



Believer's Voice of



VICTORY

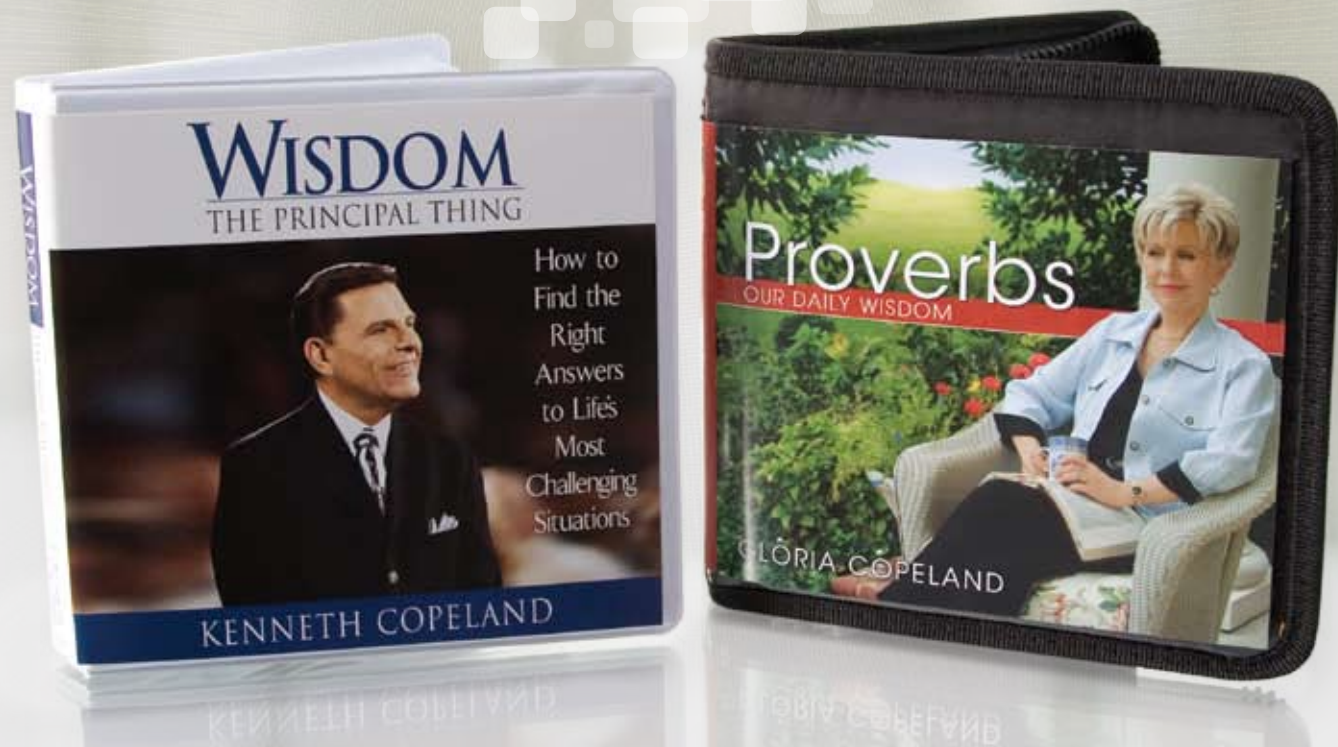
February 2009

From
Goth
to
GOD

Carsten and Rosalie Schwarm

Two CD series from Kenneth and Gloria Copeland on the book of Proverbs

Seek Wisdom



Proverbs says wisdom shouts to the believer.
So why does it seem to evade us, especially when we need it most?

In Kenneth Copeland's series, *Wisdom—The Principal Thing*, you'll learn how to take hold of wisdom and apply it to your life. You'll discover how it will infuse your prayers...and how you can believe for a wealth of insights, concepts and ideas to take you to the next level.

