

"God is my King from of old, Who works deeds of deliverance in the midst of the earth" Ps.74:12



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Ps.147:15-16 "He launches his promises earthward—how swift and sure they come!
He spreads snow like a white fleece, he scatters frost like ashes,"



SEEC

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Thank you for sowing into SEEC Ministries International.



Last December, Marty was preparing to speak on Sunday. Saturday night, he walked out of his office and said, "Before I start tomorrow, why don't you encourage the people along the lines of how you have been praying for miracles in this Christmas season." I nodded like a sweet, obliging helpmate, not wanting to infect him with any "badditude" during his preparation. One of the ways I sometimes demonstrate mercy is by not saying everything I'm thinking. (Some folks reading this article can probably appreciate that more than others.) As he walked back to his office, I continued thinking, "I'm not caught up in a forward momentum over that particular prayer this day after Christmas!" Yes, it was still the season, but God had missed my deadlines for those prayers. I wasn't in a throw-down fit over that, but I was in a sit-down, back to the drawing board discouragement. I mumbled to the Lord that I hadn't seen a miracle in the Christmas season in any of the targets in my scope. I even added, "But Lord, I'm still willing to rejoice over anybody's miracle, my Church of Christ friend's or my Lutheran friend's or even a Democrat's!

At 4:00 the next morning, I felt tears trickling across my nose and woke up enough to realize what I was thinking and hearing. When I pray



for miracles, I'm asking for a sudden, complete, supernatural change in circumstances or conditions or people. Most often, we think of miracles as the moment of change or relief or resolve that comes like a lightning strike, but they might turn out to be a slow rain instead. Rather than think God is unfaithful or uncaring because we haven't had that lightening moment, perhaps we should consider the *working of miracles* as a process and consider, as well, that part of that *working* includes all the time and preparation and specific details that miracles sometimes require.

Miracles can require <u>participation</u>. The working of miracles may have you climbing up on a housetop, carrying one corner of a stretcher with an ailing friend and then dismantling a roof to let him down into a room to be healed. The actual moment of change was only one part of that miracle.

Miracles can require <u>perseverance</u>. The woman with the issue of blood had at least five justifiable reasons to give up and die: her culture, her gender, her strength, her experience and the odds against success in actually reaching Jesus, but she pushed on. Her moment of relief was only one part of that miracle.

Miracles can require <u>process</u>, like Lazarus. Dying was part of the process of his miracle! In John 11, Some thought "Jesus wept" because He was grieving over His friend, but I believe Jesus was weeping over their pain that misunderstanding caused during the process they were experiencing. He had already said that the result of Lazarus' sickness would not be death (vs. 4). When Jesus got to the tomb, He got angry. Again, I believe He was upset because they were not AWARE that a PROCESS means God is working on a much bigger project than just the lightening moment we need. They did not know that the resurrection of Lazarus was a demonstration to convince hearts that Jesus was the Christ sent by God as well as a prophetic sign of His own resurrection to come. Step by step, the resurrection of Lazarus was a crucial miracle that fulfilled a much bigger purpose than the personal need.

Instead of picking a point to throw our hands up and quit, I'm thinking it might be wiser to expect God to be God and to wait on Him. Psalm 25 says, *I will wait on God*. That means I will gather all my expectations and twist them into a strong cord and hold on to my confidence that God will have the last word on all matters that concern me. It also means that I will trudge through disappointment and delays until I get to His results. That is simple truth that sometimes seems extremely complex to live just because life is so daily. It is a daily challenge to wait on God and wake up to face sameness without flinching and to outwit reasoning that de-

mands we "get real" and find a livable acre this side of a miracle. Stress sniffs us out daily when we are waiting on God, and if it gets a grip, it will drag us into emotional fatigue that can lead to weariness in our attitude. The word says not to be weary in well doing. Waiting on our faithful God is "well doing," but if we get snared in weariness, we are liable to faint and miss our awaited God outcome (Gal 6;9)

I'm not talking about waiting to the point of a brain strain by trying to "believe" so Tinkerbell's light will stay on. As a child I watched the Disney movie, Peter Pan. In the scene where the fairy's light of life would go out forever if the audience didn't "believe," I felt the challenge and did my part. Unfortunately, that contaminated my definition of faith and believing and made it a matter of strain and feelings and human achievement. Waiting on God is about believing God is aware of every part of our lives and refusing to doubt that He is both willing and planning to show Himself powerfully faithful.

Waiting on God involves continuing to do what we were born to do instead of deciding to be still and silent in a puddle of disappointment. For the record, I did get past my disinclination to encourage people like Marty had asked me to that Sunday morning and, before midnight, I got two phone calls with reports of undeniable supernatural interventions. I did not hear about them before Christmas like I had prayed, but both had happened the week **before** Christmas! One was financial and one was a granddaughter coming to an incredible God-turn in her life. I remembered the word of wisdom that started the financial miracle and I knew about that grandmother's prayer vigil for that particular granddaughter. So, I realized before either miracle, there had been a "working of miracles" behind the scenes before anyone saw the actual miracle.

Miracles are begun in grace and perfected in glory. They start with His supernatural enabling and come to complete manifestation through His intent and purpose and timing. As I wait on God, I shall continue to pray for miracles this Christmas season because the coming of the Christ is still in effect as well as God's goodwill toward men. May His presence and power and purpose and timing change your life as His goodwill touches the earth again.



A crucial emphasis for the coming new year is walking together in covenant. Many cultures have a strong understanding of covenant, but generally in the western world, we don't have a good grasp on covenant. An apostle from Africa told me, "In America, you think me. In Africa, you think we." The mind set has to be shifted out of an extreme individualism. You and I have individual status with God covenantally, but while we embrace our *individuality* we must be set free from our *individualism*. The theme of our individualism in America and even in our churches is, it is all about me. However, it is all about Him and us.

