



**OVER COMERS,
UNDER ORDERS**

**BREAKING THROUGH WALLS
OF DOUBT AND FEAR**

CHRIS AND CAROL GREEN

Overcomers, Under Orders

*Breaking Through Walls
of Doubt and Fear*

By

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and

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Fruitful Living Series Book #5

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version of the Bible.

Overcomers, Under Orders (*Fruitful Living Series – Book #5*)
– *Breaking Through Walls of Doubt and Fear*

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to Carlette Mack, Tiffany McCreight and Dawn Ward-Murphy; three of our spiritual daughters who were living through the most trying seasons of their lives during the writing of this book.

The Word of God shall continue to bring breakthrough in your lives. You have truly been destined to overcome, under orders.

Preface

The **Fruitful Living** books started when we began sending weekly emails simply because we did not have a midweek service. As the Lord granted us wonderful times of Bible teaching, prophetic prayer, team encouragement, and group fellowship, we immediately saw a need to maintain the momentum from Sunday to Sunday by sending emails in the middle of every week.

Those weekly emails were eventually incorporated into devotional books that have become a powerful resource for words of strength and reminders of God's promises to us as a church family.

After compiling the first set of emails, which we divided into four seasons (Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer), we continued to send the weekly emails and noticed a purposeful theme was bursting through during the second year.

We felt as if though God was using the weekly words to consistently and persistently hammer against the walls of doubt and fear that had taken resident in us and the hearts and homes of our readers. Every week, another blow was struck for truth and freedom.

During our first year, we closed most of our weekly e-newsletters with the phrase: We're overcomers, under orders. So we decided to use that declaration to express the theme of this book. As you read through this portion of our journey, we trust that God will use it to encourage you in yours.

Autumn

All I See Is Beautiful

I find it amazing how my wife, who is such a gorgeously beautiful woman, does not see what I see when I look at her. She eats right, exercises regularly, and has impeccable taste in clothing. Sometimes I walk up to her and simply say, "Hey beautiful..."

Still, every time I say it, she blushes and blinks in complete astonishment. She has told me that I have a habit of telling her that she's beautiful when she feels like she's looking her worst.

Have you ever wondered how a husband can kiss his wife after the trauma of childbirth and tell her that she's beautiful? Isn't it funny how it can be a T-shirt and sweat pants day and a husband will tell his wife that she's pretty? There are times when everything is going wrong, the makeup is not working and the hair is not cooperating, but a husband, fiancé or boyfriend will say, "You are just so beautiful."

One day I heard Carol telling someone that now that she's getting older and battling with time and gravity, she doesn't understand why her husband keeps chasing her. I waited a while before picking up on that conversation. We were sitting on the sofa together when I told her that I heard what she said about herself. I just looked at her and said, "All I see is beautiful."

This made me realize that when true love is present, you don't focus on the flaws. You see with the eyes of love. You see who your wife truly is inside and outside. It's not just her hairstyle, but her hair is beautiful. It's not the makeup or the room lighting that makes her eyes beautiful. Even when there are tears and weariness in them, it does not take away from the reality that her eyes are beautiful. It's not the lipstick that makes the lips beautiful. Her lips make the lipstick look good. Need I go further? I think you get my point.

Then I had the most wonderful thought. If I can feel this way

as a mere man about my wife, then how much more does God feel about us.

The Bible describes the relationship between a husband and a wife like that of Christ and the church. So when Jesus sees His bride (the church) He sees beautiful.

Unfortunately, since a lot of teaching and preaching is focused upon fault finding and sin searching, many people, within the church, find it difficult to see a relationship with God in a healthy way. If you had a bad marriage or if your parents divorced, it can be very hard to relate to Jesus in this way.

When people tell me that they believe God will kick people out of His family at the slightest error and mistake, then they're telling me that I have more love for my wife than God has for me. I cannot accept that teaching. I made my wife a promise even before we got married. I told her that I would never leave her. Then I set out to prove it.

I believe that's the way we are loved by God. Once we give our hearts and lives to Him, we become a part of the church and we become His bride. Something special happens inside of us. From that moment on, HE sees beautiful. HE promised to never leave us and HE set out to prove it.

So even though we may be struggling in some areas of our life, He is not turned away by blemishes, spots and wrinkles. HE still sees beautiful. Many have misquoted a particular scripture in the Bible and said Jesus is coming for a church without blemishes, spots and wrinkles, but read it for yourself. That's not what the Bible says.

The writer says that God will **present Himself** a church (bride) that will be without blemishes, spots or wrinkles. It goes on to say that He's going to clean and prepare the church Himself, for Himself. And HE's going to do it by the washing of water that comes through His Word. HE's going to do it in a patient, loving way.

Just so that you understand me clearly, this scripture was written in the context of **How Husbands Are to Love Their**

Wives. So a husband is not being told to let his wife get herself prepared for him and if she's not perfect, then he has the right to reject her.

No, the writer was telling husbands to love their wives the same way Christ loves the church; which is unconditional acceptance of who she really is right now, and total commitment to help her become all that she is meant to be.

You may look at your flaws and tell God that you need to change your spiritual diet and begin to spiritually exercise. Those are nice things to do. They are even the right things to do. But they won't make HIM accept you and love you any more than HE already does. It won't make you more attractive or more desirable. He already loves you and already sees who you are.

You see, God doesn't have to wait for weeks, months and years to see the final results. God can see the final product NOW. I personally believe that after we die and go to be with Him in eternity; in heaven, we will finally see ourselves the way God has seen us all along. We'll realize that we spent a lot of time trying to obtain something that we always had.

So the next time you're having one of those days or one of those weeks where nothing is going right, you're feeling ugly, its T-shirt, sweat pants and a bowl of ice cream time, or if it's unshaven and 'vegged' out time (for us guys), just remember that when the Lord steps into that private space in your life where you always retreat, don't be alarmed or embarrassed. ALL HE SEES IS BEAUTIFUL.

We Win

We must take this opportunity to tell you of the wonderful works of God. We cannot put into words how it felt to be sitting in Harrisburg, unable to get to our family in St. Louis, Missouri, after learning that my younger brother had just suffered a heart attack. We learned that he actually died in the emergency room.

Carol and I, along with our sons, were simply stunned. There is no way to describe the feeling when you are hit so hard that you can't even pray.

At this point, we don't care how unreligious this may sound or how that confession may appear to be a lack of faith. We will always strive to be **real about it** with you guys. Part of the problem in the church is that we won't be real about what we're going through, so you guys, in the next generation, are made to put us up on a pedestal. So we're coming down off the platform and telling you: We were devastated, scared and angry...for two days.

Nine years ago, one of my brothers died in October. It was such a blow that even to this day, the month of October brings back those memories and feelings. So to get a call like this, in October, the month that we have declared to be a **Celebration of Life**, was a huge blow.

All we could say was just, "God please, not again!"

Suddenly things began to turn around. Someone in St. Louis provided special passes so that we could fly to St. Louis. We left on Tuesday morning. My brother was still on a ventilator and a heart machine. He had been sedated for 72 hours. The doctors did not know what to anticipate.

While we were waiting for our flight, we received word that my brother was awake. We did not know what to expect by the time we arrived. Would there be brain damage? Would he need a heart transplant? There were far more questions than answers.

By the time Carol and I arrived at the hospital Tuesday afternoon, he was awake and talking. Since he was in ICU, he could only have two visitors at a time. Carol and I were able to sit with him and his wife for a few minutes in our first visit. When we left, Carol and I kissed my brother on his forehead. He will always be our little brother.

Later in the evening, I was able to spend some good quality time with him alone. It was hard to see my brother in this condition, but I was just so thankful that he was alive. He was very weak and could barely speak above a whisper. I told him to not try to talk as I just spoke the promises of God and encouraged him. I told him this was not PASTOR Chris talking. This is just Chris, your big brother.

Wednesday, we were able to spend more moments together. Throughout the day, he kept requesting his wife, Cynthia, and he kept asking for Chris and Carol. Being the kind of man that he is, he asked me about his wife and daughters. He wanted to know how they are **"really doing."** So I told him, frankly, that his girls are amazing. They are full of faith, especially his baby girl.

Whenever I saw his heart rate increasing on the monitor, I directed the conversation to lighter subjects. We talked about our childhood days and I kept encouraging him about the future.

His progress was so remarkable that he was able to eat dinner Wednesday evening in a chair. It was his first time out of the bed. During that time, Carol and I went to visit our home church for its midweek service. God gave us a wonderful release in the prayer session and we shared a brief encouragement with the church family.

Carol and I went back to the hospital where we stayed all night, Wednesday night into Thursday morning. God just gave us supernatural strength to sit with him and not get tired at all. Cynthia (his wife) was with him until 2:00am. I relieved her at that point. Carol sat with her in the waiting room, so she could get some sleep. I took the chair at the foot of his bed and I just sang and worshipped softly.

Between worship and praying all night, we had brief moments of conversation. He was not in any pain, but he was having difficulty trying to fall asleep. Also, he was uncomfortable in that hospital bed. Johnny is a big guy; taller and much thicker than me. He ran track as a kid and played basketball in high school and college. He's always been very strong. He finally managed to fall asleep at 6:00am. It was a good peaceful, restful sleep. I was glad to see it.

When he woke up, he looked straight over at me to see if I was still there. We made sure that somebody was always there. We didn't want him alone.

He was so tired of lying down, that he asked me to help him sit up so that he could, at least, sit with his feet hanging over the side of the bed. The nurses came in while he was sitting up and took his vitals and kept reporting that he's doing really well.

When Carol and I left the hospital that morning, the medical staff was talking about taking him out of Intensive Care and placing him in a regular room. The nurse told him that he is a miracle. He was still very weak and was still trying to grasp the reality of what has happened to him.

When we arrived at the hospital Thursday evening, we found Johnny and my family in a room on the floor. Not only was Johnny released from ICU, but HE WALKED FROM ICU TO HIS ROOM. God has so graced him that he was able to walk out of ICU.

Needless to say, we thought he'd be rolled out on his bed or placed in a wheelchair, but HE WALKED OUT OF THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT. We're so excited. All we could do was just hug and rejoice together. Most of our family was present. His girls were so glad to see their daddy. His baby girl was all smiles as she hugged her daddy over and over.

It was so many of us Greens with all the nieces and nephews, so on and so on, that we literally got put out of his room because we were a bit too noisy for the floor. Johnny was tired after seeing everyone, so we still had to maintain the

request for no other visitors. Even just seeing all the family was a bit much. However, he was so glad to see everyone.

We want to thank you for praying for my family. They were on watch night and day at the hospital for three days while Johnny was on a ventilator and a heart machine. Long before Carol and I arrived, they had endured a lot just watching and praying for our beloved brother.

All he remembers is being told that he was having a heart attack. Then he says, he woke up three days later. Then just two days after that, he had been granted the grace and strength to walk away from what the enemy intended to be his death bed. Instead of planning a funeral, we're making plans for a new future, a new start and a new life.

God gave Carol and me this song about two years ago and I'll close with the lyrics:

I JUST KNOW WHEN LIFE GOES WRONG
I GIVE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE
I JUST KNOW WHEN I'M IN A STORM
I GIVE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE
I JUST KNOW WHEN I'M IN A MESS
I GIVE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE
I JUST KNOW IN STRIFE AND STRESS
I GIVE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, I LIFT MY VOICE AND SAY
WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, I PRAISE GOD ANYWAY
WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, I LIFT MY HANDS AND WAVE
WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, GOD HAS MADE A WAY

I JUST KNOW WHEN I WANNA GIVE UP
I MAKE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE
I JUST KNOW IT'S BETTER TO TRUST
AND MAKE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE
I JUST KNOW WHEN I MAKE THE CHOICE
I MAKE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE
I JUST KNOW TO LIFT MY VOICE
AND MAKE A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, I LIFT MY VOICE AND SAY
WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, I PRAISE GOD ANYWAY
WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, I LIFT MY HANDS AND WAVE
WE WIN, WE WIN, WE WIN, GOD HAS MADE A WAY

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In the Eye of the Hurricane

We're living in such critical time in the history of mankind that I've found myself in deep prayer and thought about what to share with you this week. The financial markets of the world are collapsing, crime and violence are soaring, persecution is increasing against the church around the world, and we're about to transition into new leadership in this country.

As I have prayed and asked the Lord how to navigate the days ahead of us, I have heard this one word of instruction: We must learn to live in the eye of the hurricane.

The eye of the hurricane has to be one of the most phenomenal wonders of the world. God speaks a powerful revelation of life itself through this aspect of nature. The Bible says in Psalm 19 that the heavens declare the glory of God. One translation of the Hebrew text reads: The elements declare the glory of God. This is one element that truly expresses something special about God.

How is it possible that in the center of this horrible storm, where the wind can exceed 150 miles per hour, that the atmosphere can be peaceful, calm and even sunny? As the storm moves along the ocean surface, it is picking up energy and growing worse, but the center remains the same.

I find it interesting that the only way you can stay in the center of the storm (in the peace and presence of God), is to keep moving. You can't just sit. You can't be passive and comfortable. If you try to maintain your personal space of comfort, you will find yourself caught in the outer perimeter of the storm. The eye of the storm is moving because the storm is moving. So you have to keep moving with the peace of God (the eye of the storm).

Colossians 3:15-16 tells us how to keep moving with God in the midst of the storm.

...And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

This week, let's talk about **letting the peace of God rule**. This phrase means, we must be governed and led by the assurance of God Himself. That means He will direct us to go places, meet people, and do things that we may not want to do. So we must learn the difference between the **peace of God** and the **peace of our own hearts and minds**.

Sometimes there's no peace in our mind about doing certain things or going certain places because of our bad memories and our negative experiences. Many people have to learn the difference between their own **personal peace** and the **peace of God**.

Since we've been in this role of ministering in this community, we have seen scores of people who are led by their own personal peace. If they don't feel right about something, they won't do it, even when God is clearly leading them.

Even after God has clearly proven that it was Him directing their steps, they still allow the past to rule their hearts. They allow previous church experiences to rule their hearts. They allow their personal preferences to rule their hearts. They allow their expectations to rule their hearts. They allow the way others treated them to rule their hearts.

I recently heard a well known television minister declare that they don't go places where they are merely TOLERATED, but they only go to places where they are CELEBRATED. That's a very powerful, but unscriptural approach to ministry. What happened to OBEDIENCE TO GOD?

I don't know of any of God's prophets, apostles, preachers, or leaders who were living by that standard. Not only were most of them not celebrated, but they were hated. We don't only go where we feel we will personally benefit from the experience. You and I must go wherever God says for us to go.

As the storm is moving, we have to move with the eye of the storm (Peace of God). What if the eye of the storm leads you to people you don't usually hang out with? That's what happened to Peter. What if the eye of the storms leads you to work for your enemies? That's what happened to Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah. What if the eye of the storm leads you to a small group of people like our church family or some other new gathering of believers in your community? What if the peace of God leads you away from all that is familiar and comfortable?

In our earliest days in Harrisburg, a woman joined with us, but she later disclosed that she told God she didn't want to be in a small church because there are too many problems in a small gathering of believers. Her concern was legitimate, because most of us did not move with the eye of the storm at that time, and we lost our ship, crew and cargo in our first hurricane. Thankfully, God spared our lives.

Even today, as the current storm moves and the peace of God moves, we are facing major decisions on personal and ministry levels again. This time we must be faithful and obedient to move with God in the midst of the storm.

Five years ago, Carol and I left all that was familiar, prosperous and comfortable, to move to this region. Since we've been here, we've continually been required to move with the eye of the storm and remain in the peace and rest of God.

God's peace led us out of fulltime ministry and into the marketplace. God's peace led us from church facilities and into a home group gathering. God's peace led us onto the internet and into our current multi-media outreach. We recently discovered that God is directing many church planters in the same strategies around the world because of the storms that are coming forth on this nation, the world and the church.

We have often asked God why we were moving in this direction since hardly anyone knows about us and we haven't grown in over three years. But He keeps assuring us that a day will come when people will look for ministries that are

lifting up Jesus and not lifting up pastor personalities. They will look for people who are real as they grow weary of their traditions, religion and politics. So we'll just keep moving with the eye of the storm, in the peace of God.