Then, in *Proverbs—Our Daily Wisdom*, Gloria Copeland shares nuggets of truth from her own personal study of Proverbs. You'll find out how developing godly relationships and having wise attitudes will give you victory in your finances, family and church, plus you'll see how to receive the answers you need when challenges arise.

Wisdom doesn't have to be a mystery. In fact, it shouldn't be. It should be part of your daily walk. Start seeking *godly wisdom* today!

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When the Lord first spoke to us about starting the *Believer's Voice of Victory* magazine, He said: *This is your seed. Give it to everyone who ever responds to your ministry, and don't ever allow anyone to pay for a subscription to it.* For 36 years it has been our joy to bring you good news through the teachings of ministers who write out of living contact with God, and the testimonies of believers who took God at His Word and experienced His victory in everyday life.

—Kenneth and Gloria Copeland

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Maybe it's one more thing added to the list of challenges you face just making it through the day—the dog dies, the washing machine breaks, you had to change a flat just to get to work, now you're late and you forgot the car needs gas. >> Or maybe it is the impact of events that threatens your future—the stock market crashes, the value of your retirement account has plummeted or your marriage is under attack. >> What do you do when you get blindsided? What do you do when life's challenges hit you with a blow that causes you to think, *I just can't take this*, and leaves you asking...



What Do I Do Now?

Certainly the Apostle Paul faced challenges that could have caused him to ask this question often. But in every case he came out victoriously, testifying: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not

destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

What do we do to move our thinking from, *I just can't take it* to saying, as Paul did, “None of these things move me” (Acts 20:24)?

The first step is the same as the command Jesus gave Jairus, who had come to Jesus on behalf of his

sick daughter. Before they could go to her, Jairus received word the girl had died.

Jesus responded to that report with the same words He gives you and me today. He told Jairus: “Fear not: believe only.”

No matter what we, our nation or the world are facing, the first step out of it is always the same: Stop the fear.

Fear not—believe only. The Bible does not say it just once or twice. From cover to cover this command is given wherever fear might seek entrance into our thoughts and our words. Always, our first step of action is to stop the fear and choose faith.

How Do You Stop the Fear?

Too often, when surprised by something, we're quick to say, “Where were You, God?” or “Well, it doesn't look like You're going to do anything...I guess it's all over.”

That's what happened with much of Jairus' family.

While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat (Luke 8:49-55).

You can see by the words of the messenger what had captured their thinking: “Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master [the Rabbi].”

Well, if you think you're going to trouble the Master by death, then you don't know Him very well. You don't know this Rabbi if you think bad news is going to trouble Him. The only trouble He has with it, is if you let it get to you and say something like, “Well, I guess it's too late.”

That's what Jairus' relatives were doing. When Jesus arrived at the house, the family was in an uproar—weeping and wailing. They were so convinced the situation was beyond Jesus' ability to help

that when He said to them, “Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth,” they laughed. To remove the fear and grief, Jesus had to take over the house and run that unbelieving bunch out. Then He filled the room with faith, and raised the girl up.

Think what that must have been like. We can imagine Uncle Fred, Aunt Minnie and the others leaving the house mumbling, “Who does that preacher think He is? Doesn't He know that's my little niece in there?” Don't you know those attitudes changed when Jairus' family came back and the girl was sitting at the table eating?

You'll face the same thing. Your relatives and neighbors may call you crazy when you don't join in with their negative complaining about the dire forecasts of the future. But they won't be so critical when they see you come through those hard times with a smile on your face. Instead, you'll be the one some of them call the next time things go wrong.

Stay Quiet Until You're Qualified

When will we ever learn to let God take over the house and quit trying to run it ourselves? Whatever we are facing, if we will turn it all over to Him, He'll take it. It all begins with putting the situation fully in His hands by faith, then praying and doing what He says.

That means keeping our unbelieving mouths shut and letting His Word do the talking. Just shut up until we are qualified to speak.

I know that may sound harsh, but there are too many hurting people out there to tiptoe around this—people who are making their condition worse by letting their mouths run out of control.

