



# ON THIS ROCK

FAITH • FAMILY • FUTURE



# 21 DAYS OF PRAYER

WITH STORIES OF TRANSFORMED LIVES

## VOLUME 2



REACHING PEOPLE.  
CHANGING LIVES.  
[WWW.MONTCLAIRTAB.ORG](http://WWW.MONTCLAIRTAB.ORG)

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

2023-2026

## MONTCLAIR TABERNACLE

# THERE IS VICTORY IN **YOUR** TESTIMONY

---

Over the next 21 days we will join together to experience first hand the power of what God can do in the lives of those we worship with each week. Romans 10:14-17 says “But how will people call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how will they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher messenger? And how will they preach unless they are commissioned and sent for that purpose? Just as it is written and forever remains written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!” But they did not all pay attention to the good news of salvation; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” So faith comes from hearing what is told, and what is heard comes by the preaching of the message concerning Christ.” No one can argue with your own personal testimony. They might argue your theology but never your testimony.

Our testimonies are the proof of God’s good work in us. When we speak them aloud we’re making a declaration of what God has done and of why our faith and trust is in Him. It builds up our own strength and faith by recalling the ways He has changed our lives. Speaking it cultivates a sense of belief and anticipation in us for the future.

In Revelation 12:11 it says “And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.”

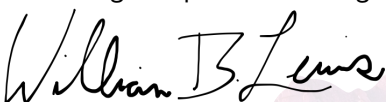
How amazing is that? We conquer the accuser by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony. In biblical context this verse is speaking in the midst of an apocalyptic revelation, it's speaking of awful things and yet in the midst of terrible attacks on believers we find them overcoming. When someone stands up and speaks of what the Lord has done in their life it's not mere words, it is a powerful force that brings victory both in their own lives and the lives of others.

During this 21 Days of Prayer Erica and I are asking you to focus on not only the sharing of your personal testimony but these three main areas of prayer:

- 1. Pray fervently for financial resources to be supplied during our On This Rock Campaign.**
- 2. Pray for Spiritual Renewal in every heart and life at Montclair Tabernacle.**
- 3. Pray that SOULS will be saved in all of the many outreaches and ministries of our church. Specifically our Death Trail outreach that takes place the last three weekends of October.**

We are so grateful for what God is doing among us and we believe that over the next few weeks every need will be met, every heart will be renewed, and many will come to know the hope that Christ can bring. Thank you for choosing to join us on this journey.

Reaching People and Changing Lives !



Pastor Brad and Erica Lewis



"And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."

— Revelation 12:11 (ESV)

# DAY 1

## BECOMING A SERVANT LEADER

- I believe in evolution! No, not that kind, but I did get your attention. Let me
- explain. As long as I can remember, I've been a helper, or a "willing worker" as I
- heard it described by church ladies. I loved helping my mother and aunts cook and serve food, whether for a family meal at home or larger events such as family reunions or dinners at church. My "evolution" was from that of being a willing worker behind the scenes where I was most comfortable, to becoming a servant leader.

I grew up attending a Baptist church and have known about God, Jesus, and "Christian" things as long as I can recall. I know that Jesus is alive, He's a healer, a provider, a strong tower, a present help, and He will show up and show out when you call on Him. I was blessed to grow up surrounded by family members who epitomized Matthew 25: 35 "for I was hungry, and you gave Me food; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in." I don't recall there being any homeless people in our community. I knew there were those who didn't have enough food, but there was always someone or the local churches that would provide food and other assistance.

My mother and father were two of those people. There were eight of us to feed, my mother and father and the six of us children. Yet almost every evening close to supper time, three of the neighbor children who lived behind us would show up. Their grandmother was raising them, and as a child I thought they were sneaking out to our house because they enjoyed my mother's cooking. As one of now eleven people sitting down to eat, I was concerned because I was unsure how Mom was going to stretch the food to feed an additional three people. But she did without even breaking a sweat. I learned later that the grandmother did not always have enough food to feed them. When I reflect on my life then, I realize we were probably considered poor. However, we were never without clothes, shelter, or food even with two adults, six children, and three extra children to feed. God does indeed provide your every need.

Witnessing first-hand how family and community took care of others stayed with me. I think that is why I have such a desire to feed and serve others. The words from two songs that my mother used to sing come to mind when I think of her and how she not only offered food to our neighbors but reached out to help in other ways as well, and always with a loving and positive attitude. **My Living Shall Not Be in Vain You've Got to Accentuate the Positive Eliminate the negative, Hang on to the affirmative, And don't mess with Mr. In-Between."**

*"If I can help somebody as I pass along, If I can cheer somebody with a word or song, Then my living shall not be in vain."*



After getting married and moving away from my family and my hometown, I had to start “making” my own community. That’s when I became an instigator. The dictionary defines the word instigator as a person who brings about or initiates something. I didn’t set out to be one, it just happened. When I wanted to see something take place or to see something done, I would talk it over with other people, such as family, friends, co-workers, or neighbors. I soon learned that when you want something done you have to be willing to take the lead, and that’s OK. It was like the Prophet Isaiah who answered the Lord and said, ““Here am I. Send me.” (Isaiah 6:8). And here’s the thing, not only do you have to be willing to take the lead, but you also have to commit to doing whatever it is you’re going to do with a good attitude and with excellence. That doesn’t mean you have to be perfect, but you’re doing it unto God and He deserves our best.

As I said earlier, I’m more of a behind the scenes serving type person, but I’ve slowly and more willingly become a leader when needed. I keep in mind, though, that an effective leader must also be willing to serve. You can’t be an effective leader if you’re not a willing servant. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is the perfect example of the servant leader. The story in John 13 when he washes the disciples’ feet is just one illustration of His willingness to serve others. I can’t imagine the Lord of Lord and King of Kings washing my feet! I would probably be like Peter at first, and then consent only if He let me fix Him a meal afterwards (Kosher of course). And this verse from the song “Through It All.” It’s another of my mother’s favorite songs. There have been many peaks and valleys along the way, but I now know that the hand of God was always there, even when I didn’t feel His presence. He placed me where I needed to be at the time I needed to be there to do what He had planned for me. I just needed to be obedient to His call. “So I thank God for the mountains, And I thank Him for the valleys, I thank Him for the storms he brought me through. For if I’d never had a problem, I’d never know that God could solve them, I’d never know what faith in God could do” Yes, God is in my story. He is in everybody’s story, because He created everybody and everything. Trust in Him. He will see you through. His mercies are new every day. Amen.

**Valerie Williams**

## **READ:**

Psalm 27:1, Psalm 118:24, James 1:2

## **REFLECT:**

Take time to read theses

## **PRAY!**

God, Im so glad your plans for me are higher than my own. You are calling me out of my comfort zone. Thank you for seeing more in me than I see in myself.

# DAY 2

## JESUS IS REAL TO ME

My Story! I was raised for the most part in the Baptist Church. Attended Sunday School and Worship at a neighborhood mission. I went forward in 1967 during a revival and asked Jesus to come into my life and was baptized shortly after. As time went by and I got older, though I went to Church, I was going through the motions.

Though not proud of it my favorite things were alcohol, getting high and hanging with friends in Georgetown several nights a week. It was in Georgetown I faced my awakening moment.

In the April on a Friday evening, 1974, walking from one of the clubs with a group of friends on our way back to VA to continue partying at, we noticed a group of folks our age just up from the corner of Wisconsin and M street singing and all happy. One of them approached me and told me they were all students at GW university. Most of them were from Southern California and wanted to share with me/us some of what was happening there. Well my mind went to California probably party!! So I walked over and he asked me a question, “Do you know Jesus? He wants to show you his Love and become real to you!” I felt like I had been slapped sober, speechless and before I could get a word out was grabbed by my group and pulled up the street. They called out God loves you!

Back in VA I told my friends to drop me at my car as I did not feel like staying out. The words “Jesus wants to become real to me” struck me. I know now the Holy Spirit was working. I started to lose my desire to go out and drink. Did not get High again, throwing out the drugs I had on hand. I knew was not saved and I could not keep the life up I was living because something was missing. So for several weeks I continued attending Church even changed to the neighborhood mission again.

One Tuesday night I was sitting in the living room watching TV, before remote and no cable or satellite. We had Washington And Baltimore channels. I flipped over several and there was Cliff Barrows leading a hymn on a Billy Graham broadcast. He was in Los Angeles.



First, something told me I needed to watch this. Second, a Young Lady shared about her life as a drug addict and living on the street but JESUS took it all away. And she sang the song “There’s just something about that name” as she began to sing Jesus Jesus Jesus there’s just something about that name. Master Savior Jesus like the fragrance after the rain..... As she sang my heart broke and the thing I needed was Jesus! I was awestruck by the Holy Spirit and then at the end of the message I knelt down on my Dad’s rocker and gave my heart to Jesus!

Joy I had never experienced. A new sense of the World and my part in it! Excitement and hunger to read Gods word. And my life since has not been without trials and struggles including a dark period later. One thing I guarantee to you is Jesus said he would never leave you nor forsake you and in almost 50 years he has not, even when I was not cooperating. An old saying on a bumper sticker “No Jesus, No Peace! Know Jesus, Know Peace”. Truer words no one has ever written!

