

## “Recalibrate: 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting” January, 2021

### “Led by the Spirit”

Compiled and Edited by Tom & Donna Watt

**Monday, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>**

This month, during the 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting, our devotional theme is highlighting the person, work, and gifts of the Holy Spirit through Scripture, Teaching, and Testimony. As we begin our journey together, let’s take a moment to look at the **Person** of the Holy Spirit..... Back in 2017, at the Assemblies of God General Council, Dr. George Wood gave us a simple message highlighting five aspects of the “person” of the Holy Spirit.

#### **Aspect #1: The Holy Spirit is our friend.**

There are two words in the Greek referring to “another”. Jesus said he would send us “another” who would come along side and be our comforter. The word used means “someone like me”, “someone of the same kind”, implying that the Holy Spirit is a full and a true representation of Jesus Christ coming to dwell within us. The Holy Spirit is the very person of Christ within us. **The Holy Spirit believes in us, protects us, is always faithful to us, and is truthful with us.** He reveals to us who we truly are and helps us move forward toward who we can become. He puts the call in our life and is the friend of the One who calls all of us. He sticks with us closer than a brother. He is always with us.

#### **Aspect #2: The Holy Spirit is our advocate or attorney.**

He is a prosecutor in the sense that he convicts concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. He is a defense attorney in that he testifies before the Father that we are His children and before those around us that we are God's own and representatives of Christ. He is the best advocate we could ever have! He is our Defender.

#### **Aspect #3: The Holy Spirit is our trainer or a life coach.**

He trains us so that we will think like Jesus, act like Jesus, and feel like Jesus. It is good for us to read Galatians 5:16-21, placing the word “I” in front of each of the fruits of the Spirit, as in: I am patient, I am kind, I am loving, and so on. You can also do that with First Corinthian's 13, placing the word “I” in lieu of the word “love”. Only a loving, caring and merciful church will impact this world for Christ.

**Aspect #4: The Holy Spirit is also the Benefactor.**

Better than money, or material things, we will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon us. What a great gift to have the Holy Spirit in his power working within us: understanding, comforting, gifting, empowering, and so much more. For, “it is not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord”. His gifts are expandable and infinite. We can receive more and thereby do more to reach the world around us with the love and gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Aspect #5: The Holy Spirit is our Scout.**

He knows what lies ahead. Consider the early apostles and their missionary journeys. The apostles didn't know what was in store for them as they traveled, but the Spirit did! They applied simple faith and obedience in Him.... And thus He led them.

--- *Dr. George Wood*

**As you read the testimonies in the coming days,** look for these aspects of the person of the Holy Spirit at work. See if you can identify specific “aspects” of the Holy Spirit’s person and work in each of the devotionals.

**Reflect by asking these questions.**

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**As a follow up, try to end each day with some personal reflection.**

Each evening take some time to consider how the Holy Spirit’s presence has been evident in your life that day. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you peace and rest, and then speak to your heart as a new day dawns.

---*Tom & Donna Watt*

Tuesday, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>

## God Desires to See Us Pursue Him!

A teenager named, Aimee, desired to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues. She would spend time at prayer meetings asking for the Spirit to descend on her like He had come upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, but it simply was not happening! Her passion for this gift of the Spirit was so strong that she told God she was going to fast and pray until He baptized her in His Spirit and she was speaking in tongues. So she locked herself in a room (even amidst her parents' protests), taking only water with her, and began to pray. Three days into her isolation, she was pleading before God, determined not to leave the room until God met her and anointed her with the gift of speaking in tongues. Then, He did! Tired, hungry and passionate for God, Aimee experienced God's baptism in that small room. She began to speak in tongues but more importantly she became empowered to preach the gospel without fear. The Lord blessed her with multiple spiritual gifts on that day and used her to reach tens of thousands of people with the good news of Jesus!

One of those women, influenced by Aimee, was my Grandmother. One night, my Grandmother had a vision, that Jesus was standing at the end of her bed beckoning her to come to Montana and start a church among the Cheyenne Indians. She woke up, gathered her family and traveled to Montana, from Los Angeles, to share the gospel with a group of people who desperately needed to hear of a Savior who loved them! She was met with opposition and struggles. Who was this little 4'11" white woman who had come into a Native American tribe? She was an unlikely candidate but she had been given a directive by God and she wasn't going to deny it! Over time, the people accepted her and she was able to plant four churches where many came to know Jesus and experienced His love.

Both Aimee and my Grandmother had incorporated the disciplines of prayer and fasting into their lives, even at a young age. They pursued God and asked God to bless them by pouring out His Spirit upon them that they might be empowered to do His will. God responded! Do you desire to be empowered by the Spirit of the living God? Do you desire to see the gifts of the Spirit manifested in your life? If you do, spend time at the feet of Jesus praying, fasting, and asking God to pour out His Spirit on you. Be relentless in pursuing God and see what He will do!

--- **Pastor Sharon Noble**

**Romans 8:11 (NIV)** "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you."

**Wednesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>**

### **“How Many of Us Want More of the Holy Spirit?”**

“I will never forget the night that I first felt God’s voice speak so clearly to me. As a 14 year old in junior high school, I was mesmerized by the speaker’s stories of the Holy Spirit working in people’s everyday lives. I sensed God’s presence in a powerful way during that Sunday evening service. I heard the guest speaker ask a simple question, “How many of you want more of the Holy Spirit?” That really struck me. “I” needed more of the Holy Spirit!

