA boss originally intended.

All-in-all, the job change process from the first time I prayed until I actually changed work locations was approximately two months. Under normal circumstances it would take much longer. Upper level supervision was awed.

“How did you do this?” I was asked. When they were told about the prayer they shook their heads in disbelief.

“. . .[N]othing shall be impossible unto you.” said Jesus, in Matthew 17:20, and in Matthew 19:26 we read, “. . .[B]ut with God all things are possible.” No problem, I repeat *no* problem is too tough for

God. God is for our success and will stop at nothing to assure it. God is no respecter of persons. If you are ready for a job change, talk to God about it. The Father helps us because it pleases Him to do so. His help demonstrates His unmerited favor toward us. God is the one who both places people in power and removes them. Do you not know that because you are His child He will move the ungodly out of the way for you?

## NEED ANOTHER JOB?

Layoff. Just the mention of word “layoff” strikes all sorts of emotions in the hearts of workers anywhere. When we hire into a company do we not have certain hopes? We hope we will be there for quite a while, we may even retire. Hey, do not forget the importance of company benefits. Does seniority keep us from being layed-off? Perhaps; however, what about those who have even more seniority? People with lesser seniority may be “bumped.” For many the first order of business is to stay employed. Sometimes layoffs come about in unusual ways. What we do about the news of impending departure sets the stage for success or disaster.

I had sent some resumes all over the world. Indeed, I had sent one to a company in New Zealand, and some to a large aircraft manufacturing concern in Seattle. In all cases, I wrote to those who, I believed, could see the big picture; that is, vice-presidents. The local library had a copy of the World Aviation Directory. I used the directory to obtain the names

of certain individuals who might be in a position to help. Every person I wrote to was unfamiliar to me. I received a nice letter from the New Zealand firm telling me they could not use my talents; that was a start. Next, I received a call from a vice-president in our sister company in Seattle, Washington who told me he would pass my resume around to people he knew. He was true to his word: one of the vice-president's contacts in Seattle, Washington, tried to reach me by telephone at my home one Saturday morning. Since I was not at home at the time, my wife took the message for me to return his call the following Monday. I had hit pay dirt.

Allowing for the time differences, I called the guy in Seattle. After introducing myself, he bluntly told me he had eight openings and asked if I wanted one. Was, "No" to be my answer? No way! I said, "Yes!" Wow! I was going to be able to move my family back to the Northwest at company expense. I received plenty of paperwork to accomplish that included background checks, and many telephone calls. Finally, all my ducks were in a row. I sent the papers off to the address given me by the company's personnel representative. I was told that very soon I would receive the word to make the transfer. I waited for a couple of months.

The new supervisor in my current job learned of my pending job in Seattle. Some bosses find certain people they like along their career path. These "pets" as I will call them, seem to be better protected from the hazards of layoff than others, such as me. Now, I found myself double-boxed with one particular pet of the boss. I had not yet accepted the offer to go to Seattle; however, there she was, ready for me to teach her my job.

In due course of time I was given an offer to go to Seattle and I accepted. Two weeks after the offer was made it was rescinded because of some technicalities about the work I was supposed to do. Within a

very short period of time, layoffs began in Seattle. Now, I was in somewhat of a fix: I was sitting in a job I still had, but would not have sometime in the future because it had been given to someone else. I needed a new job.

During the next few months I contacted and interviewed with other organizations internal to the company I was with. I also visited and interviewed with companies in other states. In all, I had sought jobs with six organizations and companies.

My boss called me into his office. While in his office, he handed me the “pink slip” and informed me of my layoff. Actually, the slip was white; however, the effect was the same. My tenure with that organization was coming to a close two week from the date on the notice.

I turned to the Lord. I had learned not to let my mind run away with itself in desperation. In times such as this all sorts of questions used to come to mind. “What am I going to do?” “Where will I get a job?” “How will I pay my bills?” and on and on. Something had to be done about those thoughts or nothing positive would be accomplished.

Some years before this, I had declared that I worked for God, not the company. When I needed a raise in my salary I asked the Lord for it. Now, I would not do differently. I had asked the Lord for direction to a new job, and He would provide. David, the psalmist, stated the following in chapter 37, verse 25, “I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” My family and I were truly in the Lord’s capable hands.

I was home, and stood looking out of my window at the scenery. Across the street is a large wheat field. The winter wheat had been sown, and the little sprouts had poked themselves out from under the earth. A soft breeze was gently moving the blades. As I stood there, I reflected on the lay-off notice. Reflecting on God’s promises I spoke, “Lord,

where is the wisdom?” Instantly, as if He had been waiting anxiously, the answer came.

The farmer plants many seeds, but he only does it once because otherwise, he would destroy the fruits of his labors. There, I had it, I was a farmer and I had planted six seeds. When a farmer finishes his planting he stops and rests. I stopped, rested, and waited. I relied on God to work. Faith works patience. I wanted patience to have her perfect work so that I would be perfect and entire, wanting, or rather needing nothing, even a job.

During the following two weeks I rested in the Lord. I did not worry because God was moving on my behalf and that of my family. He was moving in response to faith, not out of my need. The situation had been settled in my mind; I had entered into His rest. I would wait and see what God would do. I was expectant.

Did thoughts of despair, anxiety, fear, desperation and many other things come my way? Yes. Each time I cast them down I thought of II Corinthians 10:4 and 5, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” I also lived by I John 4:18, “There is not fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” I looked at the thoughts that came my way as those from the devil, and although he wanted me to, I would not change my conviction.

People at work knew I had been handed a layoff notice.

“Do you have a job yet?”

“Yes,” I would reply, “it just hasn’t manifested itself yet.”

“What kind of thing is that to say?” They would inquire.

“What more can I say, all things considered?” I gently told them.



These well-meaning people would walk away totally unedified by what I had said.

My final day of employment was rapidly approaching, only a few days were left. Thoughts were coming more rapidly and fiercely now. "You are going to fall!" "You won't have a job." The attack seemed relentless; however, I continued standing on the Word; I gave no place to the devil. I resisted him, and he had to flee.

Finally, three days remained before my last scheduled day of employment. The battle for my mind was raging. I knew from where the opposition was coming, and yet, I was determined to continue to fight the good fight of faith. Truthfully, the harder the attack became, the more determined I became to win. The strength was coming from the Lord to make me stand. I had laid hold on eternal truth and I was not letting go! Suddenly, I said aloud, "Thank you devil for letting me know my salvation is at hand!" *Immediately*, the battle stopped. The Lord had shown me that *fierce opposition on the part of the devil would have been pointless if it were not for the cause*. This was a fight of faith and the devil knew it. He had come for my words! How many times we have lost the battle because we cast away our confidence that has great recompense of reward? Was I joyous? Yes, I was joyous! I rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I think it was two days later when I received a telephone conference call. Both the second and third level managers from another organization were calling to tell me they were hiring me. They told me to have a good Thanksgiving day. I would be relocating in a few days. I would not be layed-off. This was the manifestation of God's answer to faith.

I reported to the new organization on Monday. On Wednesday, the Program Manager for the organization I had just left called a meeting. Everyone met in a large meeting room. The manager announced that the

customer, the U.S. Air Force, was shutting down the program. *Everyone* needed to go find a job!

Later, I learned that a vice-president in this company had forbidden any organizational transfers; however, he signed my paperwork.

Praise God! He always comes through in a spectacular way if we fight the good fight of faith. To fight the good fight of faith effectively, we must know what the Word of God says, and about the period of abiding. Abiding, simply stated, is not deviating from the truth of God's Word regardless what we see or hear or how long it takes for the answer to be manifested. The manifestation in the natural of the things settled in the spirit require various periods of abiding. If we become uppity because an answer is not manifested when or how we think it should be, we are unsure of the power of God's Word. However, when the superiority of God's Word over the circumstances of life is settled in our minds, the battle is over. Think about Jesus' battle in the Garden. The battle He went through was so great He sweat as is it were, great drops of blood. Ultimately, the battle was over when He submitted to the Father's will.

Some might say the only reason unusual allowances were made in my behalf to get another job was because I knew someone, and they are right. I know God, my Father. Did I need to know anyone else?

## NEEDED: A LITTLE EXTRA CASH

Whenever I am invited to minister either in word or song, I do not charge for my services. The group making the request pays all expenses. Expenses consist of gas, transportation, food, and lodging. I have a full-time job which keeps costs down for the prospective listeners. On one occasion I was asked to speak at a weekend youth retreat. The group sent gas money in advance because we were driving our family car.

We started out on our trip. Our destination was about one-hundred seventy-five miles away. The \$40.00 the group had sent us for gas was just enough money to get us there and back; twenty dollars each way. My wife and I had a couple of dollars extra between us.

We stayed through the weekend. After playing in the snow one night, I made a horrible discovery. The twenty dollars we had left to get gas for the return trip home was missing. Apparently, I had lost the money in the snow. I had put the money in my front pants pocket for protection and now it was gone. I told my wife. She asked what we were

going to do. I told her that there was only one thing we *could* do. We would pray and leave the problem in God's capable hands, and say nothing to anyone. We prayed and praised God for the answer; God would provide.

On Sunday, everyone packed their cars and vans to leave. Soon, every one of the car's and van's engines had been started. Some of the people began to leave. I checked my gas reserves and learned we had enough gas left in the tank to get to the first town on our route back home, no more.

Leon, the youth coordinator, was walking around ensuring all was well. He came over to our car and expressed his happiness about how well everything had gone that weekend. Several kids were saved the night before. He bade us farewell and God's speed and turned to walk away. I put the transmission in gear and started to drive away. Suddenly, he stopped, reached into his pocket and drew out something. As he did so, he turned around, waved to get my attention, and motioned me to stop. He walked back toward our car. As he neared us, he reached out to give me something. I rolled down the window, and reached out to accept whatever he was handing me. Leon dropped a folded twenty dollar bill into my hand. He had given us the exact amount we needed to get home. He prayed for God to bless us. He then turned and left. We went home rejoicing. God had come through again!

I called Leon after we got home that night to let him know we had arrived home, safely. I also wanted to find out about the youth service at the church that night. Leon said the service was great. When I mentioned the money, he told me he had given all he had planned to when he sent us the money. He said as he turned to walk away from the car he felt impressed to give us twenty more dollars. I told him of our prayer, and how God had used him to answer it. We were all very happy and praised God some more!

God, seemingly, always answers prayer just in time. He will never turn His back on a genuine act of faith. We are His children. Would we turn our backs on our children after they called on us?

## BLOWN RADIATOR HOSES

What a beautiful day! We left Wichita, Kansas, early one morning for Abilene, Kansas. Our destination was President Dwight D. Eisenhower's home and museum. The round trip would take about three hours driving time.

We arrived about mid-morning, and spent the remainder of the day visiting the museum. The five of us, my wife, three sons, and I had a good time. After getting some lunch we headed slightly north, saw some famous rocks and headed back home. The time was about six o'clock in the evening.

The ride was smooth. We were really enjoying being out as a family. My wife was beside me, and our sons were in the back seat playing quietly. Without warning a loud bang shattered the pastoral scene. I thought I had hit something. When I looked out over the hood

and saw water, I seriously suspected a radiator hose had blown. I headed the car onto the shoulder of the road.

I pulled the hood release and lifted the hood. I saw in the mist that the radiator hose had indeed blown. The pressure in the radiator must have been tremendous. The hose did not have a mere hole in it. There was a slice in the hose that looked as though someone had taken a knife and cut a straight line in the hose about half its length.

My wife and I prayed, "Father, we need some help right now! Night is fast approaching. We thank you in advance, asking it all in the mighty name of Jesus."

Have you been caught on the side of the road? In the natural it is a sure thing no one will stop, right? What happens in the Spirit? A minute and a half had not passed after we had prayed before a truck pulled up behind us. The truck was not a big diesel, but a smaller variety some use to haul cars one at a time. The driver got out of the truck leaving his family inside.

We talked about the problem. A particularly shaped radiator hose was needed to fix the problem. I had only seven dollars on me. The man offered to drive to the next town, McPherson, which was about eighteen miles away and see what he could find. What else could I do? I agreed. He took my destroyed hose and left.

We figured the guy would return in about an hour. About ten minutes after he left, a Kansas Highway Patrolman came on the scene. He looked at our situation; we told him about the other guy who took the hose to find a replacement. He asked us to describe the man and the vehicle. He said he was going to find him and make sure everything was okay. The officer was reassuring. We surely were not going anywhere fast.

The time seemed to drag by, the day was hot, and my wife and little boys were suffering. They sat next to the car watching cars and trucks on

the freeway whiz by. I spent the time slapping at mosquitoes. Almost thirty minutes had passed since the patrolman had left, when I spied a van about a quarter of a mile up the road backing our way. "Who is this?" I wondered.

The driver brought the van to within twenty feet of us and stopped. A man and woman, I estimated to be in their fifties, got out to greet us. They said they make it a rule never to stop and help anyone, but this case was different; however, as they saw my family and thought we could not be bad people.

The new-found friends had gone north to Canada, and were on their way back to Wichita when they saw us. They reached into their ice chest and brought out some cold milk and water for the children. We all stood and talked for about twenty minutes. We had a very pleasurable conversation. The time was passing quickly when my attention was drawn to something else: the patrol car.

The patrolman swung his car across the median strip off the freeway and stopped behind our car. I looked again and saw the guy in the truck. The patrolman was successful in finding the truck and its driver. As it turned out, the patrolman, the guy and his family drove all over the small town of McPherson to find a hose. The hose the guy brought back to us was perfect! Not only had he brought me the hose, but anti-freeze as well. He had also brought some soda pop for the kids. His family was as nice as he was.

We put the hose on and had the radiator filled in about ten minutes. No leaks in the cooling system told us the job was complete. When I asked the guy what the hose cost, he gave an itemized bill from the gas station for twenty-four dollars and change. As I said before, I only had seven dollars in cash. A check at the point was inappropriate, and a credit card was out of the question.



The woman who drove the van sensed the problem and told us we could borrow twenty dollars! We quickly agreed. Twenty dollars was given to the guy in the truck along with the seven dollars stashed in my pocket. The extra money we gave him was for his trouble. Believe me, if I had had more, I would have given it to him. We bade the guy and his family in the truck farewell with many thanksgivings, and then we exchanged addresses with the money-lenders for the return of the money.

The patrolman left when he saw that all was fine. We also thanked him profusely. Soon the people in the van left with a promise from us we would return the money the following Monday, which we did.