Please find yours today,

***Robert “BB” Welborne***

## **READ:**

John 11:25-26

## **REFLECT:**

What does it mean for Jesus to be Real to you? What experience have you had that proved that He was present and making himself known?

## **PRAY!**

Father, thank you for being close to me. Thank you for making yourself real when I need you the most. You have my attention and my heart.

## **PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray for those who do not know Christ as you do. Pray that they will experience the reality of who He is for themselves.



# DAY 3

## THE HOLY SPIRIT TOOK OVER

- “All glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us,
- to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.” (Ephesians 3:20-21)

I think one thing that is important to know as a follower of Jesus Christ is to remember that He has given us the power and authority to do great things. It is also important to know that these gifts are for all who have received the Holy Spirit. That Christ dwells in our hearts. Lastly, know that each gift given from the Lord is not greater than the next. They all work equally to benefit His kingdom, do not be discouraged, the gift you have been given is special for you and there is a reason it has been given. Remember this, it doesn't matter the age we are, at the end of the day, we are all Gods children, and He has planned everything according to His purpose.

When I was young I would have dreams and visions. Being young I didn't know how to respond nor what to think about the things I saw. I was having visions of things that I had never seen before, and a couple weeks down the road, those things I saw would come to pass. I remember sharing these visions with a close family friend and my mother, who had shared with me Gods preparation and spirit moving within me. I remember being so amazed by the idea that I was given such a gift. It wasn't until later in my life that I truly began to understand this gift and how I was supposed to prepare my heart to receive the things God wanted me to understand.

When I was 13 I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the Church of God youth camp, this is where I spoke in tongues for the first time. Around this age I started to develop a greater understanding of Gods love for me, He began to change my heart, my desires, and called me into serving in ministry. Over time I began to receive discernment, knowledge and wisdom. Pray the Lord makes these gifts strong in your heart, you will need them in your prayer life, and when you are ministering to others.

The Holy Spirit took over as my guide and transformed my life. And then there was a time in my life like all followers of Jesus, where I went through pain and hurt and fell into a pit. Until God restored my heart and picked me up from out of that pit and filled my heart with the sweetest joy.

After He had done those things, while I was in college Jesus and I began running together, and by running I mean He began to use me in so many ways. I was serving in ministry, teaching, and using the gifts the Lord had given me. He had made me bold, He told me to stand firm in the things He has given me. Even if it lead to persecution. And I began to receive dreams again, God had given me messages in these dreams not just for me but for others as well. Be sure that you are obedient when God gives you a message for another person, pray first and seek understanding. Encouragement for you, to pray for and over your dreams. Big and small, ask God to reveal the things you have seen so that they may benefit His children. I love to read Daniel and be encouraged by the things he that he has experienced. We often can relate and look to others in Gods word who have been given the same gifts we have been given. And don't be afraid to share the things the Lord has given you. And speak and sing in tongues often in your prayer time, let your gift glorify God in thanksgiving. When you are in church and you speak in tongues, pray that there is someone who can interpret so that His words will not fall on deaf ears.

It is also important to know that each gift from the Lord should be an action of the Holy Spirit not of our own selves but through His spirit. One of my favorite books in the Bible is Mark because we get to see Jesus perform all of these miraculous wonders, and there's a moment when the disciples question's Jesus about the possibility of healing. And Jesus looks to them and says "What do you mean if I Can? Anything is possible if a person believes." That has stuck to me, it has convicted me, it has directed my heart completely. Know that you have authority in Christ Jesus, to do many great things. So, do not be afraid to ask God for gifts, as He knows your heart of hearts. Know that if you believe in your father, when you pray, believe that nothing is impossible for God. Believe in the power of the Holy Spirit.



Some time ago I asked God that, if I may receive the gift of interpretation that He would use for His kingdom. Not for the benefit of understanding what I am saying but so that others in Christs body may hear a message from the Lord, when tongues are being spoken. This year at Winterfest I had an encounter with the Lord where He spoke to me. And as I was immersed in his presence I began to hear tongues turn into words. And I knew it was God allowing my to understand. Little by little He has allowed me to interpret tongues as messages for others. I feel blessed by my father in Heaven that he has allowed me to carry this gift. In everything you do for the Lord let it be pleasing to Him. You will be blessed, You will see change, and you will be transformed. May God's grace be upon you.

**Kristen Witten**



# DAY 4

## THROUGH IT ALL

My God is faithful through the good times and the hard times .

As I approach the 96th year of my life and reflect on the faithfulness of my God thru all these years, I rejoice because He has guided me even when I wasn't serving Him.

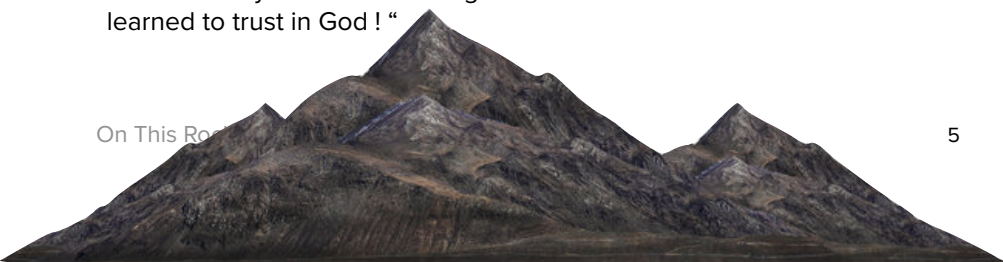
He was there when I was born and spared my life, I was born birch birth . He was there in my growing up years. As a young child I almost died with pneumonia. An alcoholic father, who praise God was saved before he died . My mom took us to Sunday School and church, I'll always be thankful to her, for this is where my foundation of faith was laid .

I married young and strayed away from my God . Our first baby boy was born with severe medical problems and at 7 weeks, God in His mercy took him home to be with Him . We had 3 more boys . I took them to Sunday School and at a revival service, I came back to God . Their Dad got saved and at a young age of 44, God took him home.

As a young widow with 3 teenage boys God provided in miraculous ways . My boys still talk about it today how God always provided. My middle son was on dialysis for 5 years, and when he was 20 God took him home . He knew Jesus and he was ready to go.

The boys married, then God brought Dave into my life and we had many happy, sometimes trying years together pastoring and evangelizing before at the age of 98 God took him home.

God has blessed me with a family that loves me and makes sure that all my needs are met. He has given me two wonderful Sons, two of the best Daughters in love, 4 wonderful Grandchildren, 5 wonderful Great Grandchildren, and a wonderful church family. I have made this short but I could really write a book on how good God has been to me and the many miracles. "Through it all I've learned to trust in Jesus . I've learned to trust in God ! “



They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings of Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint . Let Isaiah 40:31 challenge you to do it today, you will never be the same.

Ida Wilburn

READ:

Isaiah 40:31

REFLECT:

Isaiah 40:31 contains a great promise of strength for the weary: “they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” This promises a supernaturally renewed strength—a strength that would compare to mounting up as an eagle or running without fatigue. If we think that God is too great to be concerned about us, we actually don’t believe he’s great enough. God’s greatness is not just that he is strong, but that he is strong for us. God’s glory is not just that he has power, but that he loves to use it to help those who need it. God is not too great to care, he’s too great not to care.

PRAY!

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the promise of Isaiah 40:31. Help us to wait on you and trust in your unfailing love, so that we may renew our strength and soar like eagles. Give us the courage to run with endurance, walk with confidence, and overcome any challenges that we may face.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for families with our church. Pray that they would be strengthened with faith and perseverance. That all members would be unified in purpose.



# DAY 5

## BEYOND BLESSED

In 1970 at the age of ten me and my eight year old brother were gently pushed into a Pan Am Airways jet headed for New York City. We were leaving all that we knew in El Salvador, running around the farm, creating mayhem for my grandmother. My mom had migrated to NYC earlier in 1967 to support what would later become a seven sibling family. My youngest sister would later die of brain cancer. Living in The Bronx was quite challenging and would become even more challenging when all our siblings would find out that my mom and dad were getting divorced. I remember crying not knowing what life would bring, my mom, bless her heart, always persevered under any circumstances.

At the age of eighteen I left NYC to serve in the US Navy and I started a whirlwind life that would some day bring me to my knees. I lived a life of drugs, alcohol and hopping from club to club.

As I settled into my Navy career, depressed and lonely, I was always fascinated when I would see a Billy Graham crusade and marveled at the response. Growing up Catholic, giving my life to Christ was a foreign concept. One early morning, I happen to turn on the tv and the 700 club was on. Ben Kinchlow was on at that moment, doing what he did best, he was asking probing questions. He asked the following questions:

**Would you like to start a new life?**  
**Would you like to have unspeakable joy?**  
**Would you like to have your sins forgiven?**

Every time he asked, I responded, YES, YES, YES. Then he said would you like to ask Jesus into your heart, at that moment with tears coming down my face I said YES.