I responded by walking forward and lifting my hands upward as if to receive a gift. The speaker placed his hands upon my forehead and began to pray for me. I was floored by the power of God and spoke in tongues, which was then interpreted to the congregation. As soon as it was interpreted, I spoke again, another message in tongues, and it too was interpreted. With my eyes closed and my heart tender before the Lord, I had an amazing vision of a globe spinning and then I heard God’s voice speaking to me. God spoke to me and said, “Preach My Word!” For the first time in my life I felt like I had a true calling and purpose.

On the car ride home I remember saying, “God drafted me into the Big Leagues, Dad!” My life has never been the same. The Holy Spirit has been a catalyst toward God’s mission. Through the ups and downs of ministry, I’ve had to go back to the faucet for refills. God never disappoints. It’s truly amazing what God will do when we open ourselves up to Him and desire more of His Spirit in our lives!”

--- ***Pastor Jordan Hansen***

**Joel 2:28** “And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons & daughters will prophesy, your elder men will dream dreams, and ***your young men will see visions.***”

**Also read: Acts 2:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, and Matthew 28:19-20**

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

Thursday, Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>

### Hearing the Voice of the Holy Spirit

The day began like any other second day of our summer camp, except..... One camper, Daniel, had a fever and our nurse was recommending he be taken to the nearest hospital in Escondido, which was over an hour away. We placed a mattress in the back of a van and began our journey through the winding mountain roads toward the hospital. At one point, I saw people running towards something. I slowed, and as I came around the corner I saw why. There had been a horrific accident. Blind corners can be extremely dangerous and as I pulled up to the vehicle that had been struck while turning left onto the highway, I saw him. A young man.... Motionless.... His broken femur protruding from his leg.... His shirtless chest bleeding.... It appeared he was not even breathing. I paused and asked the Lord if I should place him in the back of the van, knowing it was another 45 minutes to the hospital and it could take a long time for emergency vehicles to even arrive on the scene. An inaudible voice, the voice of the Holy Spirit, spoke clearly in my spirit saying, “No, take care of your own patient.”

I drove on praying for the young man’s family. “Oh, Lord, through this tragedy, comfort and meet the family.... his mother, father, siblings....” Suddenly, that same voice spoke again. “You aren’t praying properly.” I paused and began to pray in the Spirit.

Hours later, with my patient sleeping soundly at the hospital, I wandered down to the nurse’s station in the Emergency Room. I approached the desk and mentioned that I had seen an accident on my way to the hospital. I wondered if the family of the young man was present. Perhaps I could pray with them.

When I asked the nurse if she knew anything, she said, “Those stupid paramedics. They pronounced him “dead at the scene”. They brought him here and turns out he is going to be just fine.”

--- **Glenn Rouse**

**Romans 8:26** “Likewise, the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Friday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>**

## **Pursuing the Holy Spirit Reveals the Heart of God!**

The most important and unforgettable day of my life was when I recommitted my life to Christ, repented of my sins and chose to believe in Jesus, and live every moment of my life for Him. I was in my freshman year of college. For months I had been struggling with doubts about God and wondered if I truly believed in *all* that the Bible taught.

In the beginning of my spiritual journey, I had invited God into my life. I began feeling God's presence in ways I had never experienced before. I tangibly felt God's presence moving as I worshipped, prayed, and read His word. Then fear crept in and immediately I would stop what I was doing. One day I talked to my professor and mentor about how I was running from God's presence when things got too intense because of fear.

My wise professor asked me a simple question that rings in my ears even now. "Have you told Jesus?"

Mockingly I echoed back, "*Have I told Jesus?*"

"Yes," he replied. "Have you told Jesus? Jesus is pursuing you but you keep running away. He wants you to talk to Him about your fears and doubts." In addition, he invited me to come and learn more about the Holy Spirit at an upcoming chapel at our university. I had never heard of or considered learning about the Holy Spirit.

Well, I ended up going to that chapel. There I recommitted my life to Christ, renouncing sins and confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior of my life. God filled me with the Holy Spirit which truly changed me forever. I spoke in tongues, received prophecy, and became a new person. I accepted God and His word as absolute truth and committed my life wholly to Him. No longer was I seeking a spiritual experience but seeking the living God. Now, when I spent time in His presence reading the Bible, meditating on His word, being in Christ-centered community, worshiping, and praying, I was more aware of Jesus pursuing me.

As I examined various accounts of people being filled with the Holy Spirit I discovered it came after receiving Jesus as their Lord and Savior and renouncing their sins and choosing to live their lives for Him. Sometimes it was accompanied by the sign of tongues. But these people were not searching for a spiritual encounter they were searching for the words of truth. They were searching for the living God who could set them free from the captivity that sin held over them.

This year as we consider being led by the Spirit during our time of fasting and prayer I am calling to remembrance that I should not be seeking to be led by the Spirit for the sake of a spiritual encounter, rather for the sake of pursuing God's will for my life and the world around me.

**--- Pastor Brittany Dalafu**

**Matthew 6:33** "But seek first the kingdom of God (*seek Him*) and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

**Saturday, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>**

## **The Gift of Faith**

You are saved by faith. And God has given us a measure of faith. But the spiritual gift of faith is extraordinary faith acknowledging fully that you cannot accomplish something on your own, but that the Lord has empowered you to move into new levels for the Holy Spirit to do miracles and wonders in His name.

