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Supernatural healing

Radically Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity



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PSALM 6

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?

Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.

Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.

INTRODUCTION

The first miracle I witnessed was when I was very young. I remember standing at the back door looking through a screen with my mother beside me. My cat was in the backyard literally having a "fit." I felt it was in much pain and wanted to go to it, but my mom was afraid for me to go outside. I was crying and screaming "Pray, Mom, Pray!" She began to pray and the cat became calm. To me—a child—it was a miracle. At the time my mother acted as though it was silly to pray for a cat, but I knew she felt the same way.

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Four years ago on my way home from work, I got this overpowering feeling that I should write a book on healing—and the feeling returned again and again. I thought, "I haven't been in church for 40+ years—who am I to write about healing, and what do I really know?" Finally, I did buy a notepad and start to search the scriptures, but it quickly came to an end when both my son and husband asked me, "Who do you think you are?" So the very few notes made lay there under the Bible for two years.

A few months after I had started to search the scriptures, I quit my job as an RN due to constant pain which had been diagnosed several years ago as fibromyalgia. I was referred to a rheumatologist, and he ran a lot of tests. My diagnosis, multiple myeloma, caused both my husband and me to find the Lord. And so, I have once again picked up pen and paper. International Evangelist Felix Crowder of Indianapolis got me started again when he told me to write down every scripture I could find that pertained to healing.

My prayer is that my search of the scriptures and sharing my journey will help at least one person to experience God's saving grace and healing power. Jesus said, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven

over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15: 4-7).

Jesus cares about each and every one of us. He sees that one lost sheep as the one that needs to be brought back to the fold. Did you know that a sheep will actually run in the opposite direction of safety? I had a Basset Hound, Fred, and he was like the sheep. When Fred would hear a gunshot, he would run in the direction of the shot. No matter how much I stood there and called, he kept running, and yes, I chased right after him no matter how far he went. And when Fred and I returned, our other dogs did much barking and circling around the prodigal one! Jesus and His saints are like that—there's much shouting, singing and praising when one returns.

Until I was sixteen, I went to church at least four times a week with my mother and sometimes every night during revival. I always took for granted that Jesus healed. I believed—there was no question in my mind about whether He would or would not heal. After I was out of church for years He started to place burdens on me about people that needed healing. It was like a heavy, heavy feeling that would not leave until I did something about it. Because I felt I was not in church, I would first pray and pray so that I might have no doubt in me before I prayed for that person. My cousin was one such person. She had a stroke, and the doctors left no hope to the family. Although I had not seen her in years, I received this burden. She had been in the hospital for days before I got up the courage to go. As I got there that day, she was being wheeled out of x-ray and was being taken directly to surgery to remove a clot. I was told I could have one second with her. I simply laid my hand on the side of her head and asked for her to be healed in Jesus' name. The burden I felt left immediately, and a feeling of well-being came over me. I knew immediately that she would make it. I heard later that the clot fell out when the surgeon opened her up. She is alive and well today although she does have some deficits. I am sure she had many other prayers as well, but it left me with a question: Why is God talking to me—a sinner? I had been told for years that God did not hear a sinner's prayer, and I argued vehemently that He does. God hears a sinner's prayer! When a sinner prays and faith is released to Him, the Lord will answer! In fact,

He will break all barriers to answer that prayer for it is faith connecting to His glorious power that brings healing into one's life.

I also know and understand today that this was God's way of continuing to work with me. HE NEVER GAVE UP; He never left me. As a result of His PERSISTENCE, His TROUBLING me, His FAITHFULNESS, and His LOVE—after 44 years—I am saved! And before this book is ended, I want to tell you how you, too, can be saved!

I believe that the prayers of saints are stored in heaven (Revelation 8:3-4) and those prayers live long after those saints have passed on. My mother was called a "prayer warrior" by many people when she lived. She had a list of names a page and one-half long for whom she prayed; many of your names along with mine were on it. I know that it is my mother's prayers that help sustain me and my family yet to this day.

Oh, one more thing! I still pray for animals, too. And I think God has a wonderful sense of humor as well. Nearly every day my husband and I would pass this little dog in a pen, with conditions not so good, if you know what I mean. And he was always looking longingly toward his owners' house and appeared to be begging for a little love and attention. One day we passed by, and there were two little kittens (now grown) playing just outside the dog pen, scampering about while "Dog" watched gleefully. Who would have thought to solve the problem this way—but God? I laugh joyfully to this day when I see those cats and think of God's response to my prayer.

There are those that do not believe in praying for animals, but I feel they are God's little creatures, too, and He cares what we care about. I also know that the Lord can use animals as tools to teach both children and adults about many things: prayer, healing, love, compassion, and yes, dying. It is a tool that He can use to prepare us for things to come that we might not, otherwise, handle well. Luke 21:22 says, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

IS HEALING IN THE ATONEMENT?

As you can see from the introduction, God's healing power has always played a role in my life, yet at the same time, has been a mystery to me. As a result, the subject of FAITH, HEALING AND MIRACLES has become A PASSION—AN OBSESSION in my life. As I have researched this topic, I have not only learned far more than I might have normally, but it seems every time I open the Bible, the very scripture I need is right in front of me, or something as simple as a paper falling to the ground supplies me with the answer to my question. So without further adieu, let's investigate the first big question together. Is Healing in the Atonement?

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Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, Not of works, lest anyone should boast." It is only because of God's grace meeting up with our faith in Him that we are saved—a gift from Him. And I believe it is the same with healing. Only through God's grace and power meeting up with our faith can we be healed. Isaiah 53:5 says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Just as His forgiveness of our sins is a gift from Him, so is healing a gift of God. Matthew 8:16-17 says, "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

So yes, I believe healing is in the atonement. However, it is our salvation that is primary to the Cross. John 17:1-4 says, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, & Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." First and foremost, Jesus gave His life on the Cross so that we might have eternal life. And because of His love for mankind, "with His stripes" we are healed! I Peter 2:24, again, says: "Who his

own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

God is in the business of salvation. Life eternal is the Lord's first and foremost desire for us. But it is healing that gives authority to the message of salvation.¹ In Acts 4:29-30, the Apostles prayed for God to stretch forth His hand and heal and perform signs and wonders. These men had just been released from the authorities who threatened them for preaching in the name of Jesus. They realized that their message was being challenged. They knew without confirmation that the Jews would never accept them over their conventional religion of the day. Healing gives authenticity to the story of the resurrection (Acts 3:15-17),² When people marveled at the healing of the man lame from his mother's womb, Peter told them they had denied the Holy One; they had killed the Prince of life whom God had raised from the dead and that it was His name through faith in His name that had made the lame man strong. Healing established the claims of Jesus as being able to forgive sins (Mark 2:5).³ When the men uncovered the roof and let the man with palsy down before Jesus, He said unto the sick man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." And when the scribes reasoned this in their hearts, Jesus said, "Why reason these things ... ye may know that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Mark 2:9-12). It is healing that destroys the works of the devil.⁴ In Acts 10:38 Peter stated that Jesus went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.

Because of God's desire that all have eternal life, I believe He wants us well so that we may spend our time here on earth as He did—bringing souls to Him—and, further, preparing ourselves for eternity. I believe He wants us whole—in body, spirit, and soul. Psalm 119:19 says, "I am a stranger in the earth." We are here on earth for just a little while, so our identity is not here but in eternity. Proverbs 11:28 says, "The righteous shall flourish as a branch." A life devoted to things of this world is a dead life, but if your life is devoted to Christ you will flourish and grow. Ecclesiastes 1:3, 14 says, "What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Without God there is no purpose in life. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 says, "Fear God, and

keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." To fear God and obey Him is our whole duty—our whole purpose in life. Colossians 1:16 says: "All things were created by him and for him." It's not about us! It's about Him! As the song says, "It's All in Him." The only way we can do our best work for Him is if we are well—whole and complete. So I believe He wants us to have a life of health without pain and suffering until He comes calling. I Thessalonians 5:23 says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." God's Word is His will. He wants you well.

If there is a need for healing in your life, as you take this course I want you to repeatedly say to yourself: I KNOW HE WANTS ME WELL! I KNOW HE WANTS ME WELL! I KNOW HE WANTS ME WELL! If you are a child of God, you have a covenant of promises. Beginning with Abraham God said, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generation for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee" (Genesis 17:7). In the New Testament, the Lord tells us, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Acts 3:25). We have a blood covenant with the Lord, a covenant He will not and cannot break. He is a merciful and a faithful God. God took on Himself the seed of Abraham for it "behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17). The Lord said, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you ... thoughts of peace ... to give you an expected end" (Jeremiah 29:11). He wants to bless us and keep us and to give us hope and a future. The Lord tells us to call unto Him and that He will answer us, showing us great and mighty things (Jeremiah 33:3).

As part of the atonement, Jesus bought our salvation and our healing; what we do not receive here, we will receive in the resurrection—a glorified immortal body—complete in spirit, body, and soul.

1. Walls, Muncia, Corinthians—First Epistle, (Medora, IN, 2004), p. 116.
2. Ibid., p. 117
3. Ibid p. 117
4. Ibid., p. 116

WHAT IS FAITH?

Roman's 12:3 says, "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Webster's describes faith as "unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence; an unquestioning belief in God; complete trust, confidence, or reliance."¹ Faith is a means by which man accepts and receives God's grace—God's undeserved favor to man—a free gift.² God gives us all the measure of faith, and then it is up to us to trust and believe in Him and His promises. Faith is believing what God has said. In this course, I want to talk about the difference between natural faith and supernatural faith. II Corinthians 5:7 says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." When we walk by sight, we are simply in the natural. We must see it to believe it. But when we live by faith, we operate in the supernatural. It is a faith that transcends our ability and allows us to believe in what God has said despite the circumstances. Faith is the key that opens the door.

Muncia Walls states that "faith, the gift of the Spirit, is for power with God. The Word of the Lord draws attention to what God is capable of doing—and it is faith that brings it to pass. The gift of faith is the ability to believe and trust for those things that are out of reach other than through faith. Abraham could not have had a son by Sarah any other way. Paul could not have been delivered from the storm any other way. Yet it was not a blind desire for some unseen escape hatch—it was, despite all reasoning and the ordinary workings of natural cause and effect, an assurance that was brought into being supernaturally by God's Spirit."³

Psalm 6 at the beginning of this book is an example of extraordinary faith.