He said pray with me... and right there I surrendered my life to Christ. That day I could not speak for another entity had come into my life, The Holy Spirit. I was tired of my dating life, so I prayed for a wife that would love me. Three months later I met Dee, and my life has never been the same. Four children later and many grand kids my life is beyond blessed.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, I would challenge you to do it today, you will never be the same.

**Jose E Henriquez**

## **READ:**

Psalm 85:12, Genesis 12:2

## **REFLECT:**

The Lord has done so much for us! He has blessed us with so many things, the most important of which is His mercy in that He died for sinners like us! He has bestowed us with so much grace! He has allowed us to come into His Kingdom and be a part of the great things He's doing! What we have received should not only be for our own enjoyment but for the salvation of a dying world around us!

Your family history or circumstances you've been through do not dictate how God desires to bless you. He loves to give His children good gifts.

## **PRAY!**

Dear Jesus, thank you for bringing me so far and for where you are taking me. Your blessings are everywhere. Forgive me for not seeing them as I should at times.

## **PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray for those who have been saved but choose to focus on the disappointments of life instead of the blessings. Pray that they would experience a revelation of what they have been given through faith in Christ.

# DAY 6

## TEARS OF INTERCESSION

I grew up appreciating the power of prayer from a very young age. My paternal grandmother, Sara Wairimu (after whom I am named) was an Intercessor. If you asked her to bless a meal, she would pray for a minimum of 30 minutes; incorporating in her prayer the Church, the Nation, her neighborhood and would never forget to mention and bless her 8 children by name. My Mother introduced me to the “God who answers prayer”. My Father had a habit of expressing his frustrations every time he drank and would make everybody uneasy. My mother would discern trouble before it manifested and would go to her closet and intercede. Within no time there would be peace and quiet. I watched her calm situations through her intercessions. Nothing would overwhelm her; nothing would take her by surprise because God would have revealed it to her in a dream or vision. When we became mischievous growing up and lie to her, she would just tell us “Don’t bother yourself – I read the letter in a sealed envelope”.

“Take it to Jesus” in prayer, and silence was my mother’s response to her adversaries – and they were many. I believe anything close to Jesus attracts a lot of attacks. As far as she was concerned, the person attacking you, oppressing and spitefully using you – does not matter. He/she is just a tool in the hand of the devil. The position of God concerning the situation is what matters. For you the aggrieved, she would urge you to pray for them so the Lord would separate them from the devil who causes people to commit sinful habits. Once they are separated from the devil, you see the true nature of God in them. If you fight back, it is a losing battle and there will be no difference between the aggrieved and the aggressor. When you don’t respond, it means you have a BIG GOD that is fighting for you. This was a great lesson to show the condition of the heart of the person who will pray prayers that God will answer. That holding grudge, taking offense, bitterness, anger, jealousy, pain of the past, unforgiveness, envy, etc. are unclean elements that create barriers between our heart (Spirit of man) and the Spirit of God. They keep our Spirits bound, and you cannot pray when your Spirit is bound; you need a FREE SPIRIT to pray. We should thank God for the adverse circumstances in life. God uses them to separate us from all these unclean and impure elements.

The second and most important lesson for me in prayer is that prayer should not be selfish – it should not only destroy the works of the devil but should also advance and establish the kingdom of God here on earth so that the will of God is done here on earth (in the family, in the Church, in the nation) as it is in heaven. Finally, that it is not possible to pray effectively without a burden. A burden of God’s vision, a burden of God’s purpose, a burden of what God seeks to achieve in a life, in the Church, in a nation, in a generation.



The Bible talks about Nehemiah. When the report came to Nehemiah (Neh. 1:4), **“he sat down and wept, mourned certain days and fasted”**. He prayed before the God of heaven. Nehemiah had a burden, a concern for Jerusalem, for the Jews. Yet he was not in need: he had a good job and salary in the city.

When there was a threat to the Jews in the Book of Esther, Mordecai responded. He did not take it lightly. There were forces that were going to annihilate the tribes. What is happening in our world today? Many people are in bondage, and the devil is using them at will. Let us ask God to impregnate us with the burden in His heart so we can intercede. Let us make it difficult for the devil to find men and women, boys and girls that he can use too freely. Let us partner with Holy Spirit to bring us to a new level of prayer that will save people from the wrath of God. Let us receive spiritual strength, vigor and vitality to align the people in prayer to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The paths they have taken are paths of rebellion; they have refused Christ. They are tied to wickedness. We need to receive a fresh burden from God to pray.

**We need to begin weeping for the iniquity in the land. We need to raise a cry, a mourning, a lamentation.** Jeremiah 4:19 “My bowels, my bowels.....I cannot hold my peace....destruction upon destruction.....”. This was the burden in the heart of God because of the destruction that was coming upon the Israel.

Jeremiah responds to this burden in Jeremiah 9:1 – “Oh, that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the daughter of my people”. Jeremiah began to cry for his people saying the tears were not enough for his eyes. He wanted to borrow from God a fountain of waters so that he could weep enough for his people.

When Ezra (Ezra 9) came to know that his people had committed sin, he went to the village. He began to weep, and to fast. He tore his garments; he plucked out the hair of his head and beard. It was like the shame of his nakedness and the pain of removing his hair and beard was nothing compared to the shame and the pain caused God by the sins committed. There are problems in marriages, there are problems with children, there are problems in the nations and in the Church and the purpose of God is frustrated. We need to raise a lamentation. There is a level of sin and iniquity in our societies that cannot be broken by just preaching. There are gates which cannot be opened without shedding tears for a highway to be made for Jesus.

We should ask God to give us tears of intercession – for wailing women to be raised and sent all over the nations, starting with our Jerusalem. We need to pray prayers that can give birth, prayers that will bring men into the purposes of God. We need to mourn like a woman who mourns because the only child she has died – so that the Lord may save us from His wrath. Amen and Amen.

**Rose Gachina**

# DAY 7

## I AM SECOND TO JESUS

### God is in My Marriage Story

I had my summer break from college all planned out working in the summer hire program at the Pentagon. This would be my second summer doing so. This program was a great stepping stone to possible work in the government after my graduation. Looking forward to another summer working there I came home to find out that my paperwork had been lost and I would have to re-apply for the program next summer. What a let down, now what? Little did I know that God had a plan and was working all things for the good in my life.

A woman at our church worked for a company that used summer hires and before I knew it I was interviewed and starting work within the week. I walked into the office on a Monday morning to a desk that faced the drafting room where engineers sat at high top drafting tables. And as luck would have it, in my direct line of sight was the most gorgeous man I had ever laid eyes on. I thought to myself, "This is going to be a great summer looking at him everyday!"

Before long that gorgeous guy asked me out and well, the rest is history. This gorgeous man was Tom. God had orchestrated Tom's move to Virginia just a few weeks earlier for his job. Thinking about how God's hand was in every detail in bringing us together reminds me of how much He loves and has a plan for Tom and I.

God brought my Hosea to me. Here I was a girl who had lost her father at 10 years old and had not had a consistent good male figure in my life after his death. Because of this I was determined to make it on my own. Get my degree, a good job, and then get married. I would not need a man to take care of me. Or at least that is what I thought.

And then walks in Tom, a man that wanted nothing more than to take care of me. I had no idea that God would send me a husband that would show me love like I had never seen since my father. Tom loved and pursued me. I could see the love of Jesus lived out in him. Just like Hosea went after Gomer, Tom pursued me and rescued me from myself. Anyone that knows Tom and I knows that He takes care of me and I am only second to Jesus in his life.

Thirty-six years later we are still navigating how to let God be seen in our marriage. We lead a marriage group and find safety there as we discuss highs and lows, successes and failures, hopes and fears, and foremost allowing God to be in every detail of our marriage story.

**Connie Stewart**

**READ:**

John 17:22-23, Ecclesiastes 4:12

**REFLECT:**

Marriage is an incredible gift. There's power and safety when we stand together, and yet, when we stand with God, there is infinitely more power!

When we're united with each other and with God, we look out for one another, consider each other, defend each other, and work better with each other. Instead of fighting to be right or always trying to do things our own way, we aim to pursue peace and seek to bless each other.

A husband and wife who stand with God, standing on the truth of His Word, become a powerful tool in His hands to do the good works He prepared beforehand for us to do.

On days when it's easy to feel filled with doubt, let's remember God has a purpose for our marriages — more than just making each other happy.

He intentionally created you and your spouse. As a couple, you have a beautiful opportunity to serve God as a team for His Kingdom's purposes. If you believe your marriage doesn't have a purpose, then you'll act as though it has none. But the opposite is also true: If you believe God brought you together for His purpose, then you will chase that purpose!

And if you're single or even if your marriage is hanging by a thread, your life still has purpose. The one and only place any of us can find true hope and lasting peace is in the Lord. Let's encourage one another to hang in there.

# DAY 8

## NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD

When I sit and ponder the goodness and mercy of the Lord, and his delivering power I am in awe. How surrendering my all to him— my worries, doubts, insecurities, my own way, and my shame has brought an unexplainable freedom I can not put into words or express by any action. What I can express, is the ugly feeling of the weight of all that extra baggage; exhaustion, weariness, torment, confusion, bitterness, un-forgiveness, control, rage, pride were all feelings and actions I was never meant to carry.

My identity as a child of the King of Kings was trying to be robbed from me. I had fell asleep spiritually, blinded of the enemy's tactics in my life, coming in agreement ignorantly, with plans and thoughts that were not from the Lord, that tried to manipulate the trajectory for my life. Giving ground to an enemy that wanted to destroy my life, so that I will not do exactly what I'm doing now-exposing. Thank you Lord, for meeting me at a low point in my life, you seen what I couldn't. What looked like a point of no return, was a point of restoration and renewal. Laying down my self was simple yet painful, a trial of my genuine faithfulness tested by fire and purified all for His glory. To believe and to stand on the promise you gave me in your word, that will never fail me. A promise that you would restore the years the locust have eaten, and those tears sown I'm will reaping a harvest of joy. What the devil had plotted for a set back, God spoke a set up for his Glory. He has taken me from Glory to Glory. I praise God for awakening me, and the holy spirit revealing to me mindsets, habits, strongholds that I needed to break agreement with, tear down, and in Jesus name are gone. Jesus gave me, and you the same spiritually authority that He had.

So how could I walk in defeat when I have this beautiful promise given by the Lord. My deliverance was a process, like an onion, layer by layer, a process I trusted the Holy Spirit in. As I regained the area of my mind, my will and my emotions, the enemy had for so long, I looked at things differently, talked different, worshiped different, prayed different, served different. The religious spirit was broke off my life, and a relationship with Abba was established.

I now know the love of the father, that he is for me and not against me, that he delights in mercy, not quick to get angry, and by His grace its brought me to today. That he doesn't abandon me when I fail him, that I am forgiven, that he has a plan and a purpose for my life. I've tasted and seen of His delivering power, and oh how sweet, how loving, how precious, how amazing His freedom feels. Its not only a feeling, its a completely new life I've received.

Life is not perfect, trails and tribulation I still face, battles come. I just know know that the battle I'm facing I don't have to fight my self, He fights from me, and I take rest in his presence and in his word knowing the battle is already won. I have a realization of the blood of Jesus now. That it is not a catchy phrase we sing of or quote. That there is an unwavering power in the Blood, and by his blood he shed on the cross, I can plead the blood for my healing and deliverance. I am now an overcomer, because of the words of this testimony and by the precious blood of our Savior. Thank you Jesus for saving me! My story is for His Glory!

Jessica Stanley

**READ:**

Hebrews 9:14, 1 John 1:7,  
Leviticus 17:11

**REFLECT:**

Without the blood of Jesus, we are defenseless against the devil and his works. Yes, it's good to have zeal and do good works. It's good to have a high degree of morality and a strong devotional life. But none of those things alone can cleanse, heal, or protect you. When it comes to your forgiveness and cleansing, your healing, protection, and deliverance, God is still looking at the blood.

**PRAY!**

Father, thank you for the finished work of Jesus on Calvary and for the blood that was shed for every need I have. I know it has power to save and cleanse and heal. Amen

**PRAYER FOCUS:**

Just as the blood had to be sprinkled on the doorposts, you also must apply the blood of Jesus. It was already shed for you, but it becomes powerful in your life when you apply it. Do it right now in Jesus name.



# DAY 9

## SIGNS AND WONDERS

Everyone has a story! In the late 70s my sister in law Robin invited me to a Women's Aglow event. I think there was about 25 or 30 women there. While I was there I witnessed a miraculous healing of a woman that had one leg shorter than the other.

The guest speaker asked her to come to the front of the room sat her on the table and began to pray. We all witnessed her leg growing to the same length as her other leg. P. T. L.

A few minutes later we took a break and while standing in line for the bathroom I heard this strange/unusual sound that I had never heard before. I stepped back to see where this was coming from. To my surprise it was a woman singing in tongues, she was filled with the (Holy Spirit). This was my first experience of hearing someone sing in tongues, it was so beautiful.

At the end of the night they asked if anyone would like to ask the Lord to forgive them of their sins. I said, yes and walked to the front of the room. Yeah... I was scared but I knew I wanted my life to be changed.

As I was praying the sinners prayer the most amazing thing happened to me. It was like someone put a water hose in the top of my head and turned it on and washed all my sins away. I could literally feel the blood 🩸 of Jesus cleanse my soul. Amen! Only the blood of Jesus Christ can wash the dirt off your soul. Amen!

**Gail Larkin**

## READ:

1 Corinthians 2:4, Acts 3:6, Acts 4:29-30

## REFLECT:

As we read through the book of Acts, there is a miracle happening in almost every chapter. This raises the question: should we be experiencing this type of phenomenon today? How should we think about miracles, or “signs and wonders,” in this day and age? Miracles are things which appear to violate the natural order. However it is more accurate to think of them as works of God which restore the created order (that is, undo brokenness):

"Jesus's miracles in particular were never magic tricks, designed only to impress and coerce...Instead, he used miraculous power to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and raise the dead. Why? We modern people think of miracles as the suspension of the natural order, but Jesus meant them to be the restoration of the natural order."

God is still in the business of performing signs and wonders. He has not changed. He is a miracle working God.

## PRAY!

Father God, I ask in Jesus' name right now that You would unleash, unfurl, unveil, and release Your miracles in my life right now, today: I pray that my prayers would be answered right and left, left and right, with answers tumbling over themselves to get to me. Bless those that I know with the miracle they need and assure them that you are near.

I ask eagerly in Jesus' name that You would hear my prayer and partner with me as I pray, so that You can release Your full will on the earth.

## PRAYER FOCUS:

Take time to pray for the many in our church that are in need of a restorative and supernatural miracle. Pray that healings would take place in every life that has been affected with sickness and disease.



# DAY 10

## GO WITH GOD

In 2004, we were on vacation in southern CA, and had a noon flight from LAX (Los Angeles). But we were staying about 40 miles east in Ontario, CA, so we began the drive in from our host home around 830 one morning. After about 10-15 miles, the freeway was jammed and we ground to a halt on the freeway in the rental car.

Anxieties began to be expressed by the riders in the car. Then it hit me. I need to pray about this situation. So, out loud, I prayed, "Lord, help us today as we travel home, and speed us on our way. Amen." Very brief, and to the point.

First - Within seconds of finishing the prayer, I experienced the first answer. I had a rental car map in my lap. I looked at it, and looked where we were on the freeway, and saw that we were approaching an exit. Parallel to the freeway(s) were surface roads. Why not try them ? So I took the exit. I drove for 10 - 12 miles like that, finally got back on the last freeway leading toward the airport and got off near the rental car return location. Thank you Lord for that help.

Second - We got to the terminal for our airline, Jet Blue. The line was long for check in, and was not moving. After about a half hour we are told that our plane had a mechanical problem and would be delayed about 6 hours. They would try to find other ways to get each group to their destination. When it is our turn, we get booked with United Airlines; it is a direct flight to Dulles Airport, not the one stop in Atlanta we would have had. Result, we will arrive home about 2 hours earlier this way. Thanks you again Lord.

Third - But we have to move from the Jet Blue terminal to the United Airlines terminal (there were 7 terminals at LAX in those days). So we get on a shuttle, and arrive at the United Airlines terminal. There are many lines, each one has 7-10 groups in line, and our time is getting short. What can we do ? Then we are greeted by a tall uniformed man who appears to be a United agent. We told him our problem. "Go to the oversized luggage desk, no one is there now." he says. So we do that, quickly get our bags checked, having saved some time. We look for the guy to thank him, but can't find him. A lady in similar uniform is there, so we ask her where the guy is, we want to thank him. She tells us, "Not sure what you are talking about. I am the only one who has been here all morning." Thank you Lord for speeding us along. Did we meet one your angels unawares ?

Fourth - We have a line to wait through for TSA. The watch says its around 12:05, five minutes after the flight's departure time. So we walk (nearly run) through the terminal to the gate. When we arrive at the gate, everyone is still sitting around the gate; boarding is just starting. Thank you Lord for delaying the plane so we would not miss our flight.

Fifth - We get to our seats, glad that we made the flight. I notice that the seats are roomy, which was nice, especially for our son who was with us. He had a very uncomfortable seat on the Jet Blue flight coming out to the west coast due to the limited leg room (he is over 6 feet tall). Thank you Lord for giving us nice seats, with adequate leg room.

Sixth - The attendants start down the aisles with food service, and I see the rows ahead of us receiving meals. Not expecting this, I ask the guy next to me about it. He says, "Oh, that is the usual meal service we get because we are sitting in business class." I had no idea. We had been so rushed getting to the plane we had no time to stop for food. Thank you Lord for providing us with food we needed as we were getting hungry.

Seventh - I sat next to a guy with a laptop who was working most of the way back to Virginia. For the last 10 minutes or so, he stopped and closed up the computer. We talked, and I summarized the incredible day I had just experienced. He replied something like, "Wow, I wish I had a God who takes care of me like that." I had just a moment as we got up to leave the plane to give him a Bible verse about Jesus. Thank you Lord for giving me a chance to witness to someone who needed to hear about you.

**Jeff Killen**

## **READ:**

Psalms 37:23

Tune your ears to the frequency of God's Spirit and listen to whatever he would say to you. May you discover the direction you need today as you pray.

## **REFLECT:**

What situation lies before you today in which you need the direction of your all-knowing, loving heavenly Father? Where do you need peace and righteousness today? Where do you need your path illuminated? Dive into the word and God's heart under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and search out his commandment for your life.

## **PRAY!**

Pray for guidance in all things.



# DAY 11

## SACRIFICIAL GIVING

What is sacrificial giving? When I google it, it's states "Giving beyond your means (Giving money that you really should be putting somewhere else, not giving money that you don't have) Giving that hurts. Going without something that we want/need in order to supply for the needs of another".

God is in everything. I have learned that God has a sense of humor. Before I was wrote on this topic my husband and I were talking about the building fund and how much was in our heart to give. I told him what I thought and where we could pull the money from and he said God wants us to give sacrificially. I was like not quite sure of what he meant so he said let's pray on it. I made a joke that taking from the kids college fund is a sacrifice because when they go to college we will suffer. But in a ll honesty we really wouldn't suffer because we trust God. Fast forward a few days after our conversation and I was given the topic of sacrificial giving for our ladies testimonies. I started to laugh in the meeting and didn't mean to sound disrespectful but felt it was just Gods way of saying "checkmate" to me. I came home told my husband and we started to laugh. Then after that all I've been hearing is sacrificial giving so I said ok God you got my attention.

When we have ever went thru financial problems we always would tithe and it never made sense how the money was in the bank, but it was always there. Even in those times I didn't feel it was a sacrifice because tithing has been second nature to me. It's what you at do as a Christian.

King David said, "I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing" (2 Samuel 24:24). Sacrificial giving is parting with what we'd rather keep, giving it away. Withholding the old and giving away the new.



When I give to God sacrificially I will give up something I enjoy or like in order to honor him. For example, I really enjoy getting coffee or boba drinks... so I can give up getting coffee twice a week in order to give more to God. If God puts on my heart to give up going out to eat twice a week in order to give more then so be it.

Sacrificial giving is a form of obedience and worship. Being able to give up something is a great way to honor God instead of being selfish.

**Helen Song**

## **READ:**

Matthew 26:7, Luke 21:4

## **REFLECT:**

In other words, sacrificial giving is never an effort at “getting blood from a turnip.” Sacrificial gifts are gifts that are inspired by the promises of God’s continual care and the totality of Christ’s sacrifice for us. May these truths transform each of us into Macedonian Christians for our day and age—a people who “gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord’s people” (2 Corinthians 8:3-4).

A Christian never “gives ’til it hurts.” Instead, the Christian eagerly looks for opportunities to grow in the grace of giving—sometimes even beyond our ability. How is that possible? Simple, we give with the mind of Christ—not according to the ways of the world!.

## **PRAY!**

Lord, remove the obstacles in my heart that would keep me from trusting you and following you. Do not let me stop giving just because some local needs have been met, but, as you give the ability, lead me to provide for the saving gospel to be heard in places far removed from my home. Give me a spirit of joy and an increase in eagerness for the work of your kingdom. Thank you for the great sacrifice you made for me and my sin upon the cross. Let your once-for-all sacrifice inspire my sacrifices for you! Amen.



# DAY 12

## HIS PLAN

I did not have a traditional Christian upbringing. My family were not regular attenders of any church. As a kid, I had a few different church experiences. The family would go to mass on occasion with my dad's side as they were Catholic. I went to a couple services at a Baptist church with a neighbor friend and almost every Christmas eve would go to a Candlelight vigil at a Unity church that my parents were married in. I even participated as a singing angel in "The Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever" production at the Unity church one year. I think I was about 8 years old making a "joyful noise". This is all to say I heard about God and Christ in different capacities, but I never felt connected to God in any of those experiences.

Fast forward to when I was 20, I was living a life of sin. My life was in a wayward state. My parents were divorced. I had gone from living by myself, to back with my dad, and my mom had cancer. My life came to a halt in May of 2009. My mom at the age of 50 passed away. I was in a place where I had a hardened heart and no real direction in my life. I believe this is why the Lord put my wife, who I had known for a few years back in my path during that tumultuous time. She loves the Lord and ultimately wanted to show me a love that I never truly knew.

Skip ahead again, we get engaged, and begin going to a Pentecostal church, Agape Life Fellowship, which was a church my wife attended as a kid. This was the church she wanted to get married in. It was at this time I began to connect with God. I gave my heart to the Lord and found my calling within church audio visual ministry. My wife and I are married only six months and the Lord leads us to San Antonio to another spirit filled church, Triumphant Word Christian Center. At this church I was water baptized and continued to support the audio/visual side of ministry.

Skip ahead quite a few more years and the Lord opened doors for my family here in Virginia to Montclair Tabernacle Church of God. Where my family is growing together in the Lord, and I am now serving as Media Director.

For me, it's amazing how one can be completely rudderless with no direction and then in a moment's notice the path is corrected towards the plan God has for their life. Many times, this can happen, and we have no idea the outcome. Proverbs 3: 5-6 says "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." I went from a life of sin, no direction, or a sense of love to trusting the Lord. God has blessed me with not only with a purpose, but with a love that surpasses all understanding.

**Rodney Marsh**

## **READ:**

Numbers 9:15-23

## **REFLECT:**

The ancient Israelites had little trouble knowing where God wanted them to go next. They just kept an eye on the cloud and followed it. Today God is still God, and he has promised to guide his people always. Being guided by God is a tremendous privilege. But he no longer uses a cloud to lead us. So how can we understand God's will for choosing a career, buying a house, finding a spouse, or making other decisions? Even if we commit ourselves to Christ and study the Bible, however, certain decisions may not be clear. The Bible does not print out your spouse's name or your job or the address of the home you should buy.

In making such decisions, pray for God's leading and be open to the inner promptings of his Spirit. Then trust him to guide and bless the decisions you make.

First, before we commit to a career or marriage or make other major choices, we must make a commitment to Jesus. This commitment shapes all other decisions, so we must put it first. Next, we must be sure that the choices we consider are within the Bible's guidelines. This will eliminate certain options. The Bible clearly prohibits believers marrying non-Christians, choosing sleazy careers, or spending all their money on extravagant homes while giving nothing to God's work. It's

## **PRAY!**

Thank you, Father, for guiding me. Lead me in the way of Jesus by your Holy Spirit. Help me to know your will in the decisions I face and to follow where you lead. Amen.

# DAY 13

## HIS PROMISE IS TRUE

First off, I'd like to start by saying I am honored to be able to share a bit of our testimony. I am especially excited to share this because like many other testimonies, this one is not finished yet... God is still writing this story! I pray this encourages and blesses all who reads this in Jesus Name.

So I guess it all started back in 2016. About two years into our marriage, my husband and I found out I was expecting. It was a surprise, but we were overjoyed. Sadly, that pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. Though I did not understand why, I still trusted God.

I remember feeling like it was better to not be able to conceive at all then to conceive and lose the baby. So I prayed this specific prayer to God: "Lord, please do not allow me to get pregnant again unless I will give birth to a full term healthy baby."

Ten months later I found out I was pregnant. So despite being worried or fearful, I fully trusted God because The Lord promised me a full term healthy baby. I go to my first appointment and all of my labs are perfect and they give me my due date of July 8th, 2018. So now every day in prayer I am believing the promise that my healthy baby will be born in July.

On Sunday July 1st, 2018 around 3:00pm I went into labor and on July 2nd, 2018 at 6:50pm my son, Josiah David George, was born. God kept His promise. I gave birth to my promise from God.

We were indecisive naming him, but decided on Josiah because it means "Jehovah Has Healed"

Josiah is now 4 years old and on the spectrum. So we are believing for another promise from God; Josiah's complete healing.



While I wish this promise was already fulfilled, I am trusting the process. God kept His promises before, He will do it again. I am believing that the next time I testify it will not only be of the miracle of his birth, but of his healing. Last Spring The Lord spoke Luke 1:45 to me: "Blessed is she who believes The Lord will fulfill His promises to her"

So today I stand on my promise. Josiah will be fully healed and a testimony for God's glory. So God is not done yet with our testimony. He is still writing our story. Special thanks to our First Lady Erica for thinking of my testimony and allowing me to share.

Christine George

## READ:

Jeremiah 29:11

## REFLECT:

The God we serve can do anything! He has promised to fight for us just as He fought for His people at the Red Sea, just as He fought for my heart through the Bible in the floorboards of my home, and the shoebox gift packed just for me. The challenges we face are important opportunities for our faith to grow. What might be a huge roadblock or heartache to us is still redeemable in the unfolding of His plan.

Be encouraged and find rest in the promise of His Word that He loves and cares for each one of us. And today, trust Him with the unexpected.

## PRAY:

Heavenly Father, thank You for fighting on our behalf in every battle we face. You are never surprised by our circumstances. Help us to trust You and the unfolding of Your plans daily. Help us to stand still and recognize You in every battle. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

## PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for those going through unexpected circumstances. Pray that God would give them peace and assurance that God is near and that He cares. He is working things for good!



# DAY 14

## BEAUTY FROM ASHES

This is my story. At the young age of 3 years old my family went through a terrible ordeal. I come from a family of 8 siblings, 5 brothers and 3 sisters. I am the youngest of all. Our life was always full of adventure and mishaps but on one particular day when I was 3 things would change forever.

It all seemed like an ordinary day. My 2 older sisters were in the bedroom cleaning. At 3 years old I was trying to find something to play with or get into however what happened next would be life altering. I walked into my sisters bedroom and saw a white object lying on the ground, I grabbed it and ran out of the room. Oh “look I got it” I said as I ran away from my sisters.

The object was a book of matches. I sat in the next room and struck one of the matches unknowingly at three years old what it even was or what would happen. That day I was wearing a nylon dress and as the match dropped into my lap it ignited and I sat there burning and crying.

My family came rushing in and saw me. At one point I saw a firefighter standing there with my grandmother. She had water to throw on me but at that point it was too late. They instead rolled me on the floor in a rug.

After that I was hospitalized for some time. I had 3rd degree burns over much of my body. Through the following years I had many skin grafts, transfusions, and therapy. I still carry the scars to this day and the awful memories of that moment when my life changed so drastically. Although the road has not been easy and many times I wonder why and so many answers are yet revealed, I know that I have a loving Father in heaven that knows me and cares for me. He has helped me through so much and I am so grateful that His scars remain as well to prove His love for me.

**Peggy Perry**

**READ:**

Psalm 30:5, Psalm 139, Psalm 46, Psalm 118

**REFLECT:**

When you go through a wave of grief, your thoughts can get dark. There are things that we would never think about God and life during good times, that we begin to think in our despair. These are thoughts that sometimes we do not feel comfortable sharing with people.

But with God, he already knows our thoughts. He has searched us and knows us. "Before a word is on our tongue, the LORD knows it completely." (Psalm 139:4) And so, in our grief, we do not need to hide our thoughts from God. We can go to the Lord in prayer and just lay our burdens before him.

God gave us the book of Psalm to teach us how to out to him. Most of the Bible speaks to us, but the Psalms speak for us. God wants us to invite him into our grief, not to suppress it. You can bring everything to God in prayer, and he knows it already and is ready to listen.

God is always with you. He is near to you in your grief.

David confesses in Psalm 139:7-8 that there is nowhere he can go that God is not there with him. God is omnipresent.

There is literally no place we can go, where God is not there with us. This goes beyond speaking just of physical places. David is talking about where he is in his own demeanor. He is saying that God is with him wherever he is bodily, spiritually, and emotionally.

God is not only near to David, but God's right hand holds him fast. The phrase "hold fast" is an idiom. It means to stick firmly to something. God's right hand holds us firmly and today he's holding you as well.

**PRAY:**

My heartfelt gratitude to You, Father, for Your comfort and love. You have always sustained me through good times and bad times. Even when I face difficulties beyond my control you are with me. Amen





During my lifetime, I had gone back and forth in my relationship with Christ. I remember receiving Him as Lord and Savior when I was 17 but then began living a life that I shouldn't be living! In 1980 I entered the Air Force and things got worse! I began smoking very heavily as well as drinking! The smoking had gotten so bad that my lungs began getting black which made my breathing really tough! In 1983 while I was stationed in Stacie's, New York, I had an encounter with a spirit. Just before that time, I spent my weekends in dance clubs and bars. I got to become a really good dancer and entered many contests for some really good prizes. The night of my encounter, I went to a club called "Club 37". It was the most popular club in Syracuse and was always crowded. The club had a huge dance floor and also a second floor where you could see the entire dance floor. It was on the 2nd floor that I had my experience. I found a spot on the floor that wasn't crowded and stood there for a while just listening to the music and watching everyone dance. At that moment I heard a voice that was as audible as you speaking with me. The voice said "You get out of this club and get out now". I thought someone was beside me telling me this...but there was no one there. When I realized this, I went downstairs and stood there for a few minutes very startled by what happened and then left.

A few months later, I was separated from the military and went back home to live for a while with my mom until I could find a place of my own. The first month I was home, my sister introduced me to a friend of hers. She was an awesome Christian and we became very good friends. My sister and I would visit her quite often because of her knowledge of the Word as well as her walk with the Lord. One night while we were visiting her, she told me about a particular night while I was in the military that her and my sister were lead to pray for me. As the discussion went on, I realized that the night they were talking about was the same night I had the encounter with that spirit!!

It was a few days later that I would truly repent and give God my life. A month later, I went to the doctor for an examination and it was discovered that my lungs were black from the damage that the heavy smoking I was doing had done to them. My breathing had turned literally to wheezing. The doctor told me that I was lucky basically to be alive. But as I got closer to the Lord, I noticed my breathing beginning to get better! In another months time, the wheezing completely disappeared! I went back to the doctor and they did an X-ray of my lungs. The blackness had completely disappeared and my lungs were as clear as a little baby's!!! I am so thankful that the Lord Jesus never gave up on me! He is so faithful! If he can do all of this for me, just think of what he can do for you!! Praise the Lord!!!

**Norm Wyatt**

## **READ:**

1 Corinthians 1:7, Romans 8:31

## **REFLECT:**

“Just think—you don't need a thing, you've got it all! All God's gifts are right in front of you as you wait expectantly for our Master Jesus to arrive on the scene for the Finale. And not only that, but God himself is right alongside to keep you steady and on track until things are all wrapped up by Jesus God, who got you started in this spiritual adventure, shares with us the life of his Son and our Master Jesus. He will never give up on you. Never forget that.”

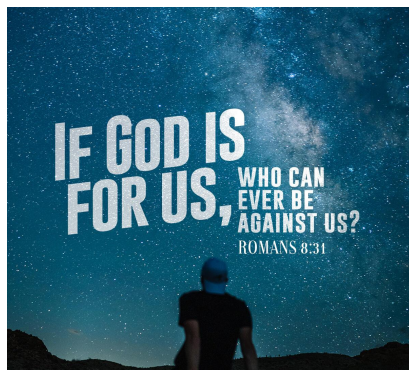
He is always pursuing and always running after you!

## **PRAY:**

Lord, thank you for being with me and ordering my steps. Even when didn't know it was you, you pursued me. I am forever grateful for your outstretched love towards me. Amen

## **PRAYER FOCUS:**

Thank God for his willingness to run after you with a passion and determination. Thank Him that no matter where you found yourself his presence is there.



Psalm 107: 13-14

*Then they cried out to the Lord in thier trouble, and he saved them from thier distress. He brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains.*

There was a lot of sin, bondage, and strongholds that plagued the past 2 generations, in my family, before my birth. It could have been going on before that time also but no knowledge of history to prove. When I was younger we went to church occasionally, not that consistently. My mom did include God and we did pray at times. My dad struggled with his health, mentally and physically. Both parents worked hard and struggled with life and the challenges that were thrown at them.

At the age of around eighteen I flipped thru the channels of the TV and I believe it was the 700 club on the channel.

The people were talking about Jesus and how he can change your life and forgive your sins and that I can have a relationship with God. At first it was hard to believe that Jesus would forgive all my sins. That he would forgive all my deeds and thoughts that did not align with his in my life. I prayed for forgiveness and asked God to use me. I began to want to live a better life and desire to want to be obedient to God. Its amazing that God would forgive me and use me even though i needed to grow so much more and remove so much negativity and sinful thoughts from me. That is the way God works, because he loves us and wants to have fellowship with us. God has been so good, his mercy and love is amazing to me.

I learned how important God was to me when I was at college and that knowledge of him is more treasured than worldly knowledge. That he holds the future and is in control of all things. After failed relationships in the past, I began to pray to God that he would bring me a good wife, a woman for me to enjoy life with. God answered me with a green light! I met my wife Lorena and God confirmed that she was the one.

God blessed me with a wonderful woman, a woman who has been a blessing to me for over 32 years. God is Good! We have been through many adventures and God has brought us through all of them.

We looked at our families and the history of them, and saw that there was a lot of sickness, addictions, and ungodly decisions that caused separations and division to them.

We prayed together that God would BREAK The CHAINS of the past that would not allow those sins and strongholds to carry on to our future children and generations to come. That we would not repeat them to our children. God has done that! He has blessed us with a desire to live in his ways. God has given us his word, His love, and his power, the Holy Spirit. God has broken the chains! My wife and I have stayed together because of our love for Jesus and the example he showed to us. He has blessed us with wonderful Godly children who love Jesus and desire to live for him. God has blessed our children with great husbands and wives that love God and want to pass on the knowledge and love of God to their children. We also have a great Church, Montclair

tabernacle where we can worship our God and share our talents and gifts for Jesus. The blessing is that our whole family is doing this all together at the same church at this time.

Breaking the chains to be free to live for God. You don't want weights to hold you back, weights of sin and unbelief, pray and have a desire to put off these chains that hold you back.

God's children are not to be under bondage. Live his word and follow his ways and he will change and bless your families for a better future.

Hebrews 12:1

*Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that easily entangles. and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

**Barry Witten**

## **READ:**

Psalms 107: 13-14 , Hebrews 12:1

## **REFLECT:**

Have you ever felt like giving up? Felt like it wasn't worth it? Take a moment and reflect on the scriptures and remember that God is for you.



# DAY 17

## MIRACLES STILL HAPPEN

Miracle on the Mission field. Over the years we have had several stuttering students. Zonia was the worst we had seen. She could not get a word out without stuttering. Her own pastor told her, “Why do you want to go to the Bible college, you will not be able to serve in ministry.

“We prayed many times for Zonia’s healing and tried our best to encourage her confidence. During her two years in the classroom, there was a slight improvement, but she continued stuttering. She went to her home church to do her one year ministerial internship.

I was floored when a few weeks later she sent a short video of her leading VBS at her local church. You may not be able to hear it like I did but in that video she was not stuttering at all. She taught those kids with authority and boldness. Many times we prayed and never saw the healing, but in God’s perfect timing Zonia received from the Lord. Don’t tell me miracles do not take place. We serve a God who heals. Yahweh Rapha is his name!!!

**Wayne Wozniak**

## READ:

Jeremiah 33:6, 1 Peter 2:24

## REFLECT:

We live in a world that is marred by sin, which means that our bodies eventually wear out and we will eventually face death. Death will come to all of us, but prior to death we experience weakness in our physical bodies, the decay that is continually working in us. Whether cancer or a cold, diabetes or a bone break, we all face some sort of sickness in our physical bodies.

The Bible says that when we are sick, we can come boldly to the throne of God, asking for grace and mercy in our time of need. Though our bodies don't feel well, God still rules over our circumstances and Jesus still has the power and authority to heal us, not to mention His willingness and ability to do so.

Approach Jesus with faith and expectancy, believing that He still heals the sick, sets us free, and exercises dominion over our physical bodies. We will all eventually die, but that doesn't mean that Jesus isn't interested in healing your body today. Confidently call out to Him to bring healing into your life.

## PRAY:

Jesus, I thank you that you have both the power and authority to heal my body. I boldly come to you today to ask for your grace and healing power to be at work in my body. I trust that you are powerful and looking for an opportunity to show your power in my body.

Cause this sickness to leave my body in Jesus' name. I break the power of stress and trauma and release your peace. I speak to every part of my body and say, "Be whole in Jesus' name." Function properly—the way God designed you to function.

Jesus, send your word and heal me today. You paid the price for my healing, so I trust that you are at work in me. Holy Spirit, fill every part of me with your supernatural presence. Drive out all that is not good, holy, and true. I receive the healing you have for me today, in Jesus' name, amen.

## PRAYER FOCUS:

Whatever you need in the way of healing, believe for it now. Trust that God is the great physician and he can do the impossible.



# DAY 18

## LIFE CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

I have been a Christian since I was 9 years old. There have been times in my life when I messed up. I was mad at God, I backslid (turned away to worldly things drinking, and smoking cigarettes), but let me tell you something! Drinking did not help me, it just made me feel good for the day. When the hangovers were gone and the reality set in nothing had changed, everything was still the same. Now you may ask, have I been the perfect Christian? No, by no means.

When I was born, I was born with congenital hip dysplasia. The doctors told my parents that I would never walk. Well as you can see, God proved them wrong. I had 8 hip surgeries on both of my hips from the time I was born until I was 18 months old. Then in 2012 when my son was just 3 months old, I had to have major hip surgery on my right hip. I was in a hospital bed and confined to my house for almost 18 months. The only way that I could do anything was with the assistance of a walker, cane, or someone to help me around. Then in 2015 I had major hip surgery on my left hip. The doctors told me that there would be a possibility that I could walk with a cane or a walker for the rest of my life after both of these surgeries. As you can see God took over this situation as well. I am walking fine (the limp is from my broken kneecap). I again defied the odds after my surgery in 2015. I was on crutches the fastest the doctor had ever seen any patient in 21 days.

When I was in high school, I got mixed up with the wrong crowd. I started hanging out with a crowd that did drugs, drank, and skipped school all the time to go home and “party.” I continued to hang out with this crowd until one night we were all in my friend’s van, and they were all drinking and smoking. I should have called my parents to get me, but instead I stayed because I wanted to fit in. They dropped me off at home, and I got the third degree from my parents. They asked me to look into the light so they could see if I had done drugs or if I had been drinking. It was not long after they dropped me off at home that the police caught them, and they all went to jail and did not graduate from high school. God was watching out for me because had I not told them to drop me off at home, I could have been in jail with them.



I have been married twice before. During those marriages there was mental, emotional, and physical abuse. While being married those two times I tried for 18 years to have a child. It was not until April 26, 2010, that my life changed forever. I went to the dr for a checkup. He ran some tests, and it was determined that I could not have children. I was a heavy drinker at the time and continued to turn to alcohol thinking it would make everything go away. I lost many friends because of my excessive drinking. I did not understand why God would do this to me. When the two things I wanted most in my life were for a man to love me for me and to be a mother.

I wanted to be a mother so bad it was one of the biggest desires of my heart. I did not understand why he would not allow me to have children. What did I do? Would I not be a good mother? I had all these questions. I just did not understand why. I continued down my path of alcoholism (because that is what it was). After 10 years of drinking and realizing it was not doing anything but making me feel bad the next morning, and my problems were always there. April 26, 2011, was a Sunday. I was getting ready to go to church, and almost did not go. I came to church and Pastor Gary Caruthers preached a sermon about "Coming back to God." Every single word of this sermon hit me like a ton of bricks. At altar call I went up front, and rededicated my life to Christ, and vowed that I would never drink again.

Well unbeknownst to me God was working a miracle in my life. I remember it like it was yesterday. My niece at the time of marriage called me at 9:18pm and said these words to me "I know you want a child and have been praying for one for a long time. I have a question to ask you but promise you will not tell anyone until the day after tomorrow. I did not put two and two together, and I said it depends on what you ask me.

She said I am leaving my husband, and I just found out I am pregnant. I want to know if you and Uncle would consider adopting this baby. If you do not want to adopt the baby the only other option is for me to have an abortion. I said you will not have an abortion, let me talk to your uncle and see what he says, but even if he is not onboard with it, I will adopt it regardless." So, I talked to my ex-husband, and he said sure because I know how much you want a child. So, I called my niece back not even 15 minutes later and told her that we would be adopting the baby, and I would start on the specifics in the morning. I do not believe this was a coincidence. **(CONTINUED IN DAY 19)**

# DAY 19

## LIFE CHANGE CONTINUES

I strongly, faithfully, and whole heartedly believe this was a miracle from God because I had just rededicated my life, I had just prayed again about having a child when it was God's timing. It was exactly a year to the day I was told by my dr that I could not have children. I was able to go through the whole pregnancy with her. Doctor's appointments, the 3am cravings, stockpiled her with B & G Custard specifically Rocky Road. 8 months and to the day later at 9:18pm on December 22, 2011, I was able to be there in the delivery room and watch my miracle from God be born. That was almost 12 years ago, and I have been sober ever since. So, God was just waiting on me to come back to Him and keep my faith in Him that when it was His time, He would then open the door for me to walk through. I believe He opened the door that night and I thank Him and praise Him every day.

As time went on my ex-husband would not quit drinking. He told me he would quit anything but drinking. I had been and still pray for him to wake up and quit drinking. It was not until August 10, 2015, I came home from work, found my son halfway out of his bouncy chair screaming his head off because the only thing keeping him in the chair was his head propped up on the end of the bouncy chair. I dropped all the bags of groceries, ran to pick up our son and looked all over for my ex-husband, and I went upstairs to our bedroom and that is when I found my ex-husband passed out cold with beer cans by his bedside. It was then that I decided I had enough, and prayed about it for years on what I was to do. I know that we are not supposed to get divorced according to scripture, but I could not take it anymore. This was the last straw, and I packed our bags and headed over to my parents' house. God gave me peace about leaving, and I moved in with my parents that following weekend.

I rededicated my life to the Lord again at 35, and that was 10 years ago. A lot can happen in 10 years. Now you may ask, have I been the perfect Christian? No, by no means. It was not until about a month ago that I was so sick, and no one could figure out what was wrong with me and the pain of feeling like my head was going to explode, nausea, slurred speech. I was in and out of doctors' offices, The neurologist in the hospital had put me on two pain killers, and 2 muscle relaxers, on top of all the other medication that I take daily. Well, come to find out this paired with smoking cigarettes like a chimney because I was so anxious and again upset at God because nothing was working and I was going to all the specialists, multiple CT scans, chest x-rays, and MRI's but no one could figure it out. They just kept telling me it was the mother of all migraines, and that I need to continue taking my medication as prescribed. So, I went to my follow up appointment with the neurologist from the hospital.

During this appointment he proceeded to tell me to continue taking my pain medication and muscle relaxers on top of all my other medication. He then proceeded to tell me that I had tension headaches, and migraines. He also stated that I had high anxiety and was severely depressed and that I should seek counseling. I did what I was told and after a week I still was not feeling right. I went to work, and worked as long as I could, but kept having to leave early because my brain felt like it was swelling, and the pressure was intense and excruciatingly painful. I left work early and called my PC after hours number. Luckily, my PC was the on-call physician. She told me to go to the emergency room immediately and so my mom picked me up and we went to the emergency room, and it was not until then we got some kind of answer. He told me to stop taking all my medication that I do not take daily. So, I came home flushed both my pain medications and muscle relaxers down the toilet and have not taken any since, but I wanted to get a second opinion. I immediately started feeling like myself again. It was almost instantaneous relief 12 hours later. I saw another neurologist who I was referred to by my PC. I went to my appointment, and he took me off the migraine medicine and told me I needed to quit smoking immediately, that was a week ago. He said the medication that I take daily along with smoking could be what is causing my neurological symptoms. I went to my PC as a follow up this past Monday. She agreed with him, but also told me that I had been having TIA's (mini strokes). She said that I need to quit smoking because I am female, over the age of 40, taking medication that I was signing my death sentence. I am a ticking time bomb with a severe stroke or heart attack waiting to happen. It is only by God's grace and mercy that I am alive, breathing and here to tell you, my testimony. This was my wake-up call from God, and it brought me to tears when I came home. I immediately quit smoking on April 17th and have no cravings for cigarettes at all.

On April 23, 2023, I rededicated my life to Christ. My husband joined me up front and we left everything in God's hands. We both rededicated our marriage to God and that He is the head of our household. Now I realize what God has me on this earth for, and that is to be His disciple. I am to speak of my testimony and spread His word. I am to be the mother who helps keep my household in the word of God.

No matter what you have done in your life, there is nothing or no one that my Jesus cannot change. If you have a hard heart, I encourage you to listen to the words of "My Jesus" by Ann Wilson, download the Bible app, and get into the Word. There is no better life than a life with Jesus. Good works, strong faith, believing there is a Jesus will not get your name written in the Lambs Book of Life or to Heaven. The only way that you can ensure these two things is to accept Him into your heart as your Lord and Savior!

**Sheree Butler**

# DAY 20

## FAITHFUL GOD

Life started for me back in 1959 in a small midwestern town called Wood River, IL. I was raised in a Christian home with five siblings. Both parents were present as well. My father worked hard as a mechanic and mom was a stay-at-home mom. We had good structure in our home, not perfect by any means, but we were active with our little church as much as possible. Life seemed to take a much worse turn for me at age eight with older sibling problems that struck our family hard. Although we lived through the pain that was wreaking havoc on our family, we pushed through and stayed true to our faith in Christ. I was saved and baptized at the age of 14. That day was a turning point for me, and I believe it was pivotal for what was to come.

My father passed away when I was 15, and my mom died when I was 20. These were events that pushed me down a road of selfishness and sin. My life was about as far from God as one could get until one day in May of 1986. I had moved to Virginia that month and I worked for a company in Alexandria, VA. That day I walked into the office and saw that cute redhead sitting there and it changed my life. Connie and I dated that summer, were engaged at the end of the summer, and were married in May of 1987. During the first year of our marriage I re-dedicated my life to Christ and haven't looked back since.

Connie and I have been married 36 years now. We have served in various ministry positions over the years in churches in Virginia and Kansas. God has used me in several laity ministry roles as an associate pastor, foreign missions director, men's ministries director, KS state director of Lay Ministries, council member, church trustee, and teen youth pastor.



I've always worked full time in addition to laity work, and I retired from the US Postal Service headquarters in 2018. God has truly blessed Connie and I in many ways. We have two children; Brandon (31) and Lauren (26). We are also blessed to have a wonderful daughter in law, Gabi Stewart, as well as two beautiful grandchildren, Hazel (7) and Clyde (4). Serving God is a priority for my family and I. Montclair Tabernacle has been pivotal in helping us serve God the way He has called us. We have been a part of MTCOG for 14 years now. What a blessing it is to have such a church family!

**Tom Stewart**

## **READ:**

Number 23:19, Romans 8:28

## **REFLECT:**

Numbers 23:19 describes a foundational aspect of God's character, his faithfulness. Scripture says, "God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?" As believers, we need a revelation of God's faithfulness. Being able to fully trust God is the beginning of living an abundant life. If you don't fully believe that God is faithful to lead you into the best possible life you could live, then you won't seek out his will, trust him with your possessions, or be able to fully enjoy his presence.

God's word promises us in Numbers 23:19 that God is perfectly faithful, steadfast, and true. Philippians 1:6 says, "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:28 promises, "We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." Your God is wholly faithful to you. No matter what you do, he will be there for you. His faithfulness isn't dependent upon your works. All he requires is a willing heart to bring about the incredible fruit of the Spirit in your life.

## **PRAY:**

Ask God to help you trust in his promise of faithfulness. Ask him how he plans on bringing peace to those areas that are disturbing you today. Listen to him as he speaks.

# DAY 21

## GOD ALLOWS DO-OVERS

Daily I am reminded of God's faithfulness.

I have often wandered why? Why this? Why that? But What encourages me as a single woman traveling this world alone is the fact that God has promised to never leave me or forsake me. When in need, I have that assurance. Has He not commanded me to be strong and of good courage, not to be afraid or dismayed" for the Lord my God is with me wherever I go. I can stand tall (I laugh because I am only 4'10") and take courage that if I should mess up;

God allows do overs. And I have needed several. You can read the word of God all day long and see all Kind of people that messed up. But God still used them. In Spite of themselves. I am encouraged today, that I am a daughter of the King! Precious in His sight! I am reminded of this verse: He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my Fortress." I look to Jesus as the author and finisher of my faith, having endured the cross for me.

He gives me the courage that no matter what I go through, Jesus will be there to cheer me on. If God is for me, who can be against me?

**Rachel Davis**

## READ:

Matthew 28:19-20,  
Hebrews 10:24-25

## REFLECT:

The Gospel of Mark, Jesus warned His disciples that He would be killed and all of the disciples would scatter and desert Him. Peter, one of Jesus' inner-circle disciples, emphatically exclaimed, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you (Mark 14:31)."

Jesus knew otherwise. Exactly as He foretold, after He was arrested, Peter denied he knew Christ three times before the rooster crowed. Peter failed Jesus, and we are told he "wept bitterly" over his sin (Matthew 26:75). However, after Jesus resurrected from the dead, He gave Peter a chance to reaffirm his commitment and fully restored him. Peter was given a do-over.

Now, it can be easy to give Peter a little bit of grace here because this failure happened before he had the privilege of seeing the resurrected Christ. As far as he knew, this Jesus he had followed closely for three years may not have been the true Messiah because His arrest didn't fit the narrative of what the Jews had been expecting. The Messiah they were waiting for would rescue Israel from the Roman occupation through a great military victory.

In the same way, as Christians, it is easier to give ourselves grace for sins we committed before coming to know Jesus as our true Savior. We easily apply unlimited do-overs to our lives before Christ. On the other hand, "big" sins that we committed after we became a Christian are harder for us to just accept a do-over for. We feel a bigger sense of ownership over our sin now. We should have known better, we should have relied on the Holy Spirit to help us overcome, and we should have turned from that sin...but we didn't.

## PRAY:

Thank you God for your do-over power. Thank you for loving me in spite of my flaws and for your long-suffering towards me. I don't deserve it but somehow you keep allowing me to return. Give me strength to keep the faith, and stand strong even in the midst of temptation and pride. I am yours and I want to be a vessel in your hands. Amen



# END OF VOLUME 2

We are finally at the end of this volume of our “On This Rock” Testimonies and 21 Days of Prayer. We hope you enjoyed reading and discovering a little about those you worship with each week.

Soon we will begin to compile Volume 2 that will represent even more stories of members of our incredible church family. This is really what this campaign is all about... People. All of these stories represent the potential that we have to respond to God’s call, prepare for growth, and get ready for more people that will have encounters with the risen Lord. Will you consider today what you can do?

Many of you have already committed yourself to sacrificial giving over the next few months. Some of you may be on the fence and haven’t decided yet if it’s worth the investment.

We hope that these brief testimonies will prove that each life is worth the investment of our time, talents, and resources. Each changed life is a testament to what God can do through faithful people that care about others.

Thank you for praying about what you will do to help us see more stories written to the glory of God. We can’t wait to read even more stories of men and women who have chosen to build their lives On This Rock.



For our next volume we would like for you to take a few moments and write a simple version of your own story. Use the sheet below to begin to jot down some ideas, then type it out and send those stories to us.

Think about how God has allowed you to see his faithfulness. We will ask you to allow us to use your story for our next devotional book if you are willing or it could be something for your own contemplation and personal benefit.

**If you do wish to submit your story please send it to our email at .... [stories@montclairtab.org](mailto:stories@montclairtab.org).**

Thank you for taking this journey with us.

### YOUR STORY



# ON THIS ROCK

FAITH • FAMILY • FUTURE



**REACHING PEOPLE.  
CHANGING LIVES.**

[WWW.MONTCLAIRTAB.ORG](http://WWW.MONTCLAIRTAB.ORG)

**16120 DUMFRIES ROAD  
DUMFRIES, VA 22025**