We must understand that no matter what the circumstances are, we are not qualified to say anything about them as long as fear and doubt are coming out of our mouths. We are not qualified until we have stopped seeing ourselves as victims and started speaking as the victors God says we are.

Until then, the best thing we can do is keep quiet.

Now that's going to take some Holy Spirit gump-tion—a quality decision from which there is no turning back. One way I like to say it is: We've got to set our faith jaws.

I got that saying from something my granddad said to me once when I was just a young squirt and a friend and I were trying to help him hoe cotton. My feet were so hot I could hardly walk, and this man I thought was as old as Methuselah would just move on down to the end of the row, turn around and come

back and chew me out because I was missing stuff.
“Pawpaw, how do you do that?” I asked. “How do you just go off and leave us here? We’re chopping and cutting and hoeing as fast as we can, and you just walk off and leave us and lap us and come back going the other way.”

“Ah, it’s easy to beat you, boy.”
“Why?”
“Because you don’t *set your jaw* for nothing.”
As I got older, I realized he meant I wasn’t determined enough to do what it took to do the job right and finish well. I wasn’t committed to that cotton patch.

Sometimes we want the results of faith, but we don’t want to stand and fight the fight of faith until God’s answer manifests. The reason Jesus could respond to Jairus’ request was he had set his faith and wouldn’t let go.

Did you notice after Jesus instructed Jairus to stop the fear, Jairus didn’t say another word? He had already spoken his faith when he said, “I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; *and she shall live*” (Mark 5:23).

From that point on, Jairus’ faith was set. He was following Jesus.

Fear tolerated is faith contaminated. And Jairus was not about to contaminate his faith with words of doubt and unbelief, and neither should you! If you can’t speak faith, just keep quiet.

Believe the Love

Jesus’ command to Jairus was not just “Fear not.” He said, “Fear not: *believe only*.” And that is His command to you and me.

But what are we to believe? We have to believe the love.

“Now, Brother Copeland, I know He loves you. But you don’t know me.”

Let me tell you what I know. I know God has given every born-again child of His “the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). I know if you have been born again, you are more than a forgiven sinner. You are a totally new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

I also know, according to Isaiah 43:25-26, God has blotted out your sins and declared He will not remember them. And He has asked you to put Him in remembrance of those things you want Him to remember. I decided a long time ago I was going to stop reminding Him of my past. Instead, I was going to direct my faith and my words to reminding Him of who He says I am in Christ, and what He has said in His Word belongs to me as a joint heir with Jesus.

Times of trouble are not the times to accept the devil’s lie that God is trying to teach you something, or that maybe you deserve the part of the curse that is trying to attach itself to your body, your finances and your relationships.

No. You want to be able to hear His words of love for you and His plan for taking you through the storms of life.

First John 4:18 tells us, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that

Now, here’s the key. Don’t just do these things until the stock market gets better, and then go back to feeding on the news media. That will only sap your faith.

Fear tolerated is faith contaminated.

feareth is not made perfect in love.”

How do you perfect love and let it complete the work it was given to do in you? You keep His Word and obey what He says.

Commit yourself to the love command in Mark 12:30-31: “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength...[and] thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”

As you believe the love, and obey the command of love, you will rise to a place where no fear can enter. You’ll walk constantly aware of Jesus’ love for you and His commitment to be there for you through any situation.

You’ll start recognizing thoughts and fears opposing that love, and you will no longer be moved by them. Instead, you’ll declare: “I’m not moved by what people say or what the devil does. I am moved by faith. I walk by faith. I sleep by faith. I get up by faith. I move and live and have my being in the faith of Him who commanded me.”

Those are the words of love being perfected in you, words that are flushing fear completely out of your life.

As you stop the fear and believe the love, you will learn to cast your care upon the Lord (1 Peter 5:7), and take your place in Psalm 127:2, “It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.”

As you rest in God’s love, He will handle all your cares.