Our family was new to the faith, having surrendered our lives to Jesus Christ at the Corry Assembly of God Church. Five months later, my youngest brother was born. He was a beautiful blond, healthy infant. For me, it was love at first sight. However, when Roy was 9 months old my mom noticed that his head was not proportioned to his body. Out of concern, my parents took him to the doctor. They were given a grim diagnosis. Roy had hydrocephalus. Specialists informed them that he would never hold his head up, talk or walk. And because of the pressure in his skull there would be extensive brain damage. As a result, he would not even have the ability to think for himself. "If he lived to be 4 years old it would be a miracle"... That was the neurologist's prognosis.

One night, my mom had a dream. Roy was riding a tricycle. Then, getting off of the tricycle, he walked toward her. Waking up and creeping into the living room, she fell on her knees and prayed. The Holy Spirit came upon her and she was filled with a flood of both faith and assurance that Roy **WOULD** indeed walk someday.

Mom told me that many evenings she was exhausted from the therapy she did on Roy 3 times a day along with taking care of his special needs. Mom would get on her knees crying out to God asking, "When Lord? When is He going to walk?" The Holy Spirit would lovingly whisper, telling her to continue clinging to the gift of faith and that He would give her all the strength she needed each day.

Although delayed in his physical development, he did hold his head up and not only spoke in complete sentences, but also sang and memorized commercials and stories. At the age of 6 1/2 Roy took his first step, unassisted... just at the time he was becoming too heavy to be carried. What a day of rejoicing that was for us. From that time on, his body and mind became stronger. And so did our faith and trust in our God of Miracles as we witnessed the supernatural gift of faith He had given to Mom which continued throughout her lifetime.

--- **Donna Watt**

**I Corinthians 12: 8-9** "For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another *faith* by the same Spirit,..."

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Sunday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>**

### **The Holy Spirit, Our Comforter & Guide in Times of Sorrow**

It was nearly midnight on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010, when I entered my mom's home in New Bern, North Carolina.

Just a day earlier, I had been teaching my third graders on a sunny day here in California. I was called into the school office where I received a phone call informing me that my precious mom, while at her bank, had suddenly collapsed and died of cardiac arrest. Devastated by this news, I sat down on the school office's floor feeling as if my body was twirling into an endless dark tunnel.....

Flipping on the living room light, I was overwhelmed by the silence of Mom's home. This was the home that my mom had planned to return to after doing a few errands. Laying on the coffee table, were the airline tickets to California to spend Christmas with us. There was so much to be done. Where do I begin? Overwhelming grief washed over me.

Standing in the middle of the living room, I heard the voice of the Holy Spirit speak, "Child, come, sit. I am here with you. I will lead you through your journey. I have already prepared the way."

In that moment, my perception of the person of the Holy Spirit was solidified. No longer an enigma, but a very real person of the Trinity... my friend, my comforter, my guide. I experienced such tremendous peace flowing through me.

Even now, I cry tears of joy that God loves us so much that He gives us the Holy Spirit. He did not leave me as an orphan, alone. So many miracles happened over the next three weeks because the Holy Spirit held me in His Hands and led me to all the people I needed to connect with in order to take care of my mom's affairs. They were all so kind and helpful. And I listened to the Holy Spirit as I planned a beautiful memorial service to honor Adeline Rose, my beautiful mom.

--- **Donna Watt**

#### **John 14:16-18 (NASB)**

16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

**Monday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>**

## **Focus: The 9 Gifts of the Holy Spirit, as Described in 1 Corinthians 12**

The Bible tells us that there are 9 gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts are the manifestations of the power and authority given to you by the Holy Spirit in order to accomplish His will on earth.

Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, that those who believe in Me, the works that I do they will do also; and greater works than these they will do, because I go to My Father. So, whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” (John 14:12-14)

Therefore, ask for these gifts of the Holy Spirit to be manifest in your life! Understand this about the gifts of the Holy Spirit...The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not for you to use however *you* want. They have specific purposes for God’s Kingdom. They are intended to glorify God by revealing more of who He is and displaying His sovereignty and power over all things.

The purpose of the Spirit’s manifestations is to benefit the body of Christ and a witness to the Gospel. 1 Cor. 12:7 “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all...”

They are available to all believers and manifested by the Holy Spirit, according to His will. 1 Corinthians 12:11 “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

God’s Word tells us that we should earnestly seek and desire these gifts, not quenching the Spirit.

- “Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy...” 1 Corinthians 14:39
- “Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.” 1 Cor.14:1
- “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies.” 1 Thessalonians 5:19-20
- “Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things, give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.” 1 Timothy 4:14-15
- “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.” 2 Timothy 1:6

### **Be Knowledgeable!**

First Corinthians 12 starts with a powerful statement from Paul: “I do not want you to be ignorant...” This may sound harsh, but Paul is warning the Church that we must stay spiritually awake, understanding and searching the scriptures so that we can stand firm in the faith. The Apostle Paul is speaking to the Gentiles in Corinth, but his message applies to us today in that we can get “carried away” with past idols. So then, we must stay aligned with God, not allowing the old to carry us away from the new that God has for us.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit take you into deeper waters with God. As Jesus said in Luke 12:48, “...to whom much is given, from him much will be required...” Therefore, we cannot be spiritually asleep and expect to experience these gifts of the Holy Spirit. Let us wake up to the new thing God wants to do in and through our lives! In a sense we have been given a charge to ask for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and to utilize them for the Body of Christ. So, prepare your heart for His instruction and leading. There is no denying He longs to do something new within each of us.