I believe Psalm 6 was David's prayer after he had lain with Bath-sheba, Uriah's wife, and had then sent Uriah to the forefront of a battle to be killed (II Samuel 12:9), and David had then fallen ill himself. After all David had done, the words he prayed were "the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping; the Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer." David knew that if we pray for anything according to God's will, we are justified in expecting what He has promised. If we know that He hears us, we know that we have the answers to that which we desire of Him. I John 5:14-15 says,

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything 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."

Faith is established on the faithfulness of God; it derives strength from God's strength. Habakkuk 3:18-19 says, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." Faith locks on to the Word of God and His promises and rejoices in the Lord! True faith is unfailing and has no eyes for fear or ears for doubt. The key to faith is to rejoice before the victory comes as though your healing has already occurred, for faith rejoices in the Lord! Faith focuses on God and His promises—not the problem. Faith focuses on the face of God and is oblivious to everything else.⁴

Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Thus, faith is the driving force that helps bring that fire down from heaven. The unseen will become real when our faith meets with God's power. I Corinthians 2:9-10 says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." Even though we cannot see or hear in the natural, we can envision a thing through God's spirit. As I pray I envision that which I desire. I see Jesus reaching down and mending those tendons and ligaments as I pray in Jesus' name. I see new blood flowing through one's veins and washing away the unclean.

How Do We Increase Our Faith?

Romans 10:17 says, "So then Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

At the time Brother Crowder told me to start writing down every scripture pertaining to healing, I didn't realize how little faith I had. I thought I had a lot of faith, but as I began reading the Bible and searching the scriptures; as I began listening to every DVD that Brother Irwin Baxter put out from Endtime University; as I listened to Brother

Stoneking's CDs and DVDs, as I asked question after question from anyone willing to respond, my faith began to soar!

Our faith is developed by praying and meditating on the Word of God. We must internalize his Word body and soul until it's a part of us because "without faith it is impossible to please him" (Hebrews 11:6). Joshua 1:8 instructs us to "meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." As we pursue God's Word and our knowledge, wisdom, and understanding increase, our faith will increase. John 8:31-32 says, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." All God has promised, we can expect for we can do all things through Christ which strengthen us (Philippians 4:13).

Brother Gill, Medora, Indiana, stated in one of his sermons that you can even be healed just from the "smoke" (being in the same area where the power of God is being manifested). It's true! I was walking the dogs one day after Sunday School, and we had just prayed for a lady that morning with cancer. Suddenly, I realized I was walking without pain! I said to my husband, "The pain in my knee is gone!" When we pray for someone at our church, we don't sit in the pews. We all go up and surround that person with the affliction as she/he is anointed with oil. I can tell you from experience, it is a powerful force that surrounds you; it feels like an electrical current running through you. It's like the song says, "It's like a fire shut up in my bones." The power is there; we just have to put the key in the door!

As a grain of mustard seed grows, we grow in our faith as we read the Word of God. True understanding needs time to mature (II Timothy 2:15). But as we mature, His truth becomes manifested in our hearts and our minds. And then one day we will know that we know that we know that the healing we desire will result when we pray in the will of the Lord, and our faith without doubt meets up with God's power. Roman's 10:17, indeed, sums it up: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

1 Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition, Guralnik, David B., editor in chief, (New

York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970), p. 503.

2 Bernard, David K, *The New Birth*, (Hazelwood, MO.: Word
Aflame Press, 1984), pp. 31, 34.

3. Walls, Muncia, *Corinthians—First Epistle*, (Medora, IN.: 2004), p.117.

4. *Word Aflame Adult Teacher*, No. 4, 1997-1998, Century Series, Davis, Richard M.,
ed., (Hazelwood, MO.: Pentecostal Publishing House, 1997), "From Doubt to Faith," p.
76.

IF YOU ONLY KNEW THE POWER WITHIN YOU!

It's yours! It's a power waiting to be turned loose! We have the power and authority—in Jesus' name.

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John 14:12-14 says "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 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 anything in my name, I will do it." Through the power of the Holy Ghost and the blood of Jesus Christ, He has given us the authority to do great works and miracles in His name. Acts 3:16 says, "And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong." Do you need healing? IT SIMPLY TAKES THE NAME OF JESUS ASKED IN FAITH!

Luke 10:19 says, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." The Lord gives us authority over Satan and all our adversaries! No wonder Satan hates Christians so much. He envies the power we have over him. Before his fall, Satan was beautiful, wise and gifted, and now, through the blood of Jesus Christ, we have the power over Satan! Because of the Lord's love for us, He hung on that Cross and regained the authority back for mankind that had been taken at the time Adam and Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And before Jesus ascended to heaven, He said: "These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18).

There's a scripture that says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). The natural man walks by sight and has no understanding regarding the things of God, while the spiritual man that reads God's Word and is renewed daily walks by faith and knows God's will. To have this power and authority in Jesus' name requires a close walk with the Lord, being full of the Holy

Ghost. If we walk as the natural man walks, we will not be able to hear Him when He speaks to us. John 16:13 says, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." As a father leads a child by the hand, the Lord will lead us to the truth. As we grow in His Word, our faith will grow and we will come to know His will. That which we ask for will then be awarded when our faith meets up with the mighty power of God. Incorporating God's Word into our daily lives is paramount if we expect Him to operate in our lives.

Natural Faith

Did you know that you can never rise above your thought life? There's a simple but profound scripture in the Bible that says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). What do you think about on a daily basis? Is it of a spiritual nature, or is your thought life controlled by the natural man? Are you taking time to put scriptures in your thought life like Mark 9:23 that says, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Is God primary in your thoughts, or are you spending all your time wrapped up in the natural things of the world? Luke 6:45 says, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." Just the daily routine of life can hinder one's walk with the Lord, so we must consciously "stop" and make sure that we have the proper focus in our lives. Is Jesus your Number One Focus?

Are you someone that never dares to dream and just accepts your circumstances? Do you always think negatively rather than positively? Do you let thoughts enter your mind constantly like "I'm going to get cancer and die from it because my mother did and my sister did"? If you do, you will never aspire to another level. If you constantly think negatively, you will never grow in God's Word! And if you allow thoughts like "I'm going to die from cancer" persistently invade your mind, you most assuredly will die of cancer! What you think is exactly what you will get.

Have you heard the story of the prairie chickens and the eagle? It fits so many lives. An eagle's egg was dropped into a nest of prairie chickens. The eggs hatched, and the

eagle and prairie chickens were raised together. The eagle scratched in the dirt along with the prairie chickens looking for bugs and worms to eat, and he never flew any higher than the prairie chickens flew. One day the eagle looked up and saw a beautiful eagle soaring in the clouds. He thought, "How wonderful; I wish I could do that." The prairie chickens said, "Well, you will never do that—you are just a prairie chicken."¹ The eagle never rose above his thought life. He never attempted to soar among the clouds or do more than he had always done—he thought he was a prairie chicken—and he died that way—never reaching for or experiencing what could have been.

One day my husband and I were watching a Great Dane run back and forth along a fence—his head reaching to the top of the wire. I commented that it looked like he could just jump over it. My husband explained that animals that are raised in an enclosure like this one usually never attempt to escape its confines. Like the eagle who thought he was a prairie chicken, the Great Dane grew up thinking he could never go over the fence—thus never rising above his thought life.

The scripture, "as a man thinketh," is a natural kind of faith. It can take you far if you are a positive thinker. Jesus was always concerned as to what His disciples were thinking. Romans 12:2 says, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." We must constantly invest in filling our minds with the good things of God. You can raise your thought life above the prairie chicken or the Great Dane's level if you continually renew your mind through the Lord's Word. You will know His promises; you will know His will. You will have unfailing faith in the Lord—a faith that makes His will your own.

Supernatural Faith

Supernatural faith is a God-like faith that kicks in when in the natural faith all hope seems gone. This is the Gift of Faith that some receive after they have received the Holy Ghost. Brother Stoneking describes it as a "special endowment of faith. It is a special portion of faith quickened to us by the Spirit. It comes to the rescue when ordinary faith is not sufficient. It is a miraculous, instantaneous touch of abundant faith

which surpasses all reason, looks impossibilities in the face and turns them into miracles."2

Do you want that special anointing? Do you want the power of the Lord within you? Tune out the world. Keep yourself in an environment where you cannot be distracted. Humble yourself unto God. It's not only through His grace and His blood that we can be saved, but it is through His grace and the blood of Jesus that we are healed. "Saved to the Uttermost"— I believe it's this kind of commitment that Jesus asks of one before that special anointment comes.

I am a person who never dreams—at least I don't remember them. Lately, however, I have been having a lot of dreams. One night I dreamed that I had been to a dinner, and I wore this beautiful dress that I had dripped food on. I awakened. The next night I dreamed I was getting ready for a wedding and was trying to think of something to wear. I remembered the dress and went to get it. There was the stain—a mustard stain—the worst kind! I woke up while I was furiously scrubbing to get the dress clean. The moral of the story—STAY READY AT ALL TIMES! God can come at anytime, and we don't want to be caught with a stain—caught unready to go. In Luke 21:36 Jesus said: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." It's this kind of commitment that is not only required for your salvation, but, I believe, is important as you pray for others or expect to receive your own healing. If you daily pursue the face of God, your anointing will come, and along with that, healing.

Where natural faith leaves off, God-like faith—supernatural faith takes over. When all hope seems gone—it's not! Just know that God will make a way when there seems no way. Get out of the way and turn it over to him! Brother Stoneking says, "A God-like faith takes hold of nothing until that nothing becomes something."3 It is a faith that transcends all human faith. You will know when the Gift of Faith is working. It's an energy that you feel inside, and as you release it in Jesus' name, that flow of energy is emitted into the atmosphere where you are. You will know in your "heart" and in your "knower" that God has answered prayer. Some say they get a "warm" feeling when they know that God has answered prayer. Another feeling is one of "well-being"—knowing,

without doubt, that God has truly answered. We are only channels through which the Lord works. "Faith in itself is an exerted energy. It is definitely an awareness within, and this awareness within is intensified when the Gift of Faith is upon us."⁴

Remember the "smoke" I mentioned at the beginning? It's the Holy Ghost! When the water is troubled as it was at the Pool of Bethesda—when the spirit is moving—that's the time to jump in. Do not wait until the song is over or the service is over. Brother Stoneking says, "As easily as you feel the presence of the Lord, you can be healed. By simply feeling the touch of the Spirit in the service where you are, you can be healed!"⁵ The power is present—release your faith to connect to the power of God. Jesus wants you well!

1 Hagee, John: Broadcast on TEN.

2 Stoneking, Lee, "Spiritual Gifts" (DVD Tapes): Lee Stoneking Ministries (www.LeeStoneking.com).

3 Ibid.

4 Stoneking, Lee, *The Gifts of the Spirit*, (Schenectady, New York: Lee Stoneking, 1975), p. 37.

5 Stoneking, Lee, "Spiritual Gifts" (DVD Tapes): Lee Stoneking Ministries (www.LeeStoneking.com).

MERCY DEMANDS OBEDIENCE

In David Bernard's book, *The New Birth*, he states: "Faith and obedience are so closely linked that lack of obedience to God is proof of a lack of faith."¹ The Israelites were not automatically protected. They had to apply the blood of the Passover lamb to their doorposts (Exodus 12:13). Only when they showed their faith through obedience to God's command, were they safe. I John 2:3-5 says, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." If we abide in Christ, we will obey His commandments. And to those that fear God and obey his commandments, He has made a promise: "I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field" (Malachi 3:11). As long as we walk in His way, He will keep us and protect us and not allow any scourge of God to destroy us.

Hezekiah was a man that feared God and kept the Lord's commandments. He was faithful to God; He did what was right and required by Him (II Kings 18:4). Hezekiah was King at a time when Judah had degenerated to a nation of idolaters, but he trusted in the Lord and removed the things which led to idolatry and then led Judah back to the one true God. Because of Hezekiah's faithfulness and obedience to God, the Lord healed Hezekiah and added fifteen more years to his life. The Lord heard his prayer and granted him mercy.

Remember Naaman, the leper, in II Kings 5:10 who was told to dip in Jordan seven times? His healing was obtained through obedience on the seventh dip! And to think he almost lost his healing because of pride! II Kings 5:12 says he wanted to dip in either the Abana or Pharpar rivers of Damascus and that he, at one point, turned away in a rage! He wanted to dip in one of the cleaner rivers. He did not want to dip in the muddy Jordan! But he did—and was healed because of his obedience.

Luke 17:12-19 tells us about the ten lepers that were cleansed as they went to show themselves to the priests. Obviously, the Lord intended that the ten lepers receive their

cure by faith and obedience to Him. And indeed, they were cleansed. But I want you to take note of the one leper! He turned back and gave Jesus praise and thanks. This one leper, because he glorified the Lord, was made whole!

Leprosy is an infectious bacterial disease which causes disfiguring skin sores, nerve damage in arms and legs, large disfiguring nodules (lumps and bumps), and muscle weakness. Hands and feet can become like clubs! The disease is deeply seated in the bones, marrow and joints of the body. The victim can see himself dying piece by piece with joints separating, and fingers and toes falling off until the body becomes one hideous form.² While Jesus cleansed the nine, he restored the one completely. I see all his lumps and bumps disappearing and his hands and feet that were clubs being restored to him! That one leper was made completely whole—in spirit, body, and soul. Your praise and your thanks will cause the Lord to "sit up and take notice." I believe He puts a high value on your praise, your worship, and your thanks to Him. Have you ever noticed that most people who are lazy get little in return? Hebrews 6:12 says, "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Through obedience the nine were cleansed, but had they made the effort to return to thank Jesus, they not only would have been cleansed but made whole as well.

James 2:20 says, "Faith without works is dead." Abraham's faith in God led him to be obedient when he offered up his son, Isaac, on the altar. By Abraham's obedience, James 2:22 says, "His faith was made perfect." Faith without works will die if one is not living in the spirit of obedience. Adam's Commentary states, "Obedience to God is essentially requisite to maintain faith. Faith lives, under God, by works, and works have their being and excellence from faith. Neither can subsist without the other."³ All the great men of the Bible showed their obedience to God: Noah built an ark; Abraham offered Isaac; Moses forsook Egypt. And in doing these things they gave evidence of their faith (Hebrews 11).

Hebrews 5:8-9 says, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Today we can show our obedience and faith in God by going to the house of God, lifting our hands in praise, and getting involved with the Lord.

Faith requires action. It requires doing something. Brother Lee Stoneking says, "People who have real faith in God get involved with Him physically and spiritually. They get involved with Him commanding, demanding and going forth to demonstrate what they have learned from His Word. A person who has faith will worship, pray, search out, listen to God's Word, become faithful, and do works of righteousness. There will be an evidence of that faith manifested in that individual's life."⁴

1 Bernard, David K., *The New Birth*, (Hazelwood, Mo.: Word Aflame Press, 1984), p. 44.

2 Barnes, Albert, *Barnes Notes: The Gospels*, (Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Book House, reprinted 1983), p. 83.

3 Adam Clarke's *Commentary on the Bible*, abridged by Earle, Ralph, (Grand Rapids, ML: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 1292.

4 Stoneking, Lee, "Spiritual Gifts" (DVD Tapes): Lee Stoneking Ministries (www.LeeStoneking.com).

FEAR AND ANXIETY CANNOT COEXIST WITH FAITH

One night I was praying and asking the Lord why I had to learn the same lesson over and over again. I have seen those that have struggled all their lives with problems they have knowing those things could affect their daily walk with God. I said "Lord, I don't want to be that person; I don't want to spend the rest of my life praying about the same thing over and over again. I don't want that feeling of worry and anxiety as I fall asleep at night. I want to be triumphant over my problem so that I can move forward." As I was praying I fell asleep. That same night I dreamed that my family and I had been somewhere visiting, and we were in a rush to get on the plane to come home. As I sat down in the pilot's seat, fear and anxiety took over; I was paralyzed. I had never flown a plane in my life—what was I doing in the pilot's seat? But then my attention was drawn to the autopilot button on the dash of the plane. I felt tremendous relief. I awakened. I was thinking "what a strange dream" when I then realized the purpose of that dream. It was to remind me to just push the autopilot button and turn all my problems over to Jesus for fear and anxiety can never coexist in one's life along side faith. II Timothy 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Through the love of God, we are empowered to triumph over our fears, for God will give us the courage so that we are made bold and fearless. I John 4:18 says, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment, He that feareth is not made perfect in love." He has given us the gift of power and love and a sound mind to be kept by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us (II Timothy 1:14). Love does not produce fear; one whose sins are pardoned and whose heart is filled with God's love, has nothing to fear. Guilt is the emotion that produces fear.¹ If we have a perfect love to God, there should be no fear of disease or even death, as He has come to give us eternal life. The love of God should deliver us from the fears that we have as well as of the fears of what is to come. Fear leaves us in distress and torment, while faith in God and His love provides comfort in our time of need.

Jesus cites a parable in Luke 19:12-27 where a nobleman called his ten servants, gave them a pound each and told them to occupy till he came back. When he returned, the

first had gained ten pounds for which he gave him authority over ten cities, and the second gained five pounds for which he was given authority over five cities. The third came and said, "Here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow." "And he saith unto him, out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by. Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds." Essentially, this parable demonstrates that they who are faithful shall be rewarded. And while much more can be said of this parable, what catches my attention is that the third man said, "I feared thee." He had no faith—he was afraid if he lost the pound, he would be severely punished. Not only was he fearful and without faith, he was lazy as well. This man saw God as hard, cruel, and unjust—the way a lot of sinners see Him. As a result, even the pound was taken from him. Revelation 21:8 states exactly what happens to the fearful man—that he shall have his part in the lake of fire along with the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars.

Matthew 6:25 says, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not thy life more than meat, and thy body than raiment?" This does not mean that we should expect God to supply all our needs all the time in a miraculous way as II Thessalonians 3:10 says, "If you do not work, neither shall you eat." What it does mean is that God expects us to have an unshaken confidence in Him and not to worry or to fear what might be tomorrow. He expects us to be prudent in our care of things and diligent in our daily responsibilities—just not overly fearful or anxious to the point of distraction from the important things of life. When we ask for a thing in confidence and humbleness, God will give us the necessary means to maintain the body which He breathed life into.

To indulge myself for a moment regarding II Thessalonians 3:10, could this scripture also apply to Revelation 19:6-10 regarding the marriage supper: if you do not work for

the kingdom of God, will you be sitting down at the marriage supper of the Lord on resurrection day?

The Lord gives us examples of why we should never be fearful or anxious in Matthew 6:26-32: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? ... Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin ... if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." The Lord tells us to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

The joy of the Lord is, indeed, our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). In Luke 18:1, Jesus told us that we "ought always to pray, and not to faint." The key to protecting our minds and keeping us strong is consistency in prayer. Without prayer, we will grow weaker and weaker each day until we end up with a dead battery. It's like a cell phone. If you don't charge it every day, it eventually dies. Fear and anxiety start in the mind, but as we pray daily and the "mind" of Christ takes over, fear and anxiety are forced to leave. II Corinthians 10:3-5 says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; 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." We have the power to bring our thoughts, our minds, our attitudes, and our imagination into line with Christ. We cannot allow our minds to stray, as it only allows Satan to creep in and place fear and anxiety there. Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." When we stand in awe of Him and place our focus on the Lord instead of on our fear, our illness, or whatever is bothering us, our fear and anxiety decreases and our faith increases. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). Fear is doubt—the opposite of faith. Fear and anxiety only render us unworthy of God's gifts and make us

miserable as well. Stop focusing on your problem and put your eyes on the Lord. Praise Him and praise Him and praise Him! Your fears and anxiety can do only one thing—
LEAVE!

After the Haiti earthquake, a Haitian man showed and described the aftermath of Haiti's ruin: total destruction of a crushed and bleeding city; people wailing in the streets; their loved ones—200,000 or more—lying dead beneath the rubble; people with crushed and broken limbs infected with gangrene; the dead and dying lying in the streets; the smell overpowering. Yet, at night, there was the soft and gentle sound of a group of Haitians singing and swaying with their arms in the air toward the heavens singing "Amazing Grace."

1 Barnes, Albert, *Barnes on the New Testament (James--Jude)*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), p. 334.

DOUBT LEAVES GOD OUT!

One of the struggles we have in this life is the seed of doubt that Satan continually tries to plant. Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Thus, it is important for us to combat the forces of darkness by continually renewing our minds so that we will always be prepared to stand off the attacks of Satan. Ephesians 6:13 says, "Take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day." The stronger we are in God's Word, the firmer we will stand in faith without doubt creeping in. In John 8:32, Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The more we grow in knowledge and wisdom and understanding in God's Word, the more prepared we are to be able to tell Satan, "It is written" (Matthew 4:1-11) as Jesus did when temptation after temptation was offered to Him by Satan just after He had completed forty days and nights of fasting in the wilderness.

James 1:6-8 says, "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." Just recently I placed something in the Lord's hands telling Him, "I trust you, it's in your hands, Lord." But three weeks later, I got a case of the worries and impatience and sent my husband to check on the situation. In fact, I was so anxious, I refused to talk to him until he did what I asked. I was so wrong in so many ways; I knew already that the situation could only be resolved by the Lord. One cannot obtain any favor from God if there is no faith. We must go to God in confidence that the thing for which we ask will be given to us. We must believe that He will do what is right and best for us—without doubt and without wavering—for "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). To go to God in prayer with uncertainty and doubt will gain one exactly nothing. God sees our hearts, and if He sees no trust in Him, our prayers go unanswered. A double-minded person is one who is wavering and is inconstant. God bestows His favor on one who is firm in His promises, who knows without question—that God will hear his prayer and is steadfast in his belief in God. I Timothy 2:8 says, "I

will therefore that men pray everywhere lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

Doubt leaves God out but BELIEVING in God's Promises and then ACTING on His Word brings healing. His healing power is released when we pray with His anointing and KNOW His promises are true. When we KNOW that "with His stripes, we are healed"; when we KNOW that God is faithful to us; when we KNOW He keeps His promises and He cannot lie (Hebrews 10:23); when we KNOW THAT WE KNOW THAT WE KNOW, our faith will lock up with God's mighty power, and our vision will become reality.

At the beginning, I asked you to repeatedly say I know He wants me well! Before we can ever receive healing, we must KNOW this in our hearts. We have to know the will of God before faith begins. It is said that Jesus received a total of 39 stripes for our healing. He was crucified so that you might escape the permanency of death, hell and the grave. Through His nail-scarred hands and the stripes on His back, He made a way for our salvation and for our healing. He didn't have to do this! Try to imagine, just for a moment, the compassion He felt for you that He would suffer so! Have you ever received a burden for someone, and you began to cry and weep? That is God allowing you to feel what He feels. Can you imagine the pain, the anguish, the suffering He felt for you as He hung on that Cross? Now, without doubt in your heart, can you say, "He wants me well"! God's Word is His will. He upholds all things by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). Before His healing power is released we must know, without a doubt, that by His stripes we are healed!

"He who will not believe till he receives what he calls a reason for it is never likely to get his soul saved. The highest, the most sovereign reason that can be given for believing is that God has commanded it."¹ And so it is with healing. If God has said it—if He has commanded it—you can believe that He will do what He says He will do. Isaiah 65:24 says, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." God is watchful; He anticipates and sees our needs and answers them before we even ask! It is simply our job to receive our healing with the full expectation that our healing is complete.

Never Confess Your Doubts

So many people have said to me: "Why do I feel like I'm healed and then the symptoms return?" or "Why am I only partially healed?" Elsewhere I tell you the importance of focusing on the Lord and not the problem. When we focus on the problem and begin to speak negative thoughts aloud such as our symptoms, we have just enabled Satan to hinder our healing. The door is opened, and Satan can just walk right in! Once we have prayed for healing, we need to hold to the positive things of God for the word of God pierces to the very depth of our soul and can see any unbelief or doubt that is in our hearts. Hebrews 4:12-13 says, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart... all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." So often, we have our own expectation of the timeframe in which God should heal or exactly how He should heal; as a result, we lose patience. We then begin to describe our symptoms or say something like "I guess He just isn't ready to heal me yet." Hebrews 10:35-36 tells us "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Be careful what you put into words. Proverbs 6:2 says, "Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth." A spoken word is a powerful tool. "What you allow yourself to put into words has a way of walking down the road of your life and coming into your life."² While positive thinking in no way can substitute for God-like faith, just remember that negative thinking is doubt. If the negative is that which you envision, then that is what can become reality. Job said, "The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me" (Job 3:25). Every idle word that we speak will have to be accounted for on the day of judgment for by our words we will be justified, but by our words we shall also be condemned (Matthew 12:36-37). Proverbs 18:7 says, "A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul." But Proverbs 16:24 says, "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."

There are so many scriptures that relate to this topic. Listed are a few: Matthew 12:36-37; Proverbs 12:18,13:3; 15:4; 18:21; 21:23; Psalm 34:13.

Never Lose Your Focus

Remember Peter? He said to the Lord, "Ask me to come to thee on the water." And the Lord said, "Come." And Peter got out of the ship and walked on water to go to Jesus. But what happened? When Peter saw the wind boisterous, the Bible says he was afraid, and beginning to sink, cried "Lord, save me." And Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matthew 14:28-31). Peter looked away; he failed to keep his focus on Jesus; he became fearful and lost his faith. There's a song that says, "Don't look to the left; don't look to the right; look straight ahead; let's win this fight." Peter limited what God was doing for him by losing his focus. Look beyond the problem; focus on the Lord; keep praising Him until the answer comes. I believe this is a reason why some can only get a certain level of healing, or our symptoms completely leave and then come back. We lose focus; we relax; or we fall back into sin and fall prey to Satan's deceptions.

Brother Lee Stoneking used the following example to demonstrate how one can lose his healing: "If I cut a tree down in my yard, the neighbor man comes by and says, 'Oh, that tree is still alive'; I say, 'No, it has been cut down.' The neighbor may contend that the tree is alive simply because the leaves remain green. They may do so for several days, but the truth of the matter is—the tree is dead because it has been cut off from the roots. It will die and the leaves will turn brown; thus the neighbor will be convinced! So it is many times when we pray for divine healing. Because the tree stays green (the symptoms remain), we agree wholeheartedly with the devil that the disease is still there. We must hold fast the profession of our faith that the name of Jesus has cut the thing off from the roots, and it is dead! Many have obtained their healing by consistent profession of their faith thanking God for the victory."³

The Lord longs to be gracious to you; He waits on high to have compassion and mercy for you (Isaiah 30:18). So keep your eyes on Him as the Lord will always be faithful to

you. The LORD WANTS YOU WELL. NEVER LOSE YOUR FOCUS. REJOICE IN THE LORD AND PRAISE HIM FOR THE VICTORY!

1. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, abridged by Earle, Ralph, (Grand Rapids, ML: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 882.
2. Stoneking, Lee, "Spiritual Gifts," Lee Stoneking Ministries, (www.LeeStoneking.com).
3. Stoneking, Lee, The Gifts of the Spirit, (Schenectady, New York: Lee Stoneking, 1975).

UNANSWERED PRAYERS

The Kingdom of God is sovereign and there is always an air of mystery around the Lord. You can not put faith into a simple formula or package and always give an exact reason why prayers seem to go unanswered. But we can know that He works all things together for our good, and we can stop and examine our lives to determine what is possibly clogging up the line between ourselves and the Lord. Sometimes the condition we are in can affect our ability to receive healing.

Lack of Knowledge, Wisdom, and Understanding

Without the full knowledge of God's Word in our hearts and our minds, our faith will wither and die. Proverbs 24:5 says, "A man of knowledge increaseth strength." In other words, knowledge increases power, and it is through the power of Jesus that the truth shall make you free (John 8:32). Isaiah said because my people

have no knowledge, they have gone into captivity (Isaiah 5:13). It takes reading the Word of God to know "in Jesus name" we have the power and authority over all the enemy and nothing shall hurt you" (Luke 10:19). It takes knowing the Word of God to know that "if you ask anything in Jesus' name, he will do it" (John 14:13-14).

Lack of Faith

It's simple! "Without faith it is impossible to please him" (Hebrews 11:6). "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). So without faith, there is no vision (substance) and without a vision the thing which you hope for cannot be brought (evidence) into existence. It is your faith connecting with God's grace and power, that will produce the healing you desire.

Unbelief

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35). He wept, not because Lazarus was dead, but because of the unbelief in Mary and the Jews that were with her. The Bible says he "groaned in the

spirit, and was troubled" (John 11:33). He said to Mary, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40).

In the story of the 'lunatick' son whom Jesus healed, the disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out the spirit. Jesus told them, "Because of your unbelief... this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:19-21). The Bible describes the child as a lunatick, falling down a lot like one having epileptic episodes, foaming at the mouth, gnashing his teeth, and wasting away. The disciples were appalled at what they saw. It was contrary to their natural senses. Doubt crept in. When the Lord said to His disciples that this kind requires prayer and fasting, He meant the highest kind of faith is necessary, and this type of faith can only come about by effectual fervent prayer and fasting. Fasting doesn't make God do something for you out of pity or make Him love you more. What fasting does do is change you. You push yourself beyond the limit; it denies your natural senses and brings them under control so that you are no longer dominated by the natural realm. The disciples experienced unbelief because they could not reach beyond the natural realm. The highest kind of faith is a God-like faith—The Gift of Faith—a supernatural faith that kicks in when things look impossible. It is a faith that allows you to believe against all odds—that God's power overrides all things. Take a moment. Know that He is God (Psalm 46:10).

Mark 6:5-6 says that Jesus "could do no mighty work ... and he marveled because of their unbelief." When Jesus went to Jarius' house, He told the people that Jarius' daughter was not dead but sleeping. They laughed and He put them out! Only the mother, father, Peter, James, and John were allowed to go in with Him when He prayed for her (Mark 5:35-41). The Lord was selective in whom He chose to be around him when He prayed. Perhaps we should be selective as well in order that those with unbelief in their hearts not delude faith that is present.

Lack of Fervent Prayer

Often prayers are unanswered simply because there is a lack of real, fervent, honest prayer. James 5:16 says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Prayer doesn't just come from the lips alone but must incorporate the desires

and feelings of the soul—focusing on Jesus when we pray.¹ He cares about our spiritual condition. Are we humble and sincere? Where does our faith and desire measure? Do we pray with a clean heart—in His will—with humility—wholeheartedly—persistently—and in the spirit? "We shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9).

When I think of effectual fervent prayer, one of the things I feel we must do when we ask for healing is not to go to Him timidly but with boldness and confidence and authority. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Matthew 11:12 says, "The violent take it by force."

In Verbal Bean's book on Prayer, he said, "Our attitude determines what we get from God. If I come in so thoroughly defeated, I'm going to leave defeated. God wants us to stand up like men and talk to Him, friend to friend."² Song of Solomon 2:14 says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." The Lord's greatest moments are when you are praying and talking to Him. He wants to be included in all that you do.

There are two ingredients that I believe are essential for an effectual fervent prayer: compassion and love. Hebrews 5:7 says in the days of his flesh, he offered up "prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Without much compassion and love in your heart, there is little fervent prayer. I Corinthians 13:2 says, "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Love for God and our neighbor should be the basis for all our actions. Love is the image of God. Clarke's Commentary states: "By faith, we receive our Maker, by hope we expect a future and eternal good; but by love, we resemble God—love to God and man makes us obedient and useful."³ I Corinthians 14:1 says, "Follow after charity," for it is charity which helps us to bear, to believe, to hope, and to endure all things. So while we may possess the faith to move mountains, if we do not have love, we are nothing.

Sin

While most sickness is not directly a result of one's sin (John 9:2-3), it can be a reason why some are not healed.

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Isaiah 59:2 says, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Sin is like a partition—it will clog the channel and cut you off. The Lord will not always bestow His mercy and compassion on us if we are not willing to abandon our sins. Jesus told the man that had an infirmity of 38 years, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14).

Unforgiveness Cancels Out God's Promise

Mark 11:25-26 says, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." This scripture is explanatory in itself and requires no comment other than unforgiveness will clog the channel between you and God. It doesn't matter to God what a person has done to you. What matters to God is that you forgive seventy times seven (Matthew 18:22).

Pride

The Bible addresses pride in many scriptures. One scripture is Proverbs 8:13 that says the Lord hates pride and arrogance. Proverbs 29:23 says, "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit." One man of such pride and arrogance was Nebuchadnezzar. Because of his pride and arrogance he drew a remarkable judgment on himself—His sin caused him to be insane for seven years. He was driven from men and ate grass like an ox; his body was wet from the dew of heaven; his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. Nebuchadnezzar attributed everything to himself and nothing to God. But at the end of the seven years,

when reason returned, he praised and extolled and honoured the King of heaven (Daniel 4:27-37).

God is not the author of sickness; it is the sin of the human race that brought sickness into this world. God allows what we allow; He will not override our will. Our lifestyles, the environment, and our own actions can contribute to illness. Smoking can cause COPD, emphysema, or lung cancer. Alcohol can cause cirrhosis of the liver. Overeating can lead to diabetes and heart disease. Anger, rebellion, and bitterness can lead to mental and emotional problems. Sexual deviation can lead to AIDS and venereal disease. While we ask for healing from God, I believe we have a responsibility to work on the problems that we, ourselves, may have created.

What's your excuse?

As I think about unanswered prayers, I think about the person who says, "Oh, I'm so sick, I just can't make it to service this morning!" I understand that there are some illnesses when this is true, but often, it is not true. And for those people, I say, "What a lack of faith!" You want God to heal you—to answer your prayers—yet you can't make an effort to go to the House of God—where the power is! I say, "Get up! Get about God's business. Activate your faith by going to the House of God—show Him that you trust in Him to heal your body and to give you the strength to praise Him.

And then there's the person that says, when asked to pray for someone: "She's really old—I'll just ask the Lord for his will to be done." God's will is exactly what we want! However, this statement, in itself, tells me there is not much fervent prayer taking place here! This was said to me one day when I asked a person to pray for an older lady with leukemia and her kidneys were shutting down. This lady is alive and well today and at home with her family. Someone's fervent prayers saw God's will performed.

I was praying for someone one day when the thought came to me: "This person doesn't really want to be healed"! There was something in their past or their present life that caused them to want to hang on to their illness—a problem that needed to be resolved before healing could take place. I was in a service in August 2009 where the evangelist gave an example of a person in a wheelchair that was in his services one night. He prayed for this person; they jumped up and ran across the church and then sat back down in the wheelchair. Asked why he did this, the man said he didn't want to give up his disability and have to go back to work!

One night I had a friend say to me: "I feel that my problem is something that I'll just have to bear like the "thorn in Paul's flesh." My friend felt unworthy to receive healing from the Lord because of past sins. But I John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The Thorn

I would like to address this issue of a "thorn in Paul's flesh" because there are those that use this scripture to say God doesn't always choose to heal. God is no respecter of persons. What he does for one, He will do for all. Additionally, I do not feel that Paul's thorn was necessarily a physical ailment. II Corinthians 12:7 says, "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure." Paul says he prayed "thrice" (II Corinthians 12:8) and the Lord's response was "my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:9), And Paul went on to say, "Gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me... for when I am weak, then I am strong" (II Corinthians 12:9-10). I've read numerous books which have said the thorn could be poor sight, an earache, or a headache. One book did suggest that it was a person that constantly attacked Paul. I think it is quite probable that Paul was attacked by men everywhere he went, as the scripture refers to "a messenger of Satan." No doubt, there were people in the many places he went to preach that were probably family members of those he had murdered, tortured, or abused. There was a time the children of Israel were told: "Ye have not obeyed my voice ... I will not drive them out. . . they shall be as thorns in your sides" (Judges 2:2-3). However, could not a thorn in the flesh simply be a thing that you did in the past that constantly nags at you and just won't let go? No matter how much you pray and ask God to help you move on from it, that "thing" just won't turn loose. I believe Paul could not forget what he had done. I believe he agonized over it day and night. He had mental anguish that would not let go. In I Corinthians 15:9-10 Paul said, "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Paul says he did not feel worthy to be called an apostle because of his persecution to the church while he was unsaved; yet, he knew God's grace was sufficient for he said, "When I am weak, then I am strong."

1 Holman, Denzil, *Conquest Through Prayer*, (Hazelwood, MO 63042: Word Aflame Press, 1988), p. 46.

2 *Verbal Bean Prayer* (edited by Steven G. Carrier), copyright © 1991 by Steven G. Carrier, 5th edition, February 2002, p. 75.

3 *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*, abridged by Ralph Earle, (Grand Rapids, MI 49516: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 1116.

NEVER GIVE UP!

When the Lord was teaching the disciples to pray, He used the following parable:

"Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him: And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:5-9). The sole purpose of this parable is to show the necessity of importunity or perseverance of prayer to the Lord. It shows the importance of not getting discouraged just because the Lord's answer seems delayed. In Daniel 10:12-13, an angel told Daniel: "From the first day your words were heard . . . but the prince of Persia withstood me one and twenty days." The Lord wants you to knock and keep on knocking. Importunity means to keep knocking—to persist—to never give up. This parable denotes persistence without regard to time, place, or circumstance. It doesn't matter if you need Him at 3 p.m. or 3 a.m. Call upon Him. He wants you to trouble Him; it honors God that you persist in your prayers for a thing that you need.

Mary E. Adams in "The Faith of a Mustard Seed" tells the story of the farmer: "I planted some grain last year. The seed sacks said that they contained 99% grain, but one percent 'other seeds'. Now I had no idea that the 'other seeds' were mustard seeds, and when I went to harvest that field, I was shocked! The one percent mustard seeds had taken over my entire field!"¹ As you know from Matthew 13:31-32 the Bible says, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." As mentioned elsewhere, your faith will grow as you read the Word of God. But something else happens. As you read the Word and your faith begins to grow, your faith will force all doubts out as God's Word takes over your life.

But there's more! The mustard seed is considered troublesome! Remember the story of the unjust judge in Luke 18:1-5: "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint: Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man: Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." The mustard seed caused the farmer a lot of trouble by multiplying and multiplying, just as the woman kept nagging the judge day and night. PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF!

I have never tried it, but Mary Adams states when a mustard seed is crushed, it sets off a pungent odor—it also stings and hurts.² It gets your attention. The Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:6-8). Jesus used the unjust judge to tell us we have a just judge—our Lord and Savior—Jesus Christ! If we have the same kind of persistence, He will avenge us of our adversaries as well!

Remember Jacob who was always getting into trouble? Although the Lord did not care for some of Jacob's ways, He loved him. Roman's 9:13 says: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." What strong words! Did you ever wonder why God would say such a thing? If you read the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis, you will understand. Esau was the type to laze around the house; he had no ambition; he was a person with a lackadaisical, no care, unconcerned attitude. On the other hand, Jacob had an attitude of determination and persistence about him. Jacob was a man that NEVER GAVE UP. He worked seven years for Rachel; instead, he got Leah. He then worked another seven years to get Rachel, the one he really wanted. He wrestled with the Lord and would not let go until the Lord blessed him. He was one persistent man. The Lord loved Jacob because of his determination and persistence. Just as the woman persisted with the unjust judge, Jacob persisted when he said, "I will not let go until you bless me."

My favorite scripture is about the woman who pressed through the crowds just to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. She persisted. She did not give up. She said, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole" (Mark 5:28). "And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague" (Mark 5:29). When she touched Him, Jesus felt the virtue go out of him, and he said "Who touched Me?" And she came and fell down and told Him the truth. And he said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" (Mark 5:34).

In Mark 2:2-17 when Jesus was preaching in Capernaum, the man sick of palsy was let down in his bed through a hole in the rooftop because the place was packed and there was no room to receive them. "When Jesus saw their faith he said, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk" (Mark 2:9). There's no question about it, the man's friends certainly got God's attention when they cut a hole in the roof and lowered the sick man down in the midst of the crowd. What a commotion it must have caused!

I love the story of Matthew 15:22-28, too. The woman of Canaan said, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Adam Clarke's Commentary refers to her as humble, full of faith, fervent, modest, respectful, and rational.³ But if you read on, you will see something more. Initially, the Lord did not answer her, but finally He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Meaning by divine appointment I am come to preach the gospel to the Jews only. But she worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me." He then said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs!" And she said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." And Jesus said, "O Woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. I see a woman so humble and without an ounce of pride! I see a woman with a great need—a woman that could not and would not back down. She boldly said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table." I only want what can be spared—just enough for my daughter to be healed! She persisted—she troubled the Lord—she never gave up! What's inside you? Would you persist or walk away? Would you humbly yet boldly come to the Lord? Would you swallow your pride and say, "Just the crumbs—that's all I ask for, Lord!"

In II Kings 4:17-37 there was another woman that refused to let her miracle go. Elisha promised the Shunammite woman a child, and she conceived and bare a son. Yet one day he collapsed in the field and died thereafter. The woman believed that if Elisha could obtain this gift—her son—from God, then Elisha could surely restore her gift to her. She saddled an ass and off she went in search of Elisha. When Elisha saw her at a distance, he sent his servant to meet her. When he asked, "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with thy child?" She replied, "It is well." How great her faith in God! When the worst had befallen her family, she says, "it is well!" She refused to let her miracle go. She persisted—she troubled the man of the Lord until he went with her, and the Bible says, "The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes!" She never gave up. She persevered until she received her miracle.

Hebrews 10:23 says, "Hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." This is exactly what the Shunammite woman did in II Kings. She said, "It is well!" She knew, without doubt, that God is faithful to His promises and that in her great need, she would receive her miracle—her son raised from his death bed.

Remember blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:47 when he cried out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Many told him to be still, but he cried out all the more. Not only did he cry out, he cast away the garment of a blind man in full expectation that he would be healed.

Like the Shunammite woman, he knew, without question, that he would receive his miracle. Jesus told him: "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

Do you have a great need? Do you need the mountains to move? Then trouble the Lord! Pray until the answer conies. Don't be quiet. Don't quit. Be bold yet humble. Pray fervently and without ceasing. God wants us to bother Him. Tug on the hem of His garment! Call out to Him as Bartimaeus did. Don't take no for an answer—persist. Activate that intense hunger and resolve as did the woman in II Kings. John 15:7 says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." PRAISE HIM. JUST KEEP PRAISING HIM UNTIL YOUR HEALING COMES! JESUS WANTS YOU WELL!

When God Is All We've Got!

There was a lady that was on a pain pump, and she went in to have her pump refilled. There was an error made in the medication, and she received pain medication 1000 times greater than what she should have received. All systems shut down; she went into a coma. All nutrition was then stopped, as the Doctors gave no hope. For 14 days she lay in a vegetative state with her family at her bedside waiting for her to die. But after 14 days she opened her eyes! When it looks like all hope is gone, it's not!

Remember Lazarus? When Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been dead four days (John 11:17). He ordered Martha to roll away the stone, and she said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh" (John 11:39). And Jesus responded: "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40). And the stone was rolled away, and Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth" (John 11:43) and Lazarus did, indeed, come forth (John 11:44)¹

So when you have someone you love lying in a hospital bed, and the doctors are telling you it is over, don't just sit there and hold their hand. PRAY. It's not over until it's over! NEVER GIVE UP!

Conquest Through Prayer⁴ says your most profound and intimate experiences of worship will likely be in your darkest days—when the pain is the greatest and you turn to God alone. It is during suffering that we pray our most authentic, heartfelt, honest-to-God prayers because we don't have time or energy for superficial ones. I can tell you this is true because when I found out that I had multiple myeloma, knowing the facts about this illness as an RN, I was terrified at what the disease could become. It is here that I did some of my own serious praying.

As God's ultimate goal for us is that we will spend eternity with Him, I do believe that He allows us to go through the fire at times just as He allowed Joseph to spend time in jail, as Daniel spent time in the lion's den, as Paul was shipwrecked many times, and the three Hebrew men were in the fiery furnace for "you'll never know that God is all you need, until God is all you've got." Once you've gone through the fire, I assure you that you will be a stronger and more compassionate person than before you went into it.

Psalm 103:13 says, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He has the disposition to care for us as a father cares for his own child. While He may allow us to go through the fire, He is right there with us just as He was with Joseph, Daniel, Paul, and the three Hebrew men. Just as your human father wants you to be well, it is the same with Jesus. As we persevere, we will come out a stronger person than when we went into the fire. Jesus said: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

You Are Never Alone

Not only will Jesus never leave us or forsake us, but He provides ministering angels to watch over us. Psalm, 34:7 says, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Each of God's people have an angel that watches over them day and night—literally—the angel sets up camp and guards the Lord's people, providing protection and delivering them from danger when they are in trouble. Hebrews 1:14 says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." The Bible cites many instances in which angels are used to help His people. Luke 15:10 shows the angels' deep interest in man: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The angels have a special interest in anything regarding redemption (1 Peter 1:12). They provide defense and protection (Genesis 19:1, 15; Acts 12:7-8). They are sent to help us resist temptation (Luke 22:43). They support us in affliction and provide comfort (Acts 1:10-11). They attend dying saints and conduct them to glory (Luke 16:22).

Lee Stoneking states each of us have an angel that looks just like us.⁵ Remember when Peter was put in prison by Herod? Although Peter had been released from that prison by an angel of the Lord, Peter's family did not know he was free. When there was a knock on the door and Rhoda reported to the family that Peter was there, they said, "Thou art mad... it is his angel" (Acts 12:15). I share this with you for a reason. As an RN, many times I would have a patient that would say there was someone in the room and point out exactly where they were sitting. As an RN I would always explain that

there was no one there, but they were still adamant! Was it, in fact, someone's angel left behind to offer comfort? I would like to think so.

When I first became a nurse I was saddened by the circumstances of so many older people. Some had family who left them alone; some had no family at all. This is what I wrote one night shortly after becoming a nurse—as though I were the patient—feeling what I thought they must feel. "Night has fallen. I lie here in this bed in this room all alone. All my family has gone home, and I have nothing but darkness in which to stare. I fade in and out—sometimes I know where I am. I know that the doctor told me today that my time was short. Other times I awaken, confused, and find myself tied to this bed—and I do not understand—all my rights are gone—I am a prisoner. And now the drugs are taking effect—I take a lot of them—they give them to me regularly—my family says I should have no pain. I feel like I am floating above my body—the room is dark—I am alone. I can see my body tied to the bed—for my safety they say. I faintly hear the nurses laughing down the hall. I wonder with sadness what my family is doing. Why are they not here? Tonight my door opens, and the nurse walks in—she thinks I do not know that she is there. She says, "It's ok to let go now, it is ok." She puts her hand on my forehead and strokes it and says, "God be with you—help her Lord—it's time to stop the suffering and the pain." She quietly walks away. She looks back, and then the door shuts behind her. Once again, there is darkness. I know this is a journey I must make alone. I know it is time. I am ready. I am no longer confused. I am no longer afraid. I feel at peace. God has sent an angel to take me home. I would like to tell the nurse that looked so sad to be happy for I am going home. I'm going home. I am no longer alone." As a nurse, I wanted to feel that these patients received comfort somehow, and in return, it gave me comfort to think they had peace in the end. I have been told by someone with a near-death experience that you are not alone, that there is calm in place of fear, that you are at peace—that if they could go back to that peaceful place—they would.

After my mother died, I would always feel such a strong presence in the car at night on my way home from work—as though someone or something was there, and it always impressed me that it was on the right side of the car near the dash. I would reach out as

though to touch this presence even though I could see nothing. The presence was so strong. I know now that an angel of the Lord was there to comfort me on that long stretch home each night.

Just a few years ago I would never have shared this experience with anyone—especially my husband who would have given me that "look." But now he has had an encounter with an angel of the Lord. I have asked him to share his experience here. I know it will bless you as it has me.

"In late fall of 2007 I was driving to work at 2:30 a.m. It was a cold windy morning and visibility was poor. I came upon two horses loose beside the roadway facing away from the road. I started slowing my pickup; I was not alarmed because the horses seemed calm. Because I had owned horses many years, I knew when they were suddenly loose they were apt to panic at any moment. As I scanned the roadway for more horses, there was an impact on my windshield and a tremendous impact on the truck.

"The steering on the truck locked, and my power brakes lost their power. When I realized the engine was stopped and I was still traveling about 40 mph, I turned the steering wheel as hard as I could and pushed the brake with all my strength. My first conscious thought was 'hey, this ride is not over; I may hit the ditch hard'. The truck eased over to the right and came to a smooth stop before impacting the bank beside the highway.

"I saw that the windshield was shattered, and the driver's door was bent out a foot in the middle. Glass lay all around me. Both of my knees were burning like fire. I moved my legs, and they were not broken. My seat belt had held my upper body, but my knees had slammed the dash hard. The airbag had broken my glasses, and they were missing. There was blood splattered all over the inside of my truck and me. I could feel my adrenaline pumping, but yet my heart was beating very slowly. I was calm. After rubbing my hands over my face and head, I realized I had no serious injuries.

"A voice said to me, 'You are going to be all right.' I said, 'Yea, I'm ok.' Instantly I became aware of another being present with me. I could see no one, but the presence was overwhelming. I said, 'I know I can't touch you, but do you mind if I try?' Again, the voice

said, 'Yes, go ahead.' I reached out with my hand and there was nothing physical there. During this time I felt as if I was with an old friend I had known all my life, and there was nothing separating us. I had never believed angels were anywhere but in heaven, but I knew I could deny them on earth no longer. As I got out of the truck the voice spoke for the last time, 'Don't cross the readjust yet.' As the angel vanished, I felt my best friend had left. During the presence of the angel, there was a feeling of indescribable love that surrounded me—beyond anything imaginable.

"I was thankful the angel was present, but it was months later before I realized all the implications of what had happened. The experience with the angel strengthened my faith in God, and I realized He cared about me, more than a take me or leave me relationship. God had reached out to me before I had ever committed to Him.

"Less than a year after this accident I started going to an Apostolic Church and put my trust in Jesus Christ. After I received the Holy Ghost, I began to remember things about the accident that I had not thought of before.

"There was a hole in the windshield in front of the driver's side directly in front of the steering wheel. The glass was pushed into the steering wheel. Allowing for the airbag, I realized my head should have come in contact with the horse's head as it came through the windshield.

"The horse's body was lying beside the highway with its skull crushed in above its eyes. I do not think the strength of a windshield will crush a horse's skull in the way this horse's skull was crushed. The horse's head did not touch any steel or metal in the truck. I believe that angel held his hand between my head and the horse."

My husband did not share this story with me about his encounter with the angel until months later. The truck was totaled, and when I saw the truck later that same day, observing the windshield and the blood splatter, I told him then that it was a miracle he was alive. Little did I know, he truly experienced a miracle that morning.

Exodus 23:20-21 says, "I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice,

provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions for my name is in him." The angels are here to minister to us at the Lord's direction be it either for defense and protection as it was in the case of Lot or Peter; to provide comfort as was the case of the Apostles when Jesus ascended; to help us resist temptations as an angel did for Jesus, or carry us to glory as the angels did for Lazarus, the beggar. Psalm 91:11-12 says, "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." In our walk with the Lord, He provides angels just to be there to prevent our fall and to protect us so that we walk safely! As the Lord was led away when Judas betrayed him with a kiss, Peter struck off an ear of the high priest's servant, and Jesus said to him: "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:52-53). I tremble when I feel the power of the Lord and at the same time think of the thousands of angels in His command that He can send to us in our time of need. You are never alone.

- 1 Adams, Mary, "The Faith of a Mustard Seed," (Internet).
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, abridged by Ralph Earle, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1967), p.
- 4 Holman, Denzil, Conquest Through Prayer, (Hazelwood, Missouri: Word Aflame Press, 1988).
- 5 Stoneking, Lee, Sermon of August, 2009.

HOW DO I PRAY FOR HEALING

Acts 3:2-8 says, "And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." It simply takes the name of Jesus asked in faith! The Bible says this man received strength immediately in his feet and ankles! "His name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16). Faith is the connection. It is the key. The power of God can be present, but you must have the key for healing to occur.

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When you pray, say, "In Jesus' name, I am healed." Don't say, "I guess it didn't happen;" "I didn't feel anything;" "There's no change;" "I guess He's trying to teach me something." We walk by faith, not by sight! Believe in God's promise. Believe that He will do what he says He will do. He will not fail us. Hebrews 10:23 says, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." Be determined! Don't let circumstances affect your thoughts. When the doctor says you have just a few weeks to live or says the cancer is incurable, continue to believe in God's promise without wavering. It is the Lord that has the last word, and it is not over until the Lord says it's over! **HE WANTS YOU WELL!**

When you call on the name of Jesus say His name with LOVE, knowing that He sacrificed His life for us that we might have life everlasting; say His name with a VISION, seeing those cancer cells cut off from the blood supply, and knowing that the roots are dead as was the roots of the fig tree; say His name with FAITH, knowing that all things are possible for those that believe and love the Lord. There is no other name like the name of Jesus—His AUTHORITY, His SPIRIT, His BLOOD, and His WORD are in the name of Jesus. John 1:1, 14 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among

us." We were not redeemed through corruptible things but "With the precious blood of Christ" (7 Peter 1:18-19).

Faith can see into the future! When you pray for healing, do it with a vision. Picture the good cells devouring the bad ones; picture new blood flowing through your veins; picture yourself or your loved one walking again. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Lee Stoneking, in his book entitled *The Gifts of the Spirit*¹ gives a great example in helping us understand this scripture. He described a woman that came to church every night and sat on the front pew, removing her brace from her leg and placing it along with the crutches on the floor and then propping her foot and ankle on a cushioned folding chair. She had had hip surgery that had incapacitated the ankle and leg. He states he felt impressed to leave the platform and lay hands on her as did others. In closing his eyes he could see this sister walking across the front of the auditorium. He opened his eyes, and she was still seated. Again, he closed his eyes and prayed—He could see her walking. Immediately he opened his eyes and whispered, "I believe you can walk in Jesus' name!" And she did! Faith connecting with the power of God defied all prognosis.

That vision or mental picture of his sister in the Lord walking was substance, and he held on to that picture (substance) until that substance (picture, vision) became evidence (reality). Brother Stoneking states, "Faith can stand in the place of what you ask for until it is manifested visibly. Your faith is the exact image of that which you ask for, and as an image, is but the reflection of the actuality. When faith is present it means that the things which we asked for are ours, and we only now await their manifestation by God!"²

Be bold and speak with authority when you pray as Matthew 11:12 says, "The violent take it by force." Ask, command, and demand in Jesus' name. Allow the Lord to work through you. Have confidence in the fact that He has given you the authority to work in his name. Have confidence that He has directed you to be bold in His name.

You know these things to be true:

- 1) "With His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

- 2) Our Lord is faithful (Hebrews 10:23); He will do what He says He will do.
- 3) "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).
- 4) In Jesus' name we have the power and authority (John 14:12-14; Luke 10:19).
- 5) It takes the name of Jesus asked in faith (Acts 3:16).
- 6) Jesus is a loving, compassionate, and merciful God.

Mark 11:22-23 says, "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 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." So talk to Him! "Lord, you have said that with your stripes we are healed. So I am standing on your promise; I am putting all my trust in you. I speak to this problem, Lord, and I am commanding in Jesus' name that this affliction be gone! In your name, Lord, I ask this!" A very simple prayer will do as long as you ask in faith without doubt, with vision, and with love and humility. PRAISE HIM AND PRAISE HIM! NEVER FORGET TO THANK HIM. REJOICE IN THE LORD AS THOUGH YOUR HEALING HAS ALREADY OCCURRED, FOR FAITH FOCUSES ON GOD AND IS OBLIVIOUS TO EVERYTHING ELSE.

We can talk to the Lord directly and He will answer our prayers, but pain and suffering can drain our energy causing exhaustion; this can lead to a deterioration of faith on our part and to a feeling of desperation until our concentration is weakened. James 5:14-15 says, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Matthew 18:19-20 says, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Until recently, I couldn't understand how someone could just give up, but pain

takes a toll; it beats you down until all energy is drained. So call on the elders of the church. Let them pray. Never give up.

How Do You See Jesus?

I believe the way we see the Lord has everything to do with everything! If we know the Lord, then we will KNOW HE WANTS US WELL! While God has been described as sovereign, holy, merciful, gracious, omniscient, and omnipotent, we need to know that it is what is at His very core—LOVE—that motivates Him. His love for us is the reason for His graciousness, His mercy, His compassion, and His faithfulness. In Exodus 34:6 the Lord described Himself as "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Psalm 103 describes the Lord as "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." Psalms 103 goes on to say: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities ... so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." In other words, He has not done to us what we deserve because of His love, His mercy and His compassion for us. If you read all of Psalm 103 at the end of this book, you will see that His mercy is everlasting for those that keep His covenant and remember His commandments.

God created man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27).

He formed us from the dust of the ground and breathed the breath of life into us (Genesis 2:7). All through the ministry of Jesus, you can see His demonstrations of love and compassion. He restored the withered hand (Luke 6:10); He spat on the ground, made clay, and anointed the blind man's eyes so that he might see; He raised the dead. Hebrews 4:15 says, "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." While Jesus walked this earth, He experienced pain and sorrow, and as He hung on the Cross, most certainly an agonizing death. He is not unfeeling but full of love and tenderness and compassion—knowing exactly what we feel as humans. In Deuteronomy 32:39, the Lord said, "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." He is Jehovah Rapha—the God who heals. He is a God of compassion

and mercy. He loves you to the very depths of His core! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). HE LOVES YOU AND HE WANTS YOU WELL!

The Bible states that the Lord is omnipresent, meaning He is everywhere. Ecclesiastes 1:9 says, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." Ecclesiastes 3:15 goes on to say, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." There is a connection between the past, present, and future and this connection exists in our Lord who controls the universe. Isaiah 53:5 says, "With his stripes we are healed" while I Peter 2:24 says, "Ye were healed." It's already done! God controls the past, the present, and the future. He knows what we need and answers before we even ask. Thus, our job is to focus on the Lord and rejoice as though our healing has already occurred. He can bring the past into the present as He did in the case of the "withered hand" or he can bring the future into the present as He did with my friend—a wound that would have taken six to eight weeks to heal—healed in three to four weeks. Lee Stoneking states it this way: "There are three dimensions in time—past, present, and future. We live in one dimension—the present. God lives in all three. He is not limited by time as you and I are."³

1 Stoneking, Lee, *The Gifts of the Spirit*, (Schenectady, New York, 1975), p. 37-38.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p 40.

FAITH IS A JOURNEY

Without question, faith is a journey. I had a beautiful friend, Martha, die recently. After the prayers and fasting of hundreds of people, and many churches, from Indiana to Texas, she departed from us prepared to spend her life in eternity with the Lord. My prayers, as well as my husband's prayers—day and night—were "I don't know how you're going to do it, Lord, but I know you are going to heal her." After months of praying, and a year of writing and studying on faith and healing, I was left with a vast emptiness in my very being. Initially, I felt all I believed—all I had prayed for, worked for and hoped for was in vain. My faith had hit rock bottom. I felt rage. I felt extreme depression. I felt that everything I thought or believed must be so wrong—that somewhere in my pursuit of the truth I had missed something.

I forced myself to pray. I kept saying over and over, "Why, Lord? What have I missed? I've researched this topic forwards and backwards. I know your Word is true!" And it is! God answered prayer. In John 11:25-26 Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Truly, the Lord had answered prayer. Yes, we wanted her here, but God had a bigger and better plan for Martha. In Philippians 1:20-21 Paul said, "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Paul's greatest desire at this point in his life was not that he be released from jail but that he honor the gospel, either in living or in dying. Life was a secondary thing to him; his main consideration was to stand up for the gospel and to maintain its truth and to magnify the Lord—be it either in life or death.¹ And Paul knew that, whether he lived or died, Christ would be honored. Paul also knew to die would be gain in that his suffering would end and he would be in a happier, higher, holier state² for he went on to say, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Philippians 1:23). Our loved one, Martha May, is in a happier, higher, holier place than she was here, and she is without pain and suffering. Martha sang a song: "Lord, whatever you have to do to me; Lord, don't let me be lost for

eternity. Above all else, I must be saved." We will all live for eternity somewhere. The choice is yours to make—and we will make that choice.

Even in death faith can still be present. As Stephen was stoned to death, he showed a faith beyond ordinary faith. In place of fear or anger or bitterness, He said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60).

1 Barnes, Albert, Barnes Notes: Ephesians to Philemon, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House), reprinted 1985, pp. 154-156.

2 Ibid., p. 158.

WHEN GOD COMES CALLING

When God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Paradise, He said to Adam: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). You know the rest of the story— death entered into creation. And so it is that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). But this isn't the end! Hebrews 9:28 goes on to say, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

We have a promise! Jesus is coming back for those that have served Him (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). I Corinthians 15:26 says, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." He will put an end to the curse which Adam and Eve caused. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Corinthians 15:55). There is nothing that can be added to these wonderful words. Death will be no more. He's coming back to prepare a place for those who have loved and served Him faithfully. Revelation 21:1-7 says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." What a promise! We could not ask for anything more than to someday be in His presence—no tears, no more death, no sorrow, no crying, no more pain. What a glorious time that will be when our Savior appears in the clouds and the trumpet sounds!

This is a section that I would have preferred to leave out—death and dying. It just did not seem to fit with topics like "he wants you well" or "never give up." We all want to live and stay with our loved ones for as long as we possibly can. However, there will still come a time when He does come calling, so I believe it is important to note that provided you are saved there is still healing in the atonement—even to the very end! Even in death you will be made whole as God raptures His people up to live with Him forever. Remember! I Thessalonians 5:23 says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." As expressed at the beginning of the book, we are here for only a little while, and so our identity is not here but in eternity. As Colossians 1:16 says we were created by Him and for Him. So while death is a sad thing here on earth, it is with rejoicing that we will meet again at the resurrection to live with Him forevermore!

Psalm 23 says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

A shadow is temporary. For a child of God, it means you are only walking through the valley to reach that place of paradise with the Lord. Paul says in II Corinthians 5:6, 8, "Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We are confident, I say, and willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." In Luke 23:43 Jesus told the thief on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

I Thessalonians 4:13,14 states, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." While this is a subject that seems to be controversial, I feel that our soul goes directly to the Lord at time of death, and we are fully awake and rejoicing. Those that have died prior to the rapture will return with Him to be reunited

with their "sleeping" physical body which becomes incorruptible (/ Corinthians 15:51-54).

Consider Luke 16:20-26 that tells us about the rich man and Lazarus. Lazarus died and was carried into Abraham's bosom. The rich man died and from hell, he begged for a drop of water. Although dead, the rich man was feeling the heat and the thirst and the torment. He was awake; he was talking. Once again the choice is ours to make: eternal torment, I believe, from the moment of death, or eternal paradise with the Lord.

Other scriptures to review as you consider this topic are Philippians 1:20-21; 23 and II Corinthians 12:2-4. For a more thorough discussion, I refer you to Bishop M. L. Walls commentary on Psalm 23, pages 49-54,

THE WAY JESUS DOES IT

This last spring on a routine visit to the Doctor, my husband's labs came back with elevated liver enzymes. This led to further labs that indicated autoimmune hepatitis. Throughout the summer, he was monitored about every three weeks, and his enzymes continued to be elevated. On the Doctor's visit in which a liver biopsy was to be scheduled, the enzymes came back normal! Through much prayer and praise, God answered prayer!

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Day and night, without ceasing, angels surround the throne crying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Revelation 4:8). Praise to God is one of the greatest things we can do for Him. We are told in Psalm 113:3 "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." In Psalm 150:6 we are told: "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." All through the Book of Psalm, you can read words of praise. In Psalm 63:3 David said: "Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."

As I have mentioned, I spent a lot of time praying after I was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. One week after praying and fasting, I was driving down the road, and an audible voice said to me, "Get on with it." I was shocked. While the Lord had communicated with me in other ways, He had never spoken to me in an audible voice. My audible response was, "What do you mean—Get on with it!" I was overjoyed and thrilled to know that God had just spoken to me. But I was puzzled. I always expected to hear something more profound or something tender in my ear. What did He want of me? Just this—PRAISE! All His messages since that time have been for me to just continue to praise Him. I had to get out of the way and let Jesus do it HIS WAY. Today, I remain asymptomatic, and I have come to know "that's enough." I know that His arms surround me. And as He has spoken to me once more since then to tell me that "I'll never be the same," I praise Him and thank him for salvation—for the chance to know Him and to love Him and to serve Him.

PSALM 145

(David's Psalm of Praise)

I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

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Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.

They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.

They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

TEACH ME LORD

I have asked this question over and over: "Why don't we see the number of miracles such as were performed in the Lord's day?" Many say that was for those days, but the Lord says it is for today too! So, why Lord?

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It is because we go about our daily lives, hardly praying or reading God's Word; it's because we sit in the pews and listen to a sermon and then run off to the nearest restaurant to talk about what we did yesterday, or we go home and turn the TV on to the latest game or show. It's because we do not take the responsibility ourselves to pray and read God's Word and incorporate it into our very being! If we have no true understanding of God's Word, then we cannot act on His Word appropriately as lack of knowledge renders one useless. Yes, there are ministers and evangelists and teachers whose responsibility it is to lead us—to teach us—but there is a limit to what they can teach us based on 2-3 hours a week. It is up to each of us to take time each day to pray and read the Word—to learn and to renew ourselves daily. God cannot work through us if we have no knowledge or understanding of His Word. John 14:26 says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 8:32 states, "The truth shall make you free." So before we can pray effectively for ourselves or someone else we must know God's Word. I would have said an entirely different prayer for my mother had I known then what I know now. I prayed for just two more months, which she received. Today, I would have prayed for complete healing! What was I thinking at the time? She was old; the Doctors said she was too weak for an operation. I made a lot of mistakes that many people make simply because they have not studied and read the Word for themselves. Had I read it for myself, I would have known that Isaiah 53:5 says, "By His stripes we are healed," not can be healed but are healed! We need to know things like the fact that our body is a temple of the Holy Ghost (I Corinthians 6:19), that He who is in us is greater than he who is against us (I John 4:4); that to put on the whole armour of God will help you conquer darkness, for the armour of God is light (Ephesians 6:11); that we can do more abundantly above all that

we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us (Ephesians 3:20); that we have power and authority over Satan (Luke 10:19); that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

I don't want to know about Him; I want to KNOW HIM. I want His Word to infiltrate my mind to the point where neither doubt and unbelief, fear and anxiety, nor Satan can penetrate my mind. Romans 8:6 says, "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." Galatians 6:8 says, "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

I challenge you to reach for God now, to search the scriptures and pray with me, to be all that God would ask us to be. Don't sit idly by and wait to be fed little by little. Take on the responsibility that is yours and yours alone. Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17) but so does unbelief, fear and doubt. By being spiritually minded and concentrating on God's Word, we can drown out those things of Satan that lead to nothing but destruction whereby God's Word leads to life everlasting. Behind every scripture is a voice—God's voice. John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." A seed cannot grow, unless it is taken out of the package and planted in the ground. Likewise, unless we take time to read the Word of God and plant it in our hearts, God will not have anything from which to work.

Isaiah 55:10-11 says, "For as the rain cometh down ... So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." When you seek the Lord and learn His Words, it will not be wasted for, in turn, you will be empowered to share God's Words with someone else. God's Words are never given or shared in vain for He has a design or purpose for His Word and it will not return void.

My doctrine shall drop as the rain
My speech shall distil as the dew,
As the small rain upon the tender herb,
And as the showers upon the grass.

(Deuteronomy 32:2)

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Sin entered into this world and death by sin. So when each of us are born, we come into this world as sinners. James 1:15 says, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Sin is like leprosy. It eats away and eats away at you—piece by piece. Like leprosy, with the joints separating and your toes and fingers falling off one by one, sin slowly eats away until nothing is left—but death itself. But Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

First, I would share with you a truth that you must OWN before you can be saved. It is a mainstream truth that runs throughout the Bible, and it is this: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4). All throughout the Book of Isaiah, you find scriptures to support this truth:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior (Isaiah 43:10-11).

I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God (Isaiah 44:6).

Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any (Isaiah 44:8).

There is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else (Isaiah 45:6).

Other scriptures in Isaiah include: 44:24, 45:21-22; 46:9, 48:11, 42:8, 37:16, 43:10-11.

It cannot be clearer! There is no "plural" in the Godhead. The New Testament supports this message:

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

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

There is none other God but one (I Corinthians 8:4).

But God is one (Galatians 3:20).

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:6).

For there is one God (I Timothy 2:5).

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble (James 2:19).

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).

In Isaiah 52:6, the Lord said, "My people shall know my name." Jesus is the name of the Lord God Almighty! I Timothy 3:16 says, "Great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I ask you, "How and when did He do all this?" In Jesus Christ! God was manifest (made visible, revealed, made known) in the flesh. "God is a Spirit—invisible to us. In order to make Himself visible to us and in order to shed innocent blood for our sins, He had to put on flesh. Jesus is not another God or a part of God, but He is the one true God of the Old Testament robed in flesh. He is the Father incarnate; He is Jehovah who came in flesh to bridge the gap between humanity and God that sin had created. He put on human identity as a person puts on a coat."¹

In John 8:24 Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Jesus said it, and He means it! He demands that you believe in the one true God—and Jesus

is His name. Jesus repeats this mainstream truth in Mark 12:29 saying, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord."

The One True God has a Plan of Salvation for us revealed in Acts 2:38: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." John 3:5 states, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." It takes both! Upon repentance of your sins, you must be baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost evidenced by speaking in tongues. IT IS A REQUIREMENT; IT IS NOT AN OPTION. Jesus directed His disciples to teach all nations to be baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). His name is Jesus! If you read the whole Book of Acts, you will not only note Peter's direction in Acts 2:38 to follow Jesus' words, but you will see that throughout the Book of Acts, His disciples obeyed and did exactly what the Lord directed them to do. They baptized in Jesus' name every time. His name is Jesus, not Father, not Son, not Holy Ghost! Like me, I am a wife, a mother, and a nurse, but my name is Linda.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, salvation is a free gift. But we must first believe that He is God manifested in the flesh. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

In Mathew 24:3 the disciples asked the Lord, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" And Jesus answered: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers place. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Mathew 24:4-8). I believe we are living in the Endtime. Where is God in your life? Do you know, without doubt, that you are ready to spend eternity with Him? If you stand in need, not only is the Plan of Salvation outlined above, but the principles of this entire book can be

applied to any area of your life.

For further information on the ONE TRUE GOD and HIS PLAN OF SALVATION, I wholeheartedly endorse David K. Bernard's books: *The Oneness of God* and *The New Birth. THAT I MAY KNOW HIM* by Muncia L. Walls is an excellent book that will direct and guide you in the scriptures as well. If you want to live in the supernatural; if you want a closer walk with God; if you want to know about the Gifts of the Spirit, I suggest you get Lee Stoneking's DVDs entitled "Spiritual Gifts." My husband and I play these DVDs over and over. Although we probably have them committed to memory, the power of the Lord is the same each and every time we listen.

May the Lord God bless each and every one of you. I pray, as you have read this book, that you have felt His anointing power. I pray that this book encourages you in some way: to live for Him, to have a closer walk with Him, to know that He loves you and wants you well; to know that you have the tools to pray for anything that you need as long as you are in His will. I pray that any fear or anxiety that you may have experienced is gone. If you are a child of God, angels surround you and protect you always. With God, you are never alone. I pray that this is a book that you can pick up when you need encouragement or a word from God as I do with Lee Stoneking's DVDs and CDs. I urge you to daily read the Word of God and to strive for the Gifts that He has for you.

1 Bernard, David K., *The Oneness of God*, vol. 1, (Hazelwood, Missouri: Word Aflame Press, 1983), p. 58-59.

PSALM 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger forever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him

For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.

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