Faith always begins where the will of God is known. And God has not kept His will a secret—His Word is His known will. Our part is to quit taking thoughts that are not ours to take. If we do have a negative thought, we rebuke it and refuse it any place in our mind. We take authority over our thoughts with our words. In the same way we take wrong thoughts by speaking doubt and unbelief, we take God’s thoughts by speaking according to His Word.

Becoming Qualified to Speak

Just as there is a time to be quiet in the middle of

a challenge, there is also a time to speak. That time is when we have made the quality decision to change *our* way of thinking to *His* way of thinking.

How do we do that? By going to God’s Word, and saying what He has said. Take His thought and say it, and say it, and say it—until you become proficient at it.

The result will be that God’s Word will get into your heart in abundance and begin to come out of your mouth without you having to make the decision or to actually take the thought.

Now, here’s the key. Don’t just do these things until the stock market gets better, and then go back to feeding on the news media. That will only sap your faith, and you’ll have a personal financial crash whether the stock market does or not. Keep feeding on the word of faith and become a good steward of the commandment of love.

A Perfect Place for Victory

Maybe the situation before you right now is something we have already mentioned. Maybe it is something that has become worse or better in recent weeks and months. Or maybe it is something yet ahead.

Whatever it is, there is a way through it. And as you do what we have been talking about, you’ll know not only what to do but exactly where you are—you are in a perfect place.

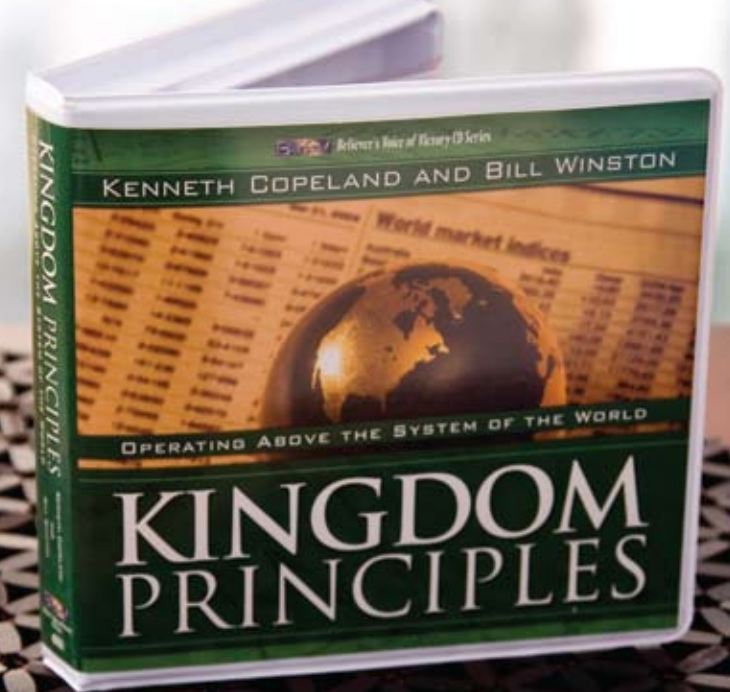
You’re in a perfect place for the mighty Financial Genius of all time—the Creator of gold and every form of money—to manifest Himself in your life and situation. From your place of agreement with Him, beginning to live in God’s system unaffected by the instabilities of this world, you are in a perfect place to do victory.

Step into your place as a world-overcoming believer, enforcing His victory over the devil’s attempts to ravage those around you with his fear. Put your faith on the line. Stop the fear and believe only. You will be made whole. You will walk out of that financial trap, out of that hospital room, out of that family situation. You will walk out free.

In Christ, you’re not the victim. You are the victor!

VICTORY

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“We tried to scare people, and the stranger we looked the more we screamed our silent message: Do you see me now?”

—Rosalie Schwarm

BY MELANIE HENRY

From GOTH tō GOD

The night was pitch-black outside Melbourne, Australia, where Roz sat jammed into a Volkswagen with her Goth friends. The driver raced the engine as though trying to keep it in sync with the cocaine that raced through his veins. They all heard the train speeding toward them, its light a shimmering globe in the darkness.