All the way home we continued to praise God for His rapid answer to our prayer. Who says God does not hear or answer prayer? Even in seemingly impossible circumstances, some of the most amazing things happen. Father knew we were short of cash and provided the answer. He also provided some lighthearted conversation from the people in the van to help pass the time. Oh! The benefits of being under His watchful eye.

## MOVING, CLOUDS, AND RAIN

The appointed day had arrived. We were to start moving on that gloomy, overcast and rainy Saturday. We had purchased a new home twenty miles or so away.

I had done all the basic things such as getting the moving truck and putting it into position for loading. Best of all, I opened the doors of the house so it would become very cold in there. This would provide a good clammy atmosphere in which to move our seeming forty-two tons of household goods. Good conditions for moving, right? Wrong, conditions for moving were terrible. All I needed now was for my two friends to show up so we could get the show on the road.

My two comrades, Ray and Sheldon finally arrived. Away we went, carrying furniture, boxes, and lamps. Everyone was in good spirits. Sheldon could be heard all over the house singing spiritual songs. My wife, along with Ray and I, packed and talked. All of us were having a

good time of laughter and fellowship. Soon, Ray, Sheldon, and I became tired of the unrelenting rain.

Sheldon and I were carrying a hunk of sofa to the truck when Sheldon stopped suddenly. He said, "I'm pretty tired of this rain, how about you?" I definitely agreed, as did Ray.

"What say we do something about it?" Continued Sheldon.

Now, I had not thought about it, but sensing his angle, I was game. We looked at Ray who indicated he did not know what was going on; however, he would go along with us. I need to say something about this dear brother Ray.

I had met Ray a year or so earlier. He felt, spiritually speaking, he had reached the limit with God. There were no more vistas; no more mountains to climb. This was due in large part to the teaching he said he had received at the church he was attending. He had been, as most of us were and probably still are in one way or another, one of those who leave their Bible on the shelf and still expect to see some spiritual growth. His state was not his fault; he was just unlearned. We had developed a close bond.

Ray and I spent much time in the Word. I did not know a lot at the time, but I was learning. I passed onto him all I was learning. Lexicons, other Bible translations, Jewish historians, anything I could wrap my hands around were fodder for my learning. The Holy Spirit capably taught me what was not being taught at the church we were attending. I should not have been surprised because I learned later many things are not taught in the church because specific church doctrines get in the way and often nullify the real power of God. Ray was growing, new vistas were apparent, but he did not quite possess the faith he needed for this operation.

We all clasped each other's hands, closed our eyes and began praising God as we stood on the truck ramp in the pouring rain. I said,

“Father, we remember when Jesus walked on the water, how he rebuked the winds, and the sea, and it obeyed. Lord Father, we now follow Jesus in example. ‘Rain, in the Name of Jesus, you are hereby ordered to cease until we are finished moving. We realize the earth needs a drink, but we are busy, and you are in the way. We consider it done.’” We praised God some more. Ray looked at us as if we had lost our marbles, and shrugging his shoulders said, “We’ll see.” Sheldon and I both said, “No problem” The rain stopped immediately!

The move continued for the remainder of the day and into the evening. We saw lots of heavy, foreboding-looking black clouds, but no rain, we had forbidden it.

Sheldon left for the day. My wife was at the new home straightening up things while Ray and I went back and picked up the last load of kid’s toys. We were just a few miles distance from the new home when a drop of rain spattered on the windshield. Ray and I laughed and laughed. Our concern was gone; we were done moving. The sky could drop as much rain as it could for all we cared. Rain fell everywhere for hours.

When we arrived at the new home we moved the few boxes stored in the back of the truck to the garage and went into the house tired and hungry. We walked into our home and found it in order. My wife had set it up like we had been there a while. There were pictures on the wall. Not only that, my wife had prepared a hot meal for us on the stove. The food was delicious!

Later, I took Ray back into town. As we went, we thanked God for a successful day. We both thanked Him for the answer to faith.

There are many times when we are totally unaware that things such as commanding the weather are possible. I assure you, faith-fired prayer turns impossibilities into possibilities.

“Is this for me?” You ask. Certainly! Hey, it does not matter how high the kite flies just so long as it is tied to the ground. Your thoughts and imaginations, your faith, can fly high and higher just as long as you are tied to the Word of God and rooted in love. Since Jesus said in Luke 1:37, “For with God nothing shall be impossible,” then *nothing* is impossible to them that believe.

Rain is but one example of an application of God’s Word. Look around you; you will see there are many more examples.

## RECONVEYANCE

In Colossians 2:13-14 we read where Paul was talking to the church as Colossi. Paul wrote, “And you being in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.” The last part of this particular scripture is of significance to me and relates directly to this story. “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us. . . .” My family and I were able to see, in 1983, a temporal application of this phrase.

We had purchased a home in Aloha, Oregon, located approximately twenty miles southwest of Portland, Oregon. During our stay we took out a second mortgage with a local national title company. We continued to make payments each month to satisfy the debt. Everything was fine for a

couple of years. The mortgage payments were gradually reducing the debt.

My job took a down-turn. I re-enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. There was; however, the question of the home and the associated indebtedness both great and small. We had tried to sell the home on our own, but to no avail. We moved to Arizona and left the selling of the home to "The Professionals."

The military is definitely not the place to get rich financially; money was gone. There was not any money to pay the first mortgage in Oregon, let alone the second. All we could do was wait and continue to believe that God would locate a buyer and move them in our direction. The problem was compounded due to a glut of new and used homes on the market. Contractors, in an effort to make a dollar, were selling new homes for the price of used ones. Buyers were asking themselves why they should buy a ten-year old home when they could get a new one for the same price. Our home remained vacant and unsold for eight months.

We owed the first mortgage to the State of Oregon. They had been apprised of our difficulty and held their peace. The second mortgage company was a bit different; we talked and negotiated. I did not have the money to satisfy the debt from the sale of the home. We would also lose the ten-thousand dollar cash down payment. The home was advertised for below-market value just to interest a potential buyer. All-in-all, I was near either to bankruptcy or foreclosure. We continued to leave it all in God's hands.

A potential buyer was located at last. For the sale of the home to go through, the second mortgage company would have to sign papers signifying their approval of the sale of the home. The proceeds from the sale of the home would not be sufficient to pay off the second mortgage. Considering our circumstances, I was altogether unable to continue to pay the monthly payments on the second mortgage at the rate I was being

charged. Although the mortgage company was less than enthusiastic, they signed the paper releasing claim to the home as we continued to negotiate the sale.

The mortgage company offered to remove all interest from the note, leaving us to pay almost fifteen hundred dollars. I still could not pay the monthly payments because they were very high. Current living expenses, though cut to the bone, would not allow any more payments. The mortgage company manager asked us how much we could afford to pay. We told him, and he said the amount we offered to pay was satisfactory. Within a few days we would receive a coupon book to use while making our regular monthly payments. The coupon book never arrived.

Approximately a year later we received a Letter of Reconveyance. As far as the title company was concerned, the debt was paid in full. The letter said we were free of all legal hassles. We were ecstatic! The handwriting of ordinances; that is, our signatures had indentured us to pay the note. The note had given the title company the authority to extract every last penny should we default, but now our signature was blotted out!

“PAID IN FULL,” said the letter from the title company. God had worked the problem. He alone, took our part when we called on Him. Etched on the hearts of my wife and me was the truth that even while we are yet speaking, He will answer. Nothing is impossible to them that believe. Paul, in Ephesians 3:20 says, “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. . . .” This was definitely above all that we could ask or think. We had asked God to help us. We did not ask Him to remove the debt; just work it out so we could afford to pay. We told the mountain of impossibility to be plucked up and cast into the sea, and then we waited. We had done all we knew to do. We stood wearing the Lord’s armor. We praised God for deliverance even before we saw it



with our physical eyes. God had gone farther than we asked or thought, praise His Name. Nothing is too tough for Him. We are, my family and I, not better than anyone else. Father God just answered simple faith.

## SNOW

I can not think of anything more pleasurable than to have the opportunity to talk to folks about the Lord. The audience can be a group of any size. I love to talk about God's Word, how He does things, and how His Words apply to us every day. He is the One who overshadows us with His majesty and views us as being spotless through the blood of His Son, Jesus.

I received a call one evening from a fellow believer in a town some two-hundred miles distant. Although he said we had met sometime before this, I did not remember the meeting. He was inquiring to see if I would consent to spend the weekend at a snow retreat for the youth in their church. The retreat was to be held at Diamond Lake, Oregon. Diamond Lake is near Crater Lake. Both lakes are located in a picturesque section of near-wilderness situated in one of the mountainous regions of Oregon. Approximately twenty or so teenagers would be there along with chaperons. The group attended the Church of The Nazarene in

the small town of Coquille, Oregon. The town is near the Pacific Ocean on the southern coast. What a privilege we had sharing Jesus with that little group on four separate occasions.

The general agenda of the weekend included time around the Word of God, food, fun, and lots of snow. We would all meet Friday evening, eat dinner, play in the snow and have devotions. I would play the guitar, and together we would all sing songs and study the Word of God. After devotions, we would go play in the snow, come back in for a late night snack, go play some more, and then go to bed. On Saturday, we would eat breakfast, and go outside to play. Afterward, we would go back inside for devotions and songs. Devotions finished, the kids would be released to go play in the snow again until lunch. There was more play in the snow, more food, more snow fun, devotions, playing, a late snack and then to bed. On Sunday, we would get up, eat, play, have devotions, play, eat lunch, pack up and go to our separate homes. Whew! Does all of this sound like a tough schedule? Not hardly.

The time we spent was very rewarding, and it was fun. Each time we gathered around the Word of God, time seemed to fly. A quick look at our watches revealed we had sat there for at least two-plus hours each time. Keeping teenagers interested was the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit. At the end of the retreat, the youth would return to Coquille and arrive at their church in time for the evening services. There they would witness the power of God during their retreat.

A conservative estimate of the number of kids who received the saving grace of the Lord Jesus was close to fifty. These either experienced His love for the first time, or rededicated their lives. We really did a lot more than just go out and play. The days were centered on the Word, its properties, values and applications to everyday living. There was an intense seriousness there; thus, the purpose of the retreat.

The youth were the reason for the retreats, the topic of consideration, and the object of concern for their spiritual welfare. The adults coveted a sound foundation in the Word of God for the youth. The Word would enable all of them to live productive lives, if they gave first consideration to the Lord and His leading in every aspect. They would learn He is more than just a security blanket they could run to during difficult times. He is the One who wants to be an active participant in their lives, to guide and direct them each day with notable, successful results. Since the Saturday evening service was usually the main get-together, the men in the group would go to another cabin to pray for the evening's service. Prayers of intercession were on-going by those at home; we at the retreat prayed throughout the day. We wanted God to demonstrate His power then and there to these kids who came from all walks of life. God manifested himself in an awesome way one Friday night.

Brian, one of the guys in the group, a high-schooler, complained there was not very much snow on the ground. Indeed, on that particular retreat there was not much if any snow on the ground. Pine needles layered the brown dirt. Snowmobiles do not usually perform very well on dry ground and pine needles. There were clear skies and absolutely no snow was forecast. To the kids, not having snow at a snow retreat was very disappointing. I told Brian if he wanted snow, then he should pray and ask God for it. After all, the Word says in Mark 11:24, "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe ye receive *them* and ye shall have *them*." With as much faith as Brian could muster, he prayed a simple prayer asking God to send snow so they could have a good time. What is a snow retreat without snow? Before morning the snow fell. Not much snow, but snow had fallen.

During the Saturday morning devotions, we were all talking about the blessing of God and how He hears and answers prayer. Brian spoke

up and declared not very much snow had fallen. I agreed and so did everyone else. I told them I had failed to mention something the night before. I told them that God likes specific prayers. Remember, Jesus never did pray general prayers. He was specific! He went direct to the heart of the problem. The result was that God answered. Jesus cast devils out of people, and lepers were cleansed of their disease. Although Brian had asked God for snow, he did not specify how much. Now, certain persons might try to contend with me on that last point; however, read what happened next.

Brian prayed, "God, make it snow a whole lot! Great big flakes! Make it snow and snow. I ask it in Jesus Name. Amen." We waited.

According to the man on the radio, snow was not predicted. Blue skies prevailed, but for how long? By early afternoon, thick clouds covered the sky. During our evening devotions a lot of snow began to fall. Large flakes drifted down like so many cotton balls. The kids were ecstatic. God had answered prayer again. God blessed Brian's faith-filled prayer by sending snow. Everyone else was blessed too. After devotions all of us went out and played. By the time morning's light had dawned, the cars, buildings and some trees were buried in the snow. We had to dig our cars out and put chains on our tires. All of us were delighted to see the answer to Brian's prayer.

The things of God; His simple truths defy the intellect of man. Prayers of faith must be answered; if not, then why pray? Answered prayer is an answer to faith. If faith is not answered, then why have it? Also, if we can not have a living relationship and fellowship with Father God, why bother? The truth is; He *does* answer prayer. He *does* respond to faith. He *does* want a living relationship and fellowship with His creation. Remember, God answers prayers because of His righteousness, not ours. Where is the disputer of this witness? Who says things are impossible? Not God.

## SPOOKS

For the majority of my life I thought God was “sugar’n spice and all that’s nice.” That He was a warm security blanket. All I ever had to use was the Name of Jesus. Jesus’ Name was the major phrase, right? The truth is, His Name only works if conditions are right, namely, if we are in right-standing with God. Any thoughts of my being right with God were quickly dispelled through the following experience.

I arrived from work one evening to find my wife, Nickee, straightening up our home. After I had kissed her hello, I asked her just how her day had been. She said some unexplainable things had happened during the day. She related to me that once or twice while she was cleaning she felt as though someone was watching her, which made her feel creepy. She thought maybe one of the workers, who were around the house doing odd jobs for the landlord, had come into the room unnoticed. When she turned around; however, no one was there. Shrugging, I told her it was no big deal.

I took Nickee and our first-born, Jayson, to a restaurant and had a nice, quiet, meal. She spoke of the occurrences again, and we agreed her imagination was running away. We finished eating and went home.

The house we lived in had a fireplace. The wood we used to feed the fire was in the basement. Because the house was rather cool I decided to build a fire for atmosphere as well as heat.

I headed for the door that separated the kitchen from the stairwell that led to the basement. I opened the door and walked through, closing it behind me. The light switch was at the bottom of the stairs. As I started down the stairs a streak of fear shot through me. I immediately put any thoughts of fear out of my mind. Now my imagination was running away with me because of the discussion I had had with my wife. I tried to dismiss the feeling, but it would not go away. The fearful feeling became very intense. I continued to make my way down the stairs.

After descending the stairs and standing before the basement door, I reached out and opened it, and switched on the light. I sensed a horrible presence! I stood stock still. Something totally invisible was in there. The feeling was like sensing someone standing next to you. Do you know the feeling? This was the same; however, this presence was wicked.

I was indignant. Walking over to the basement light and looking to where the thing seemed to be I stated, "I command you in the Name of Jesus to get out of here!" Nothing happened. I said it again, this time a little more forcefully, "I command you in the Name of Jesus to get out of here!" Again, nothing happened. I bent over and picked up an armload of wood. As I walked back to the door I turned and glowered as if to say, "I mean business!" After switching the light off, I went upstairs.

My wife was dressing Jayson for bed. I lit the fire and sat down to unwrap a stick of gum. I could hardly accomplish the task of getting the gum into my mouth because my hands were shaking so badly; I was

terrified. Nickee asked if I would like to hold the baby. “No!” I snapped. Startled, she looked up at me with a quizzical look on her face, for this was a very unusual response from me. “What is wrong?” She queried when she saw the look on my face.

I related to Nickee, what had happened. She was speechless. She asked what I was going to do. I told her I would call an evangelist friend of the family and talk to him. That night I called Brother Pritchett, and he agreed to come to our home the following evening.

I had not seen Brother Pritchett for several years. He was as I remembered him: walking with God. After we sat and talked for a while, I related the incident to him. He told Nickee and me of Satan and his devils and about the chief spirit of fear. He said the Bible says perfect love casts out fear.

“Why didn’t the presence leave when I used Jesus’ Name? I asked.

I was not prepared for the answer.

“Jay, Satan can’t cast out Satan.” He quietly remarked.

“Wait,” I said, “I have been taught that at the Name of Jesus *all* knees will bow!”

He told me my heart was not right with God. I was not a man filled with the Word of God. A man whose life was controlled by God would command the devil to leave and it would have to go. I was paying lip-service. I was a walking, talking, card-carrying hypocrite; I was deceiving myself.

I did not need any additional coaxing. Immediately I got right with God and began to search His Word. I was doing all I could to learn of Him. We began attending church and became involved there. The benefits of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and intense study of the Word of God several years later would render a very different conclusion than that that I described earlier.



The home we were living in at the time was the one I spoke of in an earlier chapter where we had commanded the rain to stop. My wife was in the hospital birthing our third son approximately two weeks after we had moved into the new home.

I visited Nickee, in the hospital. She occupied a bed in a ward with one other woman who had had her baby. Both she and her husband were Christians. We all had a wonderful time talking about God. We became involved in the subject of communion, and since I had a communion service kit for four, we decided we would all partake of communion the next evening.

The next day we all met in the hospital room, talked more about God and partook of communion. What an experience! After we parted company, we husbands drove to our respective homes some forty miles distant from each other.

I drove up the driveway to our home. I stopped the car, switched off the engine, and stepped onto the driveway. The night was clear, not a cloud in the sky. Except for the occasional sound of a passing car the neighborhood was quiet. I made my way to the front door. As I approached the house, I felt a prickly feeling on the back of my neck. I unlocked the door and went inside.

Stepping into the entry way I immediately sensed someone was in my house. Fear, a feeling I had not had for several years swept over me! This time things were different because I had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. He was now my teacher, my guide, my confidant. I had been feeding on the Word of God daily. I had been praying and fasting. Communication had been established with Father. Instantly, anger rose up in me that an intruder would come into my home whether it is spirit or flesh. Intruders were not allowed in my home!

I began moving around the house, turning on lights as I went. I moved from room to room speaking the Word of God. I used the

scripture in Matthew 10:1, which says, “. . .[H]e gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.” I was armed with the authority by faith to use Jesus’ Name, as spoken by Jesus in Mark 16 where He said, “These signs shall follow them that believe, in my name they shall cast out devils. . . .” Since I was a believer, I could cast devils out in Jesus’ Name. The whole thought process took only moments to complete. I took charge of the situation.

“You unholy being, in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whose I am and whom I serve, I command you to leave my home! How *dare* you come into the home of this Christian! Satan, you have a mad six-foot-four, red-headed Christian on your hands! Leave in the mighty Name of Jesus.” I opened every bedroom and cupboard door. I went out into the garage and came back inside. I was not quiet about the whole affair.

How did I feel? Brother or sister, when the Spirit of God is expressed through those who believe, it is awesome! My body felt electric. I believe the best way to describe the feeling is with an example of the following: If one could see into the spirit realm, they would see a figure consumed by fire with electrical charges emanating from it. For me this manifestation only occurs if I am in the presence of a demon, and then only as the Holy Spirit wills, not as I desire. I do not invoke anything. I am quite sure there are many times when demons are present, but the Holy Spirit of God is quiet; so am I.

I was not done with this whole thing. I said, “I further command you in Jesus Name to get beyond the borders of my property, and you know *exactly* where they are! Now Go!” The presence instantly left.

Remember me telling you how quiet the neighborhood was? I forgot to mention there were some very large dogs in the neighboring yards. No dogs were barking that night until I pronounced those words. Suddenly, the dogs began barking, setting up a real clamor.

Coincidence? I think not my friend, this was supernatural. I went to bed praising God and slept profoundly.

The next day I went to the hospital to whisk my wife and new son away to our home. When I arrived at the hospital, I learned the other guy's wife was also being released. Of course, we husbands held the babies while our wives readied themselves for the trip home. I related to everyone the previous night's happenings. The other husband looked at me and exclaimed the same thing had happened to him. Interestingly, he had done the same things as I had! We all praised God. We did not praise Him because we had authority over unclean spirits, but because our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life!

I admonish you. *Do not* run around and look for demons or the presence of them with the idea you are going to "whip-up" on them. No, rather, be filled with the Holy Spirit of God in all wisdom and knowledge. Be ready in an instant to take charge if and when the situation presents itself. When you experience first-hand the working of the Holy Spirit, rejoice because *your* name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

The Name of Jesus was used earlier to rid the house of a demon and it did not work; however, when I used Jesus' Name this time there was a different outcome. The situation did not change because the Name of Jesus meant any more to Jesus or the devil. No, it was the difference between a man who endeavors to walk with God versus one who did not.

To walk with God means to sell oneself out to Him. This means giving up oneself to the One who is mightier. Acknowledge that the One you serve, the One who lives in you, is greater than the one in the earth. You will speak and the devil must move.

The devil does not have a chance against a Word practicing child of God because the child will not give the devil place. Our success or

failure depends upon us standing firm in God's Word. I am up for wearing the armor of God and using His word, how about you?

## SPOTS

The sound of someone knocking on our bedroom door one early Saturday morning, awoke my wife and me from a deep, restful sleep. Our eldest son Jayson, stated, "Dad, I got some spots on me." I arose and headed for the door. I opened the door to see Jayson standing with his shirt pulled up around his neck. He exclaimed, "See?" There they were: three or four red spots on his chest. My wife asked me what the spots were. I certainly did not know, so I prayed right then, "Lord, what are these?" The answer came back, "Chicken Pox." We took Jayson's temperature, and learned it was 101 degrees. After giving him a children's non-aspirin tablet, we put him to bed. Within a few hours he was head-to-toe spots.

I remembered Jesus' words recorded in Mark 16, verses 17 and 18 which say, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing no harm shall come

to them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” I fastened the eyes of my spirit on the part that said, “. . . [T]hey shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” I immediately went to our son. Laying my right hand on his forehead I said, “You spirit of disease, I take authority over you and break your power. I command you in the Name of Jesus to get out of my son. Fever, I rebuke you too, in the Name of Jesus.” Next, I said, “Father, I have given the faith command. I thank you now for my son’s healing. I praise you for it and thank you for the Word you sent into the earth to heal. I praise you!” I had just prayed God’s Word back to Him.

A day or so later, my wife and I sat talking about God and His goodness, and Jayson. I told her I had prayed for Jayson’s healing. She did not believe the prayer worked because he had so many spots. I called Jayson over to us. Taking him up onto the couch I pulled a pajama pant leg up to his knee. I pointed to the fairly large spots on his leg. My wife saw the thousands of spots that were so small they were virtually unnoticeable. My wife’s eyes opened wide as her eyebrows rose. “I see what you mean!” She exclaimed.

We discovered our youngest son, Jaycob, had some spots on him. They were just like those Jayson had. Unbeknownst to each other, my wife and I prayed for him. Guess what? He had fewer spots than Jayson! Lights were coming on in our heads. We went right away to pray for Jeremy who did not have any symptoms of the Chicken Pox. Together, my wife and I laid our hands on him and rebuked, in advance, the sickness. Can you guess what happened? About three spots came up and left within a day or two without ever having formed blisters. We praised God.

We learned some valuable lessons. First, never wait until sickness is present to pray for healing; deal decisively with it beforehand.

Second, we expected the sickness to leave; we believed God's Word. Third, and most importantly, we worked together.

The spots Jayson and Jaycob had had left within just a few days, not weeks. Coincidence? Hardly, our response was action. Action fueled by the Word of God. The answer to the problem was the application of faith in the here-and-now world in which we live that brought results. Praise God!

Sickness is, purely and simply, from the devil, not God. I hate that devil Satan, and all he stoops to do. I detest the pain he causes people. I hated the sickness he tried to put on my children. Success is from God! Healing is from God!

Meditate on the Word, study it, and devote your life to it. There are many scriptures in the Bible showing God's willingness to heal if we will believe. John recorded Jesus' words in John 6:63, ". . .[T]he words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life." By the way, did you know Jesus gave us the authority to use His Name and expect results?

## THE CAN MAN

“Matthew 13, verses three, the last part, through eight,” said the speaker, “reads this way: ‘Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold.’

“Moreover,” he said, “Mark eleven, verses twenty three and twenty four says: ‘For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto



you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them* and ye shall have *them*.’”

We were guided to Romans 10:8 which reads, “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.” Finally, to Romans 10:10 where we found the words, “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

This man was one of several who preached what became known as “hyper-faith” teachings. These teachings appeared to try to place the listener, at least in their own mind, in the driver’s seat of the situations of life.

Another phrase was coined during that time: “Believe to receive.” Receive what? Anything your heart desires! A woman purportedly believed to receive a deck for her house and got it! The prosperity message was out and people all over the place were being vortexed into a teaching that led many astray. I was one who was lead down the path of nonsense, and it nearly cost me every shred of faith I had.

Considering the scriptures they taught us, as well as many more, I thoroughly believed if I tithed and believed, I would reap the hundredfold return. After all, I was being taught by Bible teachers. I listened to those who quoted Luke 6:38 with ease. You know where it says, “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” Wow! I could sow my seed, money, and receive mega-bucks into my coffer.

Malachi 3:10 was another biggie the teachers used to hammer the tithe message into the ears of the hearers. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of

heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room* enough to *receive* it.” I set out to “prove” God.

I can not blame the entirety of my failure on those who taught those teachings; I had to absorb a fair amount of it myself. I learned later that God *will not* counterfeit money.

I tithed as I had been taught. One church I attended frequently spent no less than fifteen minutes each Sunday morning extolling the importance of tithing. The topic centered on our responsibility to “pay” tithe. I needed the money, but I tithed anyway. I was told by the ministers of the day that God *would* bless bountifully; *far* beyond my wildest expectations, all *if* I had faith. Ah, there it was, faith. Faith was the key ingredient to success. “Well,” I told myself, “I must have *some* faith, after all, Jesus said, ‘If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed. . . .’ I have faith, so this will all work out.”

I expected that if I tithed and offered gifts of, for example, \$100.00, I could expect a hundredfold return of \$10,000.00! Now that would be quite a sum, and *definitely* to my liking.

I tithed regularly, and began falling behind in the pay-my-bills department. Taxes and electricity prices were on the increase. My dollar at the grocery store was shrinking. Despite the foregoing, I continued to tithe. The financial situation in the home was getting tight. The cost of living was worsening, but I was tithing. I thought things were going to be fine; how very wrong I was.

I thought if things were as bad as they were I would *really* get God’s attention by double-tithing. I soon found I was a month behind in my house payment. I spent a full year making up the missed payment. Something was wrong all right, but I was not yet finished.

I began to think it was most unusual in the light of what I had heard, that approximately eight months later; I had not received the

hundredfold return. I did not even receive a paltry fortyfold return like in the here-and-now. What was I to do? I would invest!

I had outstanding personal debt which amounted to about \$1,500.00. I would put away money, get the hundredfold return, pay back those I owed and have a few dollars left for tithe. Wow! Neat!

I wrote out a check for \$20.00 and put it in a can. Next, I went to the store and looked at vegetable seed packs and farming seeds. Corn and wheat were the objects of my attention. I learned that corn took around 121 days to germinate and grow to maturity; wheat was right in there.

Somewhere and I do not remember where, I came up with the brainy idea I would only to leave the check in the can for 21 days. I do not know where I got the idea to put a check in a can. At the end of the predetermined time I would open the can and find money! Eureka! I would have two-thousand dollars of the green stuff.

I sat down at work one evening for a break. A series of questions and answers assailed me.

“What would you do if you had the \$2,000.00 in your checking account right now?”

“Why, I would write out checks to pay those I owe.”

“Then do it. Faith is the answer, right?”

Based on the foregoing I wrote out checks and sent them off! Was I confident or what? I *was* confident! Money would appear in answer to my faith. People I did not know would send me money; everything would be great.

Within two days an unexpected check arrived in the mail in the amount of \$187.00. “Praise God! This is working!” I exclaimed. I called several people who knew this was going on to tell them. I was very excited; however, the excitement was short lived.

About three days later, I received a yellow slip of paper from the bank stating in bold black block lettering, “**INSUFFICIENT FUNDS.**” I was surprised, but not worried because God would provide. When five more bank notices arrived the next day, I was devastated. Because the 21 days were at hand I excused myself from my wife and made my way to the garage to get the can with the check in it.

As I opened the can I was expectant, yet very downhearted. I pulled open the lid and peered into the can. To my complete horror I saw a lone check, nothing else. I had certainly received the hundredfold return, but nothing times 100 is still nothing.

I pulled a chair to the center of the garage and sat down in utter disbelief. My faith came crashing down around me. I found myself in a heap of what was a house of cards. I was emotionally bankrupt. My mouth was dry and my tongue clave to the roof of it. All I could say was, “God, what has happened?”

Early on in this walk I had established two ground rules. One, I would believe everything written on the pages of the Bible. Two, if there ever was a problem I would be at fault, not God. This, clearly, was not God’s fault. The fault was mine! Only, *where* had I failed? I was determined to know.

The first thing I had to do was take care of those hot checks. I prayed and asked God what to do. The answer came, “Go get a loan.” I did so, and was able to cover the amount. This fiasco cost me about \$500.00 in loan interest charges over the life of the loan note that, ironically, had an overall value of nearly \$2,000.00. Two-thousand dollars was the very amount I was “believing to receive.”

I lapsed into solitude. I did not talk much with anyone about the Word. I was so awed I could not speak. My wife and I prayed much for God to show me the error of my ways. I believe except for one seed I was all but bankrupt in the faith department.

At this writing my mind is turned back momentarily to an incident which occurred at or about the time I fell back three months in my house payment I spoke of earlier.

A particular nationally known and respected Christian speaker and teacher came to our fair city of Portland to hold a mini-crusade. I determined beforehand, having heard in advance of his arrival, to go and seek him out since he was one whose books I had read and studied. I was going to ask him a very perplexing question. "I continue to tithe and give extra money. My bills are falling behind because our economy is not so constructed to handle any additional out-go. I am in need of money and any extra has yet to be found. I ask for overtime at work to no avail. I have read your books. I believe the words you say about the scripture. I believe the scriptures themselves. *What* is going on? What am I *not* doing? I have yet to see the hundredfold return manifested. What am I doing wrong?"

On the appointed day, a Saturday as I remember, my brother accompanied me to the gathering. As we walked through the door, I spied the gentleman at the book table hawking his books. When I approached and asked him if I might have a moment of his time, he agreed.

I relayed in a minute or less, my concern and my question as stated earlier. As I spoke, the man became visibly uneasy and began reshuffling the books on the table. When I asked, "What am I doing wrong?" He said, "Just keep doing what you are doing," and promptly excused himself. My brother and I stood there in utter disbelief and disappointment.

I am quite positive there were many reasons why he could not spend time with me, not the least of which was the meeting where he was speaking; however, I was deeply earnest in my desire to know where I had gone wrong. Because he was one of my "teachers" he should have

been able to help me understand if, or where, I had missed his point. Perhaps he could have talked to me later. His response to my question amounted to giving me a handful of dead leaves. What I was doing was failing; my understanding had become darkened.

I considered many things during that time of spiritual despair. Suicide was not part of my plans or anything close. Mainly I considered God; His infinite love, I sensed it; His profound peace enveloped me, and I sought His favor. I judged my life; that is, my motives, and desires. I was so bothered by these teachings I proverbially threw out the baby with the bath water.

I gathered all books I had purchased excluding the Bible. The collection included books on teaching, exhortation, and study. I also gathered together the books I had used in the pursuit of the church pastoral ministry. The books covered all types of material from many religious writers. The books were taken outside and thrown onto a pile on my lawn. I took my gasoline can and poured the contents all over the books. As the match was lit to set it all afire, I said, "Burn all of it in Jesus Name! Burn to ashes!" The day was warm and the gas was evaporating rapidly. The match ignited the fumes before it touched the pile.

The fire burned for a couple of hours. After the blackened area that had been a pile of books had cooled, I sifted the ashes looking to ensure all had burned. There had been hardback books in that pile, hard to burn. Only blackened ashes remained. Not a shred of any book remained. The wind blew softly and stirred the ashes. I went back inside to rebuild my faith. I turned my *full* attention to God.

I learned in the following years not to put any faith in the teaching or commentaries of individuals concerning the Word because faith belongs not to people, but to God. I also learned that God can not be bought with tithes and offerings of money; no one can give to get. The

spirit of the requirement of the church to “pay tithe” is of the flesh and not of the Spirit. The Word of God became paramount to me; the Word took first place. The scripture said the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. I sought God at every turn concerning the situations of life. I had been honest, but I was honestly wrong.

I spent many hours in prayer, study, and meditation in the Word of God. I was obsessed with the desire to know Him better. I learned God does not counterfeit money. Furthermore, there was no bondage to “pay tithe” if I did not have it to pay. The word says in Romans 13:8, “Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” The law of what? The law of love. I owed a lot of people. I was out of step with the Word. I started giving alms of such things as I had. Furthermore, I reasoned, if I sacrificially paid the tithe; that is, paid it at the expense of paying a bill and that bill falls behind, am I not guilty of defrauding someone even if it is a utility such as an electric company? I think so. God does not need my cash. He demands my allegiance, my love and respect. He wants me to give money freely, not because of a mandate. I began paying my bills. I did not have money to fulfill man’s dictate to pay tithe, but I sure was happy. I even had money to help where ever I could. Guess what? God blessed me.

I learned while listening to one of the “teachers” who preached the prosperity message, an interesting thing. This man, by the way, was not the one I referred to earlier. The guy had himself done exactly as I had done. He wrote out checks to pay the bills he owed. He did something I had not: rather than putting anything into a can, he put the checks into his desk drawer. When money came in to pay a particular check, he got out the check and sent it off after having gone to the bank and deposited the money. While I was giving full attention to what he had said about three years earlier, I never at any time heard him say anything other than that he had spoken to the bills and said, “Be paid in Jesus Name.” Ten of

his bills were paid by gaining the hundredfold return on his tithing and any other money he gave, or so he said. Personally, I believe his hundredfold return came from teaching the prosperity message.

I learned Malachi 3:10 was not a scripture to be used to whip people into paying tithe. God was talking through the prophet Malachi telling the Israelites He was, in my words, “fed up with their faithlessness and unfaithfulness.” Furthermore, we have only to read the preceding scripture to discover that God told the people they were cursed with a curse! The curse is in being out of fellowship with creator God because they had another god before them. God was mad because the people’s hearts were hardened by their trust in money rather than in Him. Incidentally, I have a copy of the 618 Levitical laws, and I am unable to find anywhere in the laws where tithing was equated with money. What would a modern pastor do if one of their parishioners brought their tithe in the form of a sheep or doves?

Very often selfishness with respect to money will put our fellowship with God in jeopardy which displeases God. God wanted to use the people as the windows of heaven. He wanted people open for His use. He would and could use the people, the windows of heaven, to bless others if they would let Him. More importantly, God would have greater access to people individually and collectively.

I learned giving into the work of God is a matter of conscience, not duty. We give because we love our brethren, not because of coercion, and we give to honor God. To give just to get some material thing is wrong.

I spoke to the pastor of a church in Portland, Oregon, in 1982 and told him some of the things I have here presented. I spoke in particular about tithing. He looked at me in a fashion as if to declare I was a heretic and said, “If we preached from the pulpit what you are telling me now, we would have to shut our doors.” I responded, “Then maybe you



should, and maybe you should go out and get yourself a straight job. Maybe some pastors are using the topic of tithing to ensure their financial success so they won't have to get a secular job." He just stared at me. Apparently, the pastor relied on the power of the money of men rather than faith in the power of God.

I told that particular pastor there were several people who had approached me on this very topic. These people were very upset. They religiously "paid tithe," and yet were in desperate financial straits. They did not know what to do except to continue to do what they were doing. I told these people I could identify with them and told them what Jesus said as written in Luke 11:41, "But rather *give alms of such things as ye have* [emphasis mine], and behold, all things are clean unto you." These who spoke with me were pleased because they were freed from bondage. The pastor was correct; some did stop giving as much as they had been. Although they did not stop giving money into the church coffers, they turned some of their attention to doing weird things such as catching up on their outstanding bills. Incidentally, I have never preached against giving tithes or offerings; however, I have preached against the bondage of tithing that people place on other people. Never should people feel or be condemned by others if they "give of such things as they have."

Many of the people I spoke to who attended that church prayed and prayed, and they tried and tried. They spoke of the feeling they had that the door of help was closed to them. When these people asked the church for help to pay their bills, they were turned out. I should know, I went to that church. Despite the foregoing, the pastor still did not mind getting the money.

The pastor I was talking to asked me why these people did not go to their own church pastor about their problem. I responded by saying that without exception, they were afraid of the pastor. Would he not encourage them with his words? Would he not exhort them with certain

sections of the Bible to continue tithing? For “God loves a cheerful tither.” Strange, I have never read in the Bible that God loves a cheerful tither. I have read; however, the following in II Corinthians 9:7, “. . . God loveth a cheerful giver.”

Friends, I turned my back turned to those prosperity folks. I turned to God, His Word, His faith, and His Holy Spirit. I went to school under the capable instruction of the Holy Spirit. See I John 2:27. We read there, “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.” The Holy Spirit teaches me. I share it with other people for proper balance to ensure I did not make anything up myself.

The Spirit of God heard and answered me. I discovered an amazing truth, when we devote ourselves to God and His Word we will know both truth and error. Guess what? The truth was already in the Bible in II Timothy 2:15, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

What happened to me? My mind was renewed through God’s Word. I put God’s Word first. I seriously looked to the simplicity of God’s Word and the real teacher of the Word, the Holy Spirit.

## THE DAY THE FLU FLEW

Have you ever gotten up in the morning after what you thought was a restful night's sleep only to discover you feel lousy? Your joints are achy, nose runny, and stomach feels as if there is a fight going on between the Oysters and Carp you ate the night before. Because of the possibility you are running a temperature, you grab ye olde temp-stick. You try to fasten your gaze on the little numbers and the elusive thread of mercury that is the seeming signer, sealer, and deliverer of the famous illness plaguing zillions of folks each winter. The illness? The flu!

“Oh! I am coming down with the flu!” Many people exclaim. After grabbing their pajamas, they call into their job and declare their sickness. Perhaps they crawl back into bed for the day, or spend time on the couch watching soap-operas. Personally, I hate sickness. I learned one night from where the flu comes. The lesson cost me over one-hundred dollars because of a lost night's work.

I worked third shift for a local freight subsidiary of a major railroad company. The weather was cold. Soon, I would bundle myself up and make my way to work in the great outdoors. I had one big problem: I felt as though I had been pulled through a knothole backwards. I felt flu-lousy to say the least. I had prayed for relief and did not feel better. I felt lousier as time passed. I told the devil, "You get out of here in Jesus Name! I take authority over you, you flu bug!"

Within thirty minutes of my scheduled work period, the call was made to the boss telling him I was sick and would not be there that night. Within an hour after calling I felt four-thousand percent better. Instantly, I knew what had happened. I exclaimed, "Devil, I have you now!" I then purposed in my heart the next time, if there were a next time, I would kick in Satan's teeth in the Name of Jesus.

Around Christmas time my entire family, including me, was really under the weather. The flu bug seemed to drip off us. I went immediately to the cupboard and grabbed my olive oil. I anointed and prayed for every one of us under the authority of Jesus' Word written in Matthew 10:1, "And when Jesus had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." I reasoned, I am a disciple of Jesus because I live by the Words He spoke as recorded in John 15:7,8, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." I was a disciple of Jesus. The devil had made me mad, and I was going to win because I had God's Word on it.

Jesus was given a Name above every name, and the name *flu* was definitely beneath Him. I was not about to bend my knee to the devil and his flu when I had my big brother, Jesus. As I prepared to go to work my brother Steve, called requesting prayer. Would I come over to anoint and

pray for him? I agreed to stop at his home while I was enroute to the job.

I walked into my brother's home, and prayed for him. We talked about the Word of God. We talked about God's blessings. We rejoiced because by His stripes we were healed as cited in Isaiah 53:5. I left his home and headed for work. During the night, all symptoms of what I was fighting left me. I had no idea when they left. I felt fit!

In Isaiah 33:24, we read: "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick. . . ." The first time I said I was sick. I succumbed to the physical, to the devil and his work. The second time, I would not and did not say, "I am sick." The Bible says that God sent His Word and healed, Psalms 107:20. All who dare to stand in faith of God's Word will experience spiritual success. God's Word is for all who will "do" what the Word says. Acting on what is written in the Bible by faith will garner results. I am sincerely interested in results, how about you?

## 'TIL DEATH US DO PART

I had just returned to the Air Force base where I was stationed, from a twenty-one day trip to the South Pacific islands. I hurried to the mail box hoping to find at least one stateside letter from either my parents or friends.

I looked through the little window in the post box door and spied a letter. Hurriedly, I opened the door, grabbed the letter and observed it had come from someone I did not know. I tore off the end of the envelope and unfolded the letter.

I had up to that point, never received a letter such as the one in my hand. A girl named Nickee, yes, the one I am married to, had written telling me of her dog, bird, and how old she was. I read further, "I'm just writing this letter to let you know we are getting married!" I thought there must be some mistake. I looked at the envelope. No, my name was on the envelope; I was the addressee.

"Dear David," I read.

“Yeah, that’s me all right, but *who* is this girl?” I wrote home.

By return mail, my mother informed me that the girl Nickee was her hairdresser. Mom had had a running joke with Nickee, and dared her to write me a letter, and she did. My mother got the letter from Nickee and sent it. From that time on, I was filled with curiosity about that girl. I wrote her right away. I told her I thought getting married was a great idea. I asked her to please tell me when the event was to happen, and I would send her my list of guests. She responded by saying, “We’ll wait and see.”

A few months later, I sat up in bed one morning and declared, “I am going home!” I set about to obtain leave, and flew home from the Orient.

My arrival surprised my entire family because I had not told anyone. As I walked through the door of my parent’s home, I asked, “Where is she?” After the initial shock of seeing me there in her home rather than overseas, my mother settled herself down, and left to get Nickee.

Nickee and I dated each other virtually all the twenty days I was home. She said she would *never* become married. Ten days after I met her, I asked her to marry me. Was she surprised?

We went to a very nice restaurant for dinner one evening. Originally, the restaurant had been a home, an old two-story type. The renovated house was beautiful. I asked Nickee to marry me when I took her back to her car. She said she would think about my proposal.

The next day we visited a jewelry store to pick out a wedding ring. The ring was very simple, yet beautiful. Nickee was rather nervous about being married. To put her mind at ease I told her an engagement did not mean we must be married tomorrow. Now, that information was more to her liking.

We spent ten more fun-filled days together. Days melted one into another. We were very much in love. By the time I was to leave for my

return to the Orient, Nickee told me she would marry me when I returned from overseas.

