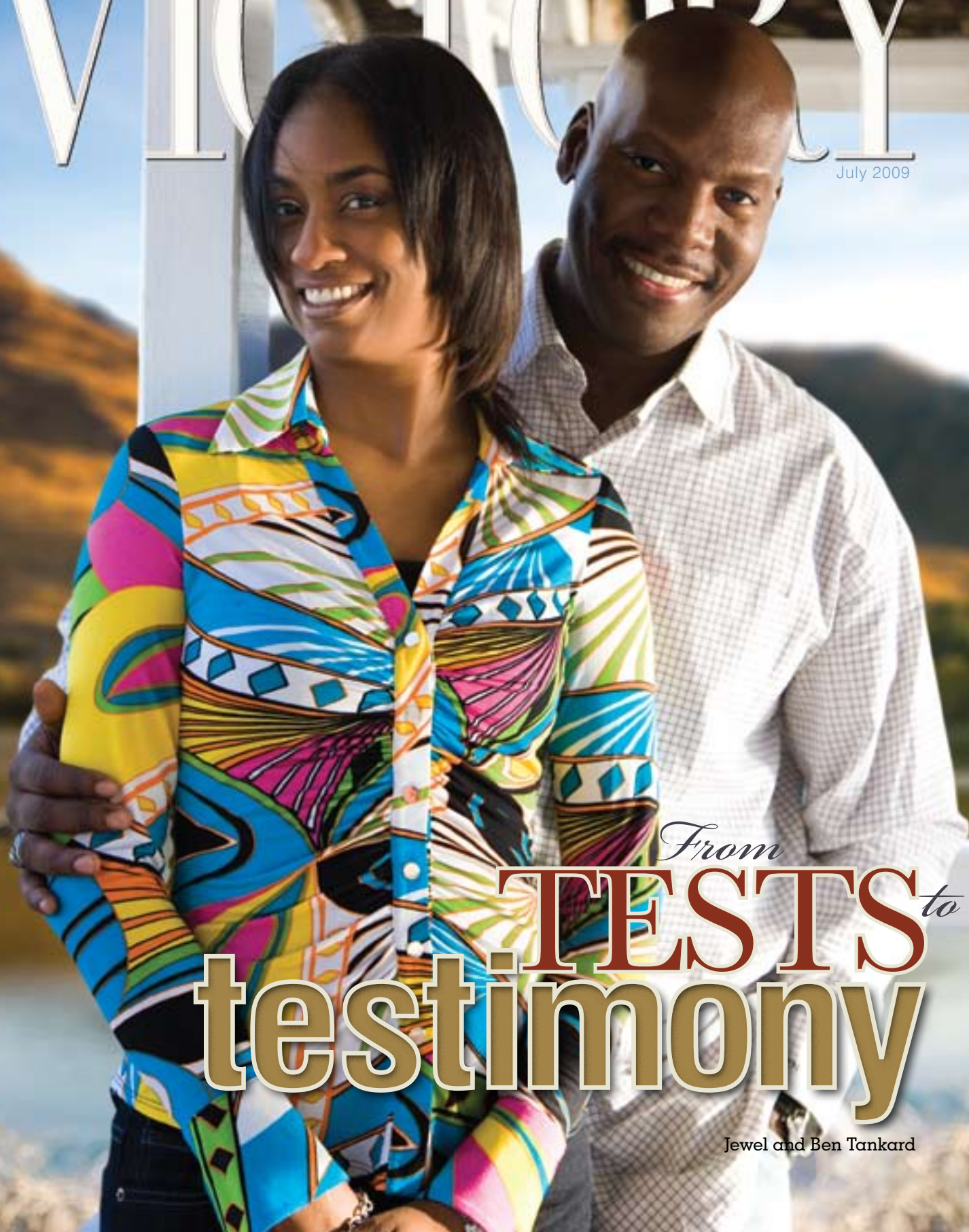


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THE BLESSING

DON'T MESS UP THE SETUP

IT DOESN'T TAKE A FINANCIAL GENIUS TO SEE THAT THIS WORLD'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM IS SET UP FOR A FALL. ¶ DON'T GET ME WRONG. I'M NOT CHIMING IN WITH DOOMSAYERS AND PREDICTING A TOTAL GLOBAL MELTDOWN. THERE'S NOT GOING TO BE ANY GLOBAL MELTDOWN—AT LEAST NOT AS LONG AS THE CHURCH IS ON THE EARTH TO PRESERVE THINGS. BUT FROM TIME TO TIME, WE ARE GOING TO SEE MAN-MADE EMPIRES FALL. THOSE FALLS MAY COME SOONER...OR THEY MAY COME LATER...BUT ONE THING IS SURE—*THEY WILL COME.*

BY KENNETH COPELAND

When they do, economists and politicians will give a hundred different reasons for them. But, in reality, there will be only one: This world's economy is based on the system of commerce that originated at the tower of Babel. It's a system in which mankind tries to meet its own needs without God—and it is divinely destined to fail.

To find that out, all you have to do is read the Bible and look at the first people who came up with it. They were a group of folks who—unlike most people today—actually understood God's way of doing things. They only knew His method of creating—*imagine it, believe it and speak it*.

And they said...let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city (Genesis 11:4-8).

A Half-Built Monument to Failure

What God did at Babel went far beyond messing up the tower builders' speech patterns. He spoke confusion into their godless way of operating. He put a cap on their ability to imagine and convey to others the images in their minds. Their communication with one another fell apart to the point they couldn't figure out what to do anymore, and they wandered away, leaving a half-built tower as a monument to their failure.

From that day to this, the same thing has happened to every group of ungodly, disobedient people who have tried to use their own human power to create and sustain their earthly kingdoms. They have only been able to build their towers, their cities, their nations and their economies to a certain point before confusion set in and things started to crumble.

It has happened before and it will happen again. Babel is set up to fail.

You, however, are not.

If you are a born-again believer who has received Jesus as your Savior and Lord, God has set you up to succeed. He has set you up to be BLESSED.

You aren't held captive by Babylonian economics because, through Jesus, you've been delivered out of that confused, ungodly system into another system altogether. As a joint heir of the last Adam, you've been put back into the Eden

system of prosperity that God created in the beginning. You've been restored to the place of THE BLESSING.

God has said to you as surely as He said to the first Adam in the Garden of Eden, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion" (Genesis 1:28). He has crowned you with His own creative glory (Psalm 8:5), blessed you with every spiritual blessing that heaven has to offer (Ephesians 1:3), and released untold numbers of angels to minister on your behalf (Hebrews 1:14). He has redeemed you from the curse so that the BLESSING of Abraham might come on you through Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:13-14).

Any way you look at it, you are set up to be BLESSED. And you can live in that BLESSING even in the midst of a confused Babylonian economy if you don't mess up the setup!

Living in a Word-Controlled World

How, exactly, could you mess up the setup?

The way most of us do it is with our mouths. Our words make us or break us. Even the people at Babel had that figured out. They'd been told by their ancestors (people like Adam and Eve) that in the beginning God said, "Light be!" and light was. He said, "Let the earth bring forth..." and it was so.

That's the only creative method they knew, so they imitated it. They declared what they imagined and believed would come to pass. They said, "We will build a city and a tower." If God hadn't intervened and confused things they would have succeeded, because this entire planet and everything in it is created and controlled by words.

The Bible confirms it again and again. For example:

- "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." (Proverbs 18:21)
- "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." (Mark 11:23)
- "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matthew 12:37)

Since we live in a word-controlled world, to stay connected to the Eden system we must get the confusion of Babel out of our mouths. We must stop talking in ways that are contrary to THE BLESSING and the Word of God by saying things like, "I can't..." "I don't know what to do." "Nobody loves me." "I'm no good."

As believers, we are lying against the truth when we make statements like that. We are flatly contradicting the Word of God and disobeying the instructions Jesus gave us.

He told us to follow His example and always speak words that are in agreement with those of our heavenly Father. He said, "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. 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" (John 8:28, 31-32).

Let me ask you something. Was Jesus ever in bondage to this world's economy during His earthly ministry? Did He ever experience one moment of shortage or lack as a result of any worldly recession or depression?

Of course not, because Jesus wasn't bound to this ungodly system of commerce. He lived totally free from it. He lived in the abundance of the kingdom of God.

Regardless of what was happening around Him, Jesus lived in THE BLESSING; and if we'll continue in His Word, we can live the same way. If we speak the truth and say only what God says, we'll be disciples of Jesus, and the truth will make us just as free as He is!

Setting the World on Fire

One person who had a revelation of that fact was the Apostle James. In his letter to the early Church, he said that the man who looks into the perfect "law of liberty" (or the *law of freedom* which is God's Word) and then acts on it by bridling his tongue will be BLESSED in everything he does (James 1:22-26).

Think about that. Someone who is BLESSED in everything he does, can't be stopped. Worldly financial crises can't stop him. The mistakes of politicians can't stop him. Nothing in this natural realm can restrain or bring him down.

"Brother Copeland, surely you don't really think our words make that much difference."

I don't think it, I know it because the Bible says so. It tells us the tongue "setteth on fire the course of nature" (James 3:6). The word translated *course* in that verse can also be translated *wheel*. Today, we might say it this way, "The tongue is what sets everything rolling."

That's the reason Satan works so hard to get hold of your tongue. It's the reason he makes sure you hear negative reports about the economy and everything else. He wants that negativity coming out of your mouth because you will have whatever you're saying.

That's also why the devil is always trying to get you upset with someone. He wants you to use your tongue to set fires of strife that will burn up your harvest of BLESSING. He knows that no matter how born again and baptized in the Holy Ghost you are, if he can rob you of your love walk and get you talking ugly about people, you'll be drifting toward downtown Babylon before you know it. James 3:16 says, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion [Babel] and every evil work."

"I know the Bible says that, Brother Copeland, but if you knew what that person did to me, you'd understand why I'm upset with him!"

No, what I understand is that by getting in strife and opening the door to confusion, you're putting yourself in serious danger. You are giving Satan access to your innermost counsel and getting your mind in such an uproar you can't hear a word God is saying to you. When you're in that condition, you don't need someone to pet you and agree with you, you need someone to tell you the truth in love.

You need someone to say, "You'd better cut that strife out right now because the devil is using it to take you captive to do his will. He is handcuffing you to this Babylonian system of confusion and it is running your life. You'd better get back over in the wisdom from above that is 'first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits'" (James 3:17).