We have to overcome a cultural challenge that has crept into the Church that wars against relationships. When John described the spirit of antichrist, it was not only the spirit that denies the incarnation of the Son of God but that also denies the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. This spirit of antichrist is at work in the Church, trying to keep people in the Church from relating with one another. We have to recognize that we are in a battle to keep our relationships and covenants in tact under our supreme relationship which is with Jesus Christ. So, let's break down some theological and biblical elements of covenant relation-



ships.

THEOLOGIC ELEMENTS of COVENANT

The relationship in the Godhead is a model for our covenant relationships. Father, Son and Holy Ghost do not exist in isolation but in alliance. They cooperate in all that they do. For example, in creation, the Father planned, the Son administered, the Spirit executed. In redemption, the Father sent the Son, the Son accomplished the work of redemption and the Spirit applies redemption to us. This covenantal alliance is a dynamic of God and the mystery of any successful relationship. That is why the Church has to model successful relationships, walking in covenant relationships for a world that is in conflict, turmoil, terrorism and war so they can see a model of a peaceful society. Since we are in His image, we are supposed to cooperate with each other and form alliances, like marriage, business, team ministries, etc. These are all alliances that speak of covenantal root or definition.

The place we mess up in looking at the Godhead as our model is that we forget that the Godhead has both unity and diversity. Our unity will not come through uniformity and sameness but rather through understanding the unity we see in the image of God includes diversity. God is one and God is three, so God has diversity within Himself. If the Godhead has diversity, then we ought to embrace diversity, (i.e., embrace basic diversity as between a man and a woman and the diversity of ethnicity, etc.). Consider the diversity in five-fold ministry. All are from Christ yet are five different perspectives. The story of the Good Shepherd seeking the lost sheep can be used to illustrate those different perspectives: The pastor is carrying the sheep, picking off flees and ticks and brush from its wool. The prophet says, "What are you doing out there?" The teacher says, "I'll give you eighteen steps of how you got there and nineteen steps to get back." The evangelist says, "Did you witness while you were out there?" The apostle says, "Hey, you have been holding up the rest of us from going forward." That is diversity and thank God for the differences. Miraculously, covenantal relationships bring the differences together and unify the diversity to make a powerful expression of the multifaceted attributes of our eternal God.

BIBLICAL ELEMENTS of COVENANT

Let's consider some apostolic observations and experiences concerning covenant ministry relationships.

1) Synergy

Synergy is essential. We get the word synergy from the word Paul

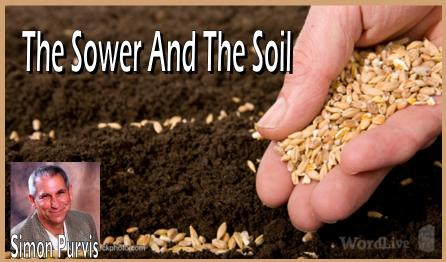
used as fellow workers, which comes from two Greek words meaning with energy. So, synergy is what is produced when we flow together covenantly in relationship. We see more produced together than if we are alone. You cannot get synergy by yourself. Paul in 1Corinthians 3, talked about his ministry and about Apollos' and Peter's ministry there in Corinth. The Corinthian church, instead of accepting the synergy of those giftings, divided over their preferences. If I had to speculate about this, I think that happened because either the people were immature or perhaps somehow Apollos and Peter and Paul did not completely connect in a covenantal way as a model for the church. (Five-fold leaders need to model synergy among themselves for an example to the Church.) Romans 16 shows us that synergy embraces both local leaders and trans-local apostolic teams in teaching. Paul named several such as Priscilla and Aquila and Andronicus and Junia and others, calling them fellow workers. The synergy of covenantal relationships produces more comprehensive and effectual ministry. Of course, there must be some level of trust for such relationships to form and maximize the Lord's ministry among us. We trust God and must learn to trust one another. Those who stay in isolation because they cannot trust will minimize their gift and calling.

2) Balance of Relationship and Mission

Another consideration is the importance of the balance between relationship and mission. In balance, relationship and mission are a tandem team, but if we get too focused on one or the other, things do not run smoothly. For example, Paul was focused on the mission in Acts 15, and he did not consider John Mark ready to be part of it. However, Barnabas was more relational and focused on the connection with John Mark, so that caused Barnabas and Paul to separate. The mission and relationship was not in balance to keep the synergy they previously had. As the Body of Christ we have, at times, been so focused on relationships that we were like "bless me" groups that forget to engage in the message of the Kingdom and have no vision or mission. However, we must also guard against pursuing vision and mission to the point of leaving too little time to maintain and strengthen our covenantal relationships. We need to be long and strong in both mission and relationship.

It is a privilege to be called to walk in covenant with God and with one another. Many look for ministry in assignments, but God would have us look for our alignments. Out of your alignments will come your best assignments. May God grace us with clarity to solidify covenant alignments, for we secure our future by walking in covenant.

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The most important parable in the Bible is Mark 4:9-20. Jesus used this parable to instruct the disciples to teach the message of the Kingdom of God. He used the parable of the sower and four types of soil to warn that Satan would come immediately to choke out that message. Jesus used the analogy of seed falling on different types of soil to represent hearts of people. To the extent that the heart receives and is open to the Word of God, is the extent of how much or how little the heart is submitted to the rule of God.

Satan is against the Kingdom of God. He hates the Kingdom and he will do anything to keep it from being established in our hearts and minds because: "For with the heart, man believes unto righteousness and confession unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) But he is subject to God's Word and by the authority given to God's spirit-filled children. Christ completed His work at Calvary. He now sits on the right hand of the Father waiting for a mature and obedient people through whom He can demonstrate, manifest, and establish His Kingdom on the earth.

GOD WANTS OUR HEART

God is after the heart because the kingdom is established in the heart. The very core of our being is in the heart. Our mind, will, emotions, and



conscience are in our heart. So many people are worried about an anti-Christ sitting on and ruling from a throne. Instead, they should be concerned about the One trying to sit on the throne of their heart NOW.

SATAN WANTS OUR HEART

Satan will blind and darken your understanding of what God is doing in the earth. He does not want you to know that God has given His people (called the Church) the power and gift of the Holy Spirit so that they can manifest His glory and the Kingdom of God in the earth and overcome evil. Satan has deceived the heart of man.