## The 9 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

### 1. The Word of Knowledge

This gift of the Holy Spirit is having knowledge about something that you have no ability or means of knowing based on your human intelligence.

Example: Suddenly you feel an immediate need to pray for someone that you may or may not even know. The Holy Spirit gives you what you need to pray effectively.

### 2. The Word of Wisdom

This gift of the Holy Spirit works with the word of knowledge. It gives you the ability and understanding of how to apply the word of knowledge.

Example: The Holy Spirit gives you the details of a situation so that you can pray and intercede. Someone, somewhere, may need your prayers at that very moment. Or, you may be asked to give counsel to a friend or unbeliever, and the Spirit gives you the exact words to speak to that person.

### 3. The Gift of Prophecy

This gift of the Holy Spirit is one that the scripture says, “to especially desire.”

This gift is a direct Word from the Lord that is to be given to someone else to edify and build them up.

Example: You share Jesus with a person and invite them to give their life to the Lord. You give a person you know the encouragement to step out in faith based on the strengths and abilities that you have observed in their life, and the affirmation of the Holy Spirit.

### 4. The Gift of Faith

God has given each of us a measure of faith. You are saved by faith. But the spiritual gift of faith is an extraordinary measure of faith, knowing full well that you cannot accomplish something on your own, but that the Lord has empowered you to move into new levels for the Holy Spirit to do miracles and wonders in His name.

Example: A believer encounters an otherwise hopeless situation, but the Holy Spirit gives you an extraordinary measure of unshakeable faith.

### 5. The Gifts of Healings

These gifts of healing equip you in various ways to access healing for yourself or be an anointed vessel that will provide healing for others physically, mentally or spiritually

Example: The laying on of hands and intercessory prayer for a person’s healing produces miraculous results.

### 6. The Working of Miracles

This gift of the Holy Spirit is depicted throughout the Bible, from Moses parting the Red Sea to Jesus feeding 5000 people. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Therefore, He still loves to bless us and others by working miracles. Similar to the word of knowledge, this spiritual gift is manifested not by human efforts, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. The work is unexplainable by natural processes. It edifies and delivers others.

Example: In the midst of a dangerous or catastrophic situation, the Holy Spirit guides a group of believers to pray for a miracle. Those whom they are praying for are delivered from harms way.

## 7. The Discerning of Spirits

This gift of the Holy Spirit equips the discerner to see evil spirits that are operating in someone's life. The Holy Spirit pulls back the curtains, exposing the evil spirits so that the person can experience a breakthrough from their bondage.

Note: Believers need to be really spiritually prepared in order to do this.

## 8. Different Kinds of Tongues

This gift of the Holy Spirit is simply a supernatural ability to speak and pray in a tongue that you do not naturally know or normally use. This can be spoken forth in prayer directly to God, or in an assembly where God anoints another believer, with the gift of interpretation, to interpret the word spoken in the native tongue of the congregation (1 Corinthians 14:2, 13-14). It can also be used to declare God's word to unbelievers as in the Day of Pentecost.

Example: When you are intensely praying and overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit's presence, you can no longer express yourself in your native language and the Holy Spirit takes control and you speak in a another (sometimes called "heavenly") language.

## 9. The Interpretation of Tongues

This gift of the Holy Spirit is to interpret the tongue that was spoken. This can either be for yourself (see 1 Corinthians 14:13-14) or for the Church (see 1 Corinthians 14:27-28), or for another individual.

Example: While you are speaking in tongues, you understand what is being said. In a church gathering a person gives a message in tongues and the Holy Spirit begins to stir in you and you get a few words. You take 1 step of faith beginning to speak out those few words and then the Spirit completely takes over and the message is interpreted through you for the edification of the gathering. On occasion, church visitors from another country have actually understood a message given in another tongue because it was their native language! What a witness!

**Tuesday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>**

As a new missionary I believed Acts 1:8, namely that “I would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon on me. I would be God’s witness to the ends of the earth.” My untested belief would soon meet the challenge of real life. My understanding of power would be changed forever. In my naivety, I envisioned one victory after another with a warm sense of accomplishment validating my “call”. What I did not understand was that God is always more focused on the worker rather than the work. ***When He has the worker, emptied of self, He can get the full Glory when He displays His power in the work.***

It took me some time to comprehend and embrace this truth. In my first itineration, my energy, creativity and time were all used up, but I was still significantly short of the needed funds to leave for the field. Driving back from one of my last missions’ services, I came to the end of myself,...

“God, my destiny is in your hands. I surrender my life and ministry once again to you. Amen.” The next morning, I received word of a miracle offering that catapulted us to language school and soon after, the mission field.

Energized that I was now a “real missionary”, I was soon confronted by my limitations in learning a new language. After an intense year of study, facing my less than impressive capacity in Spanglish, I sought God for His empowerment. God spoke to me, but He was unkind. God said, “If I can speak through a donkey, I can speak through you. Get over yourself!” Stripped of my ego but empowered with God’s passion, I finally broke through the language barrier.

As I look back on my career as a missionary, I see the hand of God empowering my weakest moments. In my first Royal Ranger outing in the Dominican Republic, an eleven-year-old camper nearly drowned, but the power of God raised him from the dead and transformed his life. At another time, a group of squatters tried to steal one of our ChildHope school’s empty lot. The only way to save the school was a put in a cement foundation but we were broke! Guided by the Holy Spirit, I sent out one email that God’s used to send in \$35,000 for the foundation. We’ve seen God’s hand of provision, healing and empowerment as He reached out through us as His broken but empowered vessels. In our weakness, through the power of the Holy Spirit, He has become our strength. As **2 Corinthians 12:9** says, “But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

***--- Dale & Patti Coad, Missionary to the Dominican Republic & Caribbean Islands***

**Wednesday, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>**

## **Giving to God with the Holy Spirit's Guidance Strengthens Our Faith**

So often, God uses our finances to test our faith. When we give, it shows God that we trust Him and believe His promises to provide for us. Giving strengthens, stretches, and tests our faith.

Many years ago, my wife and I were tithing at our church and the church was growing to such an extent that a new facility was required. The Lord presented the church with an opportunity to purchase an elementary school that was closing. To seize upon this opportunity, the church needed to raise significant funds and pledges were sought. We weren't sure what the Lord would have us pledge. Both my wife and I decided to spend time separately in prayer seeking what the Lord would have us do above and beyond our pledge. While seeking the Lord's lead in prayer, the Holy Spirit gave me an amount which was somewhat frightful due to its size, given our income and expenses at the time. I told my wife that when the Lord had spoken to her and given her an amount that we should each write down the amount on paper and then we would compare notes.

To our surprise, the amounts the Spirit gave us were the same! We knew the Lord had spoken clearly to us and now we needed to obey in faith. And the Lord did provide, which really increased our faith in Him. We were blessed with an unexpected bonus at work that year which enabled us to fulfill our pledge. Amazing! Ever since, we have approached our giving to the Lord in the same way – each praying and seeking God for what He would have us give and listening for His lead through the Holy Spirit.

--- **Tom Prince**

**Malachi 3:10** is one verse from the Bible that is very encouraging about giving:

“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse . . . If you do, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great that you won't have enough room to take it in. Try it! Put me to the test!”

Seek the Holy Spirit's voice in your giving. Allow Him to stretch your faith and be generous with a joyful and expectant heart!

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Thursday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>**

## **The Holy Spirit and Healing**

Physical healing is a work of the Holy Spirit today in our world. In answer to our prayers, God acts on behalf of his children through the working of the Holy Spirit. Millions of people today can attest to the fact that God heals. Let me give you an example from my own life.

In 2010, I was teaching a course at Bethel Bible College in Valenzuela, Metro Manila, Philippines. It was a two-week concentrated course, and during the first week I was bitten by a mosquito. By the Monday of the second week I began to feel really bad, and by Wednesday I was checked into a hospital with dengue fever. Dengue fever is a tropical disease that is transmitted by mosquitos and can be fatal. It is a leading cause of serious illness and death in many Asian countries. There is no treatment for it except keeping the body hydrated and taking Tylenol to keep the fever down. The persistent fever resulted in my being treated for over a week in the hospital, being placed on IV's and under the care of three doctors. Many people began to pray, and several offered to donate blood because transfusions are often needed with this disease. The doctors told me that in a few days my fever would go down and also at that time my blood count would go down. This is the time when people die from hemorrhaging. One of the doctors said, "That will be the most important day of your life." Sure enough, in a few days my fever went down, but my blood count went up! Two of the doctors said, "*God did this.*" In a few days, I was released from the hospital, and in a few weeks I was completely recovered!

This is an example of how the Holy Spirit's ministry of healing is manifested in our lives today. No illness is incurable with Him. Do you need healing? Ask God to bring his healing touch to you today!

--- ***Galen Hertweck, Assemblies of God Missionary (Asia Pacific Theological Seminary-APTS)***

**Mtt. 4: 23-25 ; Acts 28: 7-10 ; 1 Cor. 12: 9 ; James 5: 14,15**

James 5:13-16 (NASB)

13 Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

15 and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Friday, Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>**

### **The Gift of Healing**

As a senior in college back in Missouri, I had the opportunity to take the Red Cross life-saving class and get my lifeguard certification. Having had so much “pool time” and “beach time” growing up, I loved swimming, diving, and boogie boarding. One of the things we would do before our class began was to take some warm-up laps and then have fun doing some diving. One particular Friday I was practicing some serious dives off a platform. For some reason I focused so much on my upper body technique that I lost complete control of the lower half of my body. As I hit the water my legs swung awkwardly over my head and wrenched my lower back. I was able to make it over to the side of the pool, where are some of my classmates and the coach helped pull me out and lay me alongside the pool. After a while I was able to get up, make it out to my car, and drive back to my dorm room. I decided to pack up a few things and make the 3 hour drive home to Kansas City.

My home away from college was up in KC with a Christian family who literally adopted me into their fold. There was Mom Mowrer, a widow and spiritual dynamo, and her two sons. Her eldest son was a good friend whom I had met in high school while in “Up With People!” I became a lifelong ‘brother’ and member of the family.

When I arrived “home”, I shared the story of what happened in the pool with Mom Mowrer. I told her I may need to see a doctor and stay home for a little while to heal up. She looked straight into my eyes and asked four questions: “Tom, do you believe that God *can* heal you?” ... “Tom, do you believe God *wants* to heal you?” ... “Tom, do *you* want God to heal you?” ... The final question really caught me off guard: “Tom, do *you* have the faith that if I pray for your healing *God will heal you right now?*” Talk about putting me on the spot! But I answered with an unwavering yes to every question. Mom proceeded to sit down in a chair and asked me to sit opposite from her. She asked me to rest my two feet upon her knees and held them in her hands. Comparing my legs, she noted that my right side was shorter than my left side and we needed to pray for the Lord to release all of the muscles and tendons and tension and make both of my legs even. As she prayed I felt this heat in my leg and I literally could see my lower leg moving and lengthening until both were even. When I stood up to walk, I felt so much better and within a couple hours almost all of the pain was gone. I was in church on Sunday, back on the road to college that evening, and on Monday I was back in the pool swimming with no pain at all. The Spirit’s gifts of faith and healing in that moment were amazing! Just a few years later, God would use me to lay hands on the sick and see them immediately healed in much the same way. Glory to God!

--- **Tom Watt**

**1 Corinthians 12:9** “...for to another is given the gift of faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit...” ; **Acts 3:1-9**

**Saturday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>**

## **Peace When It Doesn't Seem to Make Any Sense**

**Romans 8:6** “The mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.”

One African night, my husband and I suddenly heard a loud noise and looked at each other. It was *gunfire* on the Bible School campus where we lived! Hearing gunfire daily is normal when you're living in a country experiencing civil war, but I've never liked that sound, especially when it's close by! As we looked out the window, we could see our guards with their AK-47 assault rifles firing as they ran 100 yards towards our missionary neighbor's house. No cell phones made communication impossible. But it appeared thieves with guns were attempting to steal their car. We waited anxiously to hear about the outcome.

Within a few minutes, the guards came back and knocked on our door. Imagine the surprise when we opened it and saw one guard pointing his AK-47 gun at a man who was sprawled on the ground nearby. The other guard said, “One thief escaped, we shot a second one and here is the third thief, who we've captured.” Next, they requested that my husband drive them to the police station with the two thieves. He obliged, and on the way there the man they had shot died in our Land Rover.

It was decided I should not be left alone in case the thief who ran away returned. So a guard with his AK-47 gun remained in the dark just outside my front door. As I watched my husband drive off into the African night with two thieves and two armed guards in the car, I experienced the “peace of God that passes all understanding.” In the natural, it didn't make sense to experience such peace after all that gunfire, the attempted robbery, and being left alone. But the Holy Spirit truly spoke to my heart, reminding me that He's with us and gives us His peace even in difficult circumstances.

**Romans 15:13** “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

--- ***Dickie Hertweck, Assemblies of God Missionary (Angola, Africa) ; (APTS)***

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

## Sunday, Jan. 17th

I recall God's provision for my family in **The Miracle of Christmas, 1993**.

That December Jim was laid off. I had been a stay at home mom for the past 15 years and we did not have money for our utilities, car payment or any Christmas gifts for our three children.

We decided to share our situation with our Partners in Christ class at NMC, family and friends. Within days, God moved in the hearts of people, some total strangers. John Huntley knew of our plight, so when the Costa Mesa Recreation office contacted him about providing Christmas gifts for a few NMC families, he gave them our information! The office wanted real specifics such as the names of toys and games, sizes and colors of clothing items, etc. One sweet part of this is that the day before John had called all three kids had made specific lists of wishes for Christmas gifts. So, part of the miracle was that God used complete strangers to bless our family.

Days later, a young couple we knew came by with cash that equaled our car payment! Finally, the Sunday before Christmas, our Partners in Christ class took a love offering for us that was the exact amount of our gas and electric bills! God knows our needs and is faithful to provide.

---**Gwen Blankenship**

### Matthew 6:25-33 (NASB)

<sup>25</sup> "For this reason I say to you, **do not be worried about your life**, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

<sup>26</sup> "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

<sup>27</sup> "And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life?"

<sup>28</sup> "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

<sup>30</sup> "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of small faith!

<sup>31</sup> "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?'"

<sup>32</sup> "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

<sup>34</sup> "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Monday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>**

**“Walk in the Spirit...” Galatians 5:21**

**When We Walk in the Spirit, He Will Bring Forth Fruit!**

We can all look back at the intersections of our lives with others. They often represent pivotal forks in the road for us. I am forever impacted by my intersection with a Christ Follower, one who was completely sold out to Jesus and who exemplified this dynamic relationship with Him. Craig knew well the tug and voice of the Holy Spirit. He shared one on one with anyone at UCI who would share a meal or a devotional time, or even sit under the right tree at the right time. The tree option was me. I sat in the quad on the UCI campus during finals week. I just happened to be reading my Bible since my grad classes gave no finals. As I minded my own business Craig was going about God’s business.

“Hey, can I tell you a Bible verse?” he asked as he approached.

I replied of course as I thought “Whoa...does this guy approach everyone this way?”

Craig shared 1 Peter 5:7 with me: “Cast all your cares on Him because He cares for you”. Supposing I was thinking about finals, Craig had picked a verse to ease my worries. But looking back... I think *God cared*, and was worried about the infant-like, tradition based, ownership lacking, at best lukewarm faith that I had settled into.

*God knew ...* Craig found out that I tend to be driven by ‘food’. He closed out our conversation by inviting me to dinner on Friday’s and a Bible study. I encountered a fellowship of people who shared from their Spirit, studied God’s word daily and emphasized Christ’s teaching. They were the embodiment of “Taste and see that the Lord is good!”

I confess that I tend toward the rational...numbers, engineering..... However, as helpful as those are they have no “taste”, no “flavor”. When I get out of my head and go above into the realm of the Holy Spirit, I can taste God’s goodness.

Craig disciplined me for over ten years in a number of settings.... Friday nights, prayer over the phone, a little basketball sometimes.... and he was always ready with a quick devotion. Recently, I bumped into Craig in Lake Forest. And guess what...he was buying a burrito with a ‘*seeking*’ student who I know was about to get a ‘meal of the Spirit’. He is such a great example of one who “walks in the Spirit” and makes the most of every opportunity the Lord places before him. I’m so glad he was tuned in and obedient to the Spirit’s voice that day on the UCI campus! Lord, help us all to be that attentive and available to your Spirit.

--- ***Court Moorefield***

**Psalm 34:8a** “Taste and see that the Lord is good...” Also: John 15:5, 12, 15-17

**Tuesday, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>**

## **Trust in Transition**

Two years ago, I was presented an opportunity to move to California from Indiana. My wife and I had no idea if we could make this work. Through many hours of prayer and going through every possible scenario, we decided to make the move. In faith, I moved to California in February of 2019, leaving Jenn and our two daughters at home until the house Indiana sold. This was far more difficult than we could have ever imagined! It turned out to be the worst possible time to sell a house in Indiana because of the terrible weather! However, we received many blessings because during the open houses it didn't snow at all. That saved Jenn a lot of trouble, not having to clear the driveway and sidewalks. Meanwhile, I was living with her aunt and uncle, and commuting to work. In my spare time I was also looking for houses... We were continually praying over our situation. We began to see things falling into place much more quickly than expected.

Soon after we listed our house in Indiana, we received an offer and ended up agreeing on a price within days! Jen remained in Indiana at her sister's house until a home opened up in CA. We used Facetime so she also could see the houses I was looking at. Amazingly, it happened that the day that we received the funds from the sale of our Indiana house, one in Aliso Viejo hit the market! I immediately went to the open house and we both loved it. We put in an offer that same day! We were even able to agree on a price that was perfect for us! Next, the fun part started.... getting financial approval for the house! This process was so hard because the changes in our income were so recent. Thanks be to God, within a few days we were approved!

God moved so many obstacles in such a short time and provided so wonderfully for our family.... My story really doesn't cover the amount of help and reassurance we received through the Holy Spirit and all our prayers being answered! This process was so stressful, but God taught us patience during this very difficult transition and we realize that we are truly blessed and supposed to be here! He's truly honored our steps of faith!

---*Derick Roberts*

### **Proverbs 3:5-6 (NASB)**

- 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart** And do not lean on your own understanding.  
**6** In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Wednesday, Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Pastor Needs a *Large Print Bible!***

What do you do when you need stronger glasses to read the Bible and you're a pastor in Angola, Africa? I knew an older pastor (60 years old was considered old there!) in this situation. The civil war had prevented him from getting better glasses, but he was a pastor and needed to be able to read the Bible. So he prayed for a Large Print Bible or a new pair of glasses!

One night some rebels in the area raided his village. He grabbed his Bible, ran for his life, and jumped into the nearby river, *with* his Bible, where He had to spend the night. The next morning, he wandered back into the village, where the looting by the rebels was so evident. After a while, his wet Bible dried out. Imagine this pastor's surprise when he opened his Bible and discovered that it had become a *Large Print Bible*. Now he didn't need better glasses. He could study and read the Bible to prepare sermons. Spending the night in the water was an uncomfortable way to get his prayers answered for a Large Print Bible, but God's ways are not our ways. A miracle was provided by the leading of the Holy Spirit to jump into that river. It saved his life as well as answered his prayer. Miracles still happen, even in the most unlikely of circumstances!

"I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for Me?" Jeremiah 32:27

--- ***Dickie Hertweck*** , *Assemblies of God Missionary (Angola, Africa)* ; (APTS)

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

Thursday, Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>

## A Gift of Tongues and Interpretation to Meet a Need

My wife, Donna, and I were living in Springfield, Missouri, for a few months during an interim period between ministries. We attended a large Assembly of God church just a few blocks from the home where we were staying. The pastor of the church had hired me to do some painting in the church, in particular helping with the remodel of the youth center.

One afternoon I went out to check on the big glass doors in front of the church, just to make sure that they would be closed and secured for the evening. As I briefly stepped outside, a man walked up trying to grab my attention in Spanish. “¡Hola hola! Usted me podría ayudar por favor. Estoy perdido y necesito direcciones.”

He obviously needed help and could not speak English. Although I had a background in foreign languages, I had not taken any Spanish classes since my eighth grade year! Quietly in my spirit I prayed, “Lord, please bring my Spanish back to me so I can help this man.” Instantly I began to understand everything the man was asking me. He was lost and needed directions to a place not far from the church. To my surprise, I was able to speak in fluent Spanish back to him and give him the directions he needed. It was amazing! The man was so excited. He understood everything I had spoken to him, thanked me, and went on his way.

It reminded me of how, by the power of the Holy Spirit through the disciples on the day of Pentecost, the Gospel was shared to all those assembled round about them....

--- **Tom Watt**

**Acts 2:4-11** (NASB) “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other *tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance*. Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, being bewildered because each one of them was *hearing them speak in his own language.*”

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Friday, Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

### **Baptized in the Holy Spirit**

Although I had committed my life to Jesus and been active for 6 years in the local Assembly of God church, by my early teens, I had become dubious about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In my opinion it seemed like it was just an emotional outburst. Every Sunday night, one particular lady would give a 'message in tongues', followed by giving an interpretation. Her 'interpretation' did not glorify God, but rather was a discourse about all she was going through in her life. So, while in high school I left the A/G church and joined the Evangelical United Methodist church.