Right now, many find their jobs threatened, their families in crisis and even some church communities are beginning to waiver in fear. As you could tell from the first part of what I wrote in last week's Midweek Connection, we haven't escaped storms, either.

We didn't intend for our communication to sound angry, fearful or faithless. I guess, like David, the Psalm can start out very painful, but you end with praise on your lips when all is said and done. (I apologize if I came off emotional).

So I encourage you to abandon your fear and just flow with God. He is trustworthy. So this week, the Word for you and I is **keep moving with the peace of God.**

United in the Storm

Last night our nation elected another president and no matter if whether your candidate was chosen or not, we are facing many storms in our future. I personally believe the first one will be a storm of division which always strikes after an election. This year it will have a significant effect on the church in America because the polls within the church show the Body of Christ was divided along racial, political and social lines during this election.

Sometimes we were asked who we believed would win. As pastors and ministers, we're not supposed to publically endorse a political candidate, so we will continue to withhold our personal views on that subject. Also, since the church in America is so divided over the candidate choices, we have found it necessary to minister on a higher and more meaningful level than politics and race.

So you ask, what could possibly be more important than politics and race, especially since the issues that were raised were deeply spiritual and moral?

We choose to focus on the hearts of men, women, boys and girls, because the Bible declares that from the heart, spring the issues of life.

Proverbs 4:23 reads: *Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring **the issues of life**.*

So, before we start discussing the issues of life, we have to deal with the heart. Many hearts have not been kept (guarded and protected). They have been broken, wounded, damaged, crushed, twisted, perverted, distorted, etc. People are assuming their personal and political positions regarding the **issues of life** based upon what has happened in and to their hearts.

The Lord gave us a particular way to address the issues of today. The main objectives of Chris and Carol Green include being spiritual parents in this era. We believe God gave us this

approach to ministry because HE knew the kind of hearts this generation would have. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, was giving a warning regarding some matters, but in the midst of his warning he makes a profound statement to explain his position. He tells them,

*For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet **you do not have many fathers**; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. - 1 Corinthians 4:15-16*

So, like Paul, we're **not** making these statements just as instructors, teachers, pastors, or clergy. We write these weekly emails to you as spiritual parents because there really aren't many fathers (and mothers) in Christ. Before we were sent out in ministry, we were called primarily to be a father and mother to this generation.

Paul established solid relationships with the people reading his letters. He was basically telling them this: I've been more than a religious instructor. So don't just do what I'm telling you because I said so. Imitate me based upon what you've seen in me and what we have shared together.

So in your mental picture of Chris and Carol, please take away the podium, the clergy collar, the robes and sacred garments. We're just a father and mother, a dad and a mom, that God has touched with His love and compassion. HE told us to go and reach your generation with that kind of love and ministry.

If we never own another church facility again, it doesn't matter. Facilities and buildings can be a help or a hindrance, depending upon where people are in their own hearts. So this mom and dad are just saying, you have to learn how to live in the eye of the storm. You must learn to be thankful when there's a lot to complain about, all around you. You have to learn how to move with the eye of the storm.

Like parents talking to their kids, we're saying: While you are following the peace of God, let's stick together. There will

always be a lot to complain about, but don't give in to it. That's why Paul told everyone to be thankful.

Last week we started talking about **Living in the Eye of the Hurricane**. We felt this was necessary to discuss because we believe some spiritual storms are on the way. However, if our lives are built on the rock solid foundation of Jesus Christ and His Word, we will withstand the winds, rain and floods that are coming. We will be required to learn what it means to stay in the eye of the storm.

After last night's presidential election, we know that millions of people will come away from it with a lot of complaining. The election results have the potential to bring more division, than ever before, into the church in America. Somebody's expectations were not met and the complaining has already begun.

But look at the first portion of this scripture in Colossians 3:15-16, which tells us ...And **let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful**. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

If we're going to get through the storm of division, we must let the peace of God rule, to which we are called in one body. That's why we declare that no matter who has won the elections at state and federal levels, the Body of Christ must have a different agenda. Our goals and objectives go beyond politics and social reform. We are called in ONE BODY, not one political party.

We must let the peace of God rule in our hearts because we are called in one body. That's why, especially after this election, we must be thankful. Give thanks to God, no matter who has won the election. Even if you feel the absolute wrong person was chosen, you and I must MOVE WITH the eye of the storm. Be thankful we're in a nation where we still have this kind of freedom. Be thankful that we can take the fight

for righteousness to another level, over and above the political process. We can take it to the Lord, in prayer.

Look at Ephesians 4: 1-4. Paul writes: *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;*

This passage opens up a whole new understanding for us in this season. Paul is saying clearly; even though I'm in a tough situation myself, I beg you to walk worthy of the calling. He even tells us how to do it. He tells us the real point of it all, which is **endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

There's that word **peace** again. We have to MOVE TOGETHER in the eye of the storm. We won't all approve of the direction that the eye is going, but since our calling is higher, our goal is higher. Our purpose is above the earthly agendas.

So this mom and dad are urging you to not get caught up in the swift moving storm of division that is coming against the church. Everyone is not pleased with the election, but if we turn from putting our hopes in an earthly leader, to placing our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and moving forth with our Kingdom of God mandate, we can truly keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. This will keep us united, in the eye of the hurricane.

Let It Live

Last week, we received the highest number of responses to our weekly e-newsletter, than in any previous edition. That tells us that many hearts were stirred regarding the issue of knowing who their true king is. I stand corrected in one of my observations from last week. This is not so much a time of DIVIDING the body of Christ, as it is a time of DISCERNING the body of Christ. Now we will discover who understands what it means to be a part of the Body of Christ, and who simply holds a few religious beliefs.

Change has come to America. We are no longer one nation under God. We are now many nations, bowing to many gods. Now with that new understanding of where our nation truly stands, let's prepare to go forth into this changed world as ONE body to do God's will.

The real revelation of this new America is that the word Christian does not mean the same thing to every American. Now there are many definitions of that word. The main issue is that our nation has made it clear, even before the election, that they don't want God, His Word, His ways, or His influence in their lives.

Now we have a national leader who has embraced Christianity, yet sincerely promotes the philosophy of pluralism. You and I have to understand that pluralism has no toleration for true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We're really proud, in one sense, to see a Black man in the White House. We never imagined it would ever happen in our lifetime. But at the same time, our allegiance to Jesus Christ is over and above our ethnicity. We cannot embrace pluralism.

So how do we proceed from this moment on? Carol and I believe that God has appointed this moment to be part of the history of this nation, but it is for reasons that are known only to Him and His sovereign will. As a result, there is a new level of dependence upon God that has developed in our hearts.

This past week there has been a new hunger in my soul. I'm hungry for the Lord's presence, like never before. I've been weeping and crying as I sit at my desk at work. I'm crying in my sleep. All we could do was just pray and cry out to God in our meeting last Friday. In my heart I just keep singing these words over and over again:

**Lord, I'm hungry for you.
Lord, I'm hungry for you.
There's nothing else I can say.
Nothing more I can do.
We have turned from your way.
Other things we pursue.
I'm no longer satisfied because
I'm hungry for You.**

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We've been talking about what it takes to live in the eye of the hurricane. First we discussed the **Peace of God** and then we encouraged you to **keep the unity of the Spirit** and to be thankful.

This week we want to conclude this discussion with the final portion of the scripture, Colossians 3:16, which tells us

...Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

That's a lot of scripture to attempt to discuss, so we'll sum it up with this: Let the Word of God really live in you. We're not going to be able to navigate in the eye of the storm if we don't recognize the voice and will of God. The only way to consistently recognize God's voice and will is to know God's Word. We can't truly stay in step with Him if we don't live in His Word and let His Word live in us.

As I read this verse it occurred to me that we can always teach and admonish one another, but the question is, are we teaching from wisdom that comes from the Word of God? James 3:15 declares that there is a wisdom that does not descend from above, but it *is* earthly, sensual and demonic. If we operate in the kind of wisdom that comes from natural thinking, our own feelings, or even from the realm of the demonic, we will find ourselves in the midst of the destructive storm, instead of being in the eye of the storm, in the peace of God.

In fact, this same Bible passage goes on to say
...the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Wow! Isn't this a great thing to know?

Finally we are encouraged to literally sing the Word of God. God understands something about us in that the Word is able to get anchored in our spirit when we sing it. We all know how quickly we memorize commercials and theme songs to TV shows. That's because we sing them to ourselves and those songs become a part of our thinking and behavior. How much more will happen in us if we sing the realities of the Word of God?

So **let the Word of God live in you!** We believe God's Word will become an internal compass with which we can navigate in the eye of the storm. No matter how difficult the future may be for the world around us, we will prevail and prosper in the purpose of God because His Word is alive within us.

Riding the Rapids

There's such a stirring in my soul. God has been up to something for a long time and we can tell that we are standing on the brink of seeing what HE has already done. We have had some powerful prayer sessions and we know that the walls and barriers that have kept us from the harvest have been broken down.

Two weeks ago, we were on a teleconference with our Bishop and all the pastors we are united with, in the Urban Pastors and Leaders Alliance. It was a wonderful six hour session that seemed to fly by because it was so refreshing to be connected with those whom we share a common mandate from God to reach this generation.

At the end of the session, we prayed for one another. All of us have been going through some overwhelming battles in our assigned locales. From physical to financial issues, we have been in a life and death battle, but victory has come. This is the day we have long awaited. The longing in our souls has been to see genuine revival.

At one point our Bishop spoke into our lives here in Pennsylvania and proclaimed, "I see a barrier, and the harvest is on the other side of the barrier. God is tearing down the barrier!"

We're not talking about church transfer where people leave one church and start attending another church because things are exciting and new. No, we're talking about real, life changing revival, where we experience the presence of God that breaks forth in the healing of hearts and homes as well as minds and bodies.

In our Friday evening intercession we've been proclaiming an end to the drug trafficking in Harrisburg. We've been proclaiming salvation and restoration among the youth and young adults. We've been proclaiming a new unity amongst God's leaders. This has not been an emotional outburst or emotional release. The Lord has been moving on us in deep

cries and wails of intercession. Sometimes this kind of praying has been referred to as giving birth in the spirit realm. Without getting caught up in the controversy over that aspect of spiritual experiences, just hear us today.

God is up to something wonderful, powerful, explosive and unprecedented. He's not going to ask for our permission. He's just going to move.

Recently, I've dreamed about powerful rivers raging through the streets of Harrisburg. Our church family was in some type of vessel and we were just riding the rapids through the streets of Harrisburg. That means no church or ministry will be able to control the coming revival. We won't be able to predict it, manipulate or try to market it and advertise it. All we can do is ride with the move of God.

In one of our times of intercession, we found ourselves praying in agreement with the Holy Spirit, that the Lord God shall come down Himself, like He did in Genesis, to stop the work of this spiritual Tower of Babel that has been exalted in this region. The Lord shall come and confuse the language of the enemy once again. Even as He confuses and scatters the enemy's camp, He shall unite and order His true church.

We're excited y'all! It's a brand new move of God. Are you ready to ride the rapids?

Once again, there is a song in our heart to share with you this week. God gave us this song when we first moved to Harrisburg. Now today, He reminds us with these lyrics:

A Brand New Move of God

We're waiting, anticipating
A brand new move of God
The freshness, the cleansing
A new move in our hearts
Each time we gather in one accord
To sing His song, hear His voice
We're wanting, yes we're longing for
A brand new move of God

We're here for this and only this
Come on, let's move with God
Hold the calls, agendas fall
He's speaking to our hearts
Each time we gather in one accord
To sing His song, hear His voice
We're wanting, yes we're longing for
A brand new move of God

The curtains rise, the lights grow bright
Behold the move of God
He takes the stage, He gets the praise
Now give Him all applause
Each time we gather in one accord,
To sing His song, hear His voice
We're wanting, yes we're longing for
A brand new move of God

He walks the aisle, because that's His style
In this move of God
He heard your cry, He's by your side
So lift your hands up high
Each time we gather in one accord
To sing His song, hear His voice
Receive what you believed Him for
A brand new move of God

(ENDING)

Receive what you believed Him for
Trust Him now with all your heart
He's here to heal the wounded part
Come on let's worship Christ the Lord

My soul, my soul, my soul, waits for You
In this move of God

My soul, my soul, my soul, waits for You, O' Lord

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Living Fully, Finishing Strong

It's the beginning of the wonderful holiday season, from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, and we encourage you to take advantage of every moment with your family. Take nothing for granted. One of my co-workers died of a heart attack on Veterans Day.

I almost lost my younger brother due to a heart attack last month. By the way, he's doing great. So, if you are in the midst of long-term grudges and battles with your family, please get that stuff resolved. Life is too short and eternity is too long, so move on.

Don't live this life full of regrets and don't allow satan to cause you to waste so much time that when you come to the end of your life you'll have a long list of things that you never completed.

Sometimes people don't get started with their dreams because they're not connected with anyone rich or famous. They don't see how writing that book, or recording those songs will mean anything since they don't see any chance of producing a project that will ever be marketed and distributed around the nation or the world.

Don't give up simply because you see no connections and no possibility to be well known or financially supported. Dr. Myles Munroe, of Bahamas Faith Ministries Int'l, encourages people all over the world with these words:

"Don't take your songs and books with you to the grave. Don't take those ideas and inventions to the grave. Don't die full of vision. Die empty, because you got it out of you and into the world."

We later realized that he didn't mean that the whole world would read our books, sing our songs, or buy our ideas. It just means, it will be released into the world, and somebody, maybe our own kids, will pick it up and run with it. But it will start with us getting it out of our heads and hearts and into

the natural world where it can be seen, heard, touched or tasted.

That's why Carol and I live according to these on-going themes in our life: We're making memories. Forgiving quickly. Walking slowly. Hosting no regrets. Obeying God. Trusting God. Loving one another. Loving and enjoying our children. Living fully and finishing strong.

That's why we've written and recorded so many songs. It wasn't for a ministry. It wasn't for fame or fortune. We're not kidding ourselves. We know we don't have the greatest quality of music and vocals. But, we did it for our children and our grandchildren. One day they may listen to or read some of that stuff that grandma and grandpa recorded or published and somebody's going to reproduce it and bless their generation with songs and stories that were written 50 years ago.

That's why we've published our books and kept a journal of our ministry experiences. Our children and grandchildren will have a living map to show them how to navigate through their seasons of change, with the call of God on their lives.

It's not about music contracts or signing a big deal with a publishing company. We're building a foundation for a spiritual legacy. We're laying up treasure in heaven where these priceless things can't be corrupted, corroded, or stolen.

So that's why we're so thankful. God has made us two of the wealthiest people on the earth. It's not about how much we have acquired. It's all about how much God has allowed us to invest.

The Image

There are times when I'm driving through the streets of this community and I see so much hopelessness and fear on faces that it's overwhelming.

In my spirit, this is what I'm seeing. I'm standing at a bridge that is destroyed, but you can't convince anyone. So I'm watching this generation walk, run and march toward certain destruction. They look at me and because I'm not from this community they don't believe me. They look at my skin color and they don't believe me. They look at my aged face and they don't believe me. They look at my apparel or they observe my manner and they don't believe me.

This is the feeling of those who have the call of God on their lives to win and disciple people. You look at people every day, but they are so beaten down by sin, that they have no more hope. There are so many things that they have already tried to do to change their lives, but they found only empty promises. Why would they possibly believe that what I'm telling them will work this time?

I see people who are mesmerized by the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, Broadway, and Nashville. While thousands pursue careers in music, arts and entertainment, millions more are seeking a life changing breakthrough in sports and athletics.

Millions more are simply looking for some sense of normality, whatever that means. With so many who have been abused and traumatized from their early childhood, they think, 'how can there possibly be a God who has all of this supposed care and love for mankind?'

So as I write this I see a huge throng, a massive crowd that is marching past me. The very sound of their footsteps and the clamor of their efforts to survive drown out my voice. They march with eyes fixed toward a goal that is not obvious, but it's in their mind. They've been told to keep chasing their dreams, but the path they have chosen to pursue the dream

is leading to this cliff. The bridge is out and there's no way to get to the other side.

Many blindly push me aside as they ignore my pleas. I'm thinking, 'There's got to be somebody in this throng who will believe me. Surely there is someone who has been through enough hurt and pain that they will at least stop for a minute and consider that there might be another path to get to the place of fulfillment.'