All of us who desire to walk in the Eden system and stay free from the recessions and depressions of the world have to operate in that higher wisdom. We have to make a quality decision to put God's Word of love and victory in



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This world's economy is based on the system of commerce that originated at the tower of Babel. **It's a system in which mankind tries to meet its own needs without God**—and it is divinely destined to fail.

our mouths and keep it there no matter what. When we're tempted to get into a fuss with someone, we have to be quick to repent. We have to be willing to say, "Hey, I was the one who was wrong. Forgive me. I love you."

How to Tame Your Tongue

"I'd like to do that, Brother Copeland, but when I get under pressure, somehow or another my tongue just gets away from me. I find myself saying things I shouldn't and regretting it later."

That's because you've been trying to tame your tongue with natural willpower. That's impossible because your tongue is tied to your spirit and it will say what's inside you before your brain has a chance to stop it.

It's spiritual law: Out of the abundance of your heart, your mouth *will* speak (Matthew 12:34). So if you're serious about keeping the Word of God in your mouth, you must first put the Word in your heart and keep it there in abundance. The power of that engrafted Word will save your soul from your old Babylonian way of thinking (James 1:21). It will renew your mind and change your imagination so it lines up with THE BLESSING.

Then you can take authority over your thoughts and your words. You can start "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" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Instead of lying awake at night gripped with fear, thinking, *What am I going to do about my bills? I'll never get them all paid. I'm going to end up losing everything*, you can roll your cares over on the Lord. You can declare the Word, laugh at the devil and say, "There's no use in me lying here worrying. God said He will take care of me and I believe Him." Then you can turn over and sleep like a baby. (See Psalm 127:2.)

A Mouthful of Heaven

If you really want to rock the devil back on his heels and release the force of THE BLESSING in your life, there's something else you can do as well. You can speak in other tongues and build yourself up on your most holy faith by praying in the Holy Ghost.

"Well, I don't know. I'm not too sure about that tongues business."

Then study your Bible and get sure about it, because it's a vital part of God's divine setup. So vital, in fact, the very first

thing God empowered the early disciples to do was "to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

Why is speaking and praying in tongues so important?

Because, as I said before, this is a word-controlled world. And when we talk in tongues or pray in the spirit, we're speaking words that are coming straight from heaven. We're speaking the language of the spirit those early tower builders lost.

The devil would rather we never find out about that. He doesn't want us to know that what God removed at Babel, He gave back at Pentecost. He doesn't want us praying in the spirit because, according to Romans 8:26-28, when we do:

- "The [Holy] Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." (He takes hold together with us against all the bad things coming against us.)
- "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (The Holy Spirit Himself starts feeding prayer into our spirit and putting words in there the devil can't figure out. He pumps us full of BLESSING power and it rolls out of us in rivers of words and sounds that perfectly express the will of God for our lives.)
- "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Religious tradition has tried to rob us of the power of that last verse by telling us the phrase *all things work together for good* refers to sicknesses and car wrecks and every other kind of demonic garbage. But that's not right! It's not the devil's stuff that's working for us, it's the things of God. It's the blood, the Word, the Holy Spirit, all the angels of heaven and the very power of God's own glory. All those things are continually working together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose—which is THE BLESSING.

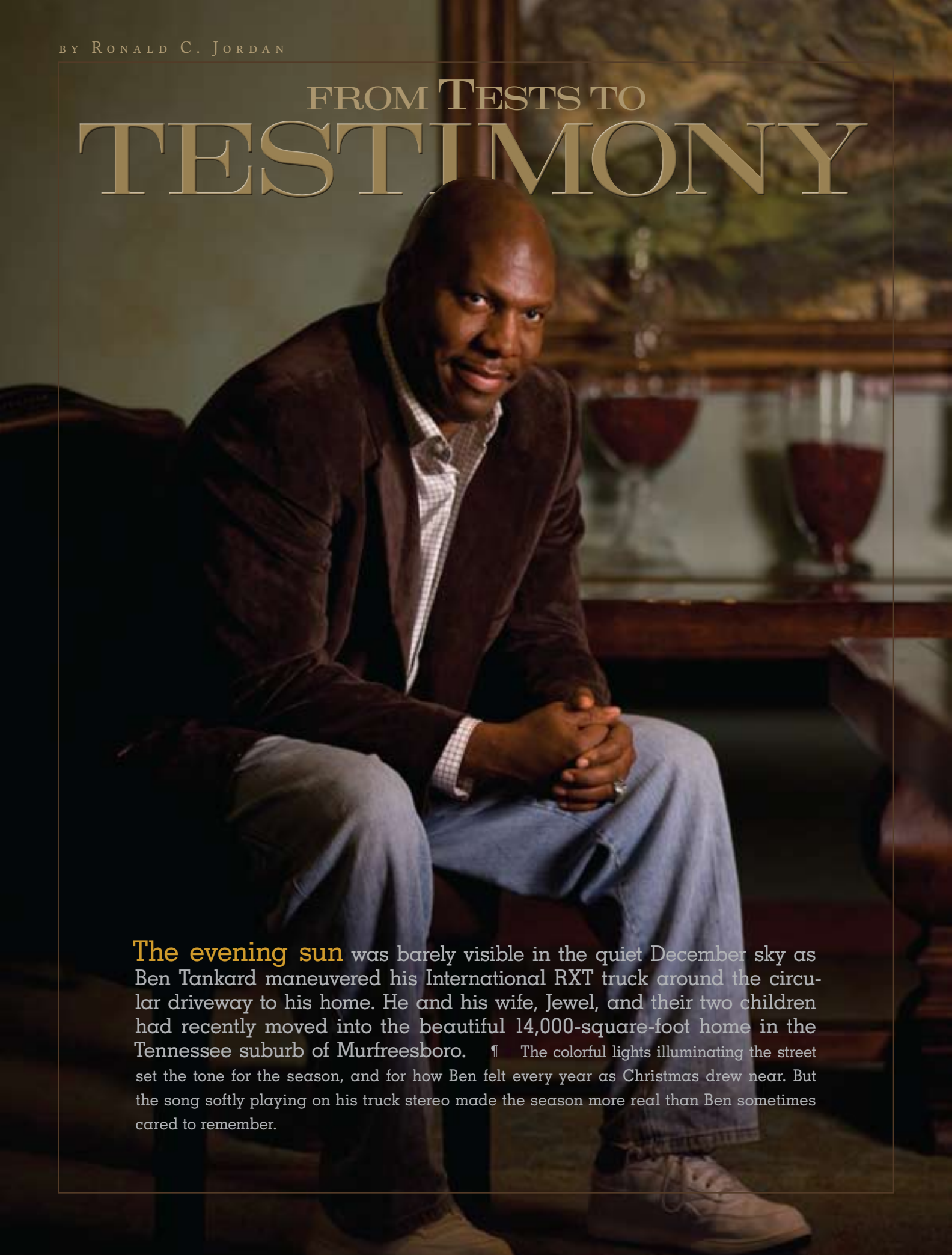
It's all one great big setup! We are set up to be BLESSED!

All we have to do is cooperate with it. All we have to do is stick with the Eden system of God's Word and we'll not only be BLESSED, we'll become an avenue of BLESSING for others.

Even in the worst of times, when Babel is in a mess all around us, we can live in the truth that makes us free. **VICTORY**

BY RONALD C. JORDAN

FROM TESTS TO TESTIMONY



The evening sun was barely visible in the quiet December sky as Ben Tankard maneuvered his International RXT truck around the circular driveway to his home. He and his wife, Jewel, and their two children had recently moved into the beautiful 14,000-square-foot home in the Tennessee suburb of Murfreesboro. ¶ The colorful lights illuminating the street set the tone for the season, and for how Ben felt every year as Christmas drew near. But the song softly playing on his truck stereo made the season more real than Ben sometimes cared to remember.

Wiping a tear from his cheek, Ben stepped from the truck, now unable to erase the memory of the drumbeats from the song “The Little Drummer Boy.” Neither could he ignore the thoughts of how significant that song had been in his life.

From the age of 3, Ben had loved the sound of drums.

“I can remember wishing for a drum every Christmas,” Ben recalls. “But somehow, even that young, I knew it would never happen. We were very poor! Our clothes came from Goodwill, and whatever Christmas presents we got came from the Salvation Army.”

Poor Little Drummer Boy

When he was 7, Ben tried out for the school Christmas production of “The Little Drummer Boy.” Unlike others auditioning for the part of the drummer, Ben didn’t own a snare drum. Rather than embarrass him by pointing out that the audition required him to have a drum, the music teacher had asked one of the other boys to loan Ben his drum.

“Halfway through my audition the teacher stopped me and announced, ‘This young man is who we are looking for,’” Ben remembers.

When the pageant concluded, Ben received three standing ovations. The teacher surprised Ben by giving him the drum he had used in the play. She also told him how proud she was of his performance, and that his mother had dressed him so perfectly for the part.

“She had no idea I was not dressed ragged on purpose,” Ben said. “She never knew the clothes I wore that night—an old tattered shirt and some cutoff bluejeans—were the best clothes I had.”

“Every time I hear that song I get emotional,” Ben says unashamedly. “It humbles me because I know where I came from and I know who is responsible for me being where I am today.”

Starting From Nowhere

Where Ben Tankard is today is a good place.

Acknowledged by many as “the Quincy Jones of gospel,” Ben is one of Christian music’s best-selling instrumentalists. Twenty-one gold and platinum albums line the walls of his 23-room mansion—the result of songs he wrote and produced and his association with other artists in the industry. He has also received more than 50 Grammy, Dove and Stellar awards and nominations over the past 20 years, yet these tell only part of the story of how God has brought him through rough and tragic times.

The vacation home in Florida; a fleet of vehicles that includes a limousine, a Mercedes and two motorcycles; two private airplanes which Ben pilots himself; and an unshakable marriage that is founded on God’s Word are a testimony, Ben says, to what God will do when you truly trust Him.

“It’s not because of anything I’ve done—it’s all about God’s mercy. Had it not been for Him I would be exactly where I started—nowhere.”

Describing life growing up in Daytona Beach, Fla., as

“nowhere” is about as accurate as it gets for Ben and his family. Ben’s father, Arthur, a Pentecostal preacher, worked hard to provide for his wife, Mary, and their two daughters and son. But times were hard. Like many in those days, the Tankards received their share of government rations, including food stamps, powdered eggs and milk, peanut butter and cheese.

When his job as a migrant worker didn’t bring in enough money to support the family, Arthur collected and sold aluminum cans.

“He would leave home around 4 a.m. and spend all day looking for cans, and return with his station wagon loaded with smelly beer cans,” Ben remembers. “Sometimes we had cans in the backyard piled 7 feet high.

“I’m sure we weren’t the only poor people back then, but when it’s you, I guess you tend to only see yourself,” Ben said, recalling how a decent meal meant getting chicken backs and wing tips, and turkey parts from the meat market for 10 cents a pound.

“We got excited just knowing there was meat on those chicken backs.”

The Reality of Poverty

Poverty was a way of life for the Tankards, but so was church.

“We were in church almost every day, and our parents were very strict regarding our lifestyle,” Ben recalls. “My sisters were not allowed to wear pants, we never went to the movies and we could only watch TV two hours a day.

“I remember thinking, *What a way to grow up!*” Ben said.

“It’s not that I was critical of my parents, because they took real good care of us. I just didn’t understand why it was so hard to have enough food or a decent place to live. The Bible says faith comes by hearing, but the church we were in didn’t teach about prosperity. We didn’t know how to exercise faith for what we wanted, or that we could have faith to believe past where we were so we never prospered.

“The only time I remember my family ever setting a goal was once when we wanted a double-wide trailer. But that had nothing to do with faith; we just wanted a double-wide!”

They never got the double-wide, but things did start to look up. In 1975, Ben’s dad came home after being away doing migrant work and announced he had found a steady job and a new place to live. The news signaled a fresh start for the Tankards, or so they thought.

Their new *home* in Starke, Fla., turned out to be a small apartment in back of an old, abandoned movie theater. There was running water and a shower, but the only bathroom was at the front of the theater. In Starke, Ben developed a stronger interest in music and quickly excelled. He was the only seventh-grader to play with the high-school concert band. In high school he played with the nearby university’s symphony orchestra.

Later his family moved to Chattahoochee, where Ben’s life began to take shape when his large, 6-foot, 6-inch frame caught the attention of the high-school basketball coach. As a result of his impressive performance on the basketball court, and his

musical talent, Ben had more than 20 college-scholarship offers when it came time to graduate. To stay close to home, he chose to attend Wallace Community College in nearby Dothan, Ala.

The Wrong Plan


Clearly, God had a plan for Ben Tankard. But by now, Ben had become so absorbed with his own plan for success he never considered looking to God.

"I suppose it goes back to never being taught," Ben says. "I never knew God loved me enough to do anything for me. My plan was to finish college, then play professional basketball overseas or try for a spot in the NBA."

In 1984, while playing with a minor league basketball team in Canada, Ben was invited to a basketball camp where, he was told, NBA scouts would be present.

"The scouts did see me play and were interested in me," Ben said. "But I blew out my knee in the first workout and just like that it was over. There went my chance of being in the NBA."

Considering himself a failure, Ben returned home to Dothan.



"It humbles me because I know where I came from, and I know who is responsible for me being where I am today."

A Real Turning Point

Desperate people do desperate things. At 21, Ben Tankard had become desperate.

"I had done everything I knew to make it, but nothing worked," Ben said. "Even worse, I had turned my back on church and God. Now I was in a fix and didn't know what to do."

Alone in his mobile home, Ben picked up a brochure someone had given him announcing a local church revival.

What harm could it do to go? he thought.

That night at the revival, a broken Ben Tankard walked down the center aisle to the front of the room to ask Jesus into his life.

"I had spent most of my life in church," Ben said, "but I cannot honestly remember ever taking a step toward salvation. I guess because we were in church every day, I assumed I didn't have anything to give up. But that night at the service, I gave it all up...I received Jesus Christ as Lord of my life."

As Ben headed back to his seat the minister said, "God has something else for you." He anointed Ben with oil, and then told him to sit down and play the organ.

"I had never played keyboards before, but that night, under the power of the Holy Spirit, I began to play like a seasoned professional," Ben said. "Sounds were coming from that organ that neither I nor anyone else in that room had ever heard before—beautiful, jazzy, anointed sounds. Somehow, I knew they were from God, and I knew I had been anointed with a special gift."

The Sounds of a Minstrel

Over the next few years, Ben endured more challenges. His father's health had begun to fail, prompting Ben to move back to Florida to be closer to his family. With no career plans, Ben worked several odd jobs to help out, while a marriage, which had produced three children, ended in divorce.

One day during his lunch break, Ben stopped at a music shop and was tinkering with a keyboard when a customer asked if he could play country music. When Ben started playing, the woman turned to the salesclerk and said, "I'll take the one he's playing," Ben remembers. A similar thing happened the next day after a customer heard Ben playing classical music. When Ben's talent became obvious, the store manager gave him a job.

"I still had a great love for music, and I saw this as my opportunity to finally do what I really wanted," Ben said. "Only this time I didn't go out on my own. I knew for me to succeed I had to allow God to show me how to make it happen."

By 1989, Ben had started his first music company, and within a year had produced his first album, *All Keyed Up*. Though he considered it a good first effort, the music industry rejected it.

"The negative responses poured in like rain," Ben remembers. "Secular companies said the music was too gospel, while gospel companies labeled it too jazzy."

Undaunted, Ben continued to push his new "gospel jazz" sound.

"I knew if this was something God had truly called me to, if He really intended for me to be successful as a musician, it would not come without some kind of difficulty or hardship," Ben said.

The years that followed brought their share of hardships, including the death of both Ben's parents and a second failed marriage.

A Spiritual Pied Piper

In 1997, Ben visited the Holy Land.

"Standing in the place where Jesus stood, and looking at the tomb where He was laid, something happened to me," Ben reflects. "I began to see Jesus on a more personal level. Connecting the dots in my life, I could see how He had literally taken me from one point to another. I wanted to know Him even more!"

That year, Ben enrolled in a correspondence course through Rhema Bible Training Center.

"One of the books on my required reading list was *Prosperity: The Choice Is Yours* by Kenneth Copeland," Ben remembers. "In it Brother Copeland talked about receiving to please the Father... When I read that, I understood—God has already provided for us, and it pleases Him when we receive."

Two years later, Ben was attending a conference when Pastor Creflo Dollar told him: "As you yield to God, you will be raised up as a spiritual Pied Piper like David, to usher people into God's presence. You will be not only a

“Everything we’re walking in is the result of prayer, and that’s what we want for others—to realize that for every prize there is a process, and it begins with the sacrifice of giving your life to the Lord.”



musician, but a minister to carry the Word of the Lord and lead people into their destiny.”

Around the same time, the Lord revealed something to Ben as he was reading Galatians 6:7, “God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

“I needed money to finance my music,” Ben said. “I understood that God had already made the provision. Now it was up to me to put my faith into action by doing something to receive what God had already given me.

“I realized it was not just about the amount of money—it was about frequency. If I needed money every day, then I needed to give money every day.”

Over the next year, Ben put into practice what the Lord had shown him.

“I loved Brother Copeland’s teaching, and had already become a Partner with his ministry,” Ben said. “So every day I put an offering in the mail to Kenneth Copeland Ministries or another ministry. Before long I began to see major increase in my family.”

By 1999, Ben’s music career was in full swing with a number of hit songs to his credit, including “Git Yo Prayze On,” “Sunday Driving” and “Keynote Speaker.” Invitations for concert appearances were pouring in, and several of his recordings had received nominations for Stellar, Dove and Grammy awards. His newest CD, *Mercy, Mercy*, was released in April.

In 2000, Ben met Jewel LaGreen, herself a divorcee and the mother of one daughter.

“From the time I laid eyes on her, I knew she was God’s perfect will for my wife,” Ben says. “An anointed woman of God, she is everything I know God intended for a man to have and I cherish her deeply.”

A year later, Ben and Jewel were married, and in 2002 they started the Destiny Center church in Murfreesboro.

“Our lives have not been without challenges,” says Jewel, who is still learning to balance her career as a businesswoman and fashion model with being a mother, home-maker and pastor’s wife. “Everything we’re walking in is the result of prayer, and that’s what we want for others—to realize that for every prize there is a process, and it begins with the sacrifice of giving your life to the Lord.”

Looking back, Ben Tankard has learned a lot about sacrificial living.

“The truth is, I never really lost out on anything,” he says. “It took me going through a lot of hard times in order to pass the test. I needed to wake up and realize God loves me, and that He anointed me for a purpose. Nothing was taken away from me, it was just delayed.”

Nothing was taken away, including Ben’s desire to be involved in the NBA.

In 2007, Ben received a call from a young man he had met 10 years earlier who was working his way through college. He had become a director of player development with the NBA.

“He wanted me to help them develop some music-based motivational programs they could use to train, encourage and develop young players in areas outside of basketball,” Ben said. He still works in that capacity today.

“God knew what my involvement with the NBA was to be from the very beginning,” Ben says. “I didn’t have to be on the court to be a testimony of His goodness. Just trusting Him and utilizing what He had anointed me with was enough.”

Some people call them trials and tribulations. But as he looks over the circumstances of his life and all he faced growing up, Ben Tankard sees them as a series of tests.

“They were all tests that God helped me pass,” Ben says. “And because I passed, today I have a tremendous testimony that gives all the glory to Him.” **VICTORY**

Partnership Set Up for God’s Plan

Ben Tankard has gone from being the “poor little drummer boy” to being called “the Quincy Jones of gospel.” Who but God could set up a plan like that!

Throughout his life, God has graced Ben with gifts, talents, signs and wonders. From his childhood days of living in poverty to these days of living in abundant blessing, God has taken him through door after open door to fulfill His plan for Ben.

Today Ben and his wife Jewel along with their children, serve the growing family of Destiny Center in Murfreesboro, Tenn. In addition to their pastoral ministry through concert crusades, music recording, television show hosting and writing, God has set Ben Tankard up to be a blessing to people everywhere!

Ben is thankful for the day God led him to partner with Kenneth Copeland Ministries, where his foundation has been built for receiving God’s plan and living blessed and victorious by the principles of God’s Word.

God has set you up to walk in the plan He has for you, too. We would be glad to be your partner in the days ahead as you move forward through the open doors God has for you! Let us hear from you today!

We’re here
for you!

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THIS CLASSIC TEACHING ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN MAY 1990.

| BY KENNETH COPELAND

Running on EMPTY

Do you know what it feels like to run out of spiritual gas? ¶ It's extremely frustrating. You know what God has called you to do. You know the destination He's put before you. But you just don't seem to have the resources you need to get there. Somehow, you've simply run dry. Do you know what that's like? I do. Two years ago God gave Gloria and me some directions we didn't really want to hear. It was during a time of pressure for us. The finances of the ministry were down. Physically and emotionally, I was lower than I'd been in years.

Right in the middle of that difficult time, God gave us a command. He said we were to go on television—daily.

I felt overwhelmed. *Surely this couldn't be from God*, I thought. Stock on television preachers was at an all-time low. I wanted to get *off* weekly television, not double and triple my TV budget.

But the more I prayed, the bigger that command from God grew. It was like chewing a piece of rawhide. I couldn't get it chewed up. The more I said, "No," the bigger His *Yes* became inside of me. Finally, I admitted that no matter how I felt about it that was what the Lord had instructed me to do.

Thankfully, I'd learned years ago not to depend on feelings or circumstances in my walk with God. So I said, "God, You're calling me into something that's impossible. I have sense enough to see the only way to do this is by faith. Now, I know I have faith. But if You don't stir me up, Lord, I don't know what I'm going to do because I don't have enough spiritual energy to reach this goal. I feel as empty as a gourd."

I knew the Word says out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water (John 7:38). But at that particular moment I couldn't even find the creek bank, much less the river.

Stir Yourself Up

About that time my friend Jerry Savelle was preaching in Little Rock, Ark., on the evening he and Carolyn celebrated 20 years in ministry. That night Jerry began by reading Paul's second letter to Timothy: "Being mindful of thy tears.... I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee" (2 Timothy 1:4, 6).

I was startled when I heard that. Apparently, Timothy had been discouraged, just like me, and had felt inadequate to the task God had given him. But Paul was addressing that problem with a clear command: "Stir up the gift inside you." *You stir yourself up!*

I saw it in a flash. The Spirit of God is in me already. Jesus is in me and I'm in Him and all I need is in Him.

Every resource I'll ever need to do what God has called me to do is inside me. All I need is to stir those resources up!

I said right out loud, "In the Name of Jesus, I stir myself up by faith! I stir up the gift that's within me. In Jesus' Name, I'm stirred up!"

I didn't feel a bit different. I didn't suddenly want to run home and start taping television broadcasts. In fact, I felt as weary as I had before. If I had asked my body, "Are you stirred up?" it would have said, "Dear me, no. I need another 30 days of sleep."

But I didn't ask my body. I turned to Gloria and said, "Gloria, I'm stirred up!" She smiled and agreed with me. She knew exactly what I was doing. It didn't matter if my eyes were bloodshot and my face was pale—she agreed with my confession of faith.

That night when I shook hands with everyone, I said, "Man, I'm stirred up." I said it to everyone I saw. I said it to my dad. I said it to God. I even sat down and wrote it in a letter to my Partners.

You know what? It wasn't but a few days until I suddenly noticed, *I am stirred up! Something real has happened here.* Now, that "something" was in me all along. But when I spoke, it started stirring until it began to affect my feelings.

That's how spiritual things always work. Feelings *follow* faith. Feelings weren't designed to lead. They were designed to follow. Let me put it like this: I've now made a firm, founded-on-the-rock, blood-washed decision that I'm finished asking Kenneth Copeland how he feels. From now on I *tell* Kenneth Copeland how he feels.

I don't ask my body what it thinks either. If I did, it might tell me it's sick, tired or worn out. But I don't ask my body. I ask the Word, and it always says the same thing. It says: By the stripes of Jesus, you're healed. It never changes. It says: The joy of the Lord is our strength.

You see, our wounds and our pains are important to God. But they shouldn't be very important to us. Not compared to the job that's before us and the power that's inside us.

That's why Paul said to Timothy, "I'm mindful of your tears...wherefore, *stir up the gift that is in you.*" He was saying, "Because I care about your tears, I'm reminding you to do something about them: *Stir up the gift that is in you.*"

It's Already in You

Everything I need is already in me. Jesus put it there.

Everything you'll ever need in your life, in your spirit, your soul and your finances—to accomplish what God has called you to do—has already been placed inside you by God Almighty.

Faith is in there. Paul called it "unfeigned faith" (2 Timothy 1:5). That means it's not some phony something. It's "God-faith," the real thing from God, Himself. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (verse 7).

Power is in there. Love is in there. It's all in there! But if you don't know it's there, how can you stir it up? You can't. In fact, if you don't know what's in you when things get tough, you'll feel like running from them. That's what I did in the beginning.

I remember the first time I went with the Oral Roberts crusade team to a healing meeting. I was a student and a member of his aircraft crew. I had been a believer a little over four years and knew so little about the things of God, especially meetings like these. However, I was part of the team and eager to learn.



You see, our wounds and our pains are important to God. **But they shouldn't be very important to us.** Not compared to the job that's before us and the power that's inside us.

I followed the team inside this huge auditorium. It was filled with sick people. They weren't just a little sick, either. The place smelled, it was so full of disease. Just walking in there sent chills of fear up my spine. My insides turned upside down. I'd never seen such a frightful sight in all my life.

I turned around and headed for the side door as fast as I could, talking to God under my breath. "Listen, I don't belong here," I told Him. "I'm getting on a Greyhound bus and heading home right now. They can get that airplane home without me."

Once I was outside the door, I started talking louder. "I'm through with this! You understand that? I don't care what I have to do, *anything* would be better than that."

Then suddenly, I froze. My feet wouldn't move. It was like my shoes were fastened to the sidewalk. I knew it was God who'd stopped me because, inside, I was still on my way to the bus station. But outside, I was stuck to the sidewalk.

I looked up and hollered, "Turn me loose!" But I couldn't move. My insides were wrestling with this war inside me—fear and a desire to run, and yet this strange draw on the other side from God.

Desperately, I prayed, "Please, let me go! I don't have anything for those people. I don't have anything to give anyone in there."

That's when God spoke back to me. Every cell in me heard it. He said, *I know you don't have anything to give them. But I do and that's why I baptized you in My Spirit.*

My feet suddenly turned loose and I knew I had a choice. I could get on that bus, or I could turn around and go back in there. One was life and one was death. No question about it. So I turned around and went back.

That was the beginning for me. Until that night I didn't know healing faith was in me. I was ready to run. But God stopped me. He knew what was in me. He knew *He* was in me, and if I'd just stay and stir up what was in me, miracles would happen—and they did.

My job was to recognize what was in me and stir it up. I had to stir up the faith. I had to stir up the love. If I'd let fear dominate that day, it would have been all over. But I stirred up what God had put in me and I found myself walking in the power and love of God, Himself.

That's what we all need to do when we feel we're running out of spiritual gas, when we feel we don't have the strength to do what God has called us to do. We need to stir ourselves up again and again.

Feed on God's Word

One of the first things we need to stir up is our thinking. We need to do something besides wallow around in front of the TV set. Stir up your thinking. Decide to read the Bible cover to cover again. Go back and do some of it on your knees. Stir up the sound mind that's in you and feed it with the Word of God.

When you find yourself worrying, shut it off immediately. Worry is nothing but meditating on the lies of the devil. So don't do it. Instead, tell Satan, "I'm not thinking on your junk, in the Name of Jesus. I'm thinking on the promises of God."

Another thing Paul told Timothy when he was discouraged: "Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner" (2 Timothy 1:8).

It's time you stirred up your testimony.



What Moves You?

The news today is filled with reports of disasters and economic doom. When troubles like these come, don't be moved by what you see... but by what the Word of God says. In this timely series, Kenneth Copeland reveals:

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Maybe you've calmed down too much. In the old days, you didn't mind grabbing someone and telling them, "Listen to what faith will do; Jesus is alive!" But you've gotten too sophisticated for that now. You've "graduated" from all that excitement stuff.

Listen, you haven't graduated from anything. You need to stir up your testimony. Start bragging about Jesus again the way you used to.

Don't you know that what you talk about all the time is what you fall in love with? Start talking good about Jesus and about everyone who has nurtured you in the Spirit. Start saying good things about your pastor and the teachers who've helped you learn the Word and watch yourself fall in love with them all over again.

Focus on Your Calling

Finally, Paul told Timothy, "[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus" (verse 9).

Do you realize you have a holy calling in you? It's time for you to go back and do what God called you to do in the beginning. If He called you to a healing ministry, go back to that.

Stir up the purpose of God inside your spirit. Don't think about other things until you're stirred inside and out. Cut off the outside distractions. Find out what God wants you to do and make a quality decision that nothing will keep you from doing it.

Over the years, a friend of mine got involved in so many different areas of ministry he was about to fold up physically under the strain. Finally, the Lord spoke to him one night and said, *John, it's not My work that's nearly killed you. It's everything you've added to it.*

I've had to deal with that in my own life. I've had to quit doing stuff just because it needs doing. Instead, I have to stick to what I'm called to do.

Maybe it's time for you to trim away the extra things you've added and get back to what God called you to do. Go back and stir up that original commission. It's holy. It's your personal calling.

There's one more thing you need to stir up if you're going to ride on the high places of the earth with God. That's joy.

Years ago I decided I was going to walk by the Word of God. Whatever the Word says I am, that's what I'm saying too. I told God that as far as I was concerned, His Word was final, and I'd confess it the rest of my life no matter what.

Not too long after that, I decided that no matter what happened, whether I felt like it or not, I'd walk in love. Because the Bible clearly says "faith worketh by love"

(Galatians 5:6). It won't work any other way.

Those two decisions—to operate by faith in the Word of God and to walk in love—are the two most important decisions I have ever made.

Recently though, God pointed out to me that I have no right to walk by faith and love and just leave joy lying there and ignore it. After all, "the joy of the Lord is your strength"!

The fact is, if you don't stir up the joy of the Lord within you, you'll have trouble walking in faith and love. You'll be too weak to hang on to them. You may say, "I'm standing on the Word. I'm walking by faith." But if you're not rejoicing, I can guarantee you'll get tired. You can't leave joy out of this stirring-up process.

So, I made a commitment to God that whatever comes, I'm walking in joy. No matter what the devil does or what anyone says to me or about me, I'm rejoicing!

It's none of my business anyway what you think about me. It's not even my business if you care about me. My business is caring about you. My job is to know that Almighty God cares for me and to stir up the love He's put in me for you.