As I was considering going to college, among the college catalogs I looked at, was one from Central Bible College in Springfield, MO. Perusing through it, I laughed at how strict the dress code was in the 'mini-skirt era'. In addition, I read the 16 A/G fundamental truths that were listed. As I walked over to the trash to throw it away, I heard a voice deep within me saying, "Don't trash it. This is where I want you to go." I knew it was the Holy Spirit's voice and I begrudgingly obeyed.

Of course, God with His great sense of humor gave me the most Pentecostal person on campus to be my roomie. Maida Lou prayed earnestly for me to end my rebellion and fill me with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I had the opportunity to get a ride home for Thanksgiving that first year of college. I missed my family and especially my baby brother, Roy. Things were not well at home. My 15 year old brother, Scott, had been getting into a lot of trouble. The latest incident was that he and his friend took my '55 Volkswagen for a spin to see how fast it could go. The tire caught on the berm, flipped the car over into a deep ditch and rolled several more times, totaling my VW. He had no remorse and even boasted to his friends at school about it. The first evening I was home, Scott came in carrying a trophy that someone had made out of a remnant from my totaled car. Scott was so proud of it. That pushed my Dad over the edge. He fell on the ground sobbing uncontrollably. *Dad...* my hero, full of wisdom & strength, a man of faith, a man among men.... I knelt down beside his shaking body and laid my hands upon him. Immediately the Holy Spirit filled me to overflowing and I began to speak in another language.\* My dad stopped crying and shaking. Then he sat up with a glow on his face and together we praised God for rescuing him from the abyss. It was a transformation that changed my spiritual life forever. The Holy Spirit is so real and all the gifts of the Spirit, He joyfully gives us.

--- **Donna Watt**

**Acts 2:4-11 ; Acts 4:31 ; Acts 10:44-47 ; Acts 19:1-6**

\*The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the physical, verbal signs of speaking with other tongues, interpretation of tongues, praising God, prophesying, and speaking God's word with extraordinary boldness.

**Saturday, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>**

## **The Gift of Healings**

**1 Cor. 12:9b** *“And to another the gifts of healings in the one Spirit”.*

**Isaiah 52:5** *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed”.*

During a trip to Uganda, Africa, a young pastor approached me and said: “God says to tell you that your latter days will be better than your former days, that He will change your ministry, and His plan for you is great. You will go through a great trial, but don’t worry. He will see you through.” I had no idea that those words would resonate and sustain me in the days to come.

Upon returning home to the U.S., it was discovered that I had a massive tumor in my abdomen that appeared to be cancer. Only my wife and I were aware of the diagnosis. While on my way to see the oncologist, my phone rang. When I answered, the person on the other end said, “While praying for you this morning, the Holy Spirit said, ‘It is not unto death.’” She had no idea what was happening. The oncologist ordered a biopsy. The results took a long time in coming. In the meantime, I began to deteriorate. Chest tubes had to be inserted to drain fluid accumulating in my body. The fluid was nutrition that was not being allowed to enter my body because of the tumor. I lost over 100 pounds!

Finally, the real diagnosis came: non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, B cell type, aggressive. A very aggressive chemotherapy was ordered. Things were getting worse. My body was shutting down from malnutrition. I was in and out of the hospital. I had to be put on oxygen. I no longer could walk... my wife had to bathe and clean me. It was hard to pray. But those words that had been spoken to me back in Africa kept resonating in my mind and sustaining me. Eventually, I was sent home on hospice, but within two days, I crashed and was placed on life support. Three times, my wife was asked to turn the machine off.

God had other plans. After several weeks in ICU, He performed a miracle and healed me! Now I am able to go to many parts of the world and tell my story, and the Lord uses it to help build the faith of the hearers.

Many are healed, delivered and restored to the glory of God.

**--- Manuel Cordero , Senior Director | Chaplaincy Ministries, Assemblies of God**

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this story?

What elements of this story can you relate to in your life?

What principles from the story could you apply in your own spiritual journey?

**Sunday, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>**

## **Sharing God's Gifts in Your Life with the Church & the World Around Us**

### **Exodus 3:10-12 (NASB)**

- v. 10 "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt."
- v. 11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?"
- v. 12 And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."

When I read Scripture I often find myself identifying with the characters I am reading about. In Peter I see myself saying things I shouldn't. In Thomas I am faced with my own doubts. In the Gospel of John, I find that the greatest impact I can have is to love others even if they have different views than my own.

In Exodus 2 through 3, we find Moses being born (*I can relate to that*),... struggling to find his way in the world (*don't we all*),... killing the Egyptian (*I have most likely killed someone with my words or wrong attitude*),... finding someone to love (*thank you Lord for Barbi, Erinn, Brent, Audrey, Joshua, Jude, other family, and my church family*), his burning bush moment (*I was 21, sitting in the middle of the aisle at a small church in Costa Mesa surrounded by people of the Jesus Movement*),... and finding God's true calling in his life.

We at Newport Mesa Church talk a lot about:

**Knowing God, Finding Freedom, Discovering Your Gifts, and Making a Difference.**

Today, let's make it our goal to learn more about God in His Word, embrace the freedom and grace He offers us, exercise the gifts God has placed within each of us, and find the joy life brings as we seek to make a difference in the world around us for His glory.

--- **Glenn Rouse**

What aspects of the Holy Spirit do you see at work in this personal reflection?

What elements of the message can you relate to in your own life?

What principles can you apply to your own spiritual journey?

What is the Holy Spirit leading you to do or participate in at NMC for 2021?