If only I could just find one person who will listen to me. God is inside of me and I feel His pain. He's speaking through my voice. He's moving in my actions. My heart aches for those I'm watching. I'm moving upstream against a flow of humanity that is marching, like zombies, toward a cliff. I look back and many are already tumbling over the edge. They scream in terror with the final step that takes them over.

Within the scream is the sudden realization that they should have listened to that guy back there. They should have listened to that friend so many weeks, months or years ago. It is the scream of realization that even if there was a lot of hypocrisy in the journey, and even though life is cruel and unfair, they could have at least considered what that skinny old black guy from somewhere in the Midwest, had to say. His words and warnings, his humor and comments, weren't about any efforts to manipulate me. He really was trying to help me avoid something. He was trying to keep me alive, but now it's too late. The scream of realization fills the heart of terror stricken lives that go tumbling over the edge.

Hearing their cry, watching them fall, I turn to face the continuing advancing throng that moves in a steady mindless pace toward the same fate. I feel more frantic. I want so much to be able to get through to each of them. They are not a mass of people, but I see individuals: young men, young ladies, saddened, broken hearts, and wounded spirits. So much has already happened in their lives and the closer they get to the end, the quicker their pace becomes, and the less they see me.

Some are getting annoyed with me as they bump into me and keep moving. They are angered that I would impede their progress, even for a second.

Desperately I grab one young man by the arm, but he pushes my hand away and keeps moving. Others, seeing my effort began to bark at me. Fists are balling and rage is filling their eyes. They call me names and spew profanity. They call me bigoted and judgmental. They tell me that everyone does not have to believe what I believe. They tell me that no one has the right to tell anyone else what direction they should take in this life. A couple of them grab my arms and send punches into my gut. The punches don't match the blows in my heart. I fall to the ground and even those who march around me are angered that they would have to side step my stumbling, so they kick me as they move past me.

I struggle to my feet and the tears are blinding. I don't know if it's the physical or emotional pain. God, there has to be some way to reach them. How can we get their attention? Is there someone who will listen? I get to my feet, but I am pushed and shoved in multiple directions as more insults are shot at me. Finally, they push me out of the flow and I find myself on the side line watching the mass of humanity marching toward the cliff. They resemble the flow of a river racing toward a waterfall.

I am horrified by what I'm observing: thousands of young people, almost an entire generation, marching toward their own destruction. That's when I notice that in their hands, they are holding objects. They look like statutes, jewels, expensive objects of gold and silver. Some hold pictures, photos, and all kinds of artifacts.

Then I notice what I hadn't seen before. As they walk, they glance down at the things in their hands. Each time they look at it, they walk a little faster. I follow their gaze and there is something on the other side of the chasm. It's like a cloud and it sparkles as thousands of tiny bits of lightening are flashing from it. I look closer and it is not merely a cloud, but it is reflective. It is flashing images directly into the eyes of the

thousands. It's showing them the same thing that's in their hands.

The message is clear. If they could just reach this cloud, they will experience what's in their hands. They are indeed chasing their dream, and they can see it just ahead. They can see it clearly. They can see that it's close.

But they can't see what I see. This road leads to a great chasm. This image creating cloud is hovering over the gaping space. It is leading them to their destruction.

I realize, in that moment, that I can't try to convince the young people with words, preaching or teaching. Even my compassion was not enough. As far as they were concerned, I was only stopping them from reaching their dreams. The only way to stop this slaughter is to stop the deception.

So right there, along the banks of the river of humanity, I dropped to my knees and lifted my voice to God in worship. A song comes into my heart.

I become what I behold
And I behold the only One
Who can ever fulfill me
And turn dreams to reality.

I'll not accept a counterfeit
No substitute for what I've seen
What is dear to me, I give to Him
For that is my greatest dream

The dancers from all eras will come
Gathering the singers to praise the Son
Musicians playing, on and on
We'll join the millions for an audience of One.

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I sang from my heart as these unrehearsed lyrics and powerful melody poured forth. The sound filled the air and I

didn't know it at that time, but a great cloud appeared over my head. It was filled with light and glowing with life. Suddenly a couple of the marching young people caught the flashing from the side of their eyes and they began to blink.

They turned and beheld the new image above me. They did not see me at all. They heard the sound, and they saw something else beyond me. Some began to stop and stare, causing a great commotion as people began to bump into one another and the crowd backed up and slowed down like a massive traffic jam on a freeway. The first thing that I noticed was that the pace was interrupted.

Some of the generation kept walking toward the cliff with the crowd, but they kept looking back at the new image that had been presented to them. They were perplexed as they wondered if they should continue or go back.

Some, who were close to the cliff's edge, were awakened and saw the destruction before them. They immediately began to fight their way against the flow to get to the banks of this human river. They wanted what they saw. They wanted what they heard.

That's when I became aware that I had help and others, like me, were running into the crowd and fighting to rescue all who wanted to get out of the current. They sliced through the crowd and got to those young people quickly and pulled them to safety. They sang the same song as they went forth into their rescue mission. The song of worship was also a song of war. It was strengthening them to reach those who wanted to be rescued.

Others were strong enough to go right up to the cliff's edge and resist the flow and grab people whose eyes were suddenly opened by the sound and the sight of life. I didn't know what these people beheld in that cloud of life, but it was powerful enough that some of them even began to throw away the objects in their hands. Some began to say, "Hey, I want that!"

Those who were pulled to the banks we're being given food and water. They were being bandaged and comforted. Healing was taking place all around me.

Many who had been rescued began to take up the same song and they ventured back out into the flow of humanity, targeting people that they knew personally. I could hear them saying things like, "My mom needs to see this. My brother needs to hear this."

This is what I see as we continue to meet and pray each week. Carol and I are not interested in just a typical church gathering. We see an explosion of revival. Even the multi-media strategy that God has given us, we can now see that it is part of presenting that new image; that cloud of life.

We don't profess to have full understanding of this vision, but we know it is a Godly thing. This is no man-made dream. Even in this vision, God has made it clear that we are not the object of what this generation will behold. Our goal is to lift up Jesus, not Chris and Carol Green.

Jesus said, "**And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.**" - John 12: 32

As We Follow Christ

“When Carol and I say follow us as we follow Christ, we’re not saying follow our ministry or our church family. We’re talking about Chris and Carol, a husband and wife, a mom and dad, follow that (example).

If you want to know how to make this work in your life, I’m not saying, ‘Give a donation’ or ‘Join our church.’ I’m saying, watch my life and do what I do. Get on your face, pray, humble yourself, (do all the things we talk about each week); break up the fallow ground; praise God when your heart is breaking; worship Him anyway; lose yourself in His presence; lose yourself in His will! That’s what we’re saying!

Even if you don’t have a dime to give to this ministry, and if you can never come back and visit ever again, if you walk away with only one thing (let it be), “I’m going to follow God.”

That’s what it’s about! That’s what it’s about!

Winter

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Many years ago, in the early days of our ministry in St. Louis, Missouri, there was this particular Sunday that our family went out to eat after church service. We were sitting with a few other church members, in one of those all-you-can-eat-smorgasbord restaurants. People from other churches, fellowships and assemblies were scattered around the room, all sitting at their tables laughing and talking.

Suddenly I heard the awful sound of someone gagging and choking. Children began to scream and without hesitating, I jumped up and ran over to the table that was across the room and to my left. When I got there, a woman leaned back in her chair, her eyes bulging and a horrible noise, like a gargle, was coming from her throat. The people at the table were yelling and the children were crying. I quickly got behind her and tried to lift her up and perform the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge whatever was stuck in her throat. She was a bit too heavy for me and my effort was futile as fear and despair began to fill my heart.

Then, out of nowhere, a rather tall and husky young man was standing next to me and helping me to lift the woman. Once we got her to her feet, he got behind her, wrapping his arms around her, and with a couple of powerful thrust, dislodged the food. She began to breathe and burst into grateful tears.

There are no words to describe the tears of joy that came to everyone at that table. The young man and I just shook hands. Eventually, the paramedics arrived and we all returned to our tables, gathering with our various church families, where we rehearsed the event over and over again.

It occurred to me as I rejoined my church family, that in that moment of crisis, it did not matter what different churches we all attended. It did not matter what church the woman attended. The young man did not stop and ask me what I believed about baptism or about speaking in tongues. We did not ask the woman her doctrinal stance on tithing or the great tribulation. All that mattered was that her life was slipping

away before our eyes, and we could not just stand there and watch it happen.

I remember how my wife hugged me and told me how proud she was, and even though that did a lot for my confidence as a man, even that was not the reason for trying to help the woman. All that mattered was the saving of that life. God used an actual crisis to change our lives forever. It changed the very reason we're in the ministry today.

I tell you this true-life event from my life because I felt you needed to understand a little more about your pastors. You see, when we say we really don't focus on the divisions and strife amongst the Body of Christ, we really mean it. We realize that there are pastors and ministers who won't agree with all our doctrinal beliefs, our core values and our strategy for ministry in Harrisburg. We won't agree with all of theirs. But it doesn't matter when we hear that choking sound in the air over Harrisburg.

We realize there are pastors who have had negative clashes and personal conflicts in their history with one another, but we're praying for the time when we lay down the weapons that are pointed at one another and we start responding to the choking people all around us.

That day in that restaurant, the Lord made it clear that this is the way we are to see life. People are choking and dying all around us, yet the church is spending its time fighting over their differences instead of saving the lives of those who are choking on sin. Wouldn't it have been ridiculous for me and the young man to have gotten into a fight with each other instead of working together to help the choking woman?

Aren't you tired of watching Christians waste time and energy fighting over doctrine, beliefs and ministry strategies while people are choking right in front of our eyes? So we repeat: We're not in Harrisburg to play games. Spiritually, we hear that guttural sound of people choking.

I feel the same way now as I did that day when I ran over and tried to help the woman. The key was that I couldn't do it all

by myself. I needed the help of another brother, from another church, who probably did not agree with all of my doctrine or all of my core values. We didn't even ask each other any questions after saving the woman's life. It just didn't matter.

We also need the help of those who have not answered the call to join the laborers in the field of harvest. There are those who have been called to specifically help us. Many years ago, the Lord gave us a prophetic word that there would be children, and that these children would help us to groom the harvest that was coming in. Today we are crying out to the Lord for our children.

"Lord we pray as we approach Christmas Day, that the Body of Christ here in this community and all over this nation would open its heart wide to YOU. Let us hear that horrible sound of people crying out in agony from being in the choke hold of death, disease, and destruction that the forces of satan have on their lives. Lord, please help Your people to see and hear! Lord, send forth laborers to join us in this field of harvest."

Please know that we don't speak like this or pray like this to be critical or judgmental of the Church. We love God's people. We choose to believe the best concerning all of us in His Body. However, I think of a Christmas song with certain lyrics that apply to this letter, but let's change the lyrics to fit this prayer of intercession:

Said the Spirit to His Church everywhere
Do you hear what I hear?
Busy with your own life's affairs
Do you hear what I hear?

The sound, the sound, Of crying in the night.
Who will bring them my healing and life?
Who will bring them my healing and life?

Said the Spirit to His leaders in this hour
Do you see what I see?
While you fight one another for great power
Do you see what I see?

The crowds, the crowds
Of sheep scattered on a hill
You must lead them in My purpose and will
You must lead them in My purpose and will

Living in Hope

This may be a Christmas in which you don't have very much money. May you be filled with a new understanding of Living in Hope. You may be feeling a little embarrassed because there won't be any gifts to give. This might be one of those years where all you can do is send Christmas cards. We just want to let you know that there is no need to feel embarrassed or depressed if "all you have to give" are just a few words and a smile.

As you know, last Saturday, for our church family Christmas Gathering, we all sat together around the table and spoke words of life and encouragement to one another. I started first by speaking words of encouragement to each of you, concluding with expressing my heart to my wife. Then each of you took a moment to do the same for each person in the room.

There were a lot of tears last week, as the most precious gifts a person could give, were lovingly offered through words of deep feelings. Our church family was brought to another level of healing and bonding. I was so awe-struck, that I was moved beyond tears. All I could do was sit and think, ***"This is what church is supposed to really be."***

God has been so faithful to us through the past three years and we are so full of expectation that in spite being a little economically challenged, we feel nothing but thanks and gratitude.

We will share a Christmas dinner in a couple of days, but the true nourishment has already been received. Carol and I have no regrets or complaints. Even though we are like millions of others who don't have much in the way of finances, to give presents to everyone, we still feel that we are the richest people on the earth because we have you guys in our lives.

This week we want to talk to you about Pastor Dave Hess. Pastor Dave is one of the leaders in this community who welcomed us in the fellowship of pastors. He paid us a great

compliment by allowing me to speak to his congregation while he was out of town about three months after we started.

Man, talk about having to walk on water in the middle of a storm. He had to be hearing from God to allow some guy from the Midwest, who he had only met a couple of times, to preach to his congregation. I kept thinking, "If I mess up, they'll stone me and then pick up the unused rocks and pummel him when he gets back in town." However, a month later, he invited me back again. I told my wife, "I guess I didn't blow it."

The second time, Pastor Dave was present. He greeted me and Carol as we walked into the auditorium. All I could say was, "I thought you were out of town again." He said he got such a good report that he wanted to be present the second time. Then I got really nervous. You may wonder why I was so nervous, but that's because Dave Hess is a great, I mean really, great teacher.

When we first moved to Harrisburg, my friends kept telling me to go and visit Christ Community Church. They said we must hear the pastor who was healed of cancer. We visited, but he was out of the country on a mission assignment.

However, we fell in love with the church immediately. I visited their website and I kept thinking, "If I wasn't starting a church, I would join this one." My other thought was, "God, why do you need us to start a church when you've already established people like this?"

Then the Lord, in His sovereignty, moved on our behalf. While attending a regional prayer gathering, a very special couple approached us at the end of the prayer session and introduced themselves to us. John and Kerry Shuey simply told us that they felt led by the Lord to come and meet us. We set up a lunch date and a couple of weeks later we were sitting in a restaurant telling them how our home church launched us out to plant a church in Harrisburg, PA.

Somewhere in the conversation, they told us that John was part of the staff at Christ Community Church and they wanted

us to meet their pastor, Dave Hess. We were stunned. John arranged for a special meeting with Pastor Dave at their church.

When Carol and I arrived on that day of destiny, we met Pastor Raleigh Wingfield, Anna Peachy, a few other folks were introduced and finally, Pastor Dave Hess. He was so humble and unassuming that you would never have guessed that he was the senior pastor.

We all sat down and after a short opening, John asked me to share my heart with the group. I was nervous and excited as I started talking. I tried not to go over the top with too much enthusiasm, and I certainly didn't want to come off as some kind of showboating know-it-all. Carol and I felt like a couple of privates in the midst of Generals.

As I shared our hearts about being sent to this region, this precious assembly of leaders just smiled and looked at one another, nodding in some secret code of agreement. It was a day that will forever be branded in my heart. I knew we had found the people we were supposed to be joined to, in this community. God had arranged the connections and we hadn't put forth any human manipulative efforts to make it happen.

So when I stood in front of the Christ Community Church family that second time, and Pastor Dave was sitting on the front row, it was an unbelievable honor.

Eventually the nervousness left and I felt so comfortable that I found myself walking up and down the aisle, passionately preaching a prophetic message concerning the healing for this region. I felt that I preached a little too long and got a little too loud, but it was still received. Pastor Dave prayed for us at the conclusion and spoke a word to encourage us.

I didn't come to understand the significance of what I declared that night until three years later, when we found ourselves living and working in the community. Once we declared those things, God used it to set us in motion to live out what I preached. We were allowed to experience the battle against hopelessness.

I shared all of that to get to this:

Two weeks ago, I came to a fresh revelation, and was compelled to return to the original calling upon us in this community, while reading a book by Pastor Dave Hess, titled **HOPE BEYOND REASON**.

If you can make one investment during this Christmas season it has got to be in this book. I don't go out on a limb and endorse books and products. We don't even make a big effort to promote our own stuff, but you have got to get this book.

God allowed this man and his family to prophetically live through and overcome a major fight in the spirit realm concerning this region. Now that we've lived here since 2004, we understand, a little better, the battle we are facing. We must learn to hope in God, beyond reason. We have come to realize, this was the message we were sent to demonstrate and declare.

We've been living it ever since we arrived. We have lost relationships, resources, and even rapport in the community. We were perplexed and wondering how to maintain a confident expectation that God was going to come through, no matter what we were facing. God used this book to nudge me back on track.

While you are reading this book, **YOU WILL BE HEALED** in your soul. The physical healing will simply be an outward manifestation of what has happened to you on the inside. I know that's what happened to us.

This is not just another new year's resolution. This is a new life revolution. Actually, we are accepting, in a fresh way, what God has already made us to be. Each of you gave testimony to the calling on our church family as you spoke hope and life to one another last week.

Family, we were planted to be a people of HOPE for the hopeless in this community and that's what we're going to be. We've been through a lot and many challenges are still ahead, but like Pastor Dave, his wife, family, and the Christ

Community Church, we will live and we will not die. We will declare the great works of the Lord to this generation.

The Best is Yet to Come

As we look back at the past year, it's amazing how clearly the Lord has led us through some very difficult times. Now as the world around us is literally falling apart, it seems the past few years were actually preparation for the days we are going through right now.

We recall how the Lord planted the seed of this ministry into the ground and caused the outer shell of our expectations and limitations to die, so that the life within, could come forth. No one likes to go through the process of going into the ground, but the outer hull must die so that the life and purpose of God can shine forth. We wrote our first emails and newsletters while going through the process of emerging from the shell.

A little over a year ago, we began writing the Fruitful Living book series. Today those books read like a training manual to prepare our hearts to recognize and follow the voice of the Lord. If I were to give those books another name it would be "**Opening Your Heart to the Wonders of God.**" There's a lot packed into those four little books.

As we end this year, those writings are reminding us of the faithfulness of God. He has met our needs and fulfilled the true longing in our spirit in profound ways.

Today, we are well supported financially and this support has made it possible for us to GIVE the books to those who visit us in our Saturday Night sessions. You may have thought it strange when you observed us doing that so let us explain our approach to ministry in this community.

We see ourselves as urban missionaries. As such, we don't want to do anything that would become a stumbling block to un-believers. Many of the people that we are reaching are being introduced to the Lord in a fresh way. One of our visitors disclosed that he hadn't been in church in over five years. So we understand if some that come are somewhat skeptical of our motives. Many don't really believe there's any such thing as an honest preacher.

However, due to the financial support that we receive from our members, as well the support we receive from ministries and people from Camp Hill, PA, Lancaster, PA, St. Louis, MO, New York, Virginia and even as far away as Germany, we have been able to SOW into this community.

We didn't come here to become ministry predators that sap the resources and finances out of a community. Thanks to those who believe in what we are doing, we've been able to host our weekly and special monthly sessions, improve our website, build a core group and produce the books, CD's and DVD's that we FREELY GIVE to those who attend our meetings and sessions.

As you know, there have been a lot of surprised expressions when we told visitors there was no charge. Some have given a donation anyway, just to express their gratitude. Our main point, though, is that even in these tough economic times, the Lord has kept us personally employed and sustained our ability to keep giving and giving into this community.

We want to follow the example of our Father God. John 3:16a "For God so loved the world that He GAVE..."

That's the reason our TV and radio broadcast never have on-air request for donations. That's the reason we've been able to host meetings in the hotels and tell the people, as you witnessed, that the meeting room was already paid for and we weren't going to hit them up for an offering or a donation.

We have been able to see the Lord touch their hearts as we invite them to give only if they desire to do so, not because we're compelling anyone out of an urgent need to meet the financial needs of the ministry. God has used this strategy to drastically change the way people perceive God.

This is one thing that makes our church family a little different. We are being supported by believers who are helping us reach non-believers. We are literally missionaries in the urban community.

When you think about it: Are we supposed to ask non-believers for an offering to support our ministry? We believe that's part of the problem today. Some ministries host evangelistic events, and then they ask the people who have been invited, to financially support the event. Think of it like this: Would you invite people to your home for dinner and then ask them to give you money for the meal?

You and all those who support this church have made it possible for us to invite people to come to our ministry dinner table and partake of a meal. After we serve them, we bless them with gifts and prayer.

It is a marvelous thing to be able to serve this way, in this community. You guys keep giving, others keep helping us, and we're investing our time, talents and finances into this as well. So all together, God is helping us to make an impact in someone's life.

So when we look back and read the accounts of how the Lord sustained us through the difficult days behind us, we are encouraged to trust God for miracles in the days ahead of us.

Therefore, we look forward to the New Year with great excitement. The best is yet to come!

Beauty for Ashes

For several weeks whenever I thought about the new year, the Lord would prompt a simple phrase in my heart, "**Beauty for Ashes.**" It was a word that brought hope into my spirit and placed a new expectancy within my heart for 2009.

The old year closed out with a bang. Pastor Raleigh and Renee Wingfield invited us to participate in the annual year ending celebration of Zion Assembly of Harrisburg. Just like last year, the Lord prompted me to share words of exhortation and encouragement. We just know that God is going to use this church family in a very special way in this part of the Harrisburg community.

After speaking the words, we sang a couple of songs, concluding with a lively praise song that we do in a Caribbean drum style. The Zion Assembly congregation joined us in dance and song as we offered a rousing praise to the Lord. It was wonderful to experience such unity.

Later that same evening, we gathered together as our church family met in our home to bring in the New Year in prayer and fellowship. As the clock ticked and the New Year slipped in upon us, I found myself sharing with the family from the word the Lord had been prompting in my heart.

Isaiah 6: 1-3 declares:

1 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

This scripture has always blessed me through the years, but I sense that the Lord is placing a special emphasis on this scripture for us, this year. In connecting this verse with what the Lord has been saying to me, I offer this exhortation to you today.

This is the year in which the Lord shall comfort all who mourn, and console those who mourn in Zion. Yes, those of you who have been in Zion, in the place where the Lord dwells, even in His presence, but you have been in mourning from the losses and the disappointments in your life. You have been in mourning from the abuse and the misuse. You have been in mourning for many years, but this is the acceptable year of the Lord. For the Lord has promised **beauty for ashes**.

For that which has been burned and totally destroyed, HE shall give beauty. For the family that was burned to ashes, HE shall give beauty. For the heart that was burned to ashes, HE shall give beauty. For the hopes and dreams that were burned to ashes, HE shall give beauty. I don't know what the beauty will look like, but I do know that there shall be the oil of joy for mourning. You will have the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

There have been seasons when we have ministered **with** heavy hearts. We have ministered **to** heavy hearts, but as we come to the end of four years and move into our fifth year, the Church family gathering will not be known as a place where hearts remain heavy, burdened and sad. We shall be called trees of righteousness. There will be no doubt that we are the planting of the Lord.

Now I close with this final exhortation from this same chapter and verse. **Isaiah 61: 4 declares:**

And **they shall rebuild** the old ruins, **they shall raise up** the former desolations, and **they shall repair** the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.

I don't have space and time to say all that I desire to say in this email, so here's the main part that I hear for you today.

Look at what God promises in verse four. As this applies to you today, you are the **THEY** in this verse. THEY are the ones who were poor and brokenhearted. THEY are the ones who were captives, prisoners and bound. THEY are the ones who mourned in Zion. THEY are the ones with ashes. THEY are the ones who had the spirit of heaviness. Now look at what the Word of God says THEY will do:

- 1.) **they shall rebuild**
- 2.) **they shall raise up**
- 3.) **they shall repair**

Notice this promise is not just for the apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelist. If you are described in verses 1-3, you are the THEY in verse four.

We don't know how God's going to do it, but we have faith to believe that He has already moved on your behalf. You may have heard this promise many times before and many years ago. To hear it again simply means you are just that many years closer to seeing it come to pass.

Please stop whatever you are doing right now and place your hand over your heart and declare to yourself, "I receive this promise for me today. I receive beauty for ashes. I receive the oil of joy. I receive the garment of praise."

We realize TV preachers are always declaring blessings and prosperity in a similar manner, but that's not what we're talking about. This is about being healed and set free to fulfill the purpose of God. So let's complete this declaration right now. Just declare this over your life:

"Lord, with this beauty, with this oil of joy and with this garment of praise, we will rebuild old ruins, we will raise up former desolations and we will repair ruined cities. We declare Your Word and Your promise over our lives for this year, Amen!"

Praise God Anyway

Many years ago the Lord gave me a song during a very difficult season in our life. The lyrics are:

Now I know the Lord will save
His anointed by His grace
He will answer in the day
Of our trouble and our pain

Some will put their trust in man
And the strength of human hands
We will remember and call His name
We will always choose to praise (Him)

**Anyway - I'm going to lift the praise
Anyway - Cause I know You will answer.
Every time I've been in this place
I lifted my voice and declared Your name
Anyway**

Lord to You I lift my soul
You lead me and Your paths You show
Let me never be ashamed
Since I'm trusting in Your name

The one who fears
You teach Your ways
You pardon sin for Your name's sake
I seek the answer no other place
On You I will wait all the day

**Anyway - I'm going to lift the praise
Anyway - Cause I know You will answer.
Every time I've been in this place
I lifted my voice and declared Your name
Anyway**

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I felt led to share this song with you this week because Saturday night, as you know, we had a couple of more visitors and the Lord had us speaking about the most valuable things in life.

If you made a chart listing from the highest to the lowest forms of wealth on the planet, human life would be at the top of the list and money or currency would be sited as the lowest form of wealth. Yet, we spend our time trying to obtain money while we ignore or take our lives and our relationships for granted.

When times are hard and our expectations are delayed or destroyed, it becomes very easy to give in to the constant pressure to focus on the lowest forms of wealth instead of the things that matter most. It also becomes easier to quit and give up on God's promises.

But beloved family of God, we're here to tell you that every time you come to this place where it seems like nothing will ever change, we must keep praising God anyway. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God.

This past week, Carol and I faced an overwhelming pressure to give up and quit. Even though more people are beginning to come, and we're starting to see some momentum, especially amongst our young men's attendance, we can still feel the pressure to not believe that this time, things will be different.

Like so many times before, the thoughts come that we won't maintain the growth, and that life will yield the same results that we've seen repeatedly over the past couple of years, but we refuse to receive the negative predictions of the enemy. All of us have been waiting to see the promised breakthrough. We wait and we wait and we wait, but nothing seems to change.

The reason I share this with you is not because we're considering quitting. We share this with you because you need to know that leaders often feel the same way that you do. So when we speak to you from the Word of God and tell you to

follow us as we follow Christ, you can see that it is not an emotionally disconnected appeal. We know it's difficult, but we are in this fight together. We're on this journey together. This week we call you, once again, to respond in faith. Praise God anyway. Don't be moved by what our eyes see or by what our ears may hear. We believe the report of the Lord.

We're starting a stretch drive of prayer and fasting as we begin this New Year and move toward our fourth anniversary in March. I call upon the family to join me in this time of seeking the Lord's face. I call upon you to join me in opening our hearts for the river of God to flow through us.

The breakthrough is not a sudden burst in attendance or a financial windfall. The breakthrough is not some event or action that we are waiting for in the natural realm. The breakthrough is something with which participate in the spiritual realm. Let the breakthrough begin in you and me. Let us open our hearts and lift our voices to give God praise anyway. That's where the breakthrough begins.

When the people of God faced the walls of Jericho, they didn't wait for the walls to fall. In fact, they didn't even know what was going to happen. All they did was just obey the command to shout. I hear this command for us in this hour. We cannot passively wait until we see the change. Now it's time to join with the move of God and be a part of the change. We encourage you, no, we insist that you magnify the Lord with us, and let's exalt His name together.

Rejoice, family, and again we say, **rejoice!**

Our Mission

Last year we produced 29 new radio broadcasts, 4 TV broadcasts and raised the number of video clips to 120 downloadable files to assist you in your efforts to share your faith and your experiences through this ministry. We even made some serious investments in upgrading our web presence for entering into the social media arena (where young adults live). All the efforts, preparation and weekly prayer have led to this defining moment.

We believe the time has come for us to make the next step in our assignment in this community. Our mission can be summed up in the following scripture.

Isaiah 61: 1-3 states:

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified." (New King James Version)

Jesus quoted from this scripture as He announced His mission on the earth. I've been stirred in my spirit for a long time because the Lord has shown me that it is time for our church family to step forth in this mission.

If I'm discerning correctly, the Lord Jesus, by His Spirit, will be present in our gatherings this year, to do what this scripture has promised. It's not about Chris and Carol Green. The Lord will be in our midst to do a special work in our hearts, in our homes, and in our lives. All He wants us to do is just come expecting Him to meet us. He just wants us to believe that He will do what He promised.

God is sending people to us and they will be the ones listed in the first couple of verses above. They will be those who are poor, brokenhearted, captive, bound, and who mourn.

One of the things that caught my attention was that the Word also included **those who mourn in Zion**. Yes, some will come who are already Believers, but they are still mourning.

Already we are beginning to see new growth as a few of the visitors who attended our meetings at the end of last year, continued to come back again and again as we moved into the new year.

Some of our spiritual sons and daughters have expressed a desire to be a part of our weekly meetings (via internet) or just to connect again since we've been living here for almost five years. This technology will make that connection possible in a small way.

Part of the reason we're going live on the internet is because we don't want to spend a lot of time merely talking about what we're going to do. We're going to demonstrate it.

So let's all come prepared to pray for one another and for those who will join us from around the country. Let's come prepared to receive God's Word for our lives. Let's come prepared to experience something new and fresh in the presence of God. Let's all come with an attitude of expectation. Leave the doubts and fears behind. Defy the voice of the enemy that says this time won't be any different than all the other times you tried to step out in faith.

World Champs

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 8:36-39)

It doesn't matter if whether you were cheering for Pittsburgh or Arizona, you have to admit that this year's Super Bowl (2009) was very exciting to watch. Like last year's game, it all came down to one play.

In referring to this game, we recall something we previously shared with you, to encourage you in this championship battle in which we are engaged.

Champions

Have you ever been on the losing end of a lopsided basketball game? The other team is winning 75-20 or some ridiculous score like that. All you want to do is just get the game over with, and it's only the first half of the game. What does a coach say to a team that is so far behind that it seems crazy to continue playing? I've played in games like that and I've watched games like that. I've also seen and played in games where we came from a long way back to finally win.

I don't know how far you are behind in your bills. It might be so far that it seems no longer worth it to even keep trying to pay them. Some of us are far behind in relationships. There are so many deficits that the possibility of restoration with some friends or family members is nowhere in sight. The last medical report may show that after all that has been done, things have only gotten worse.

Others may have deficits in your emotions or in your spirit. You expected to be in a certain place in your life by now and the years have gone by and the deficit between how long it takes to accomplish some things and how much time you feel

you have left, is staggering. Someone told you that if you don't get your big break in life by the time you're 21 or 30 years old, that it's too late.

Right now, it does not matter how far you are behind in this game. Your coach, the Holy Spirit, has called a team meeting and He has something to tell you before sending you back out in what seems to be a pointless exercise in futility.

Let's step up our confession from, "God **can** do anything." to "God **will** do anything!" God will do it for us. Come on family! Believe God! Believe God! Believe God!

Just because the enemy took a big lead, doesn't mean he's won the game. I made all kinds of blunders and mistakes when we first moved to Harrisburg. The game started and we got whipped from the opening tip-off. We fumbled the ball, we committed fouls. We missed shots. We missed passes. We tripped and fell. Have you ever seen a basketball team looking really bad? We dribbled the ball off our feet. We called timeout only to come back out and keep messing up over and over again. And all the while, the enemy was scoring and running up the points against us. By the time we started getting ourselves together and making a few points, we were way behind on the scoreboard.

For many years, you may have been playing from behind and falling further into deficit. But I discovered something when I got into the Lord's presence. I came to see that God just wants the victory to be that much more spectacular.

Nothing is sweeter in athletics, than the come from behind victory. And we're not going to win by one point on the last second of the game, either. God's going to cause the come back to blow the enemy away. It'll be so big that you will call the fruit of your victories Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasseh means "For God has made me forget all my toil." Ephraim means "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

If you find yourself saying, "I'm tired. It won't make any

difference. Things will never change.” Then please allow us to speak this over your life:

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4: 7-9)

We command the spirit of heaviness to leave you right now, in the name of Jesus Christ. You have the victory! Put on the garment of praise and bless the Lord at all times. Let His praise continually be in your mouth!

After we spend this time in the locker room (prayer closet), we’re going back out there and we’re going to score. Our defense will be devastating to the enemy. He’s doesn’t know it, but he’s scored all he’s going to score. He doesn’t know it, but he hasn’t seen us execute God’s game plan yet. He won’t be able to concentrate on one player because God’s going to use everybody. From slam dunks to a downpour of three’s, we’re bringing the rain and the rim shakers. (That’s old school basketball talk).

Now, instead of dreading going back out there, we can’t wait to get back into the game.

And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Pursuing Purpose

We're in an era in America where we are watching desperation and depression beginning to get a grip on the hearts of people. Last month a family in Ohio and another in California were destroyed by murder-suicides. Many of the nation's leading experts are saying that this was only the tip of the iceberg of what is to come as families cave in under the pressure of the recession.

There is great hopelessness when a dad or mom feels the only solution to life after losing their jobs and homes while they are trying to raise their children is to kill their family and then take their own lives. I don't say this with any harshness or indifference because we identify with the struggle. We lost our home almost two years ago. The difference is that our hope and faith was in the Lord.

By trusting in His wisdom and ways, we were able to secure another place to live as the Lord gave us favor with a real estate leasing company. In spite of an imminent foreclosure, they allowed us to move into a beautiful 3 bedroom, 3 bathroom townhome.

Yes, it was a difficult adjustment because we have been homeowners for nearly 13 years. And, yes, it was embarrassing and humiliating. But we were not hopeless and we were not in despair. God made a way of escape for us and we took it.

Sometimes, when God is providing an answer for Believers, they don't receive it because they have their hearts set on THE WAY THEY WANT God to bring deliverance. However, this was God's way for us. We didn't get to keep our home. GOD provided another one. It's not where we wanted to be, but it wasn't where we could have been. Praise God!

Now as we watch the whole nation going through the same kind of losses, we can see part of the reason GOD allowed us to go through it. Now we can declare to one and all, with assurance, that **God will make a way.**

We have a place to live and we still have jobs while all around us, people are falling into despair. So family, don't lose hope. If God did it for your leaders, HE will come through for you!

Now we're standing as beacons and examples of God's grace. We're not boasting in ourselves because it's still pretty embarrassing to tell people that we lost our home. Everything is still not perfect, but we are getting out of debt. When we boast in our weakness, it brings all the attention and glory to God, who has sustained us through it all.

That's why we are excited as we write to you this week. We are watching God bring the ministry into a new level as well. We were so happy to see our townhome filled with people who genuinely desire the Word of God.

As you observed Saturday evening, we really get excited when you guys start asking questions. When that happens, it tells us that in spite of all that has happened, this ministry is fulfilling its purpose in this community.

After disclosing the mission just two weeks ago, we watched it begin to take place right before our eyes. For the first time since we moved our weekly meetings into our home, we almost reached capacity. I think there were only a couple of empty seats left. The Word of God was rich with healing as new understanding and insight was brought forth. The best part was how everyone hung around for more conversation and fellowship afterwards. That's a pretty good sign that something special is taking place in our hearts.

Could it be that God is now moving to connect us with the people who have been looking for a church like this; where the ministry style is very laid back, safe and open for conversation as well as instruction in the Word of God? This ministry is a place where you can praise and worship God from your heart with no coercion or manipulation. And O' how we love to see genuine spontaneous worship.

Could it be that the moment has finally arrived? I used to always say to our small group that people are going to be moving to Harrisburg from all over the country and when they

come to this community, they're going to be looking for a church like this. We're not in competition with other ministries because many *'foreigners'* will be looking for a church similar to what they are accustomed to from outside of Pennsylvania. We have had to wait for those people to find us, but it's starting to happen.

Two of our newcomers have come to Harrisburg from Connecticut and Massachusetts. Both expressed that they've been looking for a church like this and we've been praying that God will help us to find people like them. We've fasted and prayed. We've hosted services in hotels on the east and west side of the river. We've been on radio and television. We've rejoiced through bad times and cried in worse times. But the past two weeks have brought a whole new infusion of faith and hope. There is a new expectation. We are looking at the breakthrough we have been praying to see come forth.

So we write this email to encourage everyone to keep coming together and let's purpose in our hearts to receive all that God wants to give us. He's started something fresh and new. He is healing our hearts and homes.

In spite of economic recession, let's press in and chase after the heart of God. We're not following Him just for blessings and just to get our prayers answered. We're not following Him just to make sure we keep our jobs or our homes. We're not following Him just for healing and miracles. God will do those things, but we don't follow Him just for the benefits and blessings.

No, we have a new purpose for coming to church. In the Bible, Paul told the Philippians, *"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me."* -Philippians 3:12

Christ Jesus laid hold of us. He touched our lives. He changed our hearts. Now we're pressing to lay hold of the purpose for which He touched our lives. Isn't that a better reason to come together, than just to fulfill a religious ritual or just to try to get stuff out of God as if though He were a giant vending

machine?

In times past, something has always happened to stop the momentum that was building. We've watched the momentum pick up more and more ever since we gathered in the hotel back in November. Suddenly, we're nearly out of seating space as we continue to meet in our home. This time, we're cutting off the plans of satanic forces to stop the momentum.

So we pray for you, your family and all that concerns you; that no weapon that has been formed against you will prosper. Don't let anything stop you in your God chase. We're going to keep gathering to release our praise, to give our worship, to receive the Word, and to go out into the real world to live what we're discovering about the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this is living; pursuing the purpose of God!

It is Well

We want to thank you for praying for us during this very difficult time. As we told you Saturday evening, one of the associate elders in our home church in St. Louis, Missouri, passed away Saturday morning. His death was unexpected and many are in deep shock and truly devastated by this sudden loss.

Therefore our family is preparing to journey to St. Louis to be a part of the celebration of his life and ministry. As we mentioned, this wonderful brother and his wife, were the couple that was promoted to the position that we held in the church, before being sent to Pennsylvania.

We must be honest with you and tell you that we have been profoundly impacted by this. Our children have grown up together and we have been close to this family for many years. There are no words to express how we feel right now.

At moments like this all we know to do is to turn to the Lord for help and strength. Over the past few days, I've been singing an old hymn:

**When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll,
Whatever my lot, thou has taught me to say
It is well, it is well with my soul.**

Horatio G. Spafford, 1873 and Philip P. Bass, 1876
© Public Domain

We apologize that we will have to cancel our Saturday night meeting because we'll be in St. Louis over the weekend.

We'll share more with you tonight as we pray our brother's family, our Bishop, and our home church family. We don't know what to expect when we return to our St. Louis family and friends, but we are open to the Lord to minister to us and through us. We know that we have been destined to bring life and hope where there has been death and despair.

That is how my life began. Many people don't know this about our family. My mother was seven months pregnant when she lost her youngest child due to an accidental food choking. Two months later, she gave birth to me. I was born into a grief-stricken family. I was born in the aftermath of devastating loss. All of my life, it seemed I was always stepping into situations where something traumatic had just taken place. I felt like I was always in the wrong place, at the wrong time.

After moving to Pennsylvania, the Lord was able to reveal to me that my birth was a prophetic statement about the calling on my life. One of my brothers shared with me that he still remembers when mom brought little baby Chris Green home, and the house was filled with new life. He shared how it changed the atmosphere of the house when I was brought home.

The Lord used this to help me to see and accept the calling upon my life. He brought a special woman named Carol into my life and we share in that Godly purpose. I hope I don't sound like I'm boasting about us. In reality, we don't feel worthy of such a calling. Our lives are marked with many failures, flaws and faults. Yet, the Lord chose us for this role in the Body of Christ; in the family of God.

Sometimes, we make attempts to teach about some of the heavier and meatier things in God. Sometimes we have even stumbled due to comments on political and social issues. However, the one place we experience a special flow in the wind of God is when He places us in someone's path to breathe His life into situations of death, disappointment and loss.

So as we travel to St. Louis this weekend, we ask that you join with us in prayer. We have already been told that a snow and rain storm is predicted to be in our path, but we must go. It's hard to explain what this man, his wife, and his children mean to us. We don't really have the money to do this, but we must go. We must be there for his family.

We are on another special assignment. What makes this assignment so challenging is that we have experienced the loss, too. We need the Lord's touch, even as we reach out to others.

We'll try to stay connected with you all through the weekend, but if we are unable to do so, we'll follow up with you in next week's Connection letter. We love you guys and we miss you already.

World Class

Do you ever feel like you're doing something special and significant, but it's in the wrong place, at the wrong time? Just check this out. A co-worker sent this to me last week:

A Violinist in the Metro

A man sat at a metro station in Washington DC and started to play the violin; it was a cold January morning. He played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, since it was rush hour, it was calculated that thousands of people went through the station, most of them on their way to work.

In the 45 minutes the musician played, only 6 people stopped and stayed for a while. About 20 gave him money but continued to walk their normal pace. He collected \$32. When he finished playing and silence took over, no one noticed it. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

No one knew this but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the best musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before his playing in the subway, Joshua Bell sold out at a theater in Boston and the seats averaged \$100.

This is a real story. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the metro station was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and the priorities of people. The outlines were: in a commonplace environment at an inappropriate hour: Do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize the talent in an unexpected context?

One of the possible conclusions from this experience could be: If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world playing some of the best music ever written on a priceless instrument, how many other things are we missing?

-Author Unknown

After I read this email, the point was well taken, however, you guys know me and I have to take things one step further. When I read the conclusion, I thought about how often many people feel their true value is ignored. We are a society that tends to overlook special things in others, and at the same time we feel our own special qualities are ignored.

Yes, I know there are some people who are deeply rooted in narcissism and their every thought and motivation is about them. However, I'm specifically addressing that place inside many of us that feels overlooked.

Of course, as Believers we are being renewed in our minds to see others in a new way, but part of the reason we struggle to do that is because we haven't experienced this kind of love in the foundational years of our lives.

For some children who are playing sports, performing in recitals, and participating in all kinds of activities, all through the event, they have one eye on the parent or relative who is encouraging them with loving nods and big smiles.

But for thousands of others, the settings are very different. Even for those who have someone there for those special moments, outside of the performance, there are few expressions of love and acceptance. There's only criticism and correction within practices and rehearsals.

Thus we have fostered a generation, which includes many of you receiving this email that only feels love and acceptance when they are performing. And that brings us to my first thought when I read the email about the violinist.

I believe many of us feel like a world class violinist who is ignored. We often feel like we are living in a commonplace environment at inappropriate hours. We are performing our best, but no one notices. It might even be your spouse, children, parents, friends, co-workers, pastors, church friends, or neighbors, that fail to recognize the moments when you are playing your violin.

This is the reason I believe that the greatest moments in life do not happen in stadiums, behind podiums, in government halls or on stages. The greatest moments in life happen behind closed doors. They happen at a hospital bed side or in a living room. They happen at dining room tables and on park benches. Profound moments take place at times and in places where nobody will ever know it. These moments have changed the lives of people forever.

Here's the best part. Those moments have been recorded in heaven. Even if no one else notices, GOD sees. Jesus saw a widow drop her last two coins into an offering bucket and not only did it catch His attention, but He made a big deal out of it.

Part of your maturity is growing to the point where God's applause is sufficient. Our friends and family will miss the things that are important to us from time to time. We will miss the moments that are important to them. Even as leaders, we may not always recognize or understand all that you may say or do. But know this (and I speak from years of experience) God sees and He remembers.

So the next time you feel that no one understands your true value and worth, remember that God stands up like a proud father and applauds. There is a big smile on His face as He nods His head in pleased satisfaction. It's sort of like in the beginning when He created everything and then said, "That's good!"

We Believe God

Even as we are still going through the healing process from the loss of one of our pastors in our home church just a few weeks ago, we were deeply impacted by the tragic events in Maryville, Illinois, where someone walked into a church service this past Sunday morning, and shot the senior pastor. A family, a church and a community were instantly ripped apart with this sudden and horrible loss.

I tell you, we are in a desperately wicked hour in America, where it is now becoming commonplace for young people to walk into church facilities or on church grounds and kill people.

Our deepest prayers of intercession are going forth for this pastor's wife, children, family and church.

One thing that grieves my heart is that over the past few weeks, more people expressed their disapproval of us praying for the president, than concern for the attacks against churches over the past year.

All I did was declare that This ministry is getting out of the political battle and getting about Kingdom business, but the perception and responses were that I was either speaking in favor of President Obama or that I was speaking against President Obama. I wasn't doing either. I was addressing the Kingdom of God mandate. I hope that the weightier matter that I was trying to convey can somehow be heard.

As for me and my house (our church family), we will serve the Lord. We will remain focused on the purpose of God. We will focus on advancing the Kingdom of God in this community.

With the loss of another great leader, we are gearing up for battle in the spirit. The enemy has stepped up his attacks, so we're stepping up our prayer and worship. Carol and I are more determined than ever before, to serve you guys and bring God's Word of healing and deliverance to you and your families.

As we get closer to our ministry anniversary celebration, we are taking every opportunity to build your faith to believe God for revival in the urban community of Harrisburg. We've been here since July 2004 and as we drive around the city, the more we see depression and hopelessness, the stronger we hold on to God's promises concerning this community.

Here are a few prophetic promises we received one year before we moved to Harrisburg:

“While we we’re praying for you (both) I saw a tree and its roots were very, very deep. The tree was strong and immoveable. The significant thing about the tree was that the leaves were bright and the fruit on the tree was very large. And the fruit was very bright and was shining with the glory of God.”

– Ronald Greene, Reformation Life Centre, Tunapuna, Trinidad, Saturday, April 26, 2003

“Pastor Chris I saw you standing and you had on new raiment. God is going to change your raiment. Your feet were shining because you had on armor that shined with the glory of God.

And I saw a street opening up before you and it had street lights or street lanterns on either side and they shined brightly with the glory of God. And the way was straight. It was a straight path with no turns and curves. The street opened up and extended before you, but as you walked, the street closed behind you. You could not go back. You could only go forward. God says you must always keep going forward. No turning to the left or the right, but you must go forward. You cannot go backward. You must go forward.

God says He’s going to provide for you. Everything is already prepared. There is already provision. You must keep moving forward.

God is going to bring a new dimension of closeness in your marriage. You will be ministering in two different

parts of the world and you will be so close that you will just know what's going on with the other one.

God is going to use your sons. They will carry on the legacy. They will be a source of encouragement to their cousins and your families."

- Ronald Greene, Reformation Life Centre, Tunapuna, Trinidad, Sunday, April 27, 2003

"God is telling me to tell you, again, that He has already provided for you. There is already provision for you. There are people and resources that He already has prepared for you. Again He is telling me to tell you that it will be sooner than you expect."

-Pastor Michelle Forde, Reformation Life Centre, Tunapuna, Trinidad, Sunday, April 27, 2003

Here is a prophetic promise that we received a couple of years ago via email from a prayer partner in the Midwest:

Everything is going to be alright. The threats you have faced shall cease. For this house that I have built, not just built but birth, shall bring true liberty. The enemy is fighting against the freedom that I have ordained to be. Lift up your heads O' ye gates and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, for the King of Glory is coming in.

You being there is a fulfillment of prophecy. My servants in this area, of the former generation, have prayed for this day. They did not have a face, but a promise. They did not know the name or person who would fulfill this call, but they had a promise. NOW STAND where I have called you and know today, this day, 4/21/06, that I have commanded a release from heaven.

Backup is on the way. Resources from heaven are on the way....The Lord says to you, Pastor Chris...Just say it and I'll back you up every step of the way. It's my word that I shall perform in your midst. So rejoice, for it is a new day for you and your house. And yes, I say

to you again, you and your people shall be fruitful. For this is the season of harvest for your house.

(April 21, 2006)

Most of you have never read or heard these words since you just started attending this church over the last three or four months. There are many promises that we have received. God sent us prophetic promises for a solid year before we moved here. Most of them were captured and recorded and we're going to rehearse them in our weekly Saturday meetings as we get closer to our anniversary. We are not led by prophetic words, but we are encouraged by them.

We believe the prophetic promise over this ministry, that it will be a church filled with young people in their 30's, 20's and even teenagers.

We believe the prophetic promise that God will use young people to build this church.

We believe that God will make us to be a church family that ministers to every generation.

We believe that we are called for such a times as this, when our nation is in crisis and turmoil, that we are to bring healing and deliverance to our families and friends.

We believe that we will see more than church attendance; that we will experience a genuine hunger for the presence of God.

We believe you were chosen by the Lord to join with us in this moment in history to bring change in Harrisburg.

We believe that God sent you to this ministry to experience the change that you will take to others.

We believe you will not ever regret the decision to unite with us for a purpose that is bigger than all of us.

We believe God has shown us our place on the wall of this city and now is the time for us to take up our tools and weapons and do our part.

We believe that the Lord has already sent help in doing this great work.

We believe that you will discover the true fulfillment that comes when you lose yourself in the purpose and will of God.

We believe God!

Spring

God Will Perform His Word

All of this month, we have been rehearsing God's prophetic promises to this ministry. The Lord sent a lot of promises to us in the years before we moved to Pennsylvania and we know that He always keeps His word. We realize many people seek after prophecies and tend to have their lives led by them. We have not been led by these prophetic words, but we have certainly been encouraged by them.

We want you to know that we never searched out ministers to give us prophetic words. All of these promises were given to us spontaneously and unexpectedly. We never asked for them or went out looking for them. Today we realize the Lord knew the time would come in which we would need to reflect upon His promises so that we would be encouraged to keep moving forward with this assignment in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

This week we're rehearsing what the Lord spoke concerning this ministry almost five years ago:

...O' man of God I am sending you because you have gone through the stages of sprouting, budding, blossoming and fruit bearing. For I am sending you to a people who have known the bitterness of the law, the legalistic attributes of the law, but they have never tasted of the sweet almond of the Spirit of Truth; And where there have been countless others who have come before, and have tried to navigate the word, I am sending you because you know what it is to live in bitterness and to wait for the promise of the sweet life in Christ.

I raise you up O' man of God as a prophet to this era, that you would bring healing indeed to those who are broken and bereft of hope. For I will, indeed, speak to the generations in their various shades of development. To the younger ones who are merely sprouting, looking for hope; to the older ones who have only known the legalistic, ritualistic practices of the law; to those who have desired to bloom and yet have been squelched by

a religious order that is not of me; and even to those who are in their fruit bearing years, I am sending you.

For I have the precious seed of my word of an almond deep within your being. The bitterness of the hull shall be stripped away by the fire that is within your mouth saith the Lord. And even with that fire there will be a gentleness, for there is much need of healing, much need of recovery, much need of dealing with the past with this people I am sending you to.

And O' woman of God I am sending you and raising you up in this hour with a word of counsel. For indeed this shall be a season that you will blossom and bloom. It will be a season where you will spill forth counsel, unpremeditated counsel.

For the word of the Lord shall spill through your lips like rain; Like dew drops upon a parched barren land are some of souls of the people that I am sending you through. But you will speak the word of the Lord and in an instant you will see vegetation sprout forth, in the name of Jesus.

And O' woman of God we break off from you now, timidity and fear and all the perfectionism that has held the deep deposit of God within you captive. This hour you are released, released, released, that the vintage wine of God will flow and that many will know I am in this place indeed.

Even as Jeremiah, God asked Jeremiah the prophet, "What do you see?"

I say, I see a branch in bloom and it is blooming in winter and some of the fruit that will mature will be: "People that are in the winters of their life. The broken, the hopeless, and the lost will hear. The discouraged and the homeless will come. In the winter of their lives I will move upon their souls. I will mend and make completely whole.

**Spring O' well of counsel within your servants tonight.
Chase away all grief, all sorrow, and all fright.
I am sending you in full bloom
and fruit that's certainly sure.
I am alert. I am active to perform My Word.
I am sending you in full bloom, sending you for sure.
I am active and alert to perform My Word."**

- May 30, 2004/ Commissioning Service Minister,
Melissa Clayton

Isn't it exciting to know that God was mindful of you long before our paths ever crossed? These promises are not just about Chris and Carol Green, but they are talking about YOU, too. They are God's promises to US. Are you ready for a new move of God in your life? We sure are. We're ready to see the rebuilding, restoration and renewal of our lives and this city.

Rebuild, Restore, Renew

Well, this is the anniversary week everybody! We could hardly wait for this special time for us to come together and celebrate the ministry of Jesus through this ministry, over these past four years, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

All of this month, we've been reflecting on God's promises concerning us. Before we launch forth into what is certain to be a life impacting weekend, we wanted to share with you some of those very special promises.

Back in 2005, several leaders and pastors gathered from this region to pray for us and this ministry. Our bishop and first lady were present to officially install us as the pastors and establish this church and ministry in this city. As part of our anniversary celebration this Saturday, we will replay that special moment and listen to what God had to say about all of us.

This week we want to share one of the first public prophetic words that we ever received about our life and ministry together. Although we have watched a lot of it come to pass while we lived in Missouri, we expect to see new dimensions of this promise in Pennsylvania.

"...A trainer and a discipler of men! A pastor who knows every inch of the sheep-fold. When I see shepherds, I smell sheep, and this man is called a shepherd in the House of God!

And I shall put healing in your hands, I'm speaking to both of you now, not individually, but I'm speaking to you corporately; there shall be healing in your hands. I don't see healing lines, but I see sick beds. And I see hearts that are overwhelmed by the sickness of soul; and torn and wounded lives. And I tell you that I put them upon your heart. And I put anointing in your hands that, together, you may heal them, says the Lord.

Yea, My son, a re-commissioning is taking place, this day, by MY Spirit. And you shall be known as a healer of broken lives!

I give you new psalms to sing. You shall sing out of the old psalms and you shall sing out of the new psalms, says the Lord. And you shall be an encourager by the psalm that I put in your heart. I don't know if you play an instrument or not, but I'm telling you that music is in every atom of your being. And God's going to draw that out and use that. And your voice is going to project music; not just a song, but music with the song.

Father, I bless this couple, now, in the name of Jesus. Everyone reach your hands this way. I want to see everyone. I want you to be involved in this re-commissioning today. That they shall be healers in the House of God. And that wounded and broken lives would be drawn by the Spirit to this place..."

- spoken forth on May 26, 1991 by Lattie McDonough

We've learned to not be led by prophecies, but we are encouraged by them. We are holding on to these Godly promises because their fulfillment means YOU will experience His rebuilding, His restoration and His renewal in your life.

Hope Renewed

We are excited and encouraged beyond words. **We have a renewed hope.** Funny thing, though. The word hope has become very distorted for many people. Politicians have used that word to advance their agendas and careers. Educators have used it to advance their noble objectives. Businesses have commercialized it to sell their products. Physicians have used it to soften the blow before issuing a bad report to the relatives of their patients. Even preachers have used it as a prelude before the collection plate is passed.

So let us take a moment and explain what we mean when we say **renewed hope.** The biblical definition of hope is this: It is an expectation and a desire that is birthed in us because God has made a promise. That expectation and desire is built and sustained because it is based upon the ONE who made the promise. Since God does not lie and since HE is a covenant keeping God, you and I can have full assurance that what HE has spoken, will come to pass. Thus we have HOPE (expectations and desires) in God and His Word.

As we have watched new faces appear in our weekly meetings and as we have watched most of those new faces reappear and make return visits, we are personally reassured of God's promise that HE will bring forth a ministry of healing in your hearts and homes.

Last Saturday evening, as we shared a word regarding the plan and purpose of God, we all experienced a high-impact moment of revelation regarding our past, the present, and the future.

Now that we have a little more understanding about HOW we got to this point in our lives and families, we have a better understanding of WHERE we are in this era.

Now armed with God's perspective, we can advance with confidence in the promise of God. This new confidence is what we have just defined as being, HOPE. The decision and action

to make these new steps into our future is what is known as, FAITH.

Family of God, we are fully persuaded of these things concerning you:

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. - Romans 8:37-39

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

- Jeremiah 29: 11-12

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

- Philippians 1: 3-6

So please don't receive those discouraging thoughts from the enemy of your soul, telling you that things will never change or that you are being a hypocrite for attending this church. He will tell you that you are being fake and phony because you are so different when you're at church, from how you are when you get home.

Let us tell you that you are not being a hypocrite. You are in the process of renewal and transformation. Of course you will feel and be different in a setting filled with praise, worship, exhortation, prayer and Godly fellowship. However, as time goes by and your spiritual growth continues, you will find that the atmosphere in your home will begin to change as well. You won't always feel this conflict and contrast

between your home and the assembly with your spiritual sisters and brothers. As more of the reality of who you are in Christ, and what He has done for you, takes hold of your inner man, all things will continue to become new in every area of your life.

As we have told you many times before, the goal is not perfect performance in our daily walk, but the goal is to have a genuine relationship with the Lord, that will lead us to maturity and fruitfulness, as well as authority and ability in God. The more you keep chasing after the Lord and His heart, the more He will continue to quench your thirst and fill your hunger for Him.

Always remember that you are loved just like you are now, but God loves you too much to let you remain the same. With that promise in mind, we are praying that you will also receive **renewed hope** today.

Can You See?

Wasn't our time together very special Saturday night? We encountered technical problems with our computer before our meeting started, but as we opened things up with prayer, it became obvious that the Lord had a different agenda anyway.

The worship, which was filled with spontaneous intercession and songs that came forth from you guys, was what we have been waiting to see ever since we first moved here. We just want to encourage you all to continue to flow in this way. It really isn't the Chris and Carol show. The Spirit of God desires to move in the entire Church family.

Afterwards, the Lord gave us a timely word of exhortation taken from Psalm 42, which Shelli Scott shared with us during the worship.

On that note, let us repeat our question that we asked Saturday night: Can you see what we see? Can you see this move of God for your family? We see a new Harrisburg. Over these next few weeks, we're going to declare what we believe God is showing us about you, your family and this city. We're not crazy. Or maybe we are. We're crazy enough to believe the Lord's promises.

A couple of weeks ago, we held our first meeting inside the Harrisburg city limit in nearly three years. Since the summer of 2006, we've been hidden away by the Lord, following Him through a wilderness preparation. Now we've come out of that season more dependent upon the Lord than ever before. Now we can see that we needed the wilderness test so that we would not become some of those self-reliant know-it-all type of people. Now, more than ever, we are dependent upon the Lord.

Some leadership books suggest that we're not supposed to admit that we don't have it all together and we're not supposed to give a hint that we don't always know what to do. Those books tell us that we're not being good leaders if we do that because such admissions may cause people to feel

insecure and unsure of our leadership ability. So we'll break the expert's protocols and let you know that we are depending on the Lord for every breath we take and every move we make. It's out of that dependence that we speak these things to you.

Now that we're back in the city, we can see what the Lord sees, with a fresh view from His throne. The first thing He gave us was a Word from Isaiah 61:4, **"And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations."**

When we read this promise, the first question that came to mind was: WHO is the THEY in this promise? WHO will rebuild the old ruins? WHO will raise up the former desolations? WHO will repair the ruined cities and the desolations of many generations?

The answer is in the first verses of this prophetic promise: They are the poor who had good tidings preached to them. They are the brokenhearted who got healed. They are the captives who received the proclamation of liberty. They are the bound who walked out of their prisons when its doors were opened. They are ones who were comforted in their mourning. They were consoled in their grief, given beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for heaviness and despair. YOU are the THEY.

This promise is talking about YOU, your mom, your dad, your siblings, your aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, grandparents, in laws, outlaws, co-workers, classmates, friends and acquaintances. This is talking about Harrisburg.

We don't claim to know how God's going to do it, but we declare that HE WILL. In fact, He's already started. Just look at what's happening in your heart. Look at what's happening in your home and in your family. It's happening because this is the acceptable year of the Lord. This is the day of vengeance of our God.

We know that we've spoken these things to you before, but we feel compelled to keep repeating it over and over until your inner man truly receives this Word.

Please take the time to rehearse this Word. Play it in your home, in your car, or while you're working. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing (by repetition) the Word of God.

Listen until you see it. We know that sounds weird, but that's how it works in the Kingdom of God. We **listen** until we **see**. Then we **say** what we **see**. Then we **live** what we **say**.

So, do you see what we see?

Rebuild the Ancient Ruins

First we want to thank everyone for sharing a meal and movie with us Sunday. The vision of this church family is to touch generations and nations with liberating praise, intimate worship, provide hope filled, faith building teaching of the Word of God, and to provide family fun and fellowship, for the healing of hearts and homes.

Spending time together in this way is a very important part of this church family. We never take it for granted when each of you decides to come together in this special way. So we mean it with all sincerity when we say, "Thank you for coming."

We trust that you are genuinely living out the purpose and plan of God for your life. What a marvelous way to live; waking up each day and knowing that we are in the purpose of God.

Over the past few weeks we've been rehearsing the prophetic promise concerning our lives as it relates to Isaiah 61: 4 which reads, **"And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations."**

THEY referred to the poor who had good tidings preached to them. THEY are the brokenhearted who got healed. THEY are the captives who received the proclamation of liberty. THEY are the bound who walked out of their prisons when its doors were opened. THEY are ones who were comforted in their mourning. THEY were consoled in grief, given beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for heaviness and despair. YOU are the THEY.

We took a closer look at what it means to **rebuild the ancient ruins** and the Lord revealed something very special. The Hebrew word for **ancient** had a meaning that described longevity in terms of the past and the future, with a view that a thing, situation or condition, will last forever. The thought is

that since it's always been this way, then it will always be this way.

The Hebrew word for **ruin** referred to something being laid waste, but through its root word, it means desolation by way of drought, heat or dryness. One of its word usages specified the ruining of a home in this manner.

So as we explored this passage it spoke to the reality of life for many, many families in this city. Homes have been ruined by a spiritual drought. It's been this way for so long that it seems like it will be like this forever.

When we studied the Hebrew word for **rebuilding**, it referred to the establishment of a home, the restoration of exiles, and to making something permanent by building a family.

So the deeper meaning of this passage is this: There are homes (families) and lives that have been perpetually and continually laid waste, by drought (absence of God's Spirit and Word). It was like this when you were born, it has been this way all of your life, and it looks like it will never, ever change.

So now that we've been armed with a greater understanding of what it means to **rebuild the ancient ruins**, let's make this prophetic declaration as a church family:

"We who were once poor, broken hearted, captive, prisoners, in mourning, in grief, and living with ashes and heaviness, will now rebuild, fortify, and establish our homes. We will restore the exiles. This will be a permanent change because we receive the refreshing waters of God's presence and Word in our hearts. We receive the priority of the presence and Word of God in our homes. Amen."

Restore the Devastations

How great is our God!

Week after week, one of you has given us a report of what God is doing in your life. I think we'll start making a space somewhere on the site for you to share your testimonies. We feel like that will serve as a great encouragement for all.

This week we want to continue rehearsing the prophetic promise from Isaiah 61:4 - "**And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations.**"

This week we're looking at what the word of God means when it says, ***They shall raise up or restore the former desolations.***

In our studies we discovered that the Hebrew word for ***former*** referred to something from the past. It also means something from an early period of time in the existence of a person or a thing.

This adjective is very important because it is talking about a devastation that not only occurred in our past, but it happened in the early years of our lives.

Now let's look at the meaning of ***devastation***. This Hebrew word referred to being appalled, stunned, stupefied, deflowered, deserted, to be stunned causing horror, to ravage, to be astounded, and to even cause oneself ruin.

That's a lot of definitions, and we can't go through each one in this short letter, but we believe you get the point.

This is the level of devastation that came into our lives while we were young either in age, or in our walk with the Lord. In some cases, it applies to both categories. It's no wonder that we have seen so much fear, paranoia, anger and bitterness since we moved here.

Now let's look at what the Word of God says about us regarding **restoration**. The Hebrew word for **raise up or restore** had such meanings as: arise, stand, to become powerful, to come on the scene, to endure, to be fixed, to be valid, to be proven, to persist, to set, station, establish, to make binding, deeded over, strengthen, succeed, to take a stand.

So here is what the Word of God is speaking to us today: ***We have been horrified, stupefied, appalled, astounded and stunned, since the early years of life; by people, circumstances, situations and demonic influences.***

We were deserted, ravaged, and deflowered. In some situations we brought ruin upon ourselves by doing these things to others who were under our influence.

We will now be raised up, strengthened, become powerful, will be fixed, validated, will be made able to succeed, and will have what is rightfully ours deeded over to us. This is action, not just talk. This covenant promise will be ratified, confirmed, and binding.

Many people accept the atmosphere of this city as being normal, but we are telling you that this is not normal. Life in the Kingdom of God is normal, but the darkness that engulfs this community is not normal.

The spirit of God is present to change this atmosphere so let's declare this together as a church family:

We receive the restoration of the Lord for our former devastations and we receive God's grace to bring this restoration to our families as well. In the name, authority and ability of Jesus Christ, we speak forth this word, Amen.

Repair the Ruined Cities

We trust that you are greatly encouraged by the word and prayer that we have been blessed to share together. Are you as excited as us? Wasn't it wonderful to just sit and talk, last Saturday night, and discover that the Lord is confirming His word in each and everyone one of us. We are beginning to experience the kind of unity and agreement the Lord can use to build a mighty army and accomplish His will in our families and city. Praise God!

This week we want to continue rehearsing the prophetic promise from Isaiah 61:4, "And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations."

This week we're looking at what the Word of God means when it says, '**they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.**'

In our studies we discovered some very interesting meanings for the term, **ruined cities**. First, the Hebrew word for **ruined** was different from the word **ruin** in the early part of this scripture. That word for **ruin** had to do with *desolation that takes place over time due to drought and heat*. This word, **ruined**, has to do with *sudden destruction*. It has such meanings as: to tear down, break down, overthrow, beat down, break, break through, destroy, pluck down, pull down, and throw down. It's a sudden and violent act that brings destruction.

The Hebrew meaning for the word **cities** was even more intriguing. We discovered that this word's basic meaning is **excitement and anguish**. It is a place that has to be **guarded and watched**, like an encampment. A city is more than its buildings and structures with its various systems of government. This Hebrew word for **city** fits the description of a heart, a home, or a family. All of these are places of excitement and anguish. These are places that must be guarded and watched (in intercession and prayer).

The Hebrew word for **generations** has meanings like: periods of time, habitation, dwelling place, and those living during a period of time. It literally means to heap up or pile to dwell.

Finally let's look at the word **repair**. Its meaning is self explanatory. It means to **renew, make new, or to renew oneself**.

So here is the prophetic interpretation: A place (a heart, a home, a family, a town) that was to be guarded by waking or watch (prayer and intercession) has been torn down, broken down, thrown down, beat down, overthrown, and utterly destroyed. This has occurred repeatedly to those living during those periods of destruction and continues to occur, even in this generation. Destruction continues to pile up in this city.

So family, let's make this prophetic declaration:

We who were once poor, broken hearted, captive, prisoners; in mourning, grief, ashes and heaviness, will renew and repair hearts and homes by prayer and intercession. We will pray and intercede for the city (heart) of Harrisburg because the heart of Harrisburg is broken. This city is like a broken, wounded heart and we (the people of God) are being raised up to stand guard, watch and pray for our families and city.

This is why the main emphasis for this church family, in this season, is prayer, intercession and worship. That's why, every week, we find ourselves worshiping and exhorting, praying and flowing in the Spirit. God is doing something within us as well as within this city. Praise God!

Let's Do This

Now in light of what we believe God has been doing in our hearts as a church family, I want to share with you, the most astounding dream that I have ever had. It happened about one year before we were released to come to Harrisburg. From what I remember, it began this way:

Carol and I were walking through a very large facility that appeared to be an indoor pool. The pool was massive, about the size of a football field, and well over 20 feet deep. It was night and there were no lights on in the place or in the pool.

We could only see by the moonlight coming through windows at the ceiling. We were walking around the pool and trying to see what was in it. In the dim lighting we could see that there was some massive shape at the far end on the bottom of the pool, but we could not make out what it was.

Suddenly a woman appeared in front of us. She looked like Carol's mother and she spoke to Carol asking her if she wanted to see what was in the bottom of the pool. Carol hesitated and before she could answer decisively, the woman snatched her by the hand and dove into the pool.

With the speed of the flash of lightening, they shot through the water toward the object at the bottom. They literally looked like a streak of light rocketing through the water. It was too fast for me to swim behind them so I ran around the pool to the far end to follow.

When I arrived, I could clearly see Carol and the woman at the bottom of the pool. I still could not see what they saw, but Carol had a look of absolute horror and terror on her face. I was about to dive into the water to get her because I am a very good swimmer and have no fear of the water and the depths they were in.

Suddenly they were out of the water and standing next to me. Neither of them was even wet. Carol was completely blank. She was like a robot. (No emotions and no expression). I was

instantly outraged and asked the woman angrily, "What have you done to my wife?"

"I haven't done anything," the woman answered as I realized that it was not my mother in law, but some kind of familiar and generational spirit. "I have just exposed her to her past and her family secrets. Now she knows where she came from. I haven't done anything to her."

"This is not my wife!" I roared. "What have you done with my wife?" Then in a flash, my wife and the woman were gone.

Just like a movie, the scene changed and I was standing outside of a city. I was facing east with the fading light of sunset behind me, and multi colored lights illuminating the buildings. It was beautiful and sinister at the same time. There were mountains in the background and I could distinctly make out the outlines of glowing windows from houses sprinkled along the mountainside. The sky was a deep dark blue and purple. The sight was spectacular.

Centered in the city was a building that was more like a tower, whose top was shaped like a dome. It was brightly lit and gave off a bright yellow-gold glow. There were searchlights shining up on it and somehow, I knew that my wife was trapped in the top of that tower. I was frustrated and felt very helpless and angry. I had no way of getting to her. I did not have the strength or ability to reach the tower, climb it, get into it or face whatever opposition there would be waiting inside of it.

As I stood observing, like a movie, the scene faded. There was a pause and I heard the thought "One year later."

The scene returned and everything was the same, but I was different. Again, it was evening and I was watching the city at dusk. Instantly, I knew that I was stronger and prepared. I knew that I had spent the past year getting built up and fortified. I had been working out and spending time with God. I stood facing the city again and I wanted to test myself to see if I was ready to go and rescue my wife from that tower.

First I returned to the facility with the pool to see if I could move through the waters with enough speed, just in case I had to encounter that spirit in that realm. I dove into the water and with one stroke; I could shoot through the water faster than lightening.

Then I wanted to test my strength, so I had someone lift a ton of bricks with a crane and hang them over my head. I told them to lower the bricks down over me. I raised my hands to support the weight. I told them to let them go and when they did, I was holding the entire weight up easily. It felt like I was only holding up about thirty pounds.

“Okay”, I thought, “I’m strong enough to hold them up, but am I strong enough to take a blow when I oppose that spirit?” So I tossed the bricks up into the air and let the whole pile come crashing down on me. The entire ton of bricks merely bounced off my shoulder and fell all around me.

I was so surprised and excited that I lifted my hands in triumph. To my left, the moon was shining and the clouds began to swirl in the light of the moon. It startled me and I drew my hands back. Suddenly a tornado-like funnel formed from the swirling clouds and stretched from the sky to my left hand. When I drew my hand back, I had the power to pull the tornado towards me. I had control over the elements and the atmosphere.

This realization so thrilled me that I exclaimed, “Yes!” and stomped my foot in excitement. My foot hit the ground and the entire city shook under the power of an earthquake-like tremor. I mean the entire city shook under the force of a simple foot stomp.

Immediately, I became more fully aware of the force and power I really had. This was not just power to conquer. This was to more than conquer.

My attention was drawn to the tower where my wife was trapped. I pointed my right foot toward the tower and just simply made a quick slide step in the direction of the tower. A

shock wave went out from my foot towards the tower. It rippled through the city and right into the tower.

I looked up into the sky and said to the Lord, "Let's do this!"

Suddenly, I woke up and The Lord's presence was heavy upon me. As I awakened He spoke clearly and precisely,

"I want you to go and rescue My bride, rescue My church from the tower of religion. By allowing you to feel the pain of frustration in attempting to rescue Carol, you now have an idea how I long to show My Love for My bride.

The principality of religion has shocked and horrified My people through the guilt and shame of their past and their sin. They are trapped in a tower of religion in a robotic stupor. I am sending you to rescue My bride, because you now know how I feel about My church.

I want you to rescue My church so they can get about My business and win the lost. I have given you authority and ability to shake the foundations, with your lifestyle and testimony. You have authority to change the atmosphere with intercession, praise and worship. You will navigate through the deep dark waters of emotions, hearts and souls of wounded and hurting people.

I send you forth with MY agenda and MY plan for your life, to take authority and dominion over demonic forces that control earth, winds and waters, through a life purged by MY Fire.

Holiness will be commanded and demanded. Victory is certain. Yes, Let's do this!"

At the time the Lord gave us this command, we had no idea what Harrisburg was like. We had no idea what we were about to face. We had no idea what the seasons would be like during those pauses between the scenes of this dream.

However, we can tell you with full assurance that we have been prepared and equipped to complete this assignment. Our greatest joy is that the Lord is assembling a church family and team to complete this awesome task. This dream was about more than Chris and Carol Green. It was about all of us and the calling that is on OUR lives.

We look forward to meeting with you this Saturday as we continue to go forth in intercession, praise and worship that will change the atmosphere, climate and culture of our hearts, homes, families and city.

Lord, You Are Welcome Here

A couple of weeks ago the Lord gave us a spontaneous song of worship. As you recall, the lyrics were:

**You're welcome in my life, Lord
You're welcome in my home.
You're welcome in my heart, Lord
Be seated on the throne.**

**In my heart, you're welcome here
From your throne, you drive all fear
In my life you're always near
In my home, you're welcome here**

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Since that special time we have continued to open our hearts to the Lord, as His Word continues to flow into us. You have probably noticed that we are releasing more teaching and prayer each and every week like relentless artillery. That's because we are operating in the ways the Lord is leading us to smash the walls of doubt, discouragement and despair that have been built around hearts and homes in this city for many years.

After about one year of ministering in Harrisburg, we kept experiencing a strange onslaught against those who attended our services each week. Every time there was a breakthrough of hope amongst us, within a week, people would abruptly stop attending. Suddenly people were avoiding the church and they would cut off all communication. We would later discover that they were staying away because of one of three issues.

First, some had been offended by something that was said or done.

Second, others felt they were under condemnation.

Third, there were those who felt like the word of God was accusing them in some way.

It was beyond strange. It was bizarre. The same people who had been weeping in the presence of God, rejoicing with uplifted hands, and who reluctantly left the gathering because they wanted to linger in the Lord's presence, would just disappear and never come back.

We were baffled and confused because this happened time after time. We would grow to 15, 20, 25, or 30 people and then the sudden outbreak of mental, emotional and spiritual negative vibes (for lack of a better word) would sweep through the church, and we'd find ourselves back down to 4 or 5 people.

Then the Lord showed us a very strategic ploy that is repeatedly released in this city, to keep people from receiving and walking in the blessing and purpose of God.

During our first year, God gave one of our first team members a dream in which metallic-like beings rushed in and attacked the congregation and scattered the flock. I didn't know what it meant, but I thought I did. The team member's dream came true and we were ravaged and scattered.

Two years later, one of our young people had a dream that a large army of metallic-like beings came marching against the Church family. However, in her dream, the Lord showed her a massive group coming to help us fight. She was not aware of the dream that had been given two years before.

Recently, the Lord gave Pastor Carol a dream about strange looking beings raining down out of the sky, upon the city of Harrisburg, in three distinct groupings.

Her dream confirmed something that the Lord made clear to us over the course of this spiritual battle. The Lord is making it clear that these three groupings represent OFFENSE, CONDEMNATION, and ACCUSATION.

As you know, before we open our hearts to receive the word of God each week, we make a declaration in which we denounce the activities and plans of satan to cause us to feel

offended, condemned or accused. Remember, satan is the accuser of the brethren, not God and His word.

For too long, this demonic strategy has been affective to keep Harrisburg bound to the past and unable to launch forth into a God-ordained, purpose-filled future.

So that's why we're rehearsing that prophetic, spontaneous song of worship the Lord gave us. Today, it is a weapon in your mouth. As the enemy's tactics have been exposed, we now go on the offensive. No more defensive strategy for the church. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church!

So release this song to the Lord, today. As this song fills your mouth, it will fill your heart. As it fills your heart, it will fill your home. Yes, the Lord is welcome here and every demonic influence that has trespassed into your life, to make you feel offended, condemned or accused, is driven out by the presence of the Lord our God.

We stand in intercession for you today, that your eyes would be open to see that God has sent a massive number of angels to fight for us; to fight with us. We pray that your eyes would be opened to see that there are for more who are with us, than those that are against us.

Since one of us can send a thousand demons fleeing in the name and authority of Jesus Christ; and since two of us can send ten thousand to flight, we already have enough of us connected together to send millions fleeing from our midst.

So we will not focus on the activities of the enemy, but we set our attention on the Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ, may the Kingdom of God be released in your household right now! Your family, your children, your job, your career, your finances, and your very purpose on this earth are right now under the authority and care of Jesus Christ.

We declare righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, over your entire life; every aspect of your life. You will not be disappointed by the Lord. God is faithful to perform His word.

God is building your house. He's establishing your house. He's blessing your house. No matter what the situation is like right now, just determine in your heart that you will rejoice in the Lord always. Bless the Lord at all times and let His praise be continually in your mouth.

We speak this over your life, today, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Sound of Rejoicing

The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. The voice (sound) of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. - Psalm 118: 14-15

We want to take this opportunity to thank you for joining together during this very special holiday weekend. Thank you for bringing food and snacks for our family gathering. We never take it for granted when you choose to come together and when you go the extra mile by bringing something to contribute to the festivities.

We have waited a long time to hear the sounds that are coming forth from this church family these days. The sounds include laughter, singing, jokes, playful teasing, compliments, encouragement and just plain old fun.

I stepped back for moment and listened as some watched old black and white movies and others sat on the patio in the cool evening breeze. The best part was listening to the young people playing the card game, Uno. The laughter was contagious. The conversation was genuine. It was great to hear such unhindered, unreserved fun and laughter.

I listened to a special and new sound in the Church family. This special sound came forth after our Saturday night session in which the young people truly blessed all of us with their words of wisdom and power.

We felt like proud parents and pastors as we were able to hear the sound of hope and faith reverberating from them. Even after that, the Lord gave us another powerful move of His Spirit as we stepped out into ministering to one family in a particular way. All we can say is that ...**the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.** (Psalm 118:23).

Something very special is happening to us. One of our nephews (Justin Keys) came to visit from St. Louis to help us record some music tracks, but due to a series of sovereign

orchestrated events and incidents, he will stay with us through the rest of the summer.

As he played the piano throughout the meeting Saturday night, it was obvious that he is supposed to be here for this season in our life and in his life as well.

This week, we just want to let you know that we love you guys. We can't wait to gather again this Saturday and continue with our teaching. God is up to something special. As our own children shared with us Saturday night, we must trust God, even when we don't understand the what's, where's, when's, how's and why's of life.

He Heard My Voice

Psalm 116 1-3 reads: **I love the LORD, because He has heard my voice *and* my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call *upon Him* as long as I live.**

We just want to continue to encourage everyone in what we talked about Saturday night. We outlined several passages in the Bible where the writers referred to lifting our voices and speaking out loud to the Lord.

It is not our intention to dismiss or minimize any teaching that you may have received about praying silently. We are not minimizing the reality that the Lord knows what you need even before you ask. It's just that there really is something special about lifting our voices before the Lord.

Hopefully, we were able to convey that this expression is not a mere emotional outburst. The Bible makes it very clear that there are times when our voice is just as important as the prayer itself.

But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the **voice** of my prayer.

- Psalm 66:19

We emphasized this point especially to the young men because most males tend to hold their thoughts and feelings within themselves. Usually males express themselves only in moments of great joy or in great anger. So it might be a bit of a stretch for many guys to grasp this at first. It may seem like this is just another pointless exercise with no practical benefit.

But we urge you to lift your voice and don't hold back, brothers. When we're playing sports or video games, we can openly and unashamedly have outburst of yells and roars while we're competing against one another. We do the same thing when something angers or frustrates us.

But life is far more important than games and sports. Many athletes have a certain declaration when they're about to compete in a must-win game. They tell one another to leave it all out on the field. Leave it all out on the court. And that's just what they do. They fight, scream, grunt, roar, bellow, and play with all their heart. Today we're saying; when it comes to playing in the ultimate game, which is the game of life, leave it all out there.

Don't hold back. Give God your praise and your worship, with all your heart, soul, mind, body and strength. When we come together, let's give God the praise that He truly deserves. Let's not be reserved and passive. Then let's go out and live the same way. As you know, we teach that worship is losing yourself in the presence of God and losing yourself in the will of God.

Here's another way to think about it. How passive and reserved do you think Satan is, when he comes against you? The Bible describes him as a roaring lion. There is no gentle and nice way to deal with him. You can't be passive or timid when confronting a hungry beast. Do you get the picture? He plays the game like an athlete who is roaring, bellowing and fighting. He's leaving it all out on the court and on the field as he plays against us.

So, you and I must come out fighting too. It's just that we don't fight in our own strength. The Lord requires us to fight in faith. One of those faith strategies is to simply lift our voices in praise, worship, prayer, and in supplication. It doesn't make any sense to our minds, but it is a powerful thing in the spirit.

Instead of only displaying outburst about negative and earthly things, while we remain silent in Godly and spiritual matters, let's begin to lift our voices to the Lord. You will find that the more you engage in this manner, the less responsive you are to carnal things. Many things that once frightened, irritated, angered or discouraged you, will no longer have the stranglehold that they once possessed.

This will be a bit of a challenge for some of us. To others, this is just a reminder. Often you will hear this quote from us to the Church family: **"Let your ears, hear your mouth, say those words to GOD."** It's okay to listen to others, but eventually you must make a decision to stop passively listening to or observing others and begin to actively participate in prayer, praise and worship.

We trust that you are hearing our hearts today. We're not talking about the mechanics of lifting your voice. This is not some new formula to get God to do something special for you. However, this is a very important aspect of Kingdom culture.

You will understand why the psalmist said, "I love the Lord, **He heard my voice...** I will call upon Him as long as I live."

God bless and we love you guys.

Summer

The Works of God Revealed

I was thinking about the family situations in to which each of us was born and how unfair so many things seem to be in life. I want to address the frustration of many people, including our own children, who come to a point in their lives where they are asking tough questions.

Remember the incident that was recorded in the Bible about the man who was born blind? John 9: 1-3 reads:

Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" *Jesus* answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.

We don't know about the unfair situations and circumstances that have surrounded your life. Like this man, you may have been born with a *disadvantage* that has caused you to question your family and yourself. *Jesus'* answer, in this case, was that this blindness was not because of sin in the life of the parents or the blind man. *Jesus* said this man was born blind and it was so that the works of God could be revealed.

I believe *Jesus* was addressing something that speaks to all of us. There are certain things that we are born with and God allowed it for a reason that is known only to Him. You may have felt that your *disadvantage* is your ethnicity, your gender, your economic level, your social status or you may have been born with a disability. Some of us believe we have been stricken with all of these *disadvantages*. However let's look at it from the answer of *Jesus*.

You were born African American, Latino, or White so that the works of God could be revealed in you. You were born a female, not to be a second-class citizen, but that the works of God could be revealed in you. You were born an African American or Latino male, not to be feared or imprisoned, but that the works of God could be revealed in you. You may have been born with special needs, but even in that, the works of

God can still be revealed in you. No matter how society or even your family views you or your social status, the works of God can be revealed in you.

The works of God have been revealed IN these situations, THROUGH these situations, IN SPITE OF these situations, and BY MIRACLES IN THE MIDST of these situations. No matter how the Lord does it, we want you to realize that the works of God will be revealed.

You see family, we have to believe that God is so superior over satan, sin, disease and death, that no matter what He allows us to be born with or to be born in, He's disclosing His intentions to reveal the works of God through the life of that individual or family.

One simple way we expressed this reality was in our praise song, **I Just Know We Win**. This song is a declaration that admits that your pastors don't know a whole lot about a whole lot of things, but we know God is faithful, fair and loving. We don't have the answers to life's toughest questions, but we know the ONE who does. We don't know what the future holds, but we know the ONE who holds the future. We just know that in all things, we still win.

So the next time you're asking the Lord why did He let you be born Black, Latino or White; male or female; in a certain neighborhood or with a special need, please receive this precious and priceless answer that the Holy Spirit is whispering to you today, "It's so that the works of God will be revealed in you."

Gift of Resiliency

Well, we're coming up on Father's Day and we encourage you to honor your fathers this weekend. You would be surprised by what a greeting card or phone call would do, even if your relationship hasn't been very good with your father.

I have some very fond memories with my dad. He was a fun-loving dad who always threw caution to the wind. It got him in trouble many times, but it also gave his children a sense of adventure and daring that proved to be very helpful for us when we found ourselves called in to the ministry.

My dad saw my love for sports and took me to my first baseball game. The St. Louis Cardinals were playing the Montreal Expos and Jose Cardenal hit a two run double in the seventh inning that gave them a 4-2 victory. I couldn't believe I was actually there, in a 50,000 seat stadium, looking at the high tech scoreboard, the massive crowd, and experiencing all the sounds I always heard when I listened to games on the radio. I had become a devoted fan; and dad gave me a chance to experience the real thing; to actually see my heroes live and in person. I have cherished that memory all of my life.

There were many other games in the years that followed. I especially loved the day I sat between my dad and his dad and watched Bob Gibson, my all time favorite Cardinal baseball player, pitch on Labor Day. I actually realized I was experiencing something very special that would never happen again; three generations, sitting together, enjoying our favorite sport.

Those were the times that established something in my heart that I have tried to give my children. There are once-in-a-life-time opportunities that come your way, and I try to open the door for them to experience some of them. Then there are some things you cannot wait for, because some memories you simply have to make.

Through the years, I hope my children have had special moments that they recall with the same kind of fondness and deep impacting love that I feel when I think back on special moments with my dad.

My dad didn't always put his arms around my shoulder, or say 'I love you' in those moments. He wasn't that kind of man. He gave us nicknames and he always told us he was proud of us. When I was struggling in arithmetic, he started calling me '*math major*' and it built my confidence to try harder and I found success. I became a straight-A student in math.

My dad is not perfect. He had his issues with his children from time to time, like any father. I was sort of a middle child. He married my mom, who already had a precious little girl, and they had three sons before I came along. One son died while my mom was pregnant with me. Then they had two more children after me.

There were many times when life was very hard. It was downright harsh and cruel. I was angry with him many times, mainly because I had no idea what it took to be the head of the household. I learned from his mistakes and failures, as well as his resiliency. And maybe that's the greatest thing my dad gave us; resiliency.

Just like my dad's journey, as a husband and father, life has been hard, sometimes harsh and downright cruel for me, but I learned from my dad how to get up and go to work every day, no matter how you feel. When I lost jobs, opportunities, homes, friends, and loved ones, I knew how to get up and keep going. Dad demonstrated to us that you should never give up, even after a failure. You never stop, no matter how you feel.

So in honor of my dad and ultimately, God, my heavenly Father, I wrote a song many years ago that expresses thanks. I gave it an informal title: **Thank You Daddy**. I just want to share that song with you this week.

The lyrics are:

There's so much I take for granted,
Like the rising of the sun
Every time I see the morning,
Never thankful for the dawn
Like a father who's always there,
With the same things every day
So consistent and expected,
Sometimes I forget to say

(Chorus)

**Thank you daddy
For the blue that's in the sky
Thank you daddy
For the light that's in Your eye
Thank you daddy
For the life beat I've been handed
I get so busy
I'm taking you for granted**

There's so much you're always doing,
You watch my life and keep me safe
Sometimes you throw in extras,
Giving me a little bit more grace
You take the time to listen,
When all I bring are complaints
You carry me on your shoulders,
And you sing to me in the rain
I can always recall
The discipline you gave
All the nights you spent with me
And the path that you have paved
You'll give more love tomorrow
Than all my yesterdays
So please forgive me daddy
I never take the time to say

**Thank you, thank you
For every single day
Thank you, thank you
For every breath I take**

**Thank you, thank you
You made us sons and daughters
Thank you, thank you
Because you are our Father
Thank you**

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Rehoboth

*There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, On the top of the mountains; its fruit shall wave like Lebanon; and those of the **city** shall **flourish** like grass of the earth.*

Psalm 72:16

This word has been in our hearts ever since we first moved to Pennsylvania. Even though our goal, all along, has been to establish a ministry in the city, the Lord has had us on a journey of obedience, faith, testing and proving.

Look at what Paul wrote to the church in Corinth.

"For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

1 Corinthians 9:17-23

Since moving here, we have been continually called upon to be all things to all men like the apostle Paul described in his letter. We have made many adjustments, changes, and adaptations of the ministry in order to win some. However, as we are preparing to enter a personal time of fasting and prayer in July, we can already feel a tug on our hearts to now focus on the **people** whom the Lord sent us here to reach; the **people of the city**, the **people in the urban community**.

Over the past five years, we haven't shared very much about our urban roots. So allow us to disclose a little bit more about our background. We come from a church located in an urban, multi-ethnic community and we are part of our bishop's Urban World Harvest expedition. We have led teenagers and ministered to young adults in the urban community. We have preached and sang on the streets and parks in the inner city.

One of our most favorite ministries of all was benevolence and food outreach. In other words, God has literally groomed us and raised us up in the diversity of the inner city. He took us out of it for a few years, but now He is about to send us back to the urban world.

Our church family has a desire to take this fruitful lifestyle to heal hearts and homes. Yet, we know that we're supposed to be ministering in the city. We're supposed to take this healing to hearts and homes in the urban world. Somewhere in the city, there is a place from which we are supposed to provide water in the midst of a desert. From some place in the city, God will make room for us. We're looking for that place like just Isaac in Genesis 26:22

*And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, because he said, "**For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.**"*

We are looking for our **Rehoboth**. There has been much warfare in various attempts to dig wells. The enemy has contended with us and our efforts. How we thank God for the pastors and leaders in our **Pennsylvania Connection list** who have helped us and supported as we have searched and sought the Lord for the place we are to dig a well and provide water.

So this week we're writing to let everyone know that in July, as your leaders, we're going to begin praying and fasting for the revelation of our **Rehoboth – the place where the Lord has made room for us; from where we shall be fruitful in the land.**

The Lord has been adjusting our focus to urban people and ministry. So we're preparing to reach people in the urban world with the life of Jesus. You may have noticed our graphics and images have been changed on our website and emails. That's because the Lord is telling us to put more emphasis on urban life. What that means is that we are to actively prepare our church family to get ready for ministering TO the city and IN the city. It's the same ministry and the same message, but the target is URBAN.

Prophetically, I can see scores of young people praising God in hip-hop styles of rap and dance. I see dramatic presentations combined with 21st century lighting and sound technology to preach the gospel of the Kingdom. I see animation, puppet shows and 3D characters, like the Muppet show, bringing the Word of God to children in the inner city. I see a lively and vibrant place that is radical in its methods because it will take bold initiatives to reach a ravaged and despondent people.

We come from that community and God is sending us back to that world. Pastor Carol was born in Uptown and raised on The Hill in Harrisburg. I was born and raised in north St. Louis which is very similar to those sections of Harrisburg. We are filled with God's love and compassion as we return to the urban community.

I feel the Spirit of God upon me right now to pray:

"God we're on our faces and we're crying out to you. Show us our **Rehoboth**. We ask that You make room for us, Lord. Make a way for us O' God! You are our only source. We thank you for making a way out of no way. We thank you for provision of people and resources. We lift our hands, our hearts, our lives and our voices to you! Amen."

Reflections

After boldly praying for the Lord to help us find our Rehoboth, we continued to persevere through the summer months, posting excerpts from our soon to be released book about spiritual warfare. Those writings, which we featured as our weekly connection emails, carried us into the autumn.

It was during the autumn of 2009 that a series of events eventually led us to the Pennsylvania Council of Churches. This wonderful organization welcomed us into their facility, providing exactly what we needed: office and studio space at a reasonable rate. With great excitement, we transitioned from occupying the sanctuary of Zion Assembly of Harrisburg on Saturday nights, to meeting in the Pennsylvania United Church Center.

It was utterly astounding to watch God fulfill His promise to provide for us. Everything just fell in place. All we had to do was simply respond in obedience to the door the Lord opened for us.

We continued our Saturday night sessions, meeting in the dining hall of our new home. Eventually we adjusted our schedule and returned to Sunday mornings.

On the first Sunday in January of 2010, we launched a whole new strategy to reach out to the community. We began providing a light breakfast and fellowship before engaging in worship and teaching. We called it Sunday Café.

We began posting the Sunday Café sessions on our website and something even more amazing began to happen. The website hits began to increase from countries outside of the United States. By the spring of 2010, we were getting more page views and hits from outside of America, than within our own country. When the Lord promised a breakthrough for us, we didn't realize that He meant a breakthrough that would take our online ministry well beyond the borders of our city and nation. Then to add icing to the cake, God even began to revive our itinerant ministry.

God also miraculously provided for us on a personal level as our family moved into a dwelling that was nearly \$500/month less than the previous lease payment and it was over 200 square feet larger. In a matter of weeks we suddenly went from barely making it, to surplus and abundance.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year, we had to keep sending out those words of encouragement and teaching a small group of believers. It was like swinging a heavy sledge hammer and pounding it against a massive wall that was the size of Hoover Dam.

It was difficult to keep doing it, but we had the Lord's promise. Moving into the United Church Center revealed a tiny crack in the wall. The expansion of the web hits revealed a little trickle of water coming through.

The Sunday Café began to attract new people including some of Carol's relatives for the first time in five years, and a little more water started to flow. That inspired us to keep swinging the sledge hammer and pounding that wall of doubt and fear.

When the blessings burst forth on our personal finances, we knew that this was the start of something fresh. Water was beginning to pour through the crack. Faith and hope were growing in hearts and homes that have never known or seen God move in this way.

This has been a journal of just one season of our journey and we encourage you to embrace the reality of this kind of breakthrough bursting forth in your life, too.

This did not happen because we are extra special to God. This happened because God always keeps His promise. He is seeking, throughout the Earth, for those who will allow Him to show Himself strong.

When God declares a thing, it is already done as far as He is concerned. What it takes, from that point, is someone to hold on and wait until **time** catches up with **eternal purpose**.

If you stand until the end of your current trial, you will come to know what it means to be one who overcomes, under God's orders to break through the walls of doubt and fear. You will experience the will of God flooding into your heart and home.

About the Authors

Christopher and Carol Green lead the Urban Life Church of Harrisburg, PA, an urban family and inner healing ministry that was launched in March of 2005. With their sons they also founded the Fruitful Life Network of Ministries, the team that provides the technical and multimedia support for all of their productions and publications.

As itinerant speakers they engage small groups or larger audiences in settings ranging from training meetings to national and international conferences, addressing issues involving marriage and family, church supportive leadership, and church prophetic exhortation. Their travels have taken them from coast to coast in the United States, to Hawaii, the Bahamas, Trinidad, the United Kingdom, and to Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa.

They completed five years of formal ministry training in their home church (Metro Christian Worship Center in St. Louis, Missouri) and to further enhance his education Chris completed certificate programs from the University of Missouri-St. Louis' Continuing Education Division. They both completed a certificate program from the American Association of Christian Counselors.

For nearly 17 years, Chris and Carol served in the leadership (14 as associate pastors) of Metro Christian Worship Center. They helped to establish this church and were officially licensed and ordained as ministers in May of 1992.

Chris also served as the executive vice president of Metro Associates, Inc, a community outreach organization based in St. Louis, Missouri. As program director of media, from 1989 until 2004, he helped coordinate annual community outreach events, produced an award winning cable TV broadcast, established two music publishing companies, and produced several music and sermon CDs.

Chris and Carol have been married since December 29, 1980 (wedding ceremony on January 3, 1981) and are the proud parents of three sons: Christopher, Jonathan and David as well as a host of people throughout the world who call them 'mom and dad'.

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Chris and Carol Green send weekly emails to their church family to maintain momentum from one week to the next. You hold in your hands one year of emails from which a powerful message of purpose came bursting through.

God was using the weekly Words to consistently and persistently smash against the walls of doubt and fear that had taken resident in the hearts and homes of their readers.

These messages struck a weekly blow for truth and freedom. Allow the sledge hammer of God's Word to break down every barrier in your life that hinders you from believing that all of the promises of God will be fulfilled.