That's my business. Stirring up the gift of God inside me...and I want you to know, I am stirred up! What's more, I'm not the only one. There's a bunch of us getting stirred up.

Listen, if you think you've seen some faith over the last 40 years, I suggest you hang around and watch what happens in the next few months and years because you haven't even seen big faith yet!

Jesus is on the move. In the days ahead, we're going to see more than we've ever seen before. God is on the move. The Spirit of God is moving out in enormous power, and it's time we move out with Him!

Don't wait until you "feel" like you can do it. Don't wait until you feel anything! Start stirring yourself up and watch what happens.

Say out loud, "In the Name of Jesus, I stir up the gift that's within me by faith. I'm not waiting till I feel something. I'm going to feel it because I'm stirring it up. I'm stirring up my faith. I'm stirring up the love of God that's in me. I'm stirring up the power.

"In the Name of Jesus, I'm stirring up everyone around me. I'm stirring up my church. I'm stirring up the devil and running him out of my affairs! I'm stirring myself up in the Spirit of the living God! I *am* stirred up!"

Now, quit waiting to feel like you can do it and get out there! You have a job to do and you have everything you need to do it. Stir it up! Once you do, you'll discover the power you've been waiting on has been right there inside you all the time...waiting on you. **VICTORY**



REAL PEOPLE. REAL NEEDS. REAL VICTORIES.

GoodNewsGazette

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart,
so let him give...for God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

Communion Provided Peace

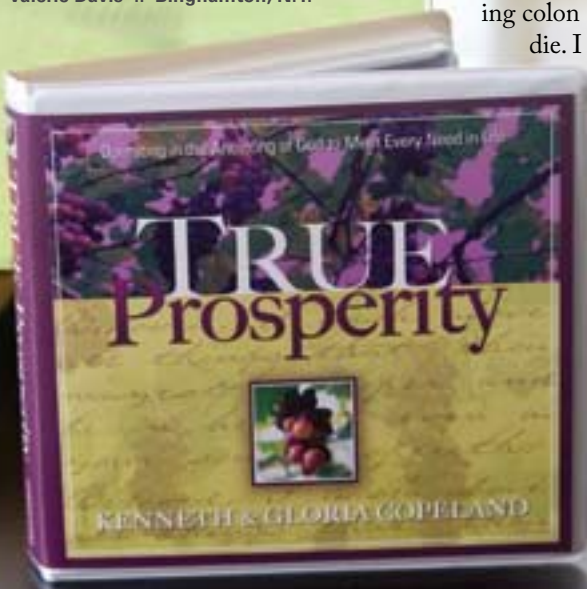
I needed to settle some things concerning debts, deadlines and believing for finances, so I took Communion through the “on demand” section on the Web site. It was as if I was right there! Pastor Tony was correct to acknowledge Pastors George and Terri for all God has put in them to minister to us. I wasn’t in a worried or panic state, but taking Communion took me higher and settled me even more. Thank God for KCM and EMIC.

Toni Cruz :: Cranbury, N.J.

Making a Difference

Thank you for teaching me the Word and for the times you or your staff have called to check in and say you were praying for the situation that I or someone else may have been in. This is appreciated very much, so thank you for taking this extra step in your ministry.

Valerie Davis :: Binghamton, N.Y.



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Faith and Obedience

In 2007, soon after a KCM broadcast advertising Days of Refreshing came on, straight away the Lord said, *I want you to go*. Then, my wife said she believed I should go. So in faith and obedience I went, knowing God wanted me to receive not only refreshing, but be repositioned and connected to a ministry that is strong in the Word.

During the conference there was an opportunity to give into the youth ministry building at EMIC, and I felt the Lord say for me to give. At the same time I asked the Lord for our house in the UK, which had been on and off the market for a couple of years, to be sold if He wanted us to return to the United States, pay off debts and be released to do what He’s called us to do.

When I arrived back in Spain I had a message from the estate agents to call them, as they had a buyer for the house. This was the first person who viewed the house and wanted to buy it—because of the seed I sowed at the conference. The house sold and three days later we were on a plane—debt free. Praise God!

T.M. :: United Kingdom



Re-created in Christ

I just wanted to tell you how great our Lord Jesus is to His Word and faithful to His covenant promises for His dear children.

I recently went to the Veterans Hospital to have some X-rays and tests done regarding colon cancer. The doctor said I’d have a few months to a year or two before I would die. I was sent home with medication to help comfort my stomach and back and they told me to come back to have surgery to remove the malignant tumors they found. When I went back they took more X-rays to find out if the tumors had gotten bigger, but they had not. I was sent home with more medication and rescheduled surgery because they thought I might need a bigger surgery than they initially expected.

I went home and prayed. I took a step of faith on my heavenly Father’s promise in His Word about my situation and what He says about my healing—not what the doctor said but what Jesus said. By His stripes I was healed. When I went back to the doctor I told them Jesus healed me. When they took X-rays before the surgery, the tumors were gone. The doctors were amazed and didn’t understand what happened. They didn’t believe that Jesus healed me, but it doesn’t matter what they think. What matters is I got a miracle from Jesus! Now I’m walking in divine health every day because I believed God and His promises to me.

J.T. :: Maine

Prayer Prevents Foreclosure

Praise the Lord, He has answered our prayers. We were close to \$10,000 that we owed on our house. But thanks be to Jesus, I have one more payment and I’m out of foreclosure. Thank you so much for your prayers to not lose our home.

Patricia Dunmire ::
North Washington, Pa.

God Is Our Source and Supply

Thank you so much for your teachings and praying for us to come into prosperity. After being unemployed for a year, my husband has hooked up with a small and growing company. This past year we looked to God as our source and supply, and we never missed or were never even late on any bill or payment! Praise God, His Word works.

Lynn Walstrom :: Minnesota

Favor for Employment

Thank you for your prayer team. After I tithed I became employed! Glory to God!

J.W. :: Canada

Business Gets a Boost

Recently, after my pledge to partnership and sowing my sacrificial offering of \$50 a month, my home business got a boost. People began calling me—with more business to come! Thank you for your faithful prayers of agreement. It's working, as always!

GA :: Nevada

I Am So Blessed

I have so many things to praise God for and I'm in awe of how much He has blessed me. I know beyond a doubt that it is only through the power of prayer. Just recently I received the Bible I requested from you. Thank You, Lord.

While watching your program (Healing School) on the range TV, I personally received healing. For many years my hearing has been poor and for the last couple of years I've been deaf on my right side. That Sunday a young lady who works in your ministry talked about how her own hearing was healed. I said to myself, *Why can't something like that happen to me?* Instantly I could hear on my right side and I could hear people on the range. Continually my hearing is improving to the point that while I'm writing I've noticed how noisy the range is. People beside me no longer have to keep repeating their questions to me.

Long ago I believed the gift of healing was no longer in this world, but after reading your daily devotions and the letters you send with scripture, I questioned that thought. I thank the Lord for bringing the truth of His love and power to my understanding. I'm still learning and coming to grips with the fact that I'm the reason I've limited His blessings; I will not limit His blessings on me anymore!

Thank you for being a great example of what a Christ-like walk and life is.

K.F. :: Canada

Prayer Is Our Priority. Please Call +44 (0)1225 787310

Living Example of God's Love ::

I know it's a bit late to write about the Europe Victory Campaign in Basel last year, but I had to write and tell you it was just wonderful. At first I felt like a stranger—I felt like, *What am I doing here?* I had a piece of paper with me that I read every day that said: He is ordering my steps. I got it from Keith Moore's teachings. I knew this was the place to be and I felt good and rejoiced. In spite of many attacks before my trip to Basel, I drove there with joy. I came there to worship. The meeting was the best thing that happened to me in a long time. I got to see a man who really believes in God. Where I live people do not believe in God, not even in the Catholic schools. I heard teachings at the meeting I have never heard before. When I saw Kenneth I saw Jesus in him. I can't explain it, but it's like Kenneth Copeland radiates love. God continues to guide me and His presence is with me.

B.B. :: Belgium

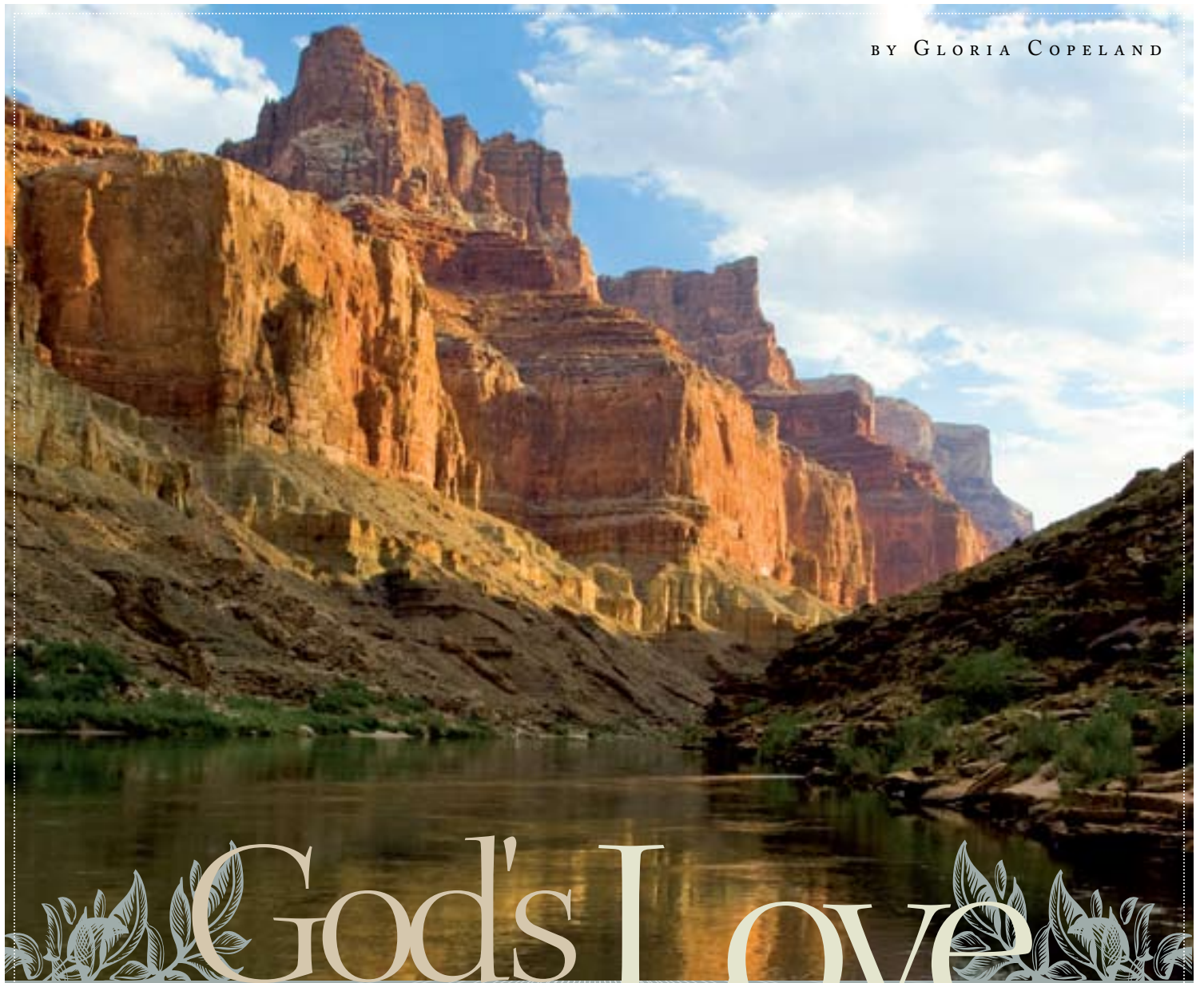
Just What I Needed

I'm 30 years old and have been addicted to drugs since the age of 14. I have been incarcerated for 15 months. About a month ago I took a Bible that didn't belong to me. I took the Bible from a place I had no business being in the first place. I just wanted it because it was a nice, leather-bound hardcover Bible with wax pages. However, my conscience kept eating at me until I eventually returned it to where it belonged.

Two days later I received a black, leather-bound Bible with wax pages from Kenneth Copeland Ministries! I also received a daily devotional. It's like God speaks to me and tells me exactly what I need to continue spending time with Him. A daily devotional is something I've had my heart set on for a long time.

I know that KCM has touched many people's lives. This letter is to thank you from the bottom of my heart for doing what you do. A lot of people in the world see me as nothing because I'm an inmate. Thank you for thinking of me as something more.

C.L. :: Pennsylvania



God's Love

command to

God's will is that His love be the distinguishing mark of every believer. The world does not see love between the believer and the Father, but the world does see the love between the believer and his brother. You have been given the love of God with which to love one another. ¶ The new commandment of love was given to you personally by Jesus: "That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12). You have been commanded to love as Jesus loved. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (verse 9). Jesus loved like the Father, now we are to love like Jesus loved.

Only the Father and His children have in their power the ability to operate in this kind of love. It is the God kind of love translated from the Greek word *agape*. This word for love is only used in connection with the family of God.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1 John 4:7). God's nature is love. It is imparted to

you when you make Jesus Christ the Lord of your life.

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (verse 8). This God kind of love is not what you do but what you are. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). God is love and you are re-created in His image. Your new nature is *agape* love. You are the love of God.

What a privilege that God would make us His love. No wonder Jesus said that all men would know us by this new kind of love! This love had never been manifest to the world before Jesus came in the flesh. They had never seen with their eyes the love of God until the Master walked among them.

The world is starved for love. God made man to receive love. The deepest yearning of every man is to be loved and cared for—a desire that can only be fulfilled through the love of God.

Every man on the face of this earth should experience the love of God. You are the open door into the love of God for the people with whom you come in contact. What an honor the Father has bestowed upon you, the ability to be loved with His love and the right to love.

If it were not possible for you to walk in God's commandment of love, He would not have given it. It is the law of the new creature. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). Notice it says love, *his*—not love, *its*. The believer is love. The believer works no ill to his neighbor. When you obey the love law of the family of God, you are performing God's perfect will in your life! The world's idea of love does not compare with *agape*. It is a poor counterfeit for God's love. *Agape* is beyond human understanding. You must learn what God says concerning His love.

THIS IS LOVE

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). "And what this love consists in is this: that we live and walk in accordance with and guided by His commandments (His orders, ordinances, precepts, teaching). This is the commandment, as you have heard from the beginning, that you continue to walk in love [guided by it and following it]" (2 John 6, *The Amplified Bible*).

God says His love is keeping His commandments—walking after His teaching. This brings love out into something tangible so you can know how to love as He loves. God has given us His love manual in black and white! Obeying God's Word is walking in God's love.

If you are born again, you are the love of God by nature. Faith is born into you when you are begotten of God, but until you begin to act on God's Word, that powerful force lies dormant. The same thing is true concerning the love of God. You can have the love of God abiding within you and be unable to allow this love to work through you and reach other people. Faith and love become active through knowledge of and acting upon the Word.

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment" (Philippians 1:9).

The love of God is released in your life by acting on the knowledge of God's Word. Without revelation knowledge that is acted upon, love lies undeveloped, and selfishness continues to reign.

PERFECTED LOVE

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 John 2:5-6).

As you act on God's Word, the love of God is perfected in you. Through His Word the Holy Spirit manifests the love nature of the Father in you. As you adhere to the message of love, love will flow from you to others.

You are a love creature. You can live the love life. God not only re-created your spirit in the image of love, but He also sent His love Spirit to live in you and teach you how to love as He loves (Romans 5:5). **VICTORY**

Discover the Love



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Question&Answer



MY WIFE AND I HAVE PRAYED THE PRAYER OF AGREEMENT ABOUT SEVERAL SITUATIONS IN OUR LIVES. BUT SO FAR, WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE RESULTS WE EXPECTED. I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER IF THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE WE NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE THIS KIND OF PRAYER WORK.

A: The prayer of agreement is one of the most powerful tools God has given us. It's a prayer that Jesus Himself guaranteed would bring results every time. "If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask," He said, "it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:19, *New American Standard*).

When you don't see the results He promised, I've found the problem usually lies in one of four areas.

1. RUN A HARMONY CHECK

The word *agree* that Jesus uses in Matthew 18:19 can also be translated "to harmonize" or "to make a symphony." A symphony is composed of many instruments which, when played together, seem to be a single voice.

If you've ever heard a symphony, you know that when the individual instruments are tuning up, each one playing separately from the other, it's not much to hear. But when the conductor raises his baton and all those instruments begin to harmonize, the sound they make is tremendously powerful.

The same thing is true in prayer. Believers agreeing together in the Holy Spirit are a powerful, unstoppable force. That's why Satan fights Christian families. That's why he doesn't want men and women unified in marriage. He wants us fighting and fussing all the time because he knows it will hinder our prayers (see 1 Peter 3:7).

Any time you fail to get results from the prayer of agreement, run a harmony check. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if you're in strife with your wife or anyone else. Then follow the instructions in Mark 11:25 where Jesus tells us, "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you...."

It is not sufficient for you and your wife to simply agree on the particular issue you are praying about. You must also be in harmony in other areas as well. So make a harmony check!

2. ESTABLISH YOUR HEART ON GOD'S WORD

The prayer of agreement will only work if it is based on the Word of God. You and your wife might agree that you'll own 100 oil wells by midnight, but you'll never see that

prayer of agreement come to pass because it's not founded on the Word of God.

So go to the Word first. Find the promise that covers the particular situation you're praying about. Then write it down and meditate on it until, as Psalm 112:7 says, your "heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord."

3. FIX YOUR MIND ON THE WORD

Second Corinthians 10:5 tells us to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Do what the Bible says and "think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). What things? Things from the Word of God!

Say to yourself, "I'll not think on anything contrary to this agreement." When Satan tries to slip in negative thoughts and break down your faith, tell him, "No, devil! I don't believe what you say. I believe what the Word says."

Then get out your Bible. Go back to the Word and soak your mind in it. Obey Proverbs 4:20-21 and keep it before your eyes.

4. ACT AS IF IT'S DONE

This is where so many believers miss it. They pray the prayer of agreement, taking a faith stand together. Then as soon as they walk out of the prayer closet, they start wringing their hands and saying, "Oh my, I just don't know what we're going to do if this problem doesn't get solved!"

Don't make that mistake. Once you've settled the issue through the prayer of agreement, refuse to act like that issue is a problem anymore. Instead, just start praising God. In every way you can, act as though all is well.

When someone asks you about the matter, just answer them with faith. Say, "Glory to God, that issue is handled. My wife and I have agreed in prayer. God is honoring our agreement. As far as we're concerned, that problem is behind us."

The prayer of agreement is a powerful tool. So don't be discouraged by your past experience. Just make the necessary adjustments, run a harmony check, establish your heart on the Word, fix your mind on the Word, act as if it's done—and keep on in agreement. And anything you ask shall be done for you by your Father in heaven. **VICTORY**



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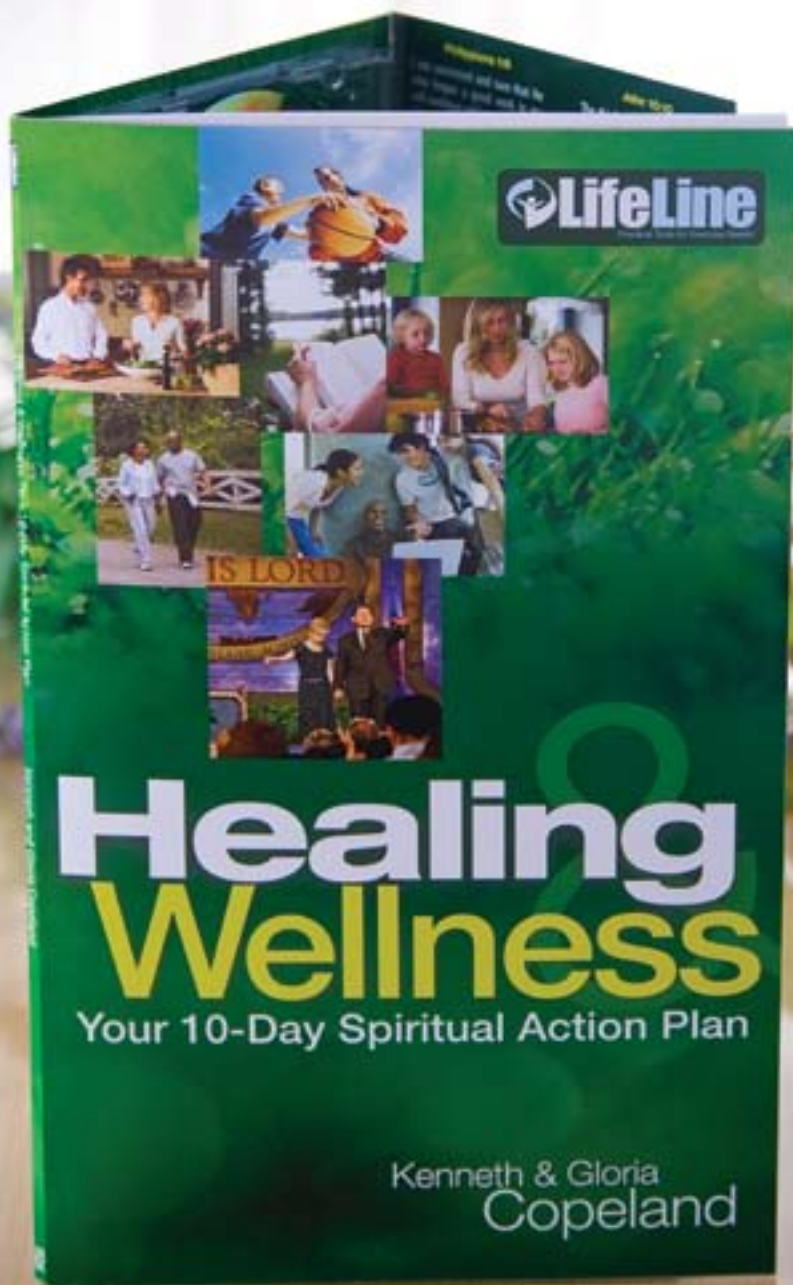
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Escaping

the pit of indecision



Lord, is this really You, or is it me? Am I about to do the wrong thing? I really need to hear from You on this!" ¶ We've all been there at one time or another. ¶ I'm talking about that place of indecision—that place where we're not sure if we're making the right decision or not, and we find ourselves in fear over the future. We want to know, we need to know that God is leading and guiding and He is directing our steps. But because we don't know how to truly hear from God, because we're not connected to Him in such a way we really know what is His will for our lives, a cold grip of fear wraps itself around us as we wrestle with the torment of not knowing what to do.

But is fear OK? Absolutely not!

Now, you may say, “But, Brother Keith, you don’t understand. I don’t know what the problem is. I’ve prayed and I’ve prayed. I can’t seem to get it. I can’t seem to hear the Lord. I don’t want to miss it. This is important. I’ve got to hear from God!”

I understand exactly what you’re saying. And I understand your not wanting to miss God. You want to know you’re doing His will. But I can also hear the fear in your voice.

Right there, you’re putting a spiritual law in motion. It’s the same thing Job did when he said, “For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me” (Job 3:25).

Fear is a perverted form of faith, and that’s not the way we’re supposed to live.

GOD ALWAYS KNOWS

There is never a day God has to pause and wonder, *Should I do this or should I do that?* He knows the end from the beginning. He always knows. He never operates in guessing, wondering, ifs and maybes.

You may say, “Yeah, but, He’s God and I’m not.” And you would be correct. He is God. But by His Spirit He dwells in you. And He is not a vacillating, fearful spirit.

Second Timothy 1:7 says God didn’t give us a spirit of fear, but rather He gave us a spirit of power, love and a sound mind. He didn’t give us a spirit of intimidation or insecurity, or wondering and wavering. James 1:6-7 says let not the man who wavers think he shall receive anything from the Lord. Why? Because he’s double-minded—and that’s not faith, it’s fear. Insecurity is another name for fear.

So, how do you get out of that terrible pit of vacillation and torment to the place of knowing His will in your situation? First, you must be willing to submit to His will and do whatever He tells you to do, even when you don’t understand it and when part of you doesn’t want to do it. John 7:17 says, “If any man will do his will, he shall *know*...” Some translations say it like this: “If any man wills to do his will” or “is willing to do his will, he shall know.” If you’re willing to do His will, Jesus said you will know.

What makes a person so unsure, so insecure? It is from previous rejection and ignoring of truth. It’s not the hearer of the Word, but the doer who is liberated. When you love the truth the Lord shows you enough to do it, and the light of that truth will dispel darkness and confusion. Ignoring what He reveals to you is so dangerous. Folks don’t even realize what they’re doing when they hear and see the truth and don’t want it. What is there to believe besides the truth? Only lies and deception.

Some years ago, while attending a large conference, I was looking around recognizing many minister friends of mine. I was thinking, *Glory to God! What a wonderful meeting.* And the Lord spoke to me.

Keith, there’s a misconception among your group.

I thought, *A misconception? Lord, what is it?*

There is a misconception that if you’ll get in the Word enough, it will solve all your problems.

Yeah, we pretty much believe that, I thought.

That’s wrong. It’s only the doer of the Word who gets results. You can go to meetings all your life and stay in bondage.

Think about that for a moment, and you’ll realize just how true that is.

You can have everyone and their brother’s books and tapes. You can quote everything you’ve ever read and heard from the Scripture. You can rattle off Bible verses and all the Greek definitions. But unless you’re willing to receive the truth and do the Lord’s will, you won’t get results in any area and you’ll stay in bondage year after year. When you begin to *do* the Word it will change your life.

So many people are virtually pulling their hair in frustration over their continued problems. They’re thinking, *Here I am, a Word person. I’ve got all this Word in me, I’ve been to all these meetings and heard all these things, and yet I’ve still got this giant mess I’ve had for the last 12 ½ years.*

It’s not a great mystery, my friend. If we want to be free from self-deception and delusion and hear from God, we have to come back to willingness to receive the truth and do His will. When we’re endeavoring to find His direction for our lives, willingness to do His will is one of the biggest prerequisites. Some things are going to require a change on your part. They’re going to require you putting your flesh under. Matthew 10:24 says the servant is not above his master. There were times when Jesus didn’t want to do the will of the Father. But He showed His great strength and love for His Father when He submitted Himself to God in the garden. He prayed, “Not my will, but thine, be done.”

Was it easy for Jesus to submit? Hebrews 5:7 tells us, “Who in the days of his [Jesus’] flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.” The Bible says Jesus sweat great drops of blood. I wouldn’t call that easy, but He did it! Aren’t you glad He did?

If there were times when the Master didn’t want to do the will of the Father, there will be times when you won’t want to do it, either. But can you do it even when you don’t want to? Can you get hold of yourself and say, “Yes, I am going to do His will. I’m going to do the Word. I don’t care how annoyed I am. I am going to walk in love. I don’t care what they said and did. I’m going to do what the Word says.” Yes, you can do it by the grace of God, just as the Master did.

GO WITH GOD

Do you know that other people’s lives are affected by our obedience? Whether or not we submit to God’s will not only affects our own lives, but the lives of our families, children, grandchildren, spouses and friends.

One of the greatest things you'll ever do for your family and friends is to go with God all the way. Submit to Him and completely do His will. Initially it can look like you're going further away from them. It can look and feel like you're being separated or even losing each other. But in time you'll be at a place where you can help them. Things will come full circle and you'll be so glad you obeyed God. It's the best thing you'll ever do for them, even when they're hollering at you not to do it.

Some of the very people who did their best to talk me out of going into the ministry were the first ones to later pat me on the back, saying things like, "Boy, you did the right thing!" The Lord was able to use us to help them. It pays to listen to the Lord and not men. You're really doing them a great favor by obeying, even though they don't know it.

TALK FAITH!

The second way to know God's direction for your life is to talk your faith. When thoughts and feelings of fear come to you about missing it, going the wrong way or staying when you should leave or leaving when you should stay, you need to open your mouth right then and say, "I *will* do the right thing. The Lord is leading me. He is directing me. He's guiding my steps. I'm His sheep and I know His voice. I won't follow a strange voice. I won't go the wrong way. He will help me and I will do the right thing."

Your head may be screaming, *Yeah, but I don't know what to do*. Say, "Shut up, head. I *will* do the right thing. I have an anointing from the Holy One and I know everything I need to know."

When you *know*, it makes you bold. Boldness is not something you put on as an act of your will. No, boldness comes from knowing. When you know how to get to a certain destination because you've done it numerous times, there is a confidence about you.

The Apostle Paul wrote to his supporters and people under his ministry and said "Pray...for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:18-19). If Paul had to ask for prayer to be bold, it must not be the result of a fleshly decision.

Some people mistake pushiness for boldness. Have you ever come across people like that? Did it make you want to praise the Lord? No, true boldness is not just something you put on or the result of intellectual knowledge. It comes from the *anointing* of knowing. Is there such a thing? According to 1 John 2:20 there is "an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." *Unction* means "anointing." This unction, this anointing of knowing resides on the inside of you because the Holy One lives inside you. It causes you to know.

YOU KNOW SOMETHING

Even if you don't know all the details of what to do or what is coming in your life, you do know some things. You know, for instance, God will never leave you nor forsake you. You know

He will always cause you to triumph. You know He'll never let you down.

When you learn to walk in this kind of faith and trust in your heavenly Father, like you're supposed to, trouble can be all around you, but you won't be distressed. You know He is faithful, and He cares for you.

Is it possible to be stress- and distress-free? Yes! Second Corinthians 4:8 says, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." You *can* count it all joy when you're in the midst of trials and tribulations. People will think, *Bless his heart. He just doesn't have sense enough to see how much trouble he's in. Look at him. He acts like he's on a vacation. Doesn't he know the world is crashing in around him?*

How can you do that? Because you *know*! You're not wondering or guessing or hoping so! It makes you sure. It makes you bold. It sets you free. No cringing, no fear. Someone might say, "Do you know about that situation?" And you'll calmly reply, "No."

"You mean you don't know what's going to happen with all that?"

"No."

"You don't seem too bothered about it."

"No."

We may not know or understand everything about a certain situation, but we don't have to be in distress or perplexed. There will always be things we don't know or understand, but we can trust in the One who does and He will always put us over. If we're walking in this kind of faith, we can relax.

The world believes trouble equals distress. Well, it does not. Not for faith people. Our names are written in the Lamb's book of life! We are seated together with Him in heavenly places.

Can you trust the One who died for you? Can you rest in knowing the Creator of the universe, the One who hung the planets is watching over you? His Word is truth, and if you'll stay in faith and be willing to receive the truth and do His will, you will come to the place where you will *know*!

Pray this out loud: "Father God, I know that in You is light and no darkness, no confusion. Any confusion I've had is not from You. I'm asking You to work in me to will and to do of all Your good pleasure, to desire to be willing to do Your will. I say by faith I delight to do Your will, O God. I delight to please You, to submit to Your Word and to do Your perfect will. Anything You've shown me in the past that I've ignored, pushed down or pushed aside or that I was unwilling to submit to or do, I ask You to show me again. Have mercy on me. Make it clear and plain to me. What I didn't see, show me. What I have forgotten, please remind me. What I've not understood, make known to me. In Jesus' Name. Amen." **VICTORY**



Keith Moore is founder and president of Moore Life Ministries and pastor of Faith Life Church in Branson, Mo. For more information or ministry materials write to Moore Life Ministries, P.O. Box 1010, Branson, MO 65615; call 417-334-9233; or visit www.moorelife.org.



STAY IN THE RACE

BY GLORIA COPELAND



“...LET US RUN WITH PATIENCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US.” HEBREWS 12:1

Are you a person who desires to be and do all God has called you to, yet find yourself sometimes feeling as though you are running a race, but going nowhere? ¶ Well, don't despair. You are on the right track, and you will finish the race. You will fulfill God's calling on your life. According to Philippians 1:6, you can be confident "that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Isn't that a wonderful thing to know?

God is constantly working on our behalf to maneuver us into the exact place we need to be. Our part is to submit to Him and what He is doing in us, and realize we are not called to just coast through life.

Since the day we were born again, Ken and I have never been able to coast in our lives. That's good because if you think you can coast, you will be moved by every wind and tide that comes along, and eventually go backward. God has always had a challenge for us to keep us moving forward. He has always had goals and opportunities set before us that have kept us focused and challenged us to stay in the race.

Moving Forward

God never lets us stay still. He keeps us moving! We walk out His plan for us step by step, by faith.

I learned from Rufus Moseley that God works gradually in preparation and suddenly in achievement. One day it can look like you are a million miles from the goal He has called you to, but you're staying in faith, walking out His plan. Then, suddenly it comes to pass and you are there!

When we were born again, we actually entered the race of faith. Not a race where we try to beat someone else out of a trophy, but a race where we each can obtain the prize. Hebrews 12:1 tells us about this race. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

The *race* here actually means "conflict or combat." We all have obstacles to overcome and hurdles to jump. Some of them come from the devil, and we are wise to learn quickly how to use God's Word to overcome his attacks.

Then, there is another aspect of our race. We race against ourselves—in that much of our conflict is with our own comfort zone. Our goal is to move forward, not stay where we are, but to do whatever it takes to fulfill the plan and purpose of God for our lives. We should be always growing in Him.

He will keep bringing us into contact with "the next step" in His plan. He will show us the next goal or the next plateau. We will always have an

opportunity in front of us to move forward in our race.

And the longer we stay in the race, the more we look forward to the next step. We always keep our hearts turned to His Word for instructions.

You might say, "Gloria, it sounds like you never get any rest." Sure we do. But the largest portion of our rest comes in letting God work out *through* us the plan He has *for* us! We enjoy the seasons of physical rest He gives us, but our real joy and most satisfying rest come in knowing He will speak to us again and let us know what our next step is in fulfilling the mission He's given us!

We have learned when you are following God's plan for your life, you stay on the move, because when you get one thing accomplished He's got something bigger ahead for you

to do. The best part of it all is knowing He has called us to run life's greatest race. It's a good race because we win! We are always believing God beyond what we can do, eager to see how He will bring us through in victory.

Operating Beyond Yourself

We have to come to grips with this truth: If we are going to accomplish what God has called us to do and stay in the race, we can't do it in the natural. We must operate beyond ourselves.

God must be involved in every step we take in His plan for our lives and work. It took me about 18 years in ministry to figure this out. Then, one day, it dawned on me: *God does not expect Ken and me to know how to do what He calls us to do.* That took the pressure off me. He doesn't look for someone who's got it all together. He doesn't expect us to have all the resources or limitless funds we will need to get the job done. That's why He gives us faith that's available in His Word.

I believe His greatest joy is in calling us to cooperate with Him in doing the impossible. We engage our faith and He provides the wisdom and understanding for us to follow through. He calls alongside the people whom He has prepared to partner with us to fulfill our mission. According to His Word, He supplies all the finances we need to get the job done through the

Salvation Prayer

If you do not know
Jesus
as your Saviour & Lord,
simply pray the following
prayer in faith, and Jesus will
be your Lord!

Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your Word says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" and "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:9). You said my salvation would be the result of Your Holy Spirit giving me new birth by coming to live in me (John 3:5-6, 15-16; Romans 8:9-11) and that if I would ask, You would fill me with Your Spirit and give me the ability to speak with other tongues (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:4).

I take You at Your Word. I confess that Jesus is Lord. And I believe in my heart that You raised Him from the dead. Thank You for coming into my heart, for giving me Your Holy Spirit as You have promised, and for being Lord over my life. Amen.

If you have just prayed this prayer, please contact us and let us know of your decision. We have a free Salvation Package we would like to send you to help you begin your new life in Jesus! Simply write and ask for offer #K0602, tick the circle on the order form that comes with this magazine or call **+44 (0)1225 787310.**

principle of sowing and reaping. We sow, then our Partners in ministry sow, and we all reap the harvest to accomplish His work. To top it all off, we receive all we need to live the blessed life and receive yet more seed to sow. His seedtime and harvest plan for providing resources is a wonderful plan (see 2 Corinthians 9:6-11).

When we step into the race, God doesn't expect us to know it all or have it all, but He does expect us to hear from heaven to receive His direction about what He's called us to do. More than anything, He desires to teach us how to live and minister in the supernatural realm—the realm of His blessing and limitless kingdom. And He teaches and trains us through His Word. He intends for us to understand His Word and to believe His promises. We get His Word into our hearts, get it out our mouths, and obey His direction to take action on the Word.

We receive the Word, believe it, speak it into our situation and act on it! Our dependence on God's Word for

our effective life and ministry is the only way any of us can operate beyond ourselves to see the work completed effectively. It is believing the Word regardless of circumstances that keeps us strong to endure the race until we finish and win!

Patience Takes the Prize

The Apostle Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). To press is to keep steady and never take your eyes off the finish line, no matter how long it takes to get there.

The key is patience! James 1:4 says we should "let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (*New King James Version*).

We each have a lot to do in the mission God has given us, and, praise God, we don't have to be out there without what we need, incomplete and imperfect. Having patience

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in our race will get us through to each of our goals with everything required so we may confidently declare, "Mission accomplished!"

I know as we walk in faith, it seems like things move so slowly in our lives. We want to get going and *do something*, but it seems like it takes a long time to get to the next place.

When I look back over the last 42 years of ministry, I think, *Wow, we have come such a long way and God has accomplished so much!*

Oh, the people we have met and the great churches we have been blessed to be connected with. The faithful Partners and Friends who have joined us throughout the years have been vital to all God has always had planned for us. Our family has come on board and helped us in countless ways. Faith has multiplied again and again throughout the world.

We wouldn't trade our slow, steady race for anything on earth!

Your race may be slow, but you *can* run it with patience as Hebrews 12:1 tells us, "...Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." That's kind of an odd pairing of terms—running and patience. But, we can run and we will be undergirded by patience so we don't give up or become discouraged. We keep moving in the direction God has called us to move. We patiently keep our eyes on the prize!

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus!

Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

When we keep our eyes on Jesus, the beginning and end of our faith race, we gain the courage to keep going because we know all our strength and resources to make it come straight from Him. We begin to see our race as pure joy! Every obstacle and hurdle becomes a point of victory as God moves us around and helps us overcome them.

We look to Jesus. We look to God's Word and we see Him. When we do, we know quitting is not an option. We can't even entertain the thought of lying down in the race. Every step in our mission is taking us closer to the finish line.

And we begin to enjoy the race, recognizing the race itself to be the most important thing. Each step is one more level of training to get us to the prize with flying colors!

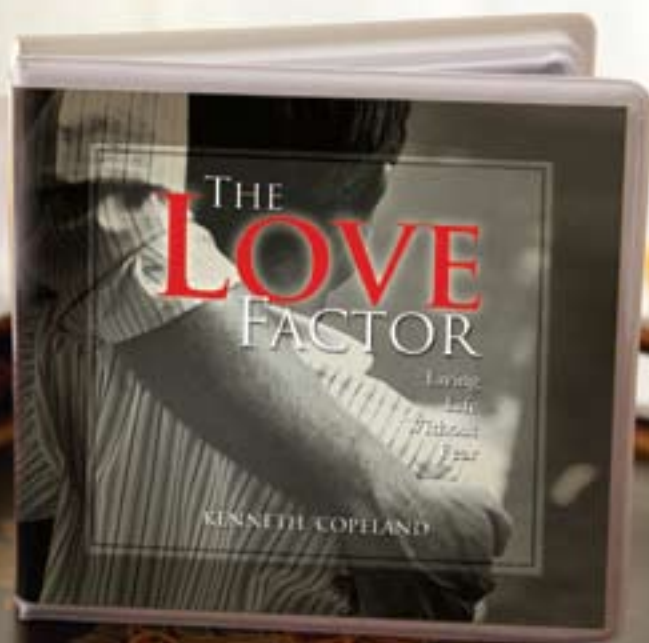
We don't count our life's mission to be compared with the glorious, redeeming life of Jesus. But, one thing we do know is that our race is part of God's big plan for humanity. He has set each of us in the race to do what only we can do. Whether we preach to thousands or speak a word of kindness to our neighbor, we express

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the love of God. Whether we have a healing ministry or we serve or volunteer in the medical community, we express His heart to have His people well. Whether we teach the Bible to people of the nations or teach in children's church, we express His desire to give people the power of the Word!

Whatever we do, we are in this race together, and we each are blessed to fulfill our part in God's plan. As we run, we will help people direct their focus to see Jesus who loved them and gave Himself for them. People are saved! Lives are changed! That's the prize that makes the race worth it all! **VICTORY**

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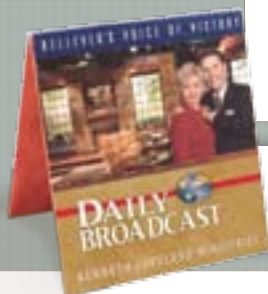


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