SATAN CAN, BUT GOD CAN'T?

Satan wants you to believe that he can enter into the heart of a man and manifest evil, but God cannot manifest the power of His Kingdom through man. Is God so weak that He cannot enter into the heart of a man, rule and manifest the Kingdom of God in this earth and overcome evil? Does He have to physically come back and crush Satan a second time? (Remember? Satan is a defeated foe.) Jesus won the battle at the Cross. What about "Greater is He that is in me than He that is in this world"? What about "If sin abounds, God's grace does much more abound"? Do you believe that God can abide in the hearts of people called the Church and manifest His glory on planet earth? Do you believe God can enter into the hearts of a people called the Church and they in tum can overcome evil in this world? "LET GOD ARISE, LET HIS ENEMIES BE SCATTERED ... "Psalms 68:1 "... LET THE WICKED PERISH AT THE PRESENCE OF GOD!" Psalms 68:2

JEZEBEL SPIRIT

A woman called Jezebel, talked about how things were evil in the world. With this spirit of magnifying the devil, the scripture says that she promoted the people into evil. In a similar way the church, (without realizing it), promotes the devil by speaking of the evil in the world and how the anti-Christ must come. We are in essence saying that evil has overcome good, and the resurrection power of God is not sufficient for the day.

THE BATTLE IS WON

True to the tradition of the above theory, most of the church world is looking for a physical return of Christ, at which time He will set up His Kingdom to resist and overcome the enemy. Jesus has already come, and brought with Him the Kingdom. The cross has already overcome. Jesus fought the battle at Calvary and He won. The cross is enough. His resur-

rection is enough. His power, the Holy Spirit, residing in the hearts of Christians is enough. Satan is a defeated foe. Spirit-filled Christians have been called to accomplish God's work. We have been called to be the salt and light of the world. We have been called to show forth the light of the gospel of the Kingdom. We have been called to manifest the Kingdom of God in the earth.

HARDENED HEARTS

Israel's understanding of the Kingdom of God was that of a physical kingdom which could not be resisted and would entirely destroy evil. They could not understand a spiritual kingdom coming to invade the human heart and give victory over evil. The church of today has the same understanding as Israel. For the most part, they are looking for a physical return of Christ to set up a physical kingdom that will resist and entirely destroy evil. They have misunderstood Christ's spiritual kingdom and have given Satan an opportunity to harden their hearts to the message of the Kingdom of God.

Satan's increased activities in our Nation have direct relationship to our failure to understand the message of the Kingdom of God. The church today does not seem to realize that God's Kingdom has dominance, not Satan's kingdom. We have lost sight of the fact that the darkness cannot overcome the light (John 1:5); as a result of this, we cower before the works of darkness instead of reproving them (Eph. 5:11). If the nations are not presently being discipled, it is not because Satan is dominating the course of history. It is because Christians, like the church at Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29), have granted to Satan an importance that he does not deserve. We have failed to realize the power the church has in the Kingdom of God. Believers, through the power of the Kingdom of God, can turn people from the power of Satan to God, from darkness to light. Acts 26:18

Christ came to defeat the works of the enemy. (1 John 3:8) In His earthly ministry, Christ: *Preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God *Cast out demons *Healed the sick Zechariah 13:1-2 ... prophesied that the coming of Christ and His redemptive Kingdom would mean the removal of "unclean spirits."

Matt, 12:28-29; Luke 10:20-22 ... Christ's power to cast out demons showed that the Kingdom of God had come and that this resulted in the plundering of Satan's house. Mark 1:21-27 ... Demons recognized that Christ's coming was a sign of their defeat. Acts 10:38 ... Christ came healing those oppressed by the devil.

CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION

On the cross, Christ finished the work that He came to do and defeated Satan through His death and resurrection ... John 12:23-32; Matt. 10:1, 7-8; Mark 6:7; 9:38; 16:15-18; Luke 10:17-18; Acts 5:16; 8:6-8; 16:16-18; 19:11-12; Romans 16:20 - "Crush Satan under your feet. Eph. 6:10-18- "Put on the full armor of God." James 4:7- "resist the devil and he will flee." 1 John 4:4- "He that is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

HOW ABOUT US?

Christ endowed us with authority and dominion, through the Kingdom of God, so that we can defeat the devil and destroy his works. Matt" 28:18-20 Will we receive the kingdom of God and submit to its power and authority and complete the work that Christ has given us to do? Will we respond to Jesus' command in Mark 4 and go into the whole world and make disciples of the nations (Matt" 28:18), so they may be followers of Christ and His teaching? Jesus taught primarily about the Kingdom of God. Acts 1:3 Shouldn't we?

(This article was taken from a teaching given by Simon Purvis. He is the lead teacher at the Word of Life Teaching Center in Luflin,TX. Training is at 10:00am each Sunday. To contact him about speaking engagements or to purchase his 160 page study manual on the Kingdom of God, call Word of Life Teaching Center at 936-639-2000; Email: wolluf@consolidated.net)



Instead of someone else *calling* it or *naming* it, why don't we *name* it or *call* it what we want it to be? God *changed* Abram's name to Abraham, instead of "Exalted Father" to "Father of a Multitude," *calling* him as a perpetual reminder of God's sure words. His new name implied a "Look Ahead!", future hope.

I remember years ago when I first opened my printing business in Houston, I named it "Burling Printers." A proper name if you want to project just a depiction of the person owning it. But as time went on, a new change was in order to more broadly express the scope of and mind-set of the business. I called it "Proficient Printing." (**Proficient:** compe-

tent or skilled in doing or using something.) I wanted to instill in the minds of buyers for the industry not just who but what our business model believed about itself and what we offered to the public.

Just as William Booth, an independent evangelist, founded "Christian Missions" in 1878 and then broadened to <u>Salvation Army</u>. I believe he looked to the future and God's impression to him. He established a global ministry through the British Isles, the United States, Canada, Australia, and Europe. Harkening back to Abraham, it's never too late to "RENAME" something. Has 2016 turned out in such a way that you could name it "such and such" and tie a ribbon on it with the feeling of helplessness as to what you could have done to have changed its outcome?

People today change their names for just about any reason or for no particular reason at all. Reasons might be that their relationship changed following a divorce or they desire a less ethnic name for religious reasons. For instance, Steve Kreucher changed his name to "In God We Trust" to honor the help God gave him during hard times. There is also a trend in people changing their name because they want to worship a hero, e.g., a singer, sports figure, political figure, etc. We all know the storybook love of Jacob and Rachel, how he worked fourteen years for the woman he wanted to marry. A few years after the birth of Joseph, his favorite son, his eleventh, Rachael is with child with his twelfth and final child. On the day of the child's birth, things turn bad for the mother and as she's giving birth, she names the child "Ben-oni," meaning "Son of my Sorrow" with her last breath. Here is where we get our hope and faith for 2017. I'm not willing to receive something that brings pain or sorrow for myself or the rest of my family. Remember, God told Adam to name all the animals he created and told him "whatever you name it or what you call it, it will be." Even today some 6,000 years later, Adam's authority is still in place on all the animals we know he named.

So Jacob the father has had his name changed to Israel by now and I believe he remembers how his outlook and up-look has changed since that wrestling match. God had rescued him from his old life of bad traits (His name Jacob meant deceiver) and literally *changed* his name to Israel which incorporated the name of God; "you have wrestled with God and prevailed". I also believe, as he's standing there trying to assimilate the fact his wife has now passed away and has named the child after her sorrow, I believe deep down his mind goes back to his father, Isaac's right hand being laid on his head and pronouncing the blessing he craved so much. As he looked at the child, it simply states (Genesis 35:18b) "But

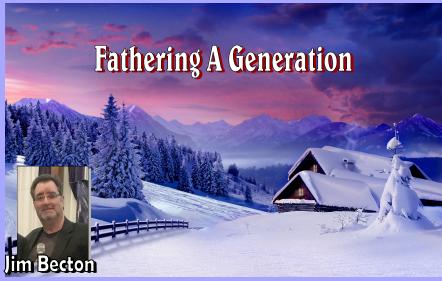
his father named him Benjamin," meaning "the Son of my right hand." Why allow his son to go through life bearing guilt over his mother's cause of death and pain?

This year you can "RENAME" what the world has named your sickness or disease, what your relationships have been, what pathway your children have followed unapproved by you, and you can "RENAME" it—call it what you want it to be! Do not accept the name(s) given to them. This year is a year of blessing. I believe we have open doors and an open heaven to declare and proclaim, healing, prosperity, chains of addiction broken and the blessing from God to be a banner of love over you and your household this year. Like Jacob, call it what you want so whatever it looks like, don't let the world, or your circumstances name your year of 2017, "RENAME" it, call it what you want it to be! and trust God and see His manifestation in the lives of those you love.

Notice this last thought of encouragement moving forward into 2017 while leaving 2016 behind. In Genesis 35 after he changed the name of his son to Benjamin, it says in verse 20, "Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb" and verse 21 in NIV says that "Israel moved on again." He left behind his sorrow and his hard times and Israel went forward into his new season.

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Psalm 110:1-3 The LORD said to My Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers In the day of a your power: In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of your youth... (NKJV)

The Spirit of our Father is drawing us into the "Day of His Power". Another translation for verse 3 of Psalm 110 in the NLT reads, "When you go to war, your people will serve willingly. You are arrayed in holy garments, and your strength will be renewed each day like the morning dew." The Message Bible reads, "Your people will freely join you, resplendent in holy armor on the great day of your conquest, join you at the fresh break of day, join you with all the vigor of youth."

Fathering a generation is so much bigger than one man, or just fathering individual sons for the kingdom. Just as Abram's name was changed from "exalted or high father" to Abraham, "Father of a Multitude," so must we shift our thinking and our focus on discipling and fathering a people, people groups and nations for the Lord. Many spiritual fathers are missing the opportunity of a lifetime to shift from "protecting a legacy" to "preparing a lineage" that will change the course of generations and bring about a powerful DESTINY OF OUR FATHER.

One of the meanings for a father is a "producer of a certain thing." It's not a manufacturing of something, it is a beginning of something that

cannot be stopped, a progeny of the Father Himself. This reproducing of sonship is being multiplied into a host of sons and daughters of the kingdom that He has called unto Himself. The mandate upon our fathering is now transcending a gathering or a teaching of people just to find their destiny and purpose. It is a multiplying of a generation, a "re-gene-ing" of the very heart of our Father that has given Himself to the world.

Abraham had no idea how that in one son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob, who became Israel, that the fulfillment of the mandate of His Father would become multiplied into a multitude. Spiritual fathers, ministry or apostolic fathers are not being raised up in this hour for their own gain or purpose, they are being raised up to "transition and transform" the generations. Isa. 58:12 says, Those from among you shall build the old waste places: You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets (paths) to Dwell in.

This is more than a change of protocol or of order, this is a whole new day to witness the resurrection and ascension power of Jesus Christ in His church that changes the course of the nations. The riches of the glory of His grace are being loosed in us now so that once again, fathers can be generators of a generation and many sons may be brought to that glory. Many are being aligned and connected with a powerful spiritual pipeline from heaven itself where the water never stops flowing. 1Peter 2:9 says, But you are a chosen generation, a royal priest-hood, an holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

How do we see this "corporate" change of fathering a generation and the generations to come? Well, we must come back to Zion, the true church that rules and leads in the midst of a dark and perverse generation. Psalm 102:12, 13, 16, 17 says, But You, O LORD, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations. You will arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favor her, yes the set time, has come. For the LORD shall (has) built up Zion; He shall (has) appeared in His glory. He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer.

Fathers, our prayers must take on the vision of the Lord. What is our heart for the generations, those that are coming behind us, those that are lost and wayward? There is a horrid loss of fathers in the home and in the church. We have a "father-less" generation that must be turned around. The apostle Paul wrote in 1Co. 4:15 the classic case for spiritual fathers: For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not

have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you (became your father), through the gospel.

How do we do this? Back to Psalm 102. Verses 18-28 give us the answer: This will be written for the generation to come, That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; From heaven the LORD viewed the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, To release those appointed to death, To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem. When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD. He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days. I said, "O my God, Do not take me away in the midst of my days; Your years are throughout all generations. Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end. The children of Your servants will continue, and their descendants will be established before You.

this is written for the Generation to come... We know what has been before us and why there has been a curse of immaturity on the generations. Now, we have the chance to turn it around for the generations in front of us. Apostle Paul wrote to his ministry son Timothy in 2Tim. 1:9,10 ...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel...

Let's be His willing people in the day of His Power...

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As of late my meditation topic has been Trust. You know: reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, surety, etc., of a person or thing; confidence. (dictionary.com) It should be a natural byproduct of being a believer. I thought so until God asked me if I trusted Him. Of course... wait, do I?! That's an answer I thought was sure at this point in my life. The amazing thing is in that moment, trust made sense for the first time. All of a sudden there was a relief in my core that I'm not sure I have ever felt. Without Him saying a word, there was an understanding that actually trusting God meant to actually let go of needing to know the process of getting to an answer. I've never functioned like that. Unfortunately my M.O. has been to ask and believe for a God-outcome while all along fixating on my logic's only conclusion as to how that could happen. That, my friends, will WEAR. YOU. OUT. In that moment it felt good, it felt right to let go, and something in me took a deep breath for the first time.

For some of you this is not news. Thank God! For some of us, however, we have confused trust with diligence. By "diligence" I mean we handle, fixate on, and stay worried about a problem until it's fixed. That is nowhere in the definition of trust. It's not only the opposite of trust, but



it is seething with dysfunction and disease. A lack of trust is one of our worst enemies. We might be blaming things on the devil that are really a lack of trust in our own lives. I'm sure the devil doesn't mind when we blame him for such things because it makes his job easier.

Trust is a principle of the Kingdom. God knew what He was doing when He created it. It's life bearing, abundant life bearing. How beautiful it is that the principles of God are set in place to provide the John 10:10 abundant life for all who live them. He gave us a map for life. Check this out, Psalm 84:12 (AMP) "O Lord of hosts, How blessed *and* greatly favored is the man who trusts in You [believing in You, relying on You, and committing himself to You with confident hope and expectation]." Yes, that is beautiful. But check out the rest of Psalm 84. It literally lines out what a life looks like that trusts God. Vs. 4 "Blessed *and* greatly favored are those who dwell in Your house *and* Your presence; They will be singing Your praises all the day long. Selah." Blessing and favor follow those who trust. Vs. 6 "Passing through the Valley of Weeping (Baca), they make it a place of springs; The early rain also covers it with blessings."

Trust gets us through hard times so that we don't make it our dwelling, and trust makes the hard times fruitful for not only us, but others. Trust is not a selfish act. Vs. 7 "They go from strength to strength [increasing in victorious power]; *Each of them* appears before God in Zion." Well, that's a mouth full! Trust causes strength, and it removes the clouds of doubt so that we can see God. Vs. 10 "For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand [anywhere else]; I would rather stand [as a door-keeper] at the threshold of the house of my God than to live [at ease] in the tents of wickedness."

Trust keeps the door open to dwell in His presence. We stay around those we trust. Vs. 11 "For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord bestows grace *and* favor and honor; No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly." Trust is the gateway to God's intentions for us, equipping, protection, grace, favor and all good things. It makes sense that the summation of this Psalm is, "O Lord of hosts, How blessed *and* greatly favored is the man who trusts in You." On top of being born to trust, these are compelling reasons to do so.

Trust is a principle that is not impossible to live. It's a choice The only things that stand in the way are experience and lies, both of which have to bow to the truth. Sometimes we just have to start by giving up increments of concern to the faithfulness of God. It really is okay to let go. For some of us that is harder than it sounds, but the depth of breath experienced on the other side is extraordinary. We are in a season of miracles, signs, and wonders. Dare to be a part of that by trusting the Trustworthy. "How blessed and greatly favored is the man who trusts You."



There are quite a few interesting debates going on in Christianity these days. There are disagreements on eschatology, the role of women in the church, politics, etc. I have some firm beliefs on each of these subjects, even most of the etcetera!

However, one debate that has caught my attention recently is the practice of tithing. Based on what I've observed, there are three positions taken by followers of Christ: 1) Indifference (usually based on lack of knowledge on the subject). 2) Tithing is Old Covenant and therefore not necessary for believers in the New Covenant. 3) Tithing is a Kingdom principle established before the law was given to Moses.

Before I go any further in addressing these, let me tell you why this particular subject caught my attention. It was this question: As a Christian, am I required to tithe? On the surface it would seem to be a legitimate question, although maybe not on the same footing as a question such as, "As a Christian, am I required to love my enemies?" We can point to the words of Jesus Himself in the gospels (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27) for the obvious answer. But what about tithing? Jesus never gave a direct command to tithe. The only time He mentions it is in Matthew 23:23 when He is rebuking the scribes and Pharisees for being hypocrites:



"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."

Jesus always seems to get to the heart of the matter, doesn't He? Instead of looking for legalistic answers to our questions, maybe we should examine why the question is asked in the first place. Oftentimes our heart is revealed by the questions we ask.

I think a more legitimate question would be, "How much of the kingdom do I want to see and experience?"

Recently, I was reading the story of Zacchaeus from The Message in Luke 19:1-9 – Then Jesus entered and walked through Jericho. There was a man there, his name Zacchaeus, the head tax man and quite rich. He wanted desperately to see Jesus, but the crowd was in his way – he was a short man and couldn't see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus when he came by.

When Jesus got to the tree, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry down. Today is my day to be a guest in your home." Zacchaeus scrambled out of the tree, hardly believing his good luck, delighted to take Jesus home with him. Everyone who saw the incident was indignant and grumped, "What business does he have getting cozy with this crook?"

Zacchaeus just stood there, a little stunned. He stammered apologetically, "Master, I give away half my income to the poor – and if I'm caught cheating, I pay four times the damages."

Jesus said, "Today is salvation day in his home! Here he is: Zacchaeus, son of Abraham! For the Son of man came to find and restore the lost."

I've always loved this story because of the obvious change in Zacchaeus' heart and his immediate response in giving away half of his income to the poor and to make restitution four-fold to anyone he had cheated. How strange that so many who have experienced the saving grace of Christ would even balk at the idea of a tithe (one-tenth) of their income.

But this time I noticed something I had never paid much attention to before. Jesus calls Zacchaeus a son of Abraham. Previously, he may have been a physical descendant of Abraham, but now he is a spiritual son. I think it's also very important that he mentions Abraham here. Abraham was the first person to tithe. You can read the story yourself in Gen.

14:18-20 and Heb. 7:1-22. Abraham paid a tithe to Melchizedek, who was a type of Christ's eternal priesthood. I find it fascinating when Christians want to call tithing a part of the Law when it was first established several hundred years before Moses was born.

Though we're talking about tithing here, this is really not a money issue. It's a heart issue. When Jesus came on the scene and began his earthly ministry, he had a lot to say about the heart. I don't have space in this article to refer to every time Jesus spoke about the heart, but He did say, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matt. 6:21)

Whether we like to acknowledge it or not, our hearts are tied to our billfolds. We need look no further than the early church in the book of Acts to see what the heart/treasure connection looks like: Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. (Acts 2:44-45) Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of houses or lands sold them and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. (Acts 4:32-35)

Without a doubt, the most read and quoted passage concerning tithing is found in Malachi 3. Aside from the obvious benefits of tithing that we who practice this lifestyle can attest to, there is a greater truth that is often overlooked. Sometimes you will hear this statement, "Well, I tried it for a while and just didn't see the benefit." Many years ago, as I was reading Malachi 3:10, these words jumped off the page at me, "And try Me now in this." I don't know about you, but for me there's a huge difference between the words "it" and "Me." This is not about rituals and ordinances. It is instead all about relationship. He doesn't ask us to try a formula or program. "Try Me," He says. Prove Me. Be an example of what it looks like to be in covenant with your faithful God.

Let us be like the man David describes in Psalm 37:26 – "He is ever merciful, and lends." The word lends is the Hebrew word lavah, which means "to join oneself to." That is a covenant word. Whether you realized it or not, this is what you were agreeing to when you decided to follow Jesus! I have joined myself to Him. All I have belongs to Him.

What it all boils down to is this: Jesus isn't asking for your tithe. He's asking for everything. When you approach Him with a heart that says, "It all belongs to you," then you'll never have to ask the question, "Am I required to tithe?"

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David as a youth, even before he was anointed as a king the first time by the Prophet Samuel, discovered *the secret of true worship* of the Most High God. It was out of his place of intimate fellowship with his God, he was given strength and power and victory over all his enemies. First the lion, then the bear and then Goliath! But more importantly, David discovered the power and authority that came with his personal form of worship. He discovered the *key* to power and authority in praise and worship over the demon spirits that were behind the evil that came against Israel due to the Idolatry of the heathen nations. He knew by revelation that he held *the key to victory* over all his enemies that opposed Israel from inheriting their Promised Land. This was the reason he had such boldness when facing the enemies of Israel that day when their champion Goliath defied David's God. He had a history of victory over the enemies of the flock of sheep that he pledged to



protect under his earthly father's authority. David's discovery of such authority over the powers of darkness that infiltrated the land of Israel was clearly seen in the Scriptures in the following verses.

"But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented and troubled him. Saul's servants said to him, Behold, an evil spirit from God torments you. Let your lord now command your servants here before you to find a man who plays skillfully on the Lyre; and when the evil spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well." (1 Samuel 16:14-16)

Saul then told his servants to find him such a man who plays well and bring him to me. The story of David is so well-known that we all know who that was, David, the youngest son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who plays skillfully, and valiant man of war, prudent in speech and eloquent, an attractive person; and the Lord is with him. And when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, David took a lyre and played it; so Saul was refreshed and became well, and the evil spirit left him.

Authority is defined as Power with Permission.

David was under authority; therefore, he had authority. **If we are not under authority, we have no authority.** All authority outside of the Triune Godhead is *delegated* authority. David had been given authority by his earthly father Jesse to tend his father's sheep. David used that authority to slay the enemies that came to devour his father's flocks. He just used this same premise of authority in regards to his heavenly Father. David knew that when he faced the giant who was in defiance of his heavenly father, that he would be given the power of God to back up the authority he had been given to protect *God's* flock called Israel. Here is the Scriptural reference to that effect.

"He chose David His servant and took him from *the sheepfolds; From tending* the ewes that had their young He brought him to be the shepherd of Jacob His people, of Israel His inheritance. So [David] was their shepherd with as upright heart; he guided them by the discernment and skillfulness [which controlled] his hands." (Psalm 78:70-73)

Thus, that key came to be to be known as the key of David.

Isaiah 22:22 "And *the key* of the house David I will lay upon his shoulder; he shall open and no one shall shut, he shall shut and no one shall open." Revelation 3:7 "These are the words of the Holy One, the True One, He Who has *the key of David*, Who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one shall open." Christ, who inherited the throne of David, now has the key of David. All authority and power over all flesh [mankind] has been granted Him. All power in heaven and earth has been given him and He has been glo-

rified that He may give eternal life to all whom His Father has given Him as His inheritance. He has the right or power and authority to give the *key of David* to his church to bind and to loose. So whatever He has loosed or bound of already in heaven, we can now do so on earth.

The time came, the Scriptures say, when the Philistines gathered their armies for battle and were assembled at a place called Socoh, *which belongs to Judah*. Saul, then king, and the armies Israel were encamped in the Valley of Elah and were in battle array against the Philistines. Israel was on one side of the mountain and the Philistines on the other side. David was the youngest son and was not invited to battle with his brothers. David was still going back and forth to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. The story goes: *David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah named Jesse*, who had eight sons. Three of his sons had followed Saul into battle. Of course, we know the story by heart so it's not necessary to repeat that part about the challenge given by Goliath of Gath etc. My reason for repeating this story printed in the Bible is to let us see the powerful revelation of the *key of David* and how it relates to the Tabernacle of David and the great importance it plays in our victory over all our enemies.

David's Key of Authority: Using God's power with His permission brings absolute victory over the enemies of God.

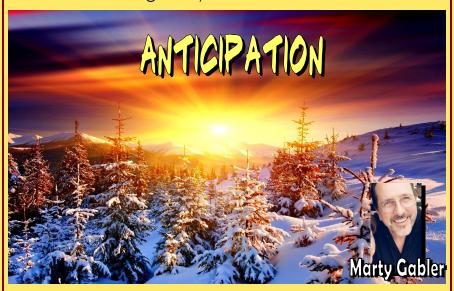
David had the power to overcome all his adversaries, because he was under the authority of his God. Thus he had God's permission to rule over his enemies, because he was a true worshiper. He exercised this authority in both the spiritual realm and the natural realm. These two words are connected. David understood the power and authority that he had in both worlds, the spiritual and the natural realm. If he didn't first and foremost have authority with God in the spirit realm, he would not have had the power to overcome the enemies in the natural realm. The power given to his enemies came from the demonic or spirit world of Satan and his power was manifested in their worship to the gods of the Philistines and all other enemies of Israel who worshiped Baal and other entities. They worshiped spirit beings, demons, and objects made of stone, wood or the formations in heavens, all of which were storefronts of Satan. He is behind all idolatry and yet tries to appear as an angel of light in his world of darkness. David had knowledge of this dark spiritual world around him and knew he had authority over them in the name of his God. This word got out quickly that David had such authority. That's the reason King Saul's servants called for David to come sing, play his harp and worship his God. They knew when he did, the demons would have to flee from Saul without delay. Now are we seeing the need of the restoration of the Tabernacle of David a little more clearly? We too, like David, must understand our authority in both worlds. First, the spirit world and then it will be manifest in the natural world. If it is bound or loosed in heaven first, then it can be bound or loosed in the earth. God has given the keys of the kingdom to the Church. We have been given the authority to bind and loose. If we are not under God's authority, then we will have absolutely no authority over the

enemy.

The Bible says; So be subject to God. Resist the devil [stand firm against him], and he will flee from you. *James 4:7*. If we are not first subjected to God, we cannot put the devil under our feet. Satan knows if you know who you are in Christ; otherwise he will only ignore you and keep doing what he's doing.

Great authority will come to the Church as the Tabernacle of David is restored.

(Samuel L. Brassfield is president and co-founder of Harvest International Ministries, Inc. [HIM], which is a mission, evangelistic and teaching outreach with an apostolic and prophetic foundation, to advance the Kingdom of God. He has authored two books and is in the process of writing others at this time. Sam and Nancy travel as prophetic conference speakers and teachers in local churches and conferences each year. They have recently started a school of ministry in which they take the teaching and training to local churches. 512-525-1001 * sbrassfield1@live.com.)



Each of us already has a pretty full plate of anticipation about the coming year. We are built to anticipate. If we are honest, I believe we will admit that we are continually anticipating what is ahead whether we are anticipating good or bad, productive or non-productive, desired or undesirable. Right in the middle of it all it would be quite helpful to us if we considered that it is quite difficult to anticipate the provision or intervention of God if we are not looking to God and His Word. Ps.145:15 (NKJV) "The eyes of all look **expectantly** to You, And You give them their food in due sea-

son." (NET) "Everything looks to you in **ANTICIPATION**, and you provide them with food on a regular basis."

It is not unusual to hear something like, "But the guy who works at my office said 'such and such'." "But I read an article on the internet and it said 'this and that'!" I have observed people making decisions and acting on something reported by a casual acquaintance or even a stranger. How often do we stop and measure the person speaking, much less the source and agenda of their argument? Why would we, in the moment, take their report as though they were expert on the subject (especially a total stranger on the internet) or that they are reporting it absolutely accurately? When we do not properly weigh information, no matter how zealously reported, we may likely end up with its consequences. Once we take a sober assessment of our personal history, many of us will probably find that we have been the recipient of those things we have anticipated that came out of an off-hand statement someone made.

Disaster Prevention

Disaster prevention may be found in as simple a form as judging before deciding. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things..." (1Cor.2:15a, KJV) The Amplified version sets it in terminology that gives us a good definition of the word "judge" (Gk.: anakrino) in this context: "But the spiritual man tries all things [he examines, investigates, inquires into, questions, and discerns all things]...". Numerous times I have heard the biblical phrase "judge not lest you be judged" witlessly rattled off while accepting things that were quite preposterous (even dangerous). It would seem that the primary aim of our taking the time and wisdom to judge should be to examine if the report/information is in agreement with the Word of God. (Compare: Lev.19:15b; Ps.82:2; Prov.31:9; Lk.12:57; Jn.7:24)

The warning our Lord gives in Matt.7:1 ("judge not lest you be judged") is wise counsel to not judge (Gk.: krino) superficially or based upon mere opinion. That is why, in 1Cor.2:15, we are to be spiritual (not merely superficial) by examining and discerning information. Rather than going about saying, "He said 'this" or "She said 'that" why can't we develop the habit of declaring, "But God said in His Word...."?

Consecrate Yourselves For Tomorrow

With God, what you do not see in this moment is entirely possible in the next moment. We can allow our anticipation to be fueled by various and sundry reports or we can separate ourselves from superficial and culturally accepted norms. Josh.3:5 "Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, FOR tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." We could, just as well, use here the word "sanctify". It basically means "to set apart from". That "setting apart from" is for a purpose, not simply being set over to the side as attempting to not be identified with something.

We may very well need to separate ourselves in anticipation of what we do not see in this moment so that we might see it in the next. We will need to separate ourselves from what we have not seen in the past year. In order to see what we need to see in the next moment (or the next year) we must separate ourselves from the distractions, interferences and disqualifiers of the present. Joshua's instruction for the people to "separate themselves apart from" could include separating from such practical and mundane things as (1.) cynicism (2.) unbelief (3.) opinions of others (4.) from past disappointments (5.) from past events that never culminated in the desired outcome and (6.) from people who never followed through with influence or promises. Joshua's words that seem to really stand out in 3:5 are, "Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow." Anticipation is not an emotion but a matter of wise adjustments and preparation.

Don't rule out Holy Spirit's involvement

1Cor.2:9-10 "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

v.10 "BUT God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

From the profitable instruction given us in v.10, it stands to reason that we must be in relationship with Holy Spirit to have valuable, enabling things revealed to us. Not only does He reveal the necessary to us but He is actively working (often unnoticed) in circumstances that have the unmovable look of already being set in cement. Our anticipatory prayers will include factoring in Holy Spirit's power and behind-the-scenes working. He is the power factor, influence factor, heart-change factor. He is the anticipation factor. Don't fail to consider Him.

A Child's Anticipation

The passage of Mk.10:15 is not talking about getting to heaven. It is talking about the authority, power, rule of God. Mk.10:15 "...Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." "As a child" paints the picture of a child who is always full of anticipation. Embracing that picture, we will not try bringing to God our agendas, preconceived ideas, preferences, and hearts/minds with no

imagination available to God. Out of the four million Israelites trapped against the Red Sea, how many do you think used their imagination to encourage the others that God would use the rod of Moses to part the sea so they could cross over on dry ground? They were stuck in the mindset of powerless servants who would not allow their minds to go beyond the typical thought processes of a subjugated people. I for one am thankful that a merciful God sent the prophet Moses with a word for them that would help them move beyond those old mental habits.

A couple was sitting at their kitchen table going over their finances and planning the family vacation which was yet three months away. Their little 5 year old boy had been in the den playing and watching TV during the planning session. It was getting late so he decided to go to his room. As he passed the kitchen the only words he heard were, "OK, so we are going to Disney World". The little boy's heart leapt with excitement and he quickly ran to his room. Sometime later, the parents finalized their three-month plan while finishing off their coffee. As they headed for bed they looked in on their son to make sure he was asleep. When they looked into the room they saw the little 5 year old lying over on his over-stuffed travel bag sound asleep. He was wearing his swim mask, his Mickey Mouse shirt, one white shoe and one red shoe. His anticipation warranted that he be prepared to travel when it was time to load the car.

What Will They Anticipate?

The coming generation will anticipate *something*. Who will give them something to anticipate? Will they anticipate hopelessness or the possibilities of the God of the Bible? One of the biggest favors we can do the coming generation is to build anticipation into them, anticipation for the intervention of God, anticipation to see God do something no previous generation has ever seen. Every time people speak of tragedy and hopelessness, let us say to the coming generation, "BUT GOD....". Let's help them keep their anticipator alive and well and functioning at peak capacity. Let's charge it up at every opportunity!

The Phenomenon of the Camel Dance

There is a group of Bedouin merchants that still use camels to transport their goods from village to village. When they need to resupply and move to a new location for trading, they camp together and wait until all the merchants are ready to travel. When they are all ready to travel, they agree to leave the following morning at daylight.

But about 3:00a.m. of the morning they are to leave, they are awak-

ened by the noise of many camels moving their feet up and down. In anticipation of the coming journey to a new place the camels stand up and start moving their legs and necks that have bells around them. The men awake to the noise and move out among the camels and dance with them. They refer to it as "the camel dance". The camels are doing what they can do at that time in the place where they are in anticipation of that which is to come. They demonstrate anticipation by taking the posture of the motion of the coming journey. Inside, they are ready to go on the next journey. Because of the atmosphere in the camp, they are anticipating the next experience. They know inside that "it" is not here, "it" is down the road and they are ready to get on down the road. They were created to carry loads and they do it well and do it willingly with anticipation.

We were created to move forward and because of Him Who has called us and enabled us, we should be filled with anticipation for what we are journeying into in this coming year. "And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall **remove from your place**, and go after it." (Jos.3:5) "Remove from your place" actually means "to pull up tent pegs". God is not the only One doing any activity. The prophet Micah doesn't seem to be waiting for some outside stimulant to condition him. He takes what he already knows of his God and decides what his mindset and actions shall be. Mic.7:7 "But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: My God will hear me."

"I anticipate the inevitable, supernatural, intervention of God!"

He is God and will never cease being everything He has always been.

Let us live more than a semblance of life, more than a reasonable facsimile thereof. In this coming year, let us rise to the heights that our Lord invites us to and live full lives.— ΩS

"Reach out and experience the breadth! Test its length! Plumb the depths! Rise to the heights! Live full lives, full in the fullness of God." Eph.3:19, Msg

Some look at a thing and see not enough while others look at the same thing and see more than enough. Jesus looked at 5 fishes and 2 chunks of bread and saw more than enough to feed 5,000 hungry people.—MG

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dates are subject to change. Call before traveling.

Check Marty's FaceBook page for updates or our blog page: martygabler.com

PLEASE PRAY FOR US

We have been putting dates on the Calendar after the magazine goes out. Please check Marty's FaceBook page and martygabler.com for dates. We also serve on presbyteries, councils and prayer groups during the week that we don't post. Thank you for your prayers as we travel.— Marty & Kathy

12-11-16
Willis, TX
Grace International Church
Pastors Joe and Virgie Bogue
10:00a.m.
Marty will be giving the
2017 Declarations
graceic.org
Church: 936-856-2455

1-15-16
Seguin, TX
New Life Fellowship
Pastors Layne and
Pamela Dietz
10:-00a.m.
Marty will be giving the
2017 Declarations
newlifefellowshipsequin.com

Website: seecministries.org
Daily Devotions: martygabler.com
Email: mail@seecministries.org
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