Unlike the others, Roz wasn't high on drugs, but alcohol numbed the fear that flared in her eyes as the massive locomotive bore down on them. When it seemed there was not a second to spare, with one voice they screamed like kids on a roller coaster as the Volkswagen lurched onto the tracks. Roz could almost feel the sparks flying as they tried to beat death. Closing her eyes, she recited the vow she'd made as a child.

I'm going to hell. So I'll go out real good.

A shiver snaked up her spine as the Volkswagen cleared the tracks by less than an inch before the train sped past, the car shuddering in its wake. Playing with trains was just one way they lived on the edge, always pushing their limits. Despite the danger, it was here, among friends, that Roz felt accepted. Sure, most of them were addicted to drugs and her roommates were male and female prostitutes, but they were the closest thing to a family she had since running away from home.

Roz pulled her lanky frame out of the car with a grace that belied her appearance. Half of her hair—dyed jet black—had been shaved, the rest fell in dreadlocks. She was draped head to toe in a black shroud topped off with a belt made of 3-inch brass bullets and black boots sporting skulls.

Still in her teens, Roz had moved 17 times in the past two years. At the moment, she lived in a hovel.

Roz didn't like thinking about her family, but sometimes she couldn't push back the memories. Even her confident swagger couldn't keep her from feeling, at times, like she used to feel as a confused child attending Mass. “What's the Trinity?” she'd asked, tugging on her mother's sleeve.

“It's a mystery,” her mother had replied, distracted and exhausted trying to keep up with eight children.

Two inches shy of 6 feet tall, it seemed Roz had always towered over her siblings. For years she had fantasized that some day her “real” family would show up and claim her, whisking her away from the screaming, slaps and punches and the constant reminders, “A leopard can't change his spots, and neither can you!”

Her surrogate family of friends was the closest thing she

had to the fulfillment of that dream. But now, as the group headed to the graveyard to hold a séance, Roz recognized that even she had her limits. This was wrong and she would not participate.

Goth glorified death, but Adrea (not her real name)—someone on the periphery of her group—had taken darkness to a whole new level. The second in charge of a witch's coven, Adrea wore implanted vampire fangs. She could shoot her arm in the direction of a window and the glass would shatter. But the darkest part was what happened to people like Mark (not his real name), a brilliant young clothes designer who was on the brink of success before he started dating Adrea. Suddenly he became reclusive, wore vampire teeth and stopped designing for anyone but Adrea. His eyes no longer sparkled with life and laughter. They now looked dead, as dead as Roz sometimes felt inside.

Her friends assured her that drugs would make her feel better. But Roz always answered, “I'm high on life.” It was a lie, of course. The naked truth was that even as a child her life had been marked by nothing but trouble.

On her 14th birthday she had decided to leave home for good. For the first time, her parents had allowed her to invite boys as well as girls over for her birthday. One of the boys called her sister a name. Her dad, a Clint Eastwood look-alike with anger issues, had whipped out a double-barreled shotgun and fired at the boy, ending the party and scattering her friends. Her dad was an excellent shot; if he'd meant to hit the boy he would have. Still, the constant anger and strife had taken their toll and this was the icing on the cake of Roz's misery. A year later, plan formulated, Roz slipped out of the ramshackle house, went to school, and ran.

“Not much of a life,” Roz admits. She was still always in trouble.

Spinning Out of Control

“My family soared off the scale of dysfunction,” Roz recalls, “but on occasion I went home to visit. Because of my behavior, I was pretty much put in lockdown. I was a constant stressor for



This re-creation shows how Rosalie looked dressed as a Goth.

my parents and it was easiest on everyone if I stayed away.”

An aunt, who was a Christian, became Roz’s family contact. “When I visited her,” Roz recalls, “she didn’t preach to me, but she told me about Jesus, answered my questions and listened to me without passing judgment.”

For a while, Roz made money modeling, