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HeartCry

MAGAZINE

THAT GOD'S NAME BE GREAT AMONG THE NATIONS



SLAVES OF CHRIST

If our King could humble Himself and obey even to the point of death on a cross, how much more should we who are His servants?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

UPDATES FROM

Kenya, Peru, Romania, & Germany

GREETINGS

It can be beneficial at times to glance back—to look and see how far the Lord has brought us. I took a little time recently to peruse some of HeartCry’s older publications and catch a glimpse of how far the Lord has brought this ministry. I was excited to find the following exposition of the name “HeartCry,” penned by Paul Washer in the very first HeartCry newsletter (the precursor to the HeartCry Magazine) in September 1990:

HEARTCRY—Somewhere in the darkness, a heart cries unheard by human ears. It comes from an abandoned child in a deserted alley or maybe from a rich man living high above the city.

HEARTCRY—Somewhere in the darkness, a heart cries unheard by human ears. A broken man, bowed low with a burden for the world around him, pleads his heart in the throne room of God. The fields are so white, and the laborers so few.

HEARTCRY—Somewhere, from a heart larger than the world, a cry breaks forth, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for Us?”

HEARTCRY—Somewhere in the darkness, a feeble voice whispers, “Here I am; send me.”

This issue contains a few articles from the old newsletters, all of which were written by Paul Washer in the 1990s. They will be brand new to most of you, and I trust you will find them as challenging and encouraging as I did. Of course, you will also read news of the Lord’s work across the globe. God has been so faithful to HeartCry over the last thirty years! We are immensely grateful for every one of you who has offered up prayers to our heavenly Father on our behalf. Please continue to pray for us—without His help, we are nothing!

In His love,

Forrest Hite (Chief Editor)

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"They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand." - Romans 15:21



Slaves of Christ

by Paul Washer

The Christian is a recipient of many titles that denote the privilege of his position. He is a son of God, a brother of Christ, a saint, a priest, and an ambassador. But of all the titles that are laid upon him, there is arguably none more descriptive, demanding, and joyful than that of “slave.” The Christian is a slave of Christ.

The word “servant” in the English New Testament comes from the Greek word *doulos*, which means “slave.” Translating the term as “servant” softens its force and makes it more palatable, more appealing to the flesh, more respectable, less demanding; but it also takes away from the meaning that was conveyed in the first-century use of the term. To present an adequate idea of what the word *doulos* really means, consider these definitions from Kiddle’s Theological Dictio-

nary of the New Testament:

“This word [*doulos*] indicates a relationship of absolute dependence in which the total commitment of the slave corresponds to the total claim of the Lord.”

“The word *doulos* denotes exclusive commitment and obligation.... Alongside the will and commission of the Lord, there is no place for one’s own will or initiative.”

“Jesus used this term [*doulos*] when he wished to emphasize the unconditional nature of human responsibility to God.”

From these few comments, it is evident that the Christian’s title of “slave” has great and far-reaching consequences. We are God’s slaves. He has an absolute claim on our lives and is totally committed to our

welfare; we are to live in absolute submission to Him and to be totally committed to His will. I think it would be beneficial to attempt to restore the true meaning of the word “slave” and to rediscover how it applies to the Christian life. In Webster’s New World College Dictionary, “slave” is defined as follows:

Slave:

A human being who is owned by and absolutely subject to another, as by capture, purchase, or birth; a bond-servant divested of all freedom and personal rights; a person who is completely dominated by some influence, habit, etc.

We Are Owned by Another

We are the property and possession of God. We do not belong to ourselves, but to Him. The Scriptures teach that the entire “earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it” (Psalm 24:1). When we were unbelievers, we did not recognize God’s exclusive right of ownership upon us; but when we came to Christ, we turned ourselves over to Him. We recognized that He alone owned all that we were and had. We gave ourselves over to Christ with great joy, for we took into account all He had done for us and all that is promised us in His name. We were like a man who found a treasure in a field and, with great joy, went and sold all he had to buy that field

(Matthew 13:44-46).

In the world, a man is known by what he owns; we Christians, however, are not known by what we own but by who owns us. We are God’s—“a people for His own possession” (Deuteronomy 7:6)—and His mark of ownership upon us is our great privilege. It is true that we have nothing that is ours; but we do have all that is His. We are His possession, but He is also ours. What more could we want or need?

We Are Totally Subject to Another

It can be said that privilege walks hand in hand with responsibility. If it is a privilege to be God’s possession, it is also a responsibility. This is indeed true of the Christian, whose responsibility is to be absolutely subject to God and His will. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 6:16-18:

“Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”

What is our greatest responsibility as slaves? Obedience: knowing the will of God and doing it. The Christian is a slave of Christ. He must live solely for the will of his Master. He no longer makes career

decisions for himself, for his career belongs to God, to be advanced as God leads. He no longer spends his money as he pleases, for his money belongs to God, to be administered as God commands. He no longer does as he wishes with his time, for his time belongs to God, to be used as God determines.

Every prayer, thought, and fiber of the slave strives for one all-consuming goal: “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10).

This submission to the will of God is not unique to a slave; it is also required of a son, as evidenced by the Lord Jesus Himself (Hebrews 10:7). We are servants and sons of God. Jesus was the Servant and the Son of God, perfect and pleasing to the Father in every way. He did nothing for Himself or according to His own plans; He did only what He saw His Father doing (John 5:19). We as Christians and sons of God are called to follow Christ, the Son of God, with the same degree of dependence and submission to the Father’s will. How much of our lives is the fruit of our independence from God and of our own self-will?

We Are Slaves by Purchase

There we stood on the auction block—slaves to sin, sold to death, lacking any hope for redemption. Then came Christ, a Lamb without spot. He put our chains upon Himself and gave Himself over to

our cruel taskmaster, accepting the death we deserved. God demonstrated His love for us in this: while we were slaves, and worthless slaves at that, Christ bought us with His very own life. We were redeemed “with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ” (I Peter 1:18-19). If the price of something determines its value, I suppose Christ’s payment makes us worth quite a lot! Could anything or anyone be found to have more worth than the Son of God? Could the price for us have been any higher? Could more have been paid?

This great thing that God has done for us should drive us to consider our devotion and our commitment to Him (I Corinthians 6:19-20). As a man for whom Christ has died, how should I live? I should live as a man absolutely given to God, His will, and His honor. My every thought, word, and action should only be a response to what God desires of me.

We Are Slaves by Birth

When we think about the Christian’s new birth, we immediately think of sonship: we are not just slaves; we are sons. This is true—we are more than slaves—but we cannot dismiss the biblical references to the Christian as a slave. We can reconcile these points by recognizing that we have the position of dearly loved sons as well as the call to be obedient servants. Jesus is the true Son of God, but He is also the Servant of God who lived on earth to do the will of His Father in heav-

en. What does the Apostle Paul tell us in Philippians 2:5-8? Since we are sons, what should our attitude be in this matter?

“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

From the life of Jesus, it is clear that the mark of true sonship is obedience. As sons, it is our privilege to reflect the will of the Father. Sonship does not diminish the cost of discipleship; if anything, it increases it! Jesus was the true Son, yet He was born into this world as a servant. He paid the highest price of discipleship! He was called to lay down His privileged position and His very life—and He obeyed. If the true Son became an obedient Servant, how much more should we, who by His obedience have become sons, live in obedient servitude to our Master?

If our King could humble Himself and obey even to the point of death on a cross, how much more should we who are His servants?

We Are Slaves by Capture

This portion of our definition is my favorite. We are not only slaves but also prisoners. We have been captured and imprisoned by the love

of Christ. The net has been cast and hauled in, and we have found ourselves bound in strands of love so strong that we will never escape. “I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love, and I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws; and I bent down and fed them” (Hosea 11:4). Of all the motivations for obedience, love is the greatest. He gave His life to give us life, and now we give it back. He loved us first; we love Him now. His love knew of no cost too great; our love is now learning to spend itself with the same reckless abandon. We are slaves, but we are dearly loved slaves. If we only knew how much He loves us, it would be much more difficult to rebel and much easier to obey!

The word “love” seems so out of place alongside the words “slave” and “prisoner.” But it is the very love of God that transforms these two words into symbols of freedom and joy! The slave of a perfect, loving Master is the freest and most joyful person of all! In its common usage, the word “slave” denotes bondage and limitation; but when it is applied to us who believe, it rings with liberty and compels us to go joyfully beyond all human limitations of loyalty, dedication, and obedience. The love of God is like a wild and rushing mountain stream that grips us, carries us away, and refuses to give us up. It will never yield us to other loves; we are lost to those forever. We are prisoners of love: “For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for



“The man
dominated by
the love
of Christ is
most Christlike”

themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf” (II Corinthians 5:14-15).

We Are Divested of All Freedom & Personal Rights

As slaves, we have lost all freedom to direct our lives in a manner contrary to the will of God; and we have been divested of every personal right that does not rightfully acknowledge the absolute sovereignty of God. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 14:7-8: “For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.”

As Christians, we must renounce

any claim to lordship in our lives; we must renounce any rebellious attempt at having our will prevail; and we must recognize Jesus Christ as our only Sovereign and His will as the indisputable Word of God. There is no confusion in Scripture with regard to “who is who.” Jesus Christ is the absolute Lord of all, and we are His servants. To the same degree, there is no confusion in the Scriptures with regard to the limits of the Lord’s sovereignty—there simply are no limits! He is Lord in life, in death, on earth, in heaven, and in hell (Philippians 2:9-11).

We Are Completely Dominated by God’s Influence

These last words from Webster’s definition are perhaps the best. The Scriptures teach that, before we

came to Christ, we were dominated by sin and our corrupt nature. Now that we are “in Christ,” we have been set free from the domination of sin and have been given over to other factors that must now dominate our lives—the righteousness and glory of God, the love of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian must be dominated by the *righteousness of God*. His holiness and righteousness should be a dominating factor in our every thought, word, and deed. We must strive to be like our God; we must seek to be holy, for He is holy. As the apostle says in I Peter 1:15:

“Like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”

The Christian must be dominated by the *glory of God*. As we have learned, we no longer live for ourselves, but for God and His will. The goal of everything we do is His glory (I Corinthians 10:31). Everything we do should be determined by whether it brings praise, honor, and majesty to His name. Deciding what is right and wrong in the Christian life is actually very simple: if my action glorifies God, it is right; if it does not, it is wrong.

The Christian must be dominated by the *love of Christ*. Love is possibly the greatest instrument of transformation in the hands of God. The love of Christ made us love Him, and His love compels us to love others as we have been loved. A man dominated by the love

of Christ is exactly what he should be: patient, kind, never envious, never boastful, never proud. He is not rude, selfish, or easily angered. He keeps no record of wrongs. He does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. He always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres (I Corinthians 13:4-7).

The man dominated by the love of Christ is most Christlike.

The Christian must be dominated by *the power of the Holy Spirit*. There is no spiritual life apart from the Holy Spirit of God. One of the driest deserts in the world is located in Peru, with heat and sand and mirages as far as the eye can see. It is a deadly place with little or no life, except where a stream miraculously makes its way down the mountains and pours forth life on the barren ground. That tiny trickle of water is powerful enough to turn dust into a garden of life. Similarly, when we are dominated by self and flesh, we leave a barren desert in our wake. When we are dominated by the Spirit, the barren desert of our lives is transformed into a fruitful garden, bearing an abundant harvest for all (Galatians 5:22-23).

“For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.”
- Isaiah 35:6



Nairobi

A New Church Plant

by Sean R. | Kenya

"Our Lord always provides for those who trust Him and obey His call"

Nairobi, Kenya—a massive, sprawling African city with a total population exceeding six million and horrific traffic of legendary proportions. Now, try to grasp the fact that there are only two or three strongly biblical churches in the entire city. Then factor in that most residents do not own cars. Traveling any distance to a church meeting is a complicated process of catching multiple buses and taxis. How would you like to do that every Sunday with your entire family? Meanwhile, congregations of the prosperity cult are meeting on almost every city block.

Another important consideration is the former members of Reformed Baptist churches in other parts of Kenya who relocate to Nairobi. Some of these are college students who were reached by the churches in university towns like Kisumu and Eldoret. These students were evangelized and discipled by Bible-preaching churches and grew to love sound doctrine. However, upon graduation, they move to the “big city,” where there is far greater hope of finding work. Others are forced to move due to a job transfer. Depending on where they live in the city, reaching one of those

two or three biblical churches can be extremely difficult. Additionally, we have been able to learn from the experience of the Zambian Reformed Baptists. Over three decades, a handful of strong churches in the capital city (Lusaka) have provided the manpower and finances to sustain a church-planting movement across their country and beyond. Lusaka, with a population of three million, has close to a dozen solid churches in the city alone, while Nairobi, with twice the people, has only a fraction of the biblical churches.

Answering the Call

I have long desired to see our Kenyan brothers launch a new church in Nairobi. But who would undertake such a daunting task? Sam Oluoch and his wife Melly have felt a growing certainty that they were the ones to go. In discussions last year, their fellow Kenyan pastors confirmed that calling. Our trusted African leader, Pastor Conrad Mbewe, added his enthusiastic endorsement—yes, Sam is the man for the job.

The Lord used Sam and Melly to establish Grace Baptist Church many years ago in Kisumu, Western Kenya. The church is now strong and healthy, and Sam was ready to leave it in the hands of his co-elder Ken and a new pastor. Sam is a seasoned pastor and skilled evangelist, and he was ready to apply that gifting and experience to the challenge of Nairobi. Despite the pain of losing their beloved pastor, Grace Baptist was willing to follow the biblical example of

Antioch (Acts 13) and give of their best for the sake and cause of the gospel.

The Move

In May 2018, Sam's family made the move to Nairobi. There was sorrow in leaving their church family and uncertainty in starting again from zero. They left a peaceful home with a view of Lake Victoria for the noisy, crowded city.

Like so many others, they looked to an eternal reward, as they left friends and home to follow their Lord.

The move held other major challenges. How would they find adequate yet affordable housing in the more expensive market of Nairobi? Yet through friends from a former church, the Lord provided a good house to rent for far below the going price. Sam and Melly had also survived all their years in ministry with the home furnishings they acquired while he worked for the government. Those furnishings had seen their last days, and Sam feared they would not survive the move. When I visited their Nairobi home in July, I wondered what I would find. Through the generosity of family and friends, I arrived to a fully furnished home!

The Work Starts

Sam arrived in Nairobi with a list of fifteen contacts, and that list quickly grew to over twenty. Some



were former members of the church in Kisumu who had relocated to Nairobi for work. Others were former university students that Sam used to evangelize in Kisumu.

In the first month, Sam and Melly averaged twelve to eighteen people in their home every Sunday night for Bible study. They are working through the Gospel of John, and the majority of those attending are not yet believers. One of those, Duncan, has recently professed faith.

Sam told me that he had to restrain himself on following up with all their contacts, because they could not fit any more in their home! They likely could have twenty-five people meeting for Bible study if they had the space. A better meeting facility became a matter of urgent prayer. One after another, each promising prospect fell through. Fi-



nally, on the very day I was leaving Nairobi for Uganda, Sam secured a rental agreement on a meeting hall. Another answer to prayer!

Since the beginning of 2018, we have seen God's faithfulness demonstrated over and over in the launch of this new work. Therefore, we have every reason to continue praying boldly that He will prosper this church plant and call many to salvation in His Son in this new year.

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Taking the Gospel to Refugees

by Naphtally Ogallo | Kenya

Three years ago, Paul Washer was listening to news on the radio about the global refugee crisis. There are many nonprofit organizations meeting humanitarian needs, but who is meeting the greatest need of these refugees—the proclamation of the true gospel? After further investigation, our Kenyan leaders, Sam and Naphtally, made an exploratory trip to the South Sudanese refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya. This led to HeartCry funding a Sudanese young man, Babale, to attend the Kenyan theological school, Kenya Reformed School of Theology (KReST). Babale has done well in his studies. Recently, he brought a request for a training conference from church leaders in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Through the giving of HeartCry donors, we were able to send Naphtally and

Emmanuel to Kakuma for a two-day conference. Below is Naphtally's report on this historic event.

It has been two years since our last visit to the Kakuma Refugee Camp, so our most recent visit of last week was very timely. The original plan was for Pastor Sam Oluoch and me to travel together. However, due to the fact that Sam had been out of the country and returned straight into teaching at KReST one week before our journey, it was decided that Pastor Emmanuel Temba would take Sam's place for this trip. Emmanuel has been working side-by-side with Sam in the new Nairobi church plant.

Travel to Lodwar and then on to Kakuma is always difficult and a bit dangerous. It was extremely challenging on this trip, due to a



nationwide government crackdown on public transport which is not road-worthy. Finally arriving in Kakuma, thoroughly tired and dusty, we were met by our hosts Babale and Pastor Stephen of Unity Church, who arranged lodging for us. The following morning, before heading to the meeting place at the Refugee Camp, we all went to the Refugee Administrative Offices, where we needed to obtain permission to enter and conduct our two-day preaching and teaching ministry. We were interrogated for some time and then required to make a written application; finally, after more waiting, we received our official permission to enter the camp and hold our meetings. We rushed to the church building (about a twenty-minute motorbike ride), where the delegates were patiently waiting; without any further delay, we embarked on our mission.

The theme of our conference was “Preaching Salvation.” I began the sessions by teaching on “Why and from What Do We Need to Be Saved?” Pastor Emmanuel then led the second session on “Salvation Is of God from Beginning to End.” We did four sessions on the first day of the conference. At the end of each session we answered questions from delegates—pastors, evangelists, and leaders in various ministries of different churches. In addition to the South Sudanese, there were also refugees from the Oromo people of Ethiopia.

On the second day, we quickly continued with the sessions. Conscious

that our time was limited among these brethren, tea and lunch breaks were kept short enough. This final day was unique, particularly with the attendance of a thirteen-year-old boy called Aganyang. This boy will be moving to grade seven next year. He stays in the camp with his mother and attends a local primary school while his father lives in South Sudan with a second wife.

So what is so special about Aganyang? This boy has an amazing grasp of the Bible! This is evident both in the depth of the questions he asked and the answers that he gave. We took very keen interest and talked more closely with him.

He said his deep desire is to finish school and become a pastor so that he can preach and teach his people (the Sudanese) to fear God and abandon ancestral traditions!

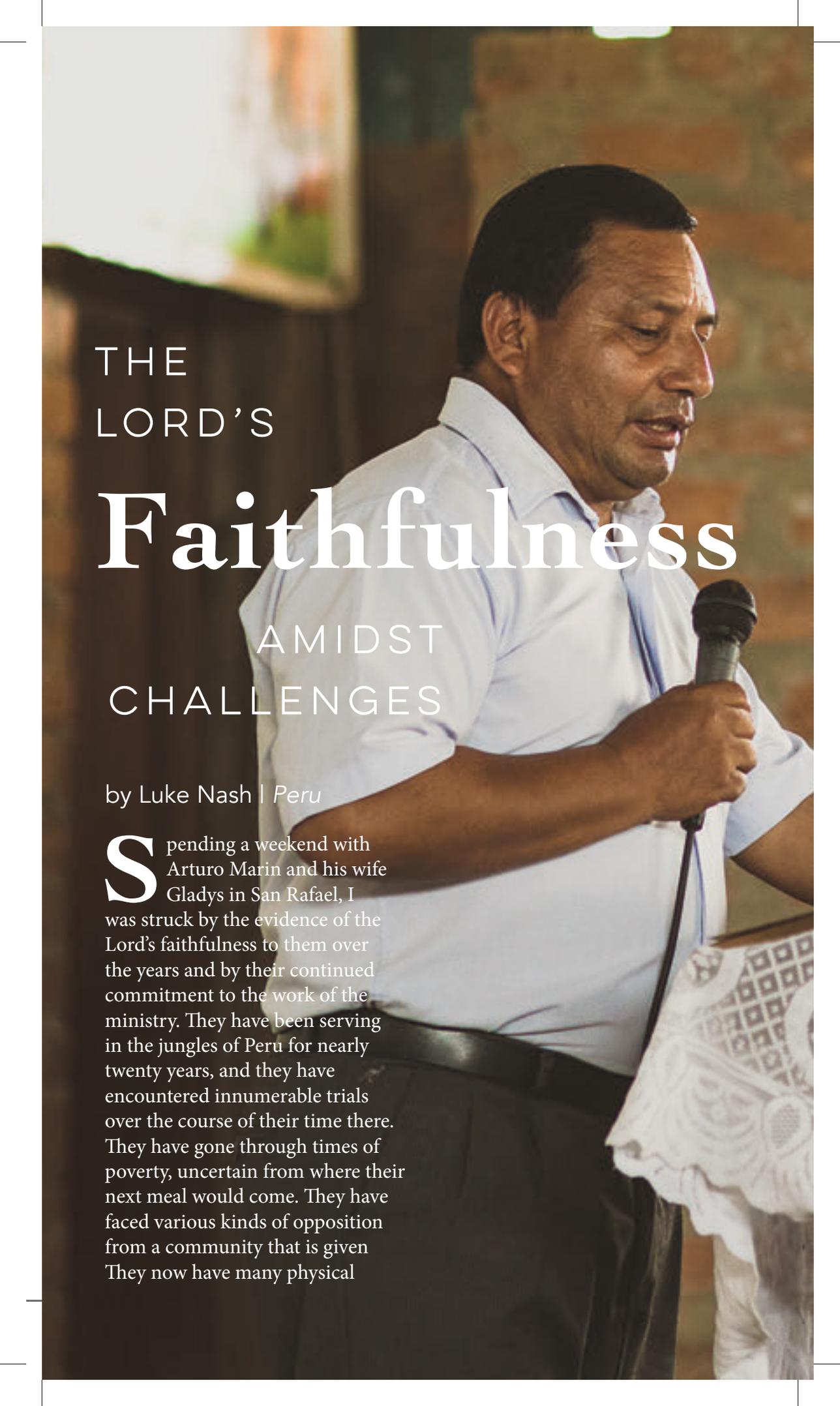
He certainly needs to be taught more of the way of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ alone by faith alone. We urged Babale and Pastor Stephen to provide more spiritual help for this young lad.

On the one hand, Aganyang deeply warmed our hearts with his knowledge of God's Word and his desire to be a pastor and turn his people from sinful practices to God. On the other hand, we were extremely saddened by the general lack of

biblical knowledge among so many of the delegates. I was drawing Old Testament illustrations as I taught from John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." When it was obvious that they were not following my illustrations, I asked passionately why there was such ignorance of very significant Old Testament stories. Their sad answers were: 1) Yes, they began to learn such stories some years ago in Sunday school back in South Sudan. But then war broke out, and people ran for their lives and ended up in the Refugee Camp. After the stress of survival, much of their former learning had been forgotten. 2) The Murle people, who were the majority at the two-day conference, only have New Testament in their language, so the Old Testament is largely unknown to them! 3) This was the very first conference of its kind for this Murle community in the camp; therefore, everything was new to them.

We pleaded with both Babale and Pastor Stephen to do much more to help their people spiritually. We urged Babale to put more effort into his theological studies at KReST and hopefully be involved in translating the Old Testament into the Murle language in the future. I am deeply grateful to HeartCry for making it possible for us to travel to Kakuma to reach these dear souls with the Word of God. Please pray for them!

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A man with dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and a dark belt, is shown in profile from the chest up. He is holding a black microphone in his right hand and appears to be speaking. In the foreground, there is a white lace cloth with a geometric pattern. The background is a warm, textured wall, possibly made of brick or stone, with a window or opening on the left side. The lighting is soft and focused on the man.

THE
LORD'S

Faithfulness

AMIDST
CHALLENGES

by Luke Nash | *Peru*

Spending a weekend with Arturo Marin and his wife Gladys in San Rafael, I was struck by the evidence of the Lord's faithfulness to them over the years and by their continued commitment to the work of the ministry. They have been serving in the jungles of Peru for nearly twenty years, and they have encountered innumerable trials over the course of their time there. They have gone through times of poverty, uncertain from where their next meal would come. They have faced various kinds of opposition from a community that is given
They now have many physical

ailments that are the result of the nature of life in the jungle. Still, in spite of the trials, they are full of joy and zealous for the Lord to be exalted in the lives of those around them. It's not that the trials don't affect them—they certainly do. In fact, Arturo admits that there have often been moments when trials come that he and Gladys have considered returning to Lima where life would be easier. But each time, the Lord has strengthened them and given them grace to endure through the trials, setting their eyes not on the things that are seen, but on the things that are not seen (II Corinthians 4:18).

During our visit, we were able to be among those that have been impacted by Arturo's ministry and to hear their testimonies of how the Lord has used both Arturo and Gladys in the spreading of the gospel. We spent time with a man named Deninson, who was brought to salvation in Christ through Arturo's persistent witness of the gospel. For many years, Deninson lived a life of drunkenness and mistreated his wife. He was known in the community as a leader in the local pagan festivals and had no interest in Christ or the gospel. But one day, as Arturo shared the gospel with him once again, the Lord opened his eyes to see his sin for what it was and to call on Christ for salvation. In his own words, "The Lord changed my life completely." Deninson has now been walking with the Lord for nearly a decade. His wife has suffered a number of illnesses during that time, and Deninson has patiently and sacrificially served her during her most difficult moments.



The grace of God has taken a violent, selfish man and made him a meek and loving husband.

We were also able to be present for the baptism of three new believers, including a married couple. Following the Sunday morning service, we made our way with the whole church to the Huallaga River, about a mile from the church building. The believers gathered on the side of the river to sing hymns together, and Pastor Arturo shared on the meaning and importance of baptism. We had the opportunity to speak with one of the sisters



being baptized, and with tears she explained the way the Lord has demonstrated His grace through the love and care that Arturo and Gladys have shown her. Her husband is not a believer and has been very opposed to her involvement in the church. Her family has been going through a severe financial crisis, and her son recently broke his leg in two places, which required two expensive surgeries. She has had to go to work in the fields in order to pay for some of the hospital costs. When her son had the accident, Arturo and Gladys were the first people to whom she went for help; she was amazed by the way they left everything they were doing to come and care for her and her family. Arturo has faithfully ministered the

gospel to her through this difficult season, and the love and concern that Gladys and Arturo have shown is one of the things that the Lord used most in drawing her to Christ.

Life in the jungles of Peru comes with peculiar social pressures that add to the challenge of being a Christian. One example of those pressures has to do with the local religious celebrations. All students are required to participate in the festivals as part of their grade in school. Lucero, a young lady in the church who is finishing high school, was previously ranked first in her class; however, she had her grade marked down because of her refusal to participate in the idolatrous rituals. There are also pressures from the community to give money toward these pagan celebrations, and when Christians refuse to give money, they are often treated poorly by other members of the community. Arturo has faced many of these challenges personally and has also had to walk the members of his church through the different temptations and trials that come with life in this context. Like Lucero, despite the external pressures to compromise their devotion to Christ, the brothers and sisters have counted service to Christ of greater value than the approval of their peers.

Please pray for Arturo and Gladys and for the church in San Rafael. Pray that their lives would adorn the gospel, and pray for endurance in the midst of many trials and challenges!

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Nicomedes Saavedra

Nicomedes is the pastor of a church in Pacaipampa, in the northern region of Peru. While he is devoted to the church in Pacaipampa, the Lord has also used him and the congregation there to start several other church plants in villages throughout the region.

Pacaipampa, Peru

Testimony of Conversion

My life was a disaster. I was a corrupt man who was a slave to sin. I mistreated my wife and was constantly given over to drink and all of the other vain things of this world.

On November 10, 1985, I was with my friends in the world, drinking and doing many detestable things before God as I walked in the desires of the flesh. Yet it was in that moment that the gospel arrived in my life through a friend in the district of Pacaipampa. This brother told us about the gospel of Jesus Christ. He told us what the Lord Jesus had done for sinful men on the cross of Calvary and how He rose from the grave on the third day. He also explained that Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father, ready to judge the world in righteousness and truth.

I understood the gospel that day through the Scriptures, and the Lord changed my life and saved me. Even though I was a terrible and perverse drunkard, He changed my life and caused me to be born again. He made me a new man! At first, I did not understand what had happened to me; but when I started

praying and studying the Scriptures and fellowshiping with the people of God, I began to understand what had taken place in my heart.

I continued to study the Scriptures every day, and I testified to my friends and family about our Lord Jesus Christ. I first shared this news with my brothers, who were also then transformed by the grace of God and were converted from their idols to serve the living God. Today they are serving together with me in the ministry of the church.

In 1986, God called me to the ministry to serve as a pastor. When I felt the calling of the Lord, I was able to study in a seminary to prepare for the ministry; then I was sent into several small villages to begin evangelistic efforts. In one of the villages, I became the pastor of a church, and I continue to serve as the pastor of the same congregation today. This church began with just six brothers and sisters, and now there are over a hundred members. The Lord has also allowed us to send out six men from within our congregation to pastor new churches.

Recent Update

This month, I went with brother Urbano Gomez to evangelize in a place called Hualanga, which is very far away from our district in Pacaipampa. We were hired by the town a few weeks before to do some work; while we were there, we found out that there were no believers—

They had never heard the gospel, and there are no churches.

During the first visit, while we were working on the doors in one of the houses, I had the opportunity to share the gospel with the owner of the house. He was interested in hearing more, so we picked a time to sit down and talk further about the gospel. I shared with him from the Scriptures and told him about repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. Other people were interested in the things we were saying as well, and they invited us to come back and continue preaching to them. Twenty days later, Urbano and I returned.

It is now the rainy season where we live, so it rained almost the whole time during our second trip. I recently bought a motorcycle for travel in the mountains, but I am still learning how to drive it. We had a hard time driving through all of the mud to get up the mountain to Hualanga! Thankfully, we made

it safely by God's grace and were able to begin preaching the gospel like we had planned.

Over the years, we have grown accustomed to traveling when it is cold and rainy; it does not discourage us from continuing with our mission to preach. Many of the houses that we wanted to visit are a long way away from the road, so we had to leave our motorcycles behind and walk through the mud and the rain—sometimes thirty minutes, sometimes an hour, sometimes two hours—to get to the homes. But that is the duty that the Lord has given us in Hualanga, and that is our duty in Christ. We have the responsibility to preach the gospel there, even when it is difficult.

As we began going through the town from door to door and preaching the gospel, our hearts were filled with sadness—there are so many people in Hualanga that need to hear the gospel, but no one is there to preach to them! Nevertheless, we give thanks to God, because we found that many people with whom we shared the gospel wanted to hear more and invited us to come back again. We were encouraged and are planning to go back soon to continue preaching. Please pray for the people of Hualanga, and pray for us as we make these trips to minister to them!

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"Even though I was a terrible and perverse drunkard, He changed my life and caused me to be born again. He made me a new man!"



Fruit in Due Season

by Marian Jipi | Romania

Marian Jipi has the heart of a true evangelist as he sacrificially ministers to the needs of the people in his community. Presently, he shepherds the Hope Church faith family and oversees three more church plants in the villages of Margineanu, Casota, and Florica. He and his wife Coco have three children.

I want to give thanks to the Lord for the conference that we had in Bran. It was a good time with powerful messages, beautiful fellowship, and many encouragements through our brothers. Encouragement is a very precious gift, and all that is needed for it is love and honesty.

I also want to thank the Lord for the personal encouragements that I have received from His hand, especially one concerning the ministry in Margineanu. I received a request concerning a medical project that we could organize there, and I agreed to help. Things have changed a lot over the twelve years that I have been working in

Margineanu, but I could not have hoped for anything better than what happened. It was the most successful evangelistic project that we have had in the last eight years! Two hundred and twenty-one people came to this medical project, where they also received spiritual counseling. A hundred and fifteen of them professed that they received Jesus into their hearts, gave us their phone number, and told us that they want to be visited at home. Many of these people knew me, and they listened to me as I talked to them about salvation and the grace of God. I had talked to them many times before, both publicly and privately. However, as I now asked them to receive Christ as their Savior, their response was beyond expectations. I understood that all the work we had done was never in vain. Every conversation and opportunity to show and prove our faith in Christ is never without value. It brings fruit in due season. God prepares a way in people's lives through our ministry; even when we have no hope, He will bring salvation at the right time. Now I have a hundred and fifteen addresses and phone numbers of people to call and visit!

Another big surprise was that the brothers who came for the medical project told me that they would return next July for more ministry outreach. And this is not all! They told me about their desire to build a house of prayer in this village. I asked them to pray for these people to be saved and to pray for me. I need a lot of prayer support to be a good harvester of such a big field.



Yesterday, I returned from the evangelistic outreach in Stoenesti. I talked to many people and met men and women of different ages, with various levels of understanding and with different life issues. Every time I return from the mission field I ask myself if it was worth it. I try to identify at least one soul that I can rejoice over, someone who met Christ. On this trip, I met a man who was sixty-two years old. Having suffered a stroke, he was now paralyzed on his right side, was unable to talk, and could barely make any sounds. Yet, with patience, we could understand each other. While he was standing at the gate, he made a sign “telling” me to leave and indicating that he could not speak. However, something prompted me not to give up. Communicating through signs, he told me that he had worked as a mechanic and driver.

I discovered that we had many things in common. I told him some experiences from my own life and career, and then I told him how God changed my life. Toward the end of our conversation, I explained to him that God uses our sufferings now to help us avoid a greater suffering in eternity. Joseph was much safer in an Egyptian prison than in his father’s house. God protects us through trials. I could spot a light in his eyes when we said told each other “goodbye.” He was ill, but a happy person. If it was only for him that I went to Stoenesti, it was worth it.

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MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT



Nathanael Armisen

Nathanael is a church planter who serves in Wetzlar, where he pastors Evangelical-Reformed Baptist Church. He is married to Dominique, and they have two daughters and a newborn son. Nathanael studied Theology in a Baptist seminary near Berlin and graduated with a MA.

Wetzlar, Germany

Testimony of Conversion

I was born in January 1984, the second of three children in a faithful and loving Christian family. My father was a carpenter and actively participated in the local church, eventually receiving the call to become a pastor. After his studies, he became a pastor in a Baptist church.

My parents were very eager to share the gospel with my siblings and me, and we enjoyed their creative ways of telling us about the heroes of faith in the Bible and about Jesus, our Savior and Friend. Since my parents had to move quite often in my childhood, I became very introverted and shy but very egotistic as well, causing plenty of suffering for my siblings especially. At five years of age, I recognized for the first time that Jesus was more than a past hero in a story—that He lives and that I needed Him to be my Savior. My parents testified later that my attitude and character changed in these days. I treated my sister and my brother differently, and I was filled with the honest desire to hear Jesus speaking to me. Now I listened to the stories

of David, Gideon, and Paul not just because of the excitement but because I longed to be used by God in the same way He used them to glorify His name.

In my second year at primary school, we had to move again, as my dad received a call to serve as pastor at another church. I felt very uncomfortable with leaving my friends. In the new city, I realized how much my attitude differed from the rest of my classmates. They loved to mock and tease others and to gossip about them. Since I tried to be kind and fair to the less popular classmates, I was very isolated and lonely. Even in our local church, there were no boys my age with whom I could have fellowship. Suffering under these circumstances, I prayed for a friend who understood me, like Jonathan was for David. But years passed, and nothing really changed.

While many of my classmates enjoyed spending their time with friends at parties, I got very frustrated with God not answering my prayer for a friend in my life. By

the age of fourteen, I was sick of being the outsider; I began to let go of my moral standards and participate in everything my classmates did. Within a very short time, my position in school completely changed—I suddenly belonged with the cool and popular boys in my grade. My weekends were filled with parties, alcohol, and marijuana until I graduated from high school. During these years when I was so “successful” outwardly, I felt an increasing emptiness inside. Somehow I believed both that God exists and that my life was sinful, but I tried to ignore my conscience. With time, I realized the false promises and painful consequences of such a life. There were several times that I knew God was calling me, but I was unwilling to obey. My parents and sister used the Bible to try to confront me about my condition, and I knew the word of God was commanding me to repent and turn away from my sin—but I tried to escape like Jonah instead of returning to Christ.

For my social service, I had the opportunity to work in Denia, Spain, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. I worked as a volunteer at a Christian school, kindergarten, and vacation camp. In God’s merciful providence, He had placed a very godly man as the head of the volunteers at that camp. He shared the gospel every morning before breakfast. Through his expository preaching, it pleased God to break my stubborn heart, so that I started to read the Bible by myself in my room. One day I asked God to change my filthy and empty life through His strength—



I knew that my own strength was incapable of ridding me of my bad habits and my sinful lifestyle.

In Spain, God opened my eyes through the treasures of His word. I found great joy in praying and worshiping Him. My heart felt light! From one day to the next, God helped me quit cigarettes, marijuana, and all of my other sinful addictions. Many people in the camp asked me what had happened, because they saw a joy I did not have before.

I actually cannot figure out whether my profession as a five-year-old was real or just a moral change in my own strength. But I know that because of my sin and wrong



desires, I had been unwilling to treasure Christ above my circumstances and my plans. In Spain, I could see how much evil and sinful longing still lived in my flesh. I finally recognized my miserable standing before God and the inability of my own strength to change. In this brokenness, however, Christ revealed Himself as mighty to save from the bondages of sin, from the deceitfulness of this passing world, and from trust in my own will and strength. I praise Him for not passing me by, but saying, “Live!” He is the true Author and Prince of Life, to whom belongs the glory forever!

Call to Ministry

The leader of the volunteers in Spain encouraged me to study the Bible and share with the others, which I first obeyed very timidly.

In time, though, I gained more and more joy in preparing and sharing the wonderful world of Scripture. While I was sharing some observations with a friend, I read I Timothy 4:12-13: “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.” That passage hit me deeply inside, and in that very moment I knew I had to give my whole lifetime to the ministry of the gospel for the glory of Christ.

I have to admit that in the following years I was very humiliated by the hurtful observation that there was still so much sin in my life. The Lord had to break my pride several times. Somehow I expected to walk



from victory to victory, but with tears over my sins I came over and over again to the steadfast mercies of Christ.

Painfully, I realized my absolute dependence on Christ's righteousness, His forgiveness, and His sanctification in my life and wondered over the depths of His grace.

In 2007, I began studying theology at the Baptist seminary in Germany, where I expected biblical

feeding but was instead shocked by a reality beyond what I could have ever imagined. In the very first lessons, I was confronted with Bible critics who argued against the reliability of Scripture and propagated doubt in the word of God. But, in God's merciful providence, it was under these conditions that He answered my childhood prayer for a friend. In my class, I met two students who were likewise grieving over the seminary teachings; we started to pray daily together. There I understood what Solomon meant when he wrote: "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born

for adversity” (Proverbs 17:17). Together we studied the Bible in addition to the regular seminary lessons, and it pleased God to open the eyes of our hearts: to a God who is absolutely sovereign and rules over everything; to His Son, who is gloriously triumphant in redeeming and reconciling His people through His sacrifice on the cross; to His Holy Spirit, who glorifies Christ’s person and work through the God-breathed, completely reliable Scriptures; and to His transforming, sanctifying work in the believers.

In our embattled time at the seminary, God confirmed His call over my life by protecting me and holding me to the truth of His word. I focused more on the fundamental teaching of the salvation of sinners by the sovereign mercy of God. Through the miserable state of the theological direction in Germany, I felt a painful desire to preach sound doctrine as the only gospel through which God is pleased to save sinners and demonstrate His merciful glory. I realized the absolute need of faithful, expository preaching in a country that has almost forgotten all that came to light during the Reformation. The very words of I Timothy—“devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching”—became very relevant and urgent to me in the current situation.

Because of my experience, I see the exigent necessity to plant biblical churches in Germany, since liberal theology has intoxicated so many churches throughout the whole country. We pray for a new

Reformation in the land of the old Reformation! And we believe that there is no other way to see this happen than preaching the sound and true word of God and planting faithful churches, that the glory of the Lamb might be known!

Recent Update

Brothers and sisters in the Lord, let me once again express my deep appreciation for your faithful prayers and interest in the gospel work in Germany. These days I have been encouraged through the prophet Haggai, who pointed to the need of the word and the Spirit of God for everything that will build up and edify: “...work; for I am with you,” declares the Lord of hosts. ‘As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!’”

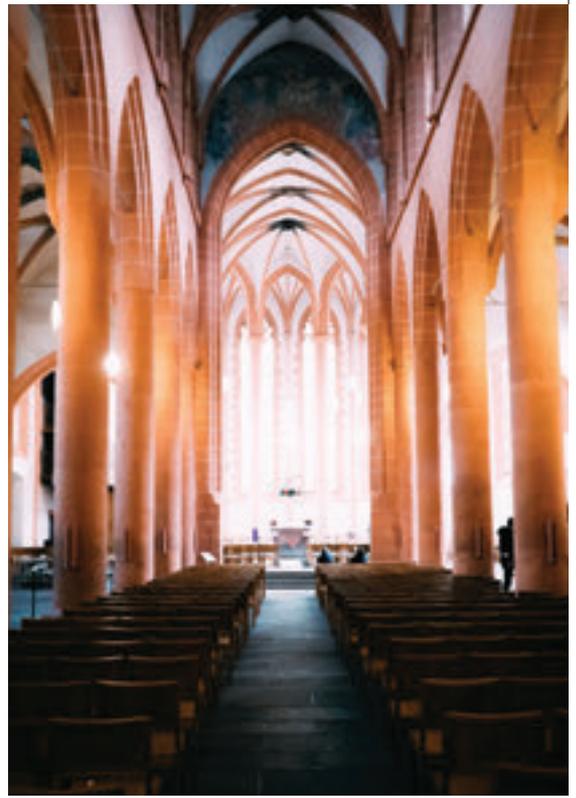
We have just come out of a time of waiting. We expected our third child to come earlier than the due date, so since mid-September we were very resistant to make any plans, knowing that our son could come any day. By the end of the month, he was still in the womb; but as Christians we know that it is a good and spiritual thing to wait patiently, because God’s timing is wiser than ours. We praise the Lord that, on October 11, our son Jonathan Eleasar was born! He and my wife are well, but my wife still needs rest.

There are three things that I would ask you to pray for in my own spiritual life: a worthy walk, fruitful work, and an increasing knowledge of God. I am more and more aware that those things only grow together, not separately. In the ministry, one of the greatest temptations is to have an unbalanced focus on just one thing: theory without praxis, or church work without personal sanctification.

But I want to please the Lord, walk worthy of His great name, get to know Him better every day, delight in His word more, and work for His honor.

To our great joy and benefit, the church appointed two young men as deacons this month. Their spiritual growth has been so obvious, and their humble walk is apparent to all. We have been praying for deacons for years and have felt our need for suitable servants in this office, but we did not want to put men in this task who were not properly equipped or gifted. I recently preached on Colossians 3:12-17, where Paul is encouraging the whole church to put on compassion, kindness, humility. Those qualities, which should be seen in and experienced by the deacons, are demanded from every Christian. Would you remember our deacons Samuel and Daniel in your prayers, that they might stir up and be an example of love in the church?

Another recent instance of grateful



joy, not only on earth but also with the angels in heaven, was the baptism of a young man. He examined his life and heart diligently through the word and by the grace of God detected so much hypocrisy, hatred, rebellion, and pride. He was convicted of his sin and wrong attitude, and he repented and believed in the grace found in Christ alone. For the baptism, he invited many relatives and friends and gave a strong and honest witness of his former deception in sin, along with his present freedom in Christ. It was a wonderful occasion to teach the gospel, the meaning of baptism, and the importance of membership in a local church. Many listeners responded to the sermon positively, and I pray that some specific visitors will keep considering these topics. Please pray for them, that the Holy Spirit might use the preaching of the word of God and the visual picture of the gospel in baptism to increase both their understanding and joyful obedience for the glory of God.

Another Sunday, a young man and woman came in just as the service was beginning. I was preaching from the final verses of Genesis 2, dealing with the creation of marriage. I spoke on the uniqueness, commitment, and unification of marriage, dealing with the moral responsibilities as well as the picture of the gospel this loving covenant gives. While I was preaching, the young man stood up several times, walked out, and then came back in. At the end of the service, they left immediately. In the parking lot, they told one of the members that they had just gotten engaged and would come again. They came back the next Sunday and shared that they were looking for a church that preached the word. They were very moved by the sermons. Please pray for them.

The Syrian family continues to attend the service. Please pray for their conversion. It is quite a wonder to us that they, though not believing, attend the services regularly. There is almost nothing that could please fleshly minds—only simple, God-fearing worship and the preaching of the word and prayer. We hope it is a sign of the Spirit working in secret!

Another visitor from Iran joined our evening Adult Sunday School. He has been a Christian for a couple of years and can speak Arabic. With great candor, he gave witness to that Syrian family, which was a delight to see. The Syrian man told me later about the conversation: God has turned that man's life completely. It seems to have made an impression on him. The Irani-

an man also gave an encouraging witness at the end of the service. In our series through the books of the Bible, I taught on Zephaniah. He came to me afterwards and was so thankful, because he had never read or even heard of that book before. He was very moved by the description of the sovereign judgment and the compassionate grace of God shown in Zephaniah and how it points to Christ.

Please pray for us as a congregation, that we would grow in the love and knowledge of our Lord. Pray that we would be a shining light, testifying about the liberating grace of God in Jesus Christ to all who come and to all we meet, for the glory of the Lamb.

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For the Sake of Love

by Paul Washer

Throughout all the annals of Christianity, I can find no one who can match the Apostle Paul in his zeal and service for the Lord. What was the source of his zeal, the motivation behind his life? Reading the text above, we find that there was only one true and noble motivation that relentlessly drove Paul to a Christian life and service that is yet to be surpassed. It was not fear or reward or necessity, but love.

It is very important that we do not humanize Paul's motivation. It was not Paul's love for Christ which motivated the apostle, but Christ's

love for him. Paul was a man freed, transformed, and impelled to service by one unalterable and eternal truth: God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Paul knew that Christ had done all that was necessary so that God might love us unconditionally and forever. Paul was God's unrelenting servant because he knew that he was unconditionally loved and that he would never be anything else. Paul was sure that he could never do a thing that could make God love him more and that he could never do a thing that could make God love him less. The issue was settled: Paul

“For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.” (II Corinthians 5:14-15)

was perfectly and eternally loved by God because of Christ; this was the catalyst of his life.

I know you have likely heard before what I am saying now, but I want you to really listen. Many Christians are motivated by fear, others are motivated by a hope of earning God’s love, and still others try to motivate themselves by their own love for God. But there is only one proper motivation in the Christian life: God’s unalterable love for us. If we are motivated by fear, we will lose heart. If we are motivated by a hope of earning God’s love, we will never do quite well enough. If we are motivated by our own love for God, we will find that our love is a very small thing—not at all dependable.

Do we realize what bondage there is in serving God out of fear, serving God to earn His love, or serving God by the strength of our own love?

When it all depends on us and we fail, we lose it all. That is a weight too heavy to bear, a chain too strong to break.

Paul was free, confident, and secure to serve the Lord with zeal and without fear because he knew that Christ had done it all and that everything depended on Him. It was Christ who died and Christ who rose again. It was Christ who secured God’s love for Paul. Paul was only a recipient of God’s love—a love so strong and unalterable that it drove him to the limits of human devotion. Paul paid a high price in service of Christ. His life was a continuous sacrifice; however, because of love, I doubt if the idea of sacrifice even entered his mind! Read his words in Philippians 3:7-8:

“But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ....”

When a man is consumed by Christ's love for him, it is no task to serve the Lord. If he ever considered it as such, he will do so no more once his hope and motivation becomes the love of Christ. If he ever called service a sacrifice, he will regret he ever said such a thing when he comes to understand the love that has no comparison and no end. The man who understands the love of God will hear the call to service and reply: "Search the house, open the purse, empty every storeroom! Does anything yet remain that can be offered to the Lord? He is worthy of all! Let me enter heaven having offered all for the sake of love!"

How can we imitate the Apostle Paul and his devoted service to the Lord? We must begin by growing in the love of God.

We must settle the issue once and for all that we are saved by grace and loved by grace. There is no power on earth or in heaven that can change the love of God in our lives. No sin held in our hearts or staining our hands can cause God's love for us to diminish or fade.

Once we grasp this truth, fear no longer has a place in our lives; we can live wholly for God. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear" (I John 4:18). Listen again to Paul in Romans 8:38-39:

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Knowing that we are loved and never having to fear not being loved will be the catalyst that motivates our devotion and service to heights we never dreamed possible. When we look to ourselves and find only weakness and failure, our hope, strength, and devotion die. When we look to Christ and His undying loyalty and love for us, we are filled with hope. "And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5).

"Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing our great Redeemer's praise!" Oh, for a thousand lives to give! Our Lord and great God Jesus Christ is worthy of all glory and honor and power and praise! There are no words that can express the greatness of His goodness toward us, His servants. We deserve only death and eternal separation from God, but He has made us sons! We deserve to live this life lost and alone and without hope, but He has brought us into the fold and shepherds us with everlasting kindness. Let us now serve Him! "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10).

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Scarred Hands by Paul Washer Are the Best Healers

Have you ever noticed how our trials seem to work out God's purpose in our lives and also enable us to minister to others with a similar hurt or need? Each of us can probably look back and see that God has allowed certain trials to come our way so that we might minister to others. This truth is most clearly and poignantly revealed at the very moment we find ourselves holding somebody's hand and saying, "I know what you are going through; I know what you are feeling."

Comforting is an open field for almost any believer in the church. A love for people and a patience to listen—both of which come from God—are the two most important elements. Who can better comfort a hurting wife who has lost her husband than another widow who has endured the same suffering? Who better to encourage a man who has lost his job than

another who has weathered the same storm?

The ministry of comfort is not a profession and has no "carrying card"; it is not given a title before the church as an "official" ministry.

The ministry of comfort is a hidden personal ministry, one few people will ever notice, but one that holds eternal reward. As believers, each one of us has the God-given talent and the time to care for at least someone. The professional Christian counselor is a blessing to the Christian community, but we do not necessarily need to be one to minister to the hurting around us. We only need to care.

"...so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."
— II Corinthians 1:4b

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"The world lives in a time of crisis. Christians alone are in a position to rescue the perishing. We dare not settle down to try to live as if things were normal."

- *A.W. Tozer*

"If by excessive labor, we die before reaching the average age of man, worn out in the Master's service, then glory be to God, we shall have so much less of earth and so much more of Heaven!"

- *C.H. Surgeon*



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