The months remaining until my return to the states seemed endless. As we later discussed with each other, doubts assailed us, but letters helped. Time, however, marched on and finally the time came for me to return to the States. After boarding the airplane affectionately known as “the freedom bird” I settled into my seat for the long trip home.

I arrived at Travis Air Force Base, California, and ran to a restroom. I changed from military to civilian by quickly trading my military uniform for street clothes. The change took only moments, and I scurried to board another plane bound for Eugene, Oregon, where my family and Nickee waited impatiently.

I walked off the aircraft and saw my mother. Nickee ran around the corner and wrapped a big hug around me. I hugged my mom, too. I was home again.

Nickee and I prepared for our marriage. We were to be married in Reno, Nevada, six days later. Nickee’s sister and her boyfriend went with us to stand as witnesses. The trip took all night; we arrived in town the next morning. We were married and headed back home the following day. Wow! What a trip; it all happened so quickly.

Everyone was tired due to the whirlwind trip. Except for an occasional comment about the scenery, no one spoke. The view of the terrain along the way was extraordinary. I was thinking of a nice hot cup of coffee to wake me up; all of the others were quiet. Suddenly, the sound of a crowing rooster shattered the peace. My new sister-in-law thought she would do something to enliven everyone. Believe me it did; we had a good time.

For the next couple of years, our marriage was pretty rocky. Normally, rough edges are removed during courtship; ours were removed



after we were married. I likened it to two chainsaws tearing after one another.

Big personality conflicts do not lend themselves to much peace; truthfully, no peace was to be had at any price. We argued a lot.

After I was discharged from the Air force, we began attending church, and as much as we knew we were trying to live life as Christians. The only thing was nothing was happening. One day, after an especially grim hassle, Nickee and I sat down and took stock of the situation.

We both wanted the marriage to work despite our continual hassles. We really did love each other. We hurt because we hurt each other. I wanted her to change to fit my yardstick; she wanted me to leave her alone, and so 'round and 'round. The bickering had to stop if we were to remain together. We prayed. As kind of an aside, I heard a story of a group of people who were experiencing serious difficulties. One in their group announced, "Let's pray!" Someone retorted with, "Has it come to that?" It had for us. We despaired, and began to pray.

We prayed about our problems with ourselves and each other. We asked God to do something on our behalf lest we successfully destroy the marriage. We went through the bible searching for scripture to eliminate our sense of utter helplessness. We were woefully ignorant about God's Word. We found in Philippians 2:9-11 the following: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of *things* in heaven, and *things* in the earth, and *things* under the earth and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father." That was it! We would make Jesus the Lord over our marriage! We both prayed and declared Jesus to be Lord of our marriage. We desperately needed Him to bind it up, and heal it. We also asked forgiveness of one another. We promised each other to keep our eyes on Jesus, keeping Him first in our lives both individually and collectively. In so doing, God

would do the rest, and He did. We just celebrated our twenty-second year together in the Lord.

Success does not happen overnight, not all of the time anyway; it certainly did not here. Vidal Sassoon, the famous hairstylist, said, “The only time success comes before work is in the dictionary.” We sensed the presence of God’s Spirit there in that home, that day. For once in our marriage we actually believed we actually could live together “‘Til death do us part.”

You may go through rough and tough times yourself, or you may know of some who are. Remember, *nothing* is impossible to God. All things are possible to them who believe. Two must agree in a marriage to make the marriage work. Pre-conceived ideas, role models and all other negative things like that must go into the trash. We need to allow our partner to grow and develop. Do not worry whether or not you will like what they are becoming in the Lord. Concern yourself with God’s work in you.

Successful Christian marriages stay together because Jesus *is* Lord. God must be at the center of the family because the devil is trying so very hard to tear it apart. Agreement power in a marriage; that is, the agreement to let Jesus rule the family is powerful stuff, and the devil hates it. With God on your side, you can not fail if, when you call on Him, you let Him do His perfect work in your life.

God is in the healing and binding-up business. Do not wait until complete disaster strikes to seek God.

## WASHERS, BEWARE!

My wife and I came across the scripture in Philippians 2:9-11 which says, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of *things* in heaven and *things* in earth and *things* under the earth and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” We noted the words, “. . .[N]ame above every name. . .[E]very knee should bow.”

I have heard people say this, “In the context of this scripture, ‘things’ means people.” Actually, the word “things” was not in the original text, but were added for clarification. Further, they advise this scripture does not lend itself to covering the situation I am going to present. My response is all things are possible to them that believe. When the Lord quickens a particular scripture to we Christians, we can stand on it; that is, live by it. We are strengthened by the Word of God and able to do the seemingly impossible.

Jesus Name is above everything that has a name. Every name must bow because the name ascribed to it is inferior to the Name of Jesus. Right? I am quite sure there are some who would consider me a lunatic, but at least, and this is no brag, we are seeing the results of believing God's Word; results are what counts.

My wife came in one day and calmly informed me the washing machine would not spin out the water. I told her I would check on the problem. I went to the garage where the washer was located. I stood before the machine. I ran a check on the system, running the washer through all of its cycles; no good. The water remained in the washer. I have as much savvy about a washer as some do about stereos. When the washing machine is turned on it should work properly. In this case ignorance was rampant about the operation of washing machines, but we were not without recourse.

Knowing what the word said, I acted by stating, "Washer, you have a name which is beneath the Name of Jesus. You be healed in Jesus Name." I ran the washer, again, through all its wash and rinse cycles. The water remained in the wash tub. As I stood there looking at the washer, I heard a sound behind me. Larry, a neighbor who lived nearby was riding up our driveway on his bicycle. I waved and invited him into the garage.

Larry asked me how things were going. He was out riding and thought he would come by our home. The irony lay in the fact that Larry had never been to our home. He had a lovely wife and family, and he usually spent his free time tinkering in his garage.

I explained the problem of how the water would not drain out of the washer. He told me the problem was a worn out pump. When I asked how he knew that, he explained the purpose of the pump was to draw water in and out of the machine. That was it; the washer needed a new pump.

We were short of funds to buy a new pump. I did not have the money to buy a new washer or summon a repairman. Larry told me not to worry, because his brother-in-law owned an appliance part store not far away. If he could use my telephone he would call to see if a part was available. Larry's call was successful, his brother-in-law had a part and the total cost would be about seventeen dollars. Since he was preparing to close the shop for the evening, he asked us to come by and get the part the next day.

The following day I collected Larry, and together we went to the appliance parts store. Having only to pay dealer's cost pleased me beyond words. I paid for the part, and since Larry had other things to do I dropped him off at his home along with many thanks.

Nearly an hour was required to replace the defective pump. I had absolutely no idea what I was doing. Perfect, I would learn something new. After I finished the job I set the washer upright and ran the machine through its wash and rinse cycles again. The new part worked perfectly. My wife and I praised God.

When I prayed for the washer to be healed, I expected something to happen. I did not know how the healing would be manifest. I just knew the washer would be healed, fixed.

God is great, and His understanding is matchless. He is ready and willing to answer the farthest reaches of faith. Our natural thinking process will seem to scream; all natural rationale will rebel. This fact remains: no problem is too tough for God. When we stand firm on the Word, something *has* to move. The something that will move is everything. No matter what we see or feel, we believe and act on the Word because it is the language of God. Did not God bring the world into existence with His Word?

## WHAT ARE IDOLS?

Sometimes one may unwittingly find themselves in possession of an idol, an object of worship or adoration. Sometimes one may knowingly obtain the detestable things as “art objects” unknowledgeable of the impact they will have on a home. I certainly knew what I was doing when I bought my little idol.

The artistry was superb; a beautiful work of art. The object of my attention was a hand carved piece of wood approximately fifteen inches high. The statue depicted a very old man dressed in flowing robes and leaning on a staff. A beard had been carved into the wood. The top of the head was rather large and bald; a larger head than is considered normal in our society. The wood was what appeared to be Monkey-Pod, a heavy wood the sculptor had finished with some sort of oil rub.

Okinawans knew the statue as the “god of long life.” The idol was an object of worship because the people believed the god would give the

blessing of long life to the inhabitants of any home in which the idol was placed. Tradition dictated the statue is prominently displayed.

I purchased the statue in Okinawa in 1974 thinking it would be a nice addition to the decor of my military dormitory room. I did not believe any of the hoopla about idols anyway, it was only folklore; therefore, it did not warrant my serious attention because all of it was humbug. Since I was not a practicing believer in this sort of thing it would have no effect on me. I also was not a practicing Christian then either; having the idol was no big deal, I would keep it.

I finished my tour of duty in Okinawa and received orders to Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. After spending approximately seven months there, the Air Force reassigned me to McChord Air Force Base, Washington. All the while I had possession of the little idol. One night my wife and I had a very unusual spiritual experience.

I remember lying on my back in bed one evening. My wife had already fallen asleep. I was almost ready to slip into sleep myself. Suddenly, I felt as though someone jumped on me, and though I could not see anyone, I resisted whomever, or whatever it was. The ordeal gave me the creeps. As I resisted inwardly, I felt it move from me to my wife. Approximately ten to fifteen seconds later she suddenly reached out and grabbed my arm.

“Oh! You’re there!” She exclaimed.

“Yes. What’s the matter?”

“I felt like someone jumped on me.”

I told her then what had happened to me. We shrugged it off and went to sleep.

After my discharge from the Air Force, we moved to Portland, Oregon. We bought a little home, our first, a year later.

We began attending a little Nazarene church and became involved with the youth group. We were, at the same time, experiencing upheaval

in our family because of work, there was not enough of it; school was a hassle; and money, we needed more just to pay bills. Our own personalities, adjustments, and just life in particular were getting the best of us. Neither my wife nor I were baptized in the Holy Spirit, although we really were trying to live good Christian lives. No matter how hard we tried, the worse things became. I thought of the idol, and wondered. . . .

I called my mother one evening with a question. Was it possible the immediate family of a person could be oppressed of the devil for something they had done or knew? She answered in the affirmative and wondered what I had in mind. I told her about the god of long life. I explained how I had come by it and what it represented. I told her God had been needling me about it for a while. I had not gotten rid of it because I liked the rich wood color and the artistry. Regardless, I felt that if we were to have peace, I would have to get rid of the idol; I reasoned now would be the time.

Ron, the youth pastor of the church we attended, was over one evening. Together with my wife and me, we sat and talked about the Word of God. The subject of idols became a point in our conversation. During the conversation my wife learned the meaning of the idol. To say she was surprised was an understatement. I declared we would have to rid ourselves of the idol immediately, and as we had a fireplace, I would torch the idol in the fire. Afterwards, we would be free of the representative influence of the idol.

The fire was blazing that night; I always liked to have a hot fire. No one could go near the fireplace for any length of time because of the heat. I left the room to get the idol. When I returned, I threw it into the fire. My wife got up and left the room and returned with some metal voodoo figures she had, up until this time, thought were rather cute; these too, were thrown into the fire. We waited and watched to see all of



them burn; particularly the wood. We did not think the cast iron figures would burn. Interestingly, the wood figure did not burn. The figure was not blackened by the heat, and it did not smoke; it just lay there. This was very unusual considering the fact I had had it sitting on a shelf for about three years. There were no special finishes on the carving which would prevent burning.

The atmosphere in the house became very oppressive after I threw the figure on the fire. Creepy chills ran all over us as we sat there. Ron, did not know what to think. He sat on the edge of the sofa, eyes wide and exclaimed, "What is going on?" We had to do something, so I rushed over to the fireplace and pointed my finger at the idol and yelled, "Burn in the Name of Jesus, and get out of my house!" Immediately the wood began to burn. Normally, wood consumed by fire is a reddish or orange color. This was not the case; blue fire consumed the wood until the object was a pile of ashes. As we watched it burn, the atmosphere changed in the home; peace returned. We praised God.

I sifted the ashes in the fireplace the next day; the metal voodoo figures had disappeared. I have burned wood with nails in it before, and the nails always showed up in the ashes, burnt, but there nevertheless. Peace was restored to our home. The fellowship between my wife and I greatly improved after the episode with the idol.

People can say what they will concerning demons and idols. I now believe demons somehow affix themselves to ungodly idols such as this one and really, very many more types. In our case the demon came with the idol from Okinawa. I licensed the demon to be in my home because I allowed the idol into my home.

Devils do not like to be moved from the place they like. A good example is where Jesus met the mad, devil-possessed man of Gadara. The devils implored Jesus not to send them away from the country where

they were, but to send them into the pigs that were feeding nearby. For further reading, see Mark chapter five.

When we bring these heathen idols into our homes, however ignorantly, we give the devil license to bother us. The sad truth is that we, either through the mail, various types of magazines and the like, bring countless idols and their demons into our homes. The devils will cause havoc unless we purge them from our homes by getting rid of the items that hold them there.

The only explanation I have for the occasion in Washington state, where something jumped on my wife and me, is to say the idol was in our home. I am convinced we were attacked by a demon. One thing I can state, after we got rid of the figure, we never had another experience like that again.

Second Corinthians 6:16 states in part, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" In response to that scripture I say, none. The result was I rid our home of the offensive idol. I reasoned if having idols was of no real concern, then the Word would not have spoken about it. The Word had spoken about it so I had to pay attention. By the way, do you have any idols in your home?

## WHAT LANGUAGE DO YOU SPEAK?

I guess there is not anything so controversial in the body of Christ than the subject of speaking in other tongues. Contentions have arisen in mainline denominations over the topic of tongues that have resulted in the splitting of churches. These become different camps, so-to-speak, fixing themselves on those scriptures that feed their particular brand of doctrine no matter what it may be. Many forget there is only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism; I was one such fellow.

I would tell those around me of like mind such things as, “I do not believe in that tongues stuff. According to the Bible, it is the least of the gifts.” and on and on. I was so vehemently opposed to the subject I did not want to hear it and wanted less for people to speak to me about it at all. Unbeknownst to me, God had other things in store.

I was asked by the youth pastor of a large Assembly of God church in Portland, Oregon, to minister in word and song to their college age

youth group. I accepted, and on the appointed day I was there with my wife.

I fell into a discussion with the youth pastor just prior to the start of the meeting about tongues.

“Well, we are not charismatic.” I told him.

“We are.” He said to my shock.

“Uh-oh.” I thought, trying to act casual to keep him from seeing my surprise. Into what sort of mess had I gotten myself? I took my wife off to the side and told her what had been said; it was her turn to be stunned.

“What are you going to do? She asked.

“Just play it by ear and hope they don’t start that tongue stuff. We’ll get out of here real fast after the meeting.”

I should have known that my best laid plans would not work to my favor.

I played the guitar, sang, and spoke out of the Word. Because the service was winding down to a close, I turned the service over to the youth pastor and went to find a place to sit as the pastor went to the front of the room. He announced the time for prayer was at hand, and requested all come forward and crowd around the altar. After everyone had settled themselves, the pastor began to pray. Without provocation someone began speaking in other tongues. I broke into a nervous sweat with nowhere to go. Furtive glances between my wife and I did not help; we had no choice but to outwait this meeting. When the meeting was finally over, which seemed like hours, we thanked the youth pastor and took off out of there. To our way of thinking that meeting was nothing short of a harrowing experience.

A few months later, I was experiencing a genuine spiritual roller-coaster ride. The more I tried to be a Christian, the better I failed. I read some out of the Bible, like during Bible study at home with our

children, or with the high school teenagers who visited us. All-in-all I was very frustrated.

I was at odds with myself, and I knew my family was feeling it; our fellowship was suffering. Being in church was not any better, for they believed somehow unless one was carrying some weight equal to an elephant you were, spiritually speaking, “not there,” wherever “there” was supposed to be. You were not a good burden-carrying Christian without the weight. Truthfully, according to the standards they carried I should have been a spiritual giant. Since I did not really believe we were to be mules in a pack train, so everything compounded for me. I was ready to pay for peace whatever the cost! The answer to my plight came soon because I was praying fervently for God to help me.

As preparations for the night’s work began, the thought came to me to read the Bible before I left. Absent-mindedly, I turned to Acts 1:8. There in print I read the words that stood out like airport runway lights on a dark night. The scripture 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 parts of Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Or, you could translate the cities to be, Dallas, Portland, or wherever. The point of it all to me was, “But ye shall receive power. . . Holy Ghost. . . shall be witnesses.” How could I be an effective witness to God without the enduement of power by the Holy Ghost? How could I witness about which I knew not? More importantly, how could I possibly live an effective Christian life without the Holy Ghost? I knew in my heart I could not; therefore, I would endeavor to find this Holy Ghost.

I woke my wife from her sleep and exclaimed, “Do you know what we do not have in our lives?”

“No, what?” She replied.

“We do not,” I said, “have the power of the Holy Spirit operating in our lives, and I am going to search the ends of the earth to find it!”

My wife was immediately enthusiastic. I resolved orally with her that whatever the cost; I would find this Holy Spirit.

I began to search the scriptures fervently in my quest to know truth. I spent virtually every waking moment in the Word of God. On a particular day I was up at about 3:00 a.m. I was reading in the book of Acts, specifically chapter 2 verse 38. In this section, the Apostle Peter was talking to the crowd assembled there. He said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” I thought those words sounded easy enough; I set about to fulfill what I had read.

First, I prayed and confessed everything that came to mind. Second, I observed the need for water baptism. Since a preacher was not handy to baptize me, my bathtub would be suitable for the job. I stepped into the bathtub after it was filled. I said, “I baptize myself now in the Name of the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost.” I submerged, rose up, dried off, and dressed myself. Returning to the living room I sat on the floor before the Word.

I read aloud the scripture again, ensuring in my own mind I had done all I knew to do. I announced my readiness to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost! Could anyone I knew ever believe this? Here was a guy who, a short while ago, had been very anti-tongues. While sitting on the floor I now asked God to baptize me in the Holy Ghost. I was amazed at my change of heart.

I sat there with my arms raised, waiting. Soon, my hands were on the floor. I waited and waited; nothing happened. Now, I did not know whether or not I would be zorked with lightning or not, but I was getting a little frustrated. Where was the Holy Spirit? Should there be strange sensations or something?

A warm thought went through my mind as a question. “How do you feel?” Truthfully, I was so caught up in what I was doing, concentrating on receiving a physical manifestation, I had not noticed anything. I sat and reflected, and I *did* notice something powerful, peace. There was a lot of peace; I basked in it. The thought came again, “You have received.” I agreed, as I remembered a scripture where Jesus said, “Peace I give you, not as the world gives, give I you.” So that was it; I had received the Holy Spirit. I rose up and went to bed.

For the next several weeks I continued to study the Word. Though I spent much time in study the words made no sense. I felt that I would get better response from a wall. I grew frustrated from a complete lack of understanding of God’s word. One day when I prayed, “This does *not* make a bit of sense!” God spoke.

In the book of Hebrews chapter 11, verse six, I read, “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” When I read that passage I said aloud, “Stop!” I re-read the scripture, “But without faith it is impossible to please him. . . .” I reasoned that I must have *some* faith or I would not be here. I continued reading, “[F]or he that cometh to God must believe that He is. . . .” Aloud I said, “Lord, I do believe you are; you are extant. You have been, you are, you ever shall be.” I went on to the last part of the scripture, “[A]nd *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Stop! I said. “You know I have been here day after day trying to understand what the scripture says. You owe me. You owe me because of what the Word says and because of what I have been doing. I thank you for it now in Jesus’ Name.” I rejoiced; I *was* getting somewhere. I was confident; my heart was full because I was going to understand His Word. What I did not realize, of course, was I was already beginning to understand!

Within about a week, the doors blew open and the scriptures began to make sense. The revelation of God filled a deep hunger; I felt like underlining the entire Bible word for word. I ate this word voraciously as a ravenous animal deprived of food for a long time. I wanted more and more and more; the more I ate the more I wanted. I would never again be satisfied with mere complacent, weak Christianity. As I read the topic of being in the “Spirit” was continually before me.

I read much about the Holy Spirit. I read about being in the spirit. John in the Revelation was in the spirit. Jesus was led of the spirit. I read about “speaking with new tongues” and felt as though my prayers had changed significantly. Still, there was no depth to the prayers I prayed. I felt as if I were as some Buddhists in Tibet who write their prayers on paper, put them in a can with a stick through the middle and a flyweight attached to the can. They twirl the can around throughout the day believing their prayers are prayed.

The word said to pray without ceasing; I could not do it. I kept saying the same old stuff. To say the least, prayer was all very boring, not to mention frustrating. In the frustration, I prayed to God again for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I told Him that I would search the ends of the earth to find Him. Shortly thereafter, I felt a deep uneasiness as if something was wrong, but I did not know why.

There was a nagging thought in the back of my mind. The thought was: What would you say if you learned you passed up the very thing you were seeking? I dismissed the thought as erroneous. Thinking perhaps I was experiencing a burden of God, I prayed asking Him for healing for a particular woman in our church. Afterward, I felt a little better, but there was still that “wrong” feeling.

Several days later I was thinking about exactly when the uneasiness began. I realized it was when I had prayed to receive the Holy Spirit the



second time. This was after I had profoundly sensed the peace of God after my water baptism. Was it possible I had grieved the Holy Spirit?

I prayed, and told God if I had grieved the Holy Spirit I was very sorry. The apology was confessed with the thought in mind that it was indeed possible He was offended. Immediately, I sensed peace again; the uneasiness was completely gone, I was free, but I learned the Holy Spirit is easily hurt. I never wanted to hurt Him again.

Because I was back on the track, I got back to the subject of the Spirit; specifically, being in the Spirit. I wanted so much of God; whatever He had I wanted. I wanted to know how to pray without ceasing as Paul spoke of in the Word. I gritted my teeth and said, "Even if it means speaking in other tongues." I was astonished I had pronounced those words, but I sensed I had done the right thing. I learned if I wanted anything from God I must open myself entirely to Him and His influence.

I began to hear faint almost indistinct words way off somewhere in my spirit. I did not mouth the words though; it was too unknown; too strange so I left it alone.

I reached a point where I sought God saying, "Lord, you have people here on earth to talk to. Bring to my mind one who is an instrument of your use to talk with me about this." There was surging force within me on the verge of release, but I did not know how or what. The name of a man came to mind; the pastor of a local Assembly of God church. Immediately, I sought audience with the man.

The pastor sat across the desk from me in his office. My thoughts, successes and failures, as well as my profound desires were poured out to him.

"Jay, just give your all to Him," he remarked.

"I have. I have done all I know to do!" My fervent exclamation so caught him off guard he raised his eyebrows in genuine surprise.

“Then say the things you are hearing.” He quietly said.

I described to him the unspoken words going around in my head.

“Go, get by yourself and unwrap this gift. The Holy Spirit will manifest Himself to you,” he said. Then he laid his hands on my head and prayed.

“The devil,” he said, “will come telling you all of this is a fake. Fear not, the devil is lying. What you exactly prayed for you have received.”

I went home and unwrapped the gift as he had said; that is, I began speaking in an unknown language; the deepest regions of my mind were shaken. The devil did come and tell me I was faking tongues. In response, I said, “No, it is not, it is a gift of God and in Jesus’ Name, it is mine. Tongues are true; they are not fake. The Holy Spirit gave them to me.” The devil promptly left.

As I spoke this unknown language, all resentment, all criticism about speaking in other tongues melted. I learned there are two positions people may occupy; that of the unbeliever or the unlearned. Unbelievers are scoffers unwilling to learn. On the other hand, unlearned people may not be unbelievers. These are they who are open to learning and apt to learn, who are willing to take note of what the Holy Spirit has to teach about the angelic language. I would say that a lot of folks are as unlearned as I.

Since the first time I spoke the Holy language of God, my spirit has developed a keener ear to what God has to say to me. His will has become known to me in a personal way. Wisdom has been imparted to me through the gift of His Spirit by way of His prayer language, study and meditation in His word and an earnest desire to serve Him.

I was not zorked with lightning, and I did not roll around on the floor screaming. No, I learned God is a gentleman and will meet one on their ground; that is, on their level. He will never embarrass anyone. If

you are not a person who laughs uproariously or throws themselves around the room in ecstasy, you probably will not when baptized in the Holy Spirit. I found myself in complete understanding of why there are other tongues. I was not fearful or self-conscious; the Holy Spirit manifested Himself to me. The Lord ministered to me in the privacy of my own home; the Lord made a house call. Contrary to how some believe or feel, receiving from the Holy Spirit is not contingent on being part of an organized church and its building. God, very simply answered my plea; He surrounded me with Himself. Praying without ceasing was possible everywhere I went.

Many speakers have expounded on the topic of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. To date, I have heard none say anything except for this: Speaking in other tongues is evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. From my experience, this is not necessarily true; for God works in various ways. I knew the Holy Spirit was in my spirit; we were one. I knew my life seriously began to change. I was different yet I did not speak in tongues until later.

We are not all cut out of the same bolt of cloth; not everyone is the same. Some experience the Holy Spirit and “tongues” immediately after asking, but others, as in my case, do not. Why? There is a process involved. The Holy Spirit manifests Himself as our minds are renewed to the Word of God. We are transformed and ‘voila!’ We give up ourselves to obtain Him, and the outward manifestation of the Holy Spirit is fully realized. The Holy Spirit is allowed to express Himself; hence, baptism.

Remember the scripture that said we would be witnesses? I took this truth to my family; that is, my wife, children, mother, father, brother, and sister. We all learned together; the message was well received. The message was delivered to some denominational Baptists and they too received the baptism in the Holy Spirit as well as many other folks.

Friend, the gift of other tongues as the Spirit gives us utterance is the will of God. We can rejoice because God is for us, not against us. The language we pray is undefiled by human thought or emotion. Prayer in our own language, many times, can be corrupted by our personal desires.

I sought the Holy Spirit first; I did not seek tongues. I found He had characteristics I had not counted on, such as when I bought a new Volvo. I really wanted the car. After I purchased it, I discovered to my complete surprise it had electric door locks. I was not looking for a car with electric locks, just that particular car.

If you are as I was, take heart; all is not lost. Spend quality time in God's Word. Search out the Father, and in the scriptures you will hear Him speak. In your spirit you will hear His words. The words are the words of the real you, the language of the Father. You and He are one, He expresses Himself through you and His Word, and He is never found apart from His Word. Is the Lord not wonderfully tender?

## WHAT WERE YOU DOING?

Has the name of a loved one or a friend ever suddenly popped into your mind? If so, what do you do about it? Have you ever thought the reason the name came to mind is the Lord wants you to intercede on their behalf?

Our eldest son, Jayson, was working for a Dairy Queen franchise in a small town north of us. One night he came home and after settling himself, asked my wife and me a question, "What were you doing tonight around 8:30? My wife, Nickee, told him, as matter of fact, we were driving home from the grocery store at that time. She related to him his name had come into her mind. Not knowing how to pray for him, she just prayed a silent prayer to the Lord, "Lord, I ask you for a special manifestation of your keeping power over Jayson right now in Jesus' Name." Jayson shook his head and said, "I wondered." He hastened to explain he was mopping the floor in the back room at that time. Because the floor was wet he was trying to safely navigate across it, when

suddenly his feet went out from under him. He said he was falling backward when without warning he was propelled forward and onto his feet. He turned around and looked to where he would have fallen. Had he continued the fall he would have struck the back of his head on the corner of a six-inch high concrete containment area. We believe it was the angels of the Lord who excel in strength who pushed him forward. We praised God for His keeping power.

In another instance, our two youngest sons, Jeremy, and Jaycob, left to try to find a Karate school located not far from our home.

Since the “weather-guesser” was predicting cold weather, I thought some firewood for the fireplace would keep the family warm. I went outside and began taking some of our wood supply into the house. As I gathered an armload, Jeremy’s and Jaycob’s names came to mind. I immediately spoke to the Lord, “Father, right now I ask you for a special manifestation of the your keeping power over Jeremy and Jaycob in Jesus’ Name, and I thank you for it.” I went about my business. I noted the time; it was about 6:45 p.m.

Jeremy and Jaycob arrived home just after 7:00 p.m. After they had declared their inability to find the Karate school, Jeremy said they had had a weird experience and asked, “Was somebody praying for me?” Jeremy said as he drove he came to an intersection, and because the light was already green he proceeded slowly through the intersection. He looked to his left and saw a car bearing down on him. Apparently, the driver of the other car was not interested in slowing. The driver ran his red light and drove into the door of the Grand Prix Jeremy was driving. The impact rocked Jeremy’s car to the right as the other car bounced backward. Jeremy stopped his car and got out to check for damage. He did not note any damage so he got back into his car and headed for home.

I asked Jeremy, what time this happened. He said it was about 6:45 p.m. I told him the Lord had prompted me to pray for Jaycob and him.

Jeremy told us at the time all of this was going on he knew someone was praying for them. We all praised God again for His goodness.

Surely, there are those who would scoff a little saying that those instances related earlier were purely coincidental. Our family has learned, and is continuing to learn and know the leading of the Lord in the area of being responsive. The truth is the benefits of the Lord are available to all who call upon His Name. The next time a name comes to your mind, stop what you are doing and breathe a prayer; it may save someone's life.

## WHERE ARE THOSE PAJAMAS?

How many times have we fallen into despair because we just could not find what we were looking for? Our attitude, when we begin the search for the object of our attention, may be calm, initially. As the search continues our cool approach may become heated, and we begin to realize we are becoming rather undesirable to be around. Seemingly, the higher the importance of the object of our search, the higher our level of frustration. If we despair and sit smoldering in the recliner, when will we think of calling on the Lord for His help? Also, if we asked the Lord for His help would we know His voice from our own?

Listening to the Lord requires a trained ear. Training begins by spending time in the Word of God. Once His voice becomes familiar to our ear we may respond accordingly. Sometimes His voice can become indistinct, causing us to think the thoughts are our own, if we become overcome by our frustrations. The key is to remain calm; chaos chokes the voice of God from our ear.



Jesus said in John 14:13,14 the following: “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.” His words include asking for help.

My wife, Nickee, was at home alone one day while I was at work. She busied herself around the home by cleaning, straightening furniture, making beds, cleaning up after our son, and doing the laundry. Doing the laundry is usually not a very tasking activity; however, it could be if an article of clothing was misplaced. What was missing was a pair of our son’s pajamas.

“Where are those pajamas?” Nickee wondered. She began an in-depth search throughout the house for the pajamas. The search included looking under beds, the dirty laundry basket, clean clothes pile, Jayson’s room, our room, the kitchen, living room, and everywhere else that came to her mind. Not one stone was left unturned in her search. Nickee became very frustrated because she had just washed the pajamas, and now they remained hidden from her view.

I arrived home that evening to find a very distraught wife. After we greeted each other I asked her how her day went. For the next few minutes she described in excruciating detail, her inability to find the pajamas.

“Did you ask the Lord where they are?” I asked.

“Yes.”

“What did He say?”

“‘They are in the sheets,’ but those may have been my own thoughts.”

“Did you look in the sheets?”

“No. I looked all over the house.”

“Why didn’t you look in the sheets?”

“Because I had just washed and folded the sheets and put them away.”

I walked over to the linen closet, opened the door, and began pulling sheets from the closet and unfolding them. I prayed, “God, Nickee said you told her the pajamas are in the sheets. If they are not here you better make some because I have been telling her you talk to people.” Nearly all the clean, folded, sheets were in a pile on the floor. I pulled one of the last sheets off the shelf and began unfolding it. The sheet was a bottom sheet designed to fit over the corners of a bed. As the sheet fell loose, I looked down into one of the fitted corners and spied the pajamas. I exclaimed, “I found them!” We rejoiced, what was lost was found. We both learned how listening to the Spirit saves time. Nickee had spent nearly eight fruitless hours of continual searching. Personally, I could not imagine how many hours I had spent looking for things. Hours of searching would have been saved if I had called on the Lord to help me.

Many people go to work in a particular place because of the benefits. I have met some people who, seemingly, rate the benefits they will receive from the company higher than the wages they will receive. What about God’s benefits? Is the saving of souls the only benefit of being a Christian? Have you ever considered that saving us time is a benefit of the Lord? Sometimes we will work or search endlessly only to learn if we had listened to the Lord we could have gone on to something else.

When we ask the Lord a question, we must be ready to listen, and act. If the Lord does not waste time, why should we?

## WHERE COMETH THE WIND?

Nearly two weeks after I had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit I informed my wife of my experience. The news was rather surprising to her because both of us had steered completely away from any evidences of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I went on to explain that I did not have the experience in church, rather, in the privacy of our home after having seen a respected church minister who pastored nearby. Praying in other tongues was a result of having besought God's Spirit, for praying in my lack-luster understanding was unfruitful. Paul had spoken that we should pray without ceasing, but how could I when my mouth ran out of words? Furthermore, I told her that speaking in other tongues was not my goal, rather, to walk in the Spirit of God. Nickee quietly asked me to keep to myself about my experience, and because I fully understood what she meant, I agreed.

Several weeks after I exposed my Holy Spirit experience to my wife I sat reading a particular book. The chapter that caught my eye addressed

the topic of a purpose for speaking in other tongues. Praying in other tongues prepares the heart and soul to hear from the Holy Spirit. Only through preparation may the child of God receive from the Lord such things as words of knowledge, wisdom, and other benefits of the Spirit of The Lord that pertain to life and godliness. I immediately sought Nickee to tell her of the chapter in the book.

One evening, as I prepared to leave for work, I broached the topic of the book with my wife. I briefly outlined the chapter in the book, and suggested she read it. Nickee told me she would read the book. I left for work wondering what she would tell me the next day.

Upon returning home from work the next morning I went directly to bed. I slept for a few hours and awoke wondering what Nickee thought of the chapter. I rose and dressed for the day, walked into the living room where Nickee was sitting.

Nickee told me she had read the chapter and, for once in her life, saw a practical reason for praying in other tongues. The problem was that she did not know how to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Now, I was certainly ignorant about receiving the baptism, but I told Nickee what I had done. She was interested to learn that I had simply prayed; giving everything I could think of to the Lord. Confessing to Him everything and anything that came to mind which would hinder any fellowship with Him and cleared away any regard for sin. Since Nickee was now anxious to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, I suggested that she go into our bedroom and pray to the father. We were reminded of the scripture in Luke 11:11-13, "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" We had the legal base for asking our Father for

the Holy Spirit so Nickee made her way to the bedroom and shut the door.

While Nickee was praying, I prayed too. Praises were offered to God were offered on behalf of Nickee. Coveting God's best for her was my sincere desire because we needed to work together, and be in agreement if we were to work together. Some time passed when I heard the bedroom door open.

Nickee walked out into the living room with a very strange expression on her face. I asked her how things had gone; did she speak with other tongues? She said no, but something strange happened to her while she prayed. As she sat and prayed, suddenly she heard the sound of a wind blowing around the room. The sound was very noticeable so she went to the windows to see if one of them was open that would allow any wind to come inside. While she was looking behind the curtains, she could still hear the wind, and she was totally bewildered. Because Nickee was not reared in a Christian home, and because she had recently accepted Jesus as the Son of God she could not possibly know what was happening.

Upon hearing Nickee's words, I burst into laughter. I laughed not at her, but in delight of what I heard. I asked her if she had any idea what the wind meant. When she said she did not, I opened the Bible to Acts 2:1-2, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." The fact she did not speak in other tongues paled in the light of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Tongues would evidence themselves later, but for now we basked in the blessing of the Lord.

One time my aunt advised me that the age of miracles was gone. A look of shock was the response to my statement that, "If the age of miracles is gone then you are dead in your sins!" The age of miracles is

gone for those who believe in such things, but the Holy Spirit miraculously evidenced Himself by underscoring scripture to my dear unlearned wife. Now no one could ever dispute Nickee's testimony to Him. Nickee's simple request was magnificently answered. God moved in response to her faith. Is this not the way of God, to confound the wise and show His strength to them who call upon His Name? God is great.

## YOU SAID TO SAY WHAT?

Leon called asking if we would visit the church he attended for a banquet and evening service on a particular Saturday night. The plan was for me to both sing and speak in the evening's meeting. He also wanted to know if we would stay over and participate in the Sunday morning service. Nickee and I heartily accepted because we always look forward to participating in the Lord's work.

We departed our home on Saturday afternoon and headed southwest to Oregon's coastal town of Coquille. Our spirits were high, and we spent the time talking about the Word of God. Time certainly seems to fly when the Word of God is the topic of discussion. The four hour drive went quickly, and soon we were driving up the driveway to the church.

After all greetings were finished, I began searching the church for a place to pray. Leon told us the banquet would begin in an hour, and the evening service an hour after eating. I found a quiet room suitable for prayer and began talking to the Lord. To say I was nervous was an

understatement because I had absolutely no idea what to talk about that night. I prayed fervently asking the Lord for a topic. The subject had to be from the Lord, for these people this night. I asked the Lord for an anointing, in Jesus' Name. No answers were given to me. Suddenly, I remembered the banquet. I was late.

I hurried down the stairs to the basement where the banquet was being held. The sounds of many voices were heard and faces seen as I rounded the corner into the banquet hall. Leon had originally intended for me to lead the people in prayer over the dinner. Since I was late, Leon prayed and everyone dug into the food. During the dinner a few of the people told me how anxious they were for me to hear their pastor preach. Suddenly, the dinner ended, and people began clearing the tables. What a meal! No one walked away from the tables hungry.

I rushed back to the room. The time I had to get an answer from the Lord was quickly vanishing. By now, I was much more fervent in my plea to the Lord for subject material, and for an anointing for the evening's service. Throughout the dinner I continued to cast about in my mind for a topic; my mind was empty of thoughts. I prayed in the Spirit for a while. Subtly, a thought came into my conscious mind: What does I John 2:27 say? I thought for a moment and recited the scripture, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." Suddenly, my heart keyed in on the words, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you. . . ." The anointing *abides* in me? Why am I asking for something I already have? I wondered if I was off base in my thinking. So many religious speakers have spoken, "Lord, I ask for an anointing for this evening's service." I thoroughly believed asking for an anointing for a special event was the right thing to do. Now here I was and the Lord was gently telling me not



to ask for what I already had; what a concept! My mind reeled with the revelation. I prayed, "All right Lord, I thank you for the anointing that abides in me; therefore, I ask for the manifestation of your anointing." I thanked the Lord in advance of the manifestation of His anointing. Now we were progressing, but what about the topic for the evening?

My mind felt like a washing machine for thinking. Slosh, slosh, slosh, my thoughts went round and round. I implored the Lord for a subject. Typical of the Lord, faint almost far-off words were formulating, seemingly, in the back of my mind. The words were, "What have you been studying?" Seriously, I was spending nearly thirty hours a week in the Word of God and prayer. Research in the Word of God covered many trails and subjects. I told the Lord of many areas I had studied. Next, I heard the words, "Do not worry what to say. Open your mouth and I will fill it. This is not your service, it is mine." Time came for me to go out onto the stage.

While walking out of my room into the auditorium, I looked to see what size audience was there. People came in and filled nearly every seat in the auditorium, and still I did not know specifically what I was to say. I sat on my chair at the microphone and began the service with prayer. We spent about thirty to forty minutes singing songs. I sang songs I had written, and we sang group sing-alongs. The spiritual atmosphere was light; however, I sensed the presence of the Lord.

The time had come to get into the meat of the Word. The music had prepared our hearts to hear what the Lord had to say. I set my guitar down onto its stand. As clear as crystal the Lord gave me the message for the evening. I was to speak on second Peter 1:5-10 which says, "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you, and abound, they

make *you that ye* shall neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for it ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”

The Lord had shown me days earlier the power in what Peter had written. I described to the people the importance of the word, diligence. Without diligence, we do not move forward; we stagnate. Diligence is akin to being persistent and consistent. We looked at diligence as being the center point of a balance beam. If all eight of the elements of II Peter were placed along the beam; that is, faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love, four on each side, we would see the balanced Christian life. Too much or too little of any one of the elements would tip the scales, therefore, putting us out of balance. Generally, the balance beam is part of a scale, and diligence in studying the Word of God along with developing a fellowship with the Lord works in us, abundance. We will be able to see clearly the things God sees, and understand God’s love toward us to save us from destruction.

None of us want to fall; therefore, as the scripture says, “. . . [G]ive diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” The people needed to look into themselves to see if, based on the scripture, their lives were out of balance. Since the Lord is in the healing and binding-up-broken-hearts business, the people were invited to come forward to the altar to pray. Many people came to the altar that night. Truly, the Lord had graced the service with His presence.

On Sunday, we filled the auditorium for the morning service, and people told me again how anxious they were for me to hear their pastor. There were, roughly, seventy-five people there that morning. Again,

there was a feeling of light-heartedness among the people. I prepared myself to sing a rollicking group sing-along when suddenly the Lord changed my mind. “Do not sing the song you intended; rather, play ‘He’s Coming Again.’” The pastor motioned to me to come to the stage to play my song before he spoke. I stepped up to the microphone, introduced the song and began to play. I closed my eyes and moved in the Spirit.

While I was singing, I heard someone talking. The words were indistinct, and there was the soft rustling of people. My eyes remained closed. I sang the last strains of the song. Opening my eyes, I saw the altar lined to capacity. Nearly all the people in the auditorium had come forward for prayer. I placed my guitar against a chair, and saw the pastor coming toward me. He grasped my right hand in his and shook it. Looking at me through his piercing blue eyes he stated, “God used you, man!” I looked around me. People were everywhere.

I knelt in front of one praying, and asked the Lord why I did not feel emotion. The Lord shot back, “There is no time for crying, this is business!” Several of us prayed with these people until the altar was empty. Afterward, we returned to our seats. The pastor stepped up to the podium, prayed and thanked God, and closed the service. The people all stood up and began leaving.

Looking back over the two services, I learned that God is not interested in what we have to say as much as He is interested in having His way to lead people to Him. If I had been able to come up with something to talk about on Saturday, I may have tainted the message with my thoughts; faith spoke instead. A messenger gives the message, he does not interpret, and he or she goes where God says go and waits for the message.

Few people in the church knew I had studied for the ministry in that denomination. No one, except my wife, knew I had been baptized in the Holy Spirit and prayed in other tongues. Telling people about my

baptism was not important because attention would have focused on me rather than the Spirit. Praying in the Holy Spirit brought the manifestation of God's supreme presence. The Lord God blessed the services and affected many lives.

Seeing the work of God, first-hand, is awesome. I did not have the pleasure of hearing their pastor, and I am quite sure he was a very good speaker, and would have set a very good spiritual table. After the service on Sunday, one who hoped I would hear her pastor came up to me and stated, "I do so wish you could have heard our pastor!" Despite the move of God, some will miss Him and His work.

## ZION'S MOUNT

My wife and I stood looking out of our bedroom window. We had just sent the kids off to school, and were fondly reflecting on the vacation our family had had in St. Louis. Because we arrived home the evening before, I decided to spend the last of my vacation at home with my wife. The day was sunny, blue sky, no clouds could be seen, and the birds chirped noisily. As we stood, we watched as a white four-door car was driven into our driveway.

A short, pudgy man climbed out of his car and made his way across the yard to our front door. A streak of vocalized fear ran through my wife and me. We intuitively knew that the man was a legal process server; however, as far as we knew no one was planning to sue us. What a way to end a vacation!

I answered the door, warily. The man handed me an envelope and asked me to sign a receipt signifying that, certainly, we were being duly

notified of a lawsuit against us. When I asked the man who was suing us, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "I don't know."

I was shaking so badly I could hardly open the envelope. When at last the task was accomplished, the multiple sheets of paper were pulled from the envelope and unfolded. Our eyes quickly scanned the document looking for the name of the plaintiff. In the upper left corner we spied the name. The day we received the summons was a Friday, and we were to appear in court the next Monday! I could not believe, although I should have, what was happening. The paper in my hand sealed my belief that I had not, up to that point, known I was so perfectly hated. What were we to do? We needed a lawyer in a hurry. First, we prayed and told the Lord what was happening. Next, we asked for a manifestation of His leadership, and told him of our need. Immediately after thanking Him, a name came to mind, and we made the call.

The attorney, miraculously, was in his office. We quickly detailed the situation to him; he asked us to come quickly.

The drive to the attorney's office seemed to take forever. All along the way, Nickee and I prayed and thanked God for helping us. He had to know more than us because we were certainly in the dark. We sought to quiet our raging imaginations and seemingly relentless fear of the unknown by remembering that perfect love casts out fear. That fear, however, tried to return like unwanted guests.

Our attorney quietly read through the document in his hand. We sat quietly and looked around the room and at each other. What was going through his mind? He laid the papers on his desk and looked up at us. He told us the first thing he had to do was go to the court and have the case set over to another day which would give us time to prepare.

As an aside, I am constrained to reveal the reason for the suit against me. My ex-wife was suing me for back and current child support. While we were married, she decided another man was singing a better

song than I, and sued me for divorce. The child support payments did not go through the courts as they do today; for years I paid child support payments directly to my ex-wife. In the course of time suspicion set in that she had moved without telling me of her new address; telephone numbers did not work. I tested my doubts by sending her a payment by certified mail with return receipt requested. The Post Office returned my mail because no one would sign for it when it reached its destination, wherever that happened to be. The rubber stamps on the envelope indicated it had been through at least two stations, which confirmed my suspicions. Because I could not reach her directly, I stopped the payments. If she had signed for the letter and opened it she would have seen a note asking her to reveal her address. Never, was the thought in my head to try to cheat the system by not paying child support. I had paid when money was desperately needed to make ends meet with my current family. I did not mind giving the money for my daughter's sake; not because of the law, but out of a sense of personal responsibility. Now, after five years she had come out of the woodwork and wanted the money.

Paying the debt of five years of back child support was not a problem, but paying a serious increase, was; therefore, we wanted a decrease in the amount of the payment. The decrease would allow me to see my daughter whom I had not seen for a number of years. Also, we strongly desired the tax consideration for my daughter. Lastly, we wanted the judge to rule giving my current family primary consideration.

Nickee and I hit the problem head-on by taking the whole affair to the throne room of God. We remembered the scripture in Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." We also remembered Hebrews 4:15&16, "For we have

not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” One night we sat praying both in the spirit and in our own understanding. During prayer, Nickee said she had a vision of the Lord behind the chair of the judge. The vision meant that God was in control of this situation. We praised and thanked God for His grace and help; the fear was vanquished. Later, we learned from our attorney that the presiding judge in our case was none other than one affectionately known as “the hanging judge.” He judged domestic cases, and there were some I knew who had been before him and walked away bleeding, so-to-speak, because of his judgements.

The attorney was able to secure a new court date for us. What were we to do during the wait? Nickee and I continued to pray every day. We prayed when we were together and when we were apart. When we prayed we did not wail and cry begging God to do something in our behalf. Rather, we gave thanks to God because He had already shown us He was in control.

I began to fast. Every morning I would declare a fast to the Lord. I chose Isaiah 58 for my foundation scripture. The fast was declared in the following manner: “Lord, I declare a fast this day until noon in Jesus’ Name. Turn me to see a better reflection of yourself. Use me as a magnifying glass to burn out iniquity and wickedness. Thank you for letting me participate in your success. Amen.” In my spirit, my mind’s eye as some would say, I saw the problem represented by a six foot cube of steel. The block sat before me. I fasted every day until about three days before the court date.

Each morning after rising, I would praise God for his successes. A mental reaffirmation would be made by me of the fasts and their impact, and each time I sensed pressure between me and the block of steel. This



morning was different: I sensed a lessening of the pressure! I made mental inventory of my spiritual situation. Had I backed off my stance, or had I spoken anything other than the Word of God? What was happening? If I had not moved, the block must have. Truly, faith forced the block of steel away from me that meant the title deed to this victory was ours.

The day of our court hearing arrived. We did not have to be in court because our attorney would negotiate for us. Several hours later, he called us and asked us to come to his office. After we arrived, we learned the outcome of the hearing.

We were given a copy of the “Court of Journal Entry” to read. The attorney began detailing the outcomes of the hearing. The judge ruled in our favor giving us primary consideration, due in part to the fact that my ex-wife was several states away. Next, the judge lowered the amount of the child support to defray the costs of bringing my daughter in for a visit. Alas, we were not to receive the tax consideration; however, Nickee and I rejoiced because we were seeing a physical manifestation of the work of God.

A few days later, I sat and read the court document; it contained a startling piece of information, which if true, would give us everything we asked. My ex-wife was given a few days to respond to the court’s decision. If she did not respond within the number of days specified by the court the child support would be further reduced by \$50.00; thus, giving us two reductions! Because the court system is slow she did not receive the documents in time to respond; the court awarded us the reduction by default. Further, we also received the tax advantage because of the word “shall” in the body of the text. I spoke to our attorney about my findings, and he told me that we would get either a reduction in the amount of child support payments, or the tax advantage, not both. When I asked him if the word “shall” means “determination” or

“inevitability” he said, yes. I stated that based on the wording in the document we not only received a reduction in child support, but the tax advantage as well. The attorney dropped his head and said, “Yes.” We had won! Perhaps, the writer of the document did not fully understand technical terminology; therefore, the court gave us the reduction and tax advantage. I could hardly wait to get home to tell Nickee.

I burst into the house with the news. Nickee and I rejoiced and thanked God. The Spirit of the Lord manifested the answer to our prayer in the physical. I saw my daughter, we paid the child support payments according to schedule, and the court closed the case.

Proverbs 16:7 says, “When a man’s way please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

The key to the success in this scenario is that complete reliance must be on the Lord. Second Peter 1:2-4 says, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” We simply accessed the promises by applying faith to the situation. Also, the Lord in Second Chronicles 20:17 stated, “Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*: set yourselves, stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the Lord with you. . . .” The battle was not ours it was the Lord’s so we did not meddle in His business.

I stated in an earlier chapter that we are nothing special, no different in God’s eyes than any other. Using the faith of God against the mountain that stood before us drew the attention of God. A New Testament writer, Mark, spoke in chapter five, verses 25-34 about the woman with the issue of blood. He quoted her as saying, “If I may but

touch his clothes I shall be whole.” When the woman touched Jesus’ garments, He perceived that virtue, or power, had gone out of Him. The woman’s action of faith captured the attention of Jesus despite the throng pressing in on Him, and He told her, “Go in peace and be whole of thy plague.” Holding high the shield of God’s faith was our answer to the lawsuit. We may all capture God’s attention when we do the same thing as the woman, how would we otherwise? Amen.

## A PARTING WORD

One day while I was a boy, I noticed a tile in the shower stall coming away from the wall. The cracked grout was falling away because the tile was pushing it out of the way. As little boys will do I wondered what was going on with the tile. Pulling the tile completely away from the wall revealed a tiny mold; a flick of my finger fairly vaporized it. I replaced the tile and left. I did not know at the time that the little mold would serve, in the future, as an object lesson in the force of faith.

In chapter twenty-nine, I spoke of standing in front of a six-foot square block of steel, as I fasted. I saw the block in my spirit, and as you may recall, the block represented the lawsuit against me. By all human standards the steel block was immovable, but it had moved. Now I wondered how much the block weighed. Working with people who calculate the weights of various materials can be handy; therefore, I asked them what a six-foot square block of generic steel would weigh. Considering their calculations, the experts said the block would weigh

just over 114,000 pounds! How much force would move the 114,000 pounds? A constant force of 3,000 pounds, or 2.6 percent of the weight of the block would easily move it. I went on to ask how much force would move the same weight if the block were on dirt, 50,000 pounds. The answer was a flat, “No!” Less than 10,000 pounds of force could move the weight on dirt. I stood amazed after they told me the answer to my question. The force of faith required to move the block was miniscule in proportion to the weight and size of the block; however, faith moved the block. Jesus said in Luke 17:6, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.” I learned that the amount of faith is not as important as what we do with it.

One may ask, “How does faith work when applied to situations in my life?”

“Very well.” Another jokingly responds.

What is important is not how faith works, rather, what works faith? Again, I recalled the mold behind the tile. The mold seemed weak, just like us. Where did the mold’s strength lie that separated the glue, broke the grout, and moved the tile? Very simply, the mold’s strength lay in its persistence. The tile that prevented the mold’s growth had to be removed for it to grow. Situations and problems, represented as tiles in people’s live can stop their spiritual growth unless they take action by using faith. What principally works faith is love, and praising God in advance for the manifestation of the answer, demonstrates the application of faith to any situation. In Galatians 5:6 we read, “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” Just as the mold applied constant force against the tile to move it, so was the constant force of faith applied to the block I mentioned earlier that moved it. Faith’s force remained constantly fueled

by giving praises to God. When we use faith, we will lack nothing that pertains to life and godliness; however, unbelief thwarts faith's purpose.

People have told me that it does not matter what they think in their head as long as they believe in their heart. James very clearly addresses the topic of head thinking versus heart believing in chapter one verses six through eight, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." Hearts and heads must work in unison. Certainly, thoughts of doubt and unbelief will fly through our minds, but we should treat them like unwanted guests and kick them out. If our purpose is to eat, so-to-speak, the fruits of faith, then we will at all costs seek to maintain a thought life centered on the Word and not the circumstances. We can cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalt itself against the wisdom of God. Any thing that comes to us such as doubt or unbelief exalts, or attempts to exalt itself, as being higher than the wisdom of God. Sincerely, no one needs a billboard sign to see the difference between being in, or not being in, alignment with the Word of God.

Accepting the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, and confessing with our mouths the Lord Jesus, saved us from damnation. Our spirits became saved, not our souls. Some say our souls are saved day by day, but exactly *how* is our soul saved? The work of faith saves our souls. In I Peter 1:9, we may read the following startling revelation, "Receiving the end of your faith *even* the salvation of *your* souls." Faith must be actively applied to the circumstances we encounter in our life here on earth. We can not simply say we have faith yet do nothing with it. The possession of faith demands action, and it must be used constantly. The writer of Hebrews 11:6 states the following: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please him. . . ." We can not please the Lord if we do not

have and use faith. If we have faith we will use it and look for places to apply it.

The Lord Jesus is easily touched by our infirmities, but is constrained to do nothing until we touch Him with faith. The writer of Hebrews states the following in chapter four, verses fifteen and sixteen, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Jesus used faith everywhere He went with whomever He met, and has seen everything imaginable; therefore, He is sensitive and compassionate. When we need something we go boldly to the throne of grace; we do not act as if someone would beat us if we spoke. The throne of grace is the place to receive unmerited favor from the sovereign Lord of the Universe. Very often we experience hit and miss the grace of the Lord and do not understand why. Walking continually in the grace of God is contingent upon our use of faith. Romans 5:1-2 says, “Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also *we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand*, [emphasis mine] and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” God’s Word plainly speaks the following: faith accesses the grace of God.

Where do we get the faith to move the mountains in our lives? Paul the apostle, spoke the following in Romans 12:3, “For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but God hath dealt to every man *the* [emphasis mine] measure of faith.” The faith given by the Lord to His children is equal in distribution; that is, same faith, and same size. The faith we now have is not different than the faith Father used to bring the world into existence. The disciples, as recorded in Luke 17:5-6, asked Jesus to increase their faith. The disciples had to have realized

they had some faith, but they wanted more, an increase. Jesus' response in verse six was, ". . .If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." Jesus was simply telling the disciples to use what they had. Very often we want more faith when we have not used what we have. A grain of mustard seed is not very large, yet Jesus likens faith to it. If we continually use mustard seed faith and garner results, faith will grow; therefore, we do not need to ask for an increase. We do not need an increase in faith as much as we need to use what we have. Confidence, or trust that faith works, grows in faith when faith is used, and the confidence we have leads us to greater applications of faith.

The Lord gives a reinforcement of faith to meet each situation of life. The apostle Paul wrote the following in Romans 10:17, "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." We may read the Word of God but not understand it. We draw strength from the Word of God when we understand what it is saying to us; that is, it speaks to us. A clear example of the Word speaking to someone is found in Matthew chapter fourteen where Jesus was walking on the water toward the boat that held the disciples. Peter, upon seeing Jesus, asked that if it be Jesus that Jesus would bid him come to Him. Jesus said for Peter to come to Him, and spoke the following: "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Peter immediately climbed out of the boat and made his way to Jesus. Peter, upon hearing the Word spoken to him acted immediately. Another example of hearing the Word that will move a person to action is when the Word is read and the words seem to fairly leap off the page. An affirmation that faith is present to meet the need is the exclamation, "Man, now that speaks to me!" Father immediately responds to an act of faith.



We can not put faith in a closet for use at a later time. Being instant in and out of season; that is, being ready at all times, is due to living in faith. Faith answers the door when problems of life knock. Active faith affords us the confidence that when we step out each day into the streams of life we are tight and polished, and hold the shield of faith high for all to see.

To walk in the faith of God is to walk in abundance, and attempting to do things our way leads to failure. Faith is the cornerstone of wisdom, and the wisdom of God is foolishness to men. The foolishness of men says that faith is stupid because they can not see it, but the righteous who continually use faith have entered into the rest of God. People of faith will not seek their own solutions to the problems they face; they will live the faith of Jesus who never acted out of anything but faith.

Dear reader, be blessed beyond measure by God our Father through the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. May the Holy Spirit assist you at every turn to deal with every situation of life? Be blessed in your going out, coming in, when you rise and when you sit. May the Word of the Lord be continually upon your lips, may you hold the shield of faith high, and the Lord will keep you until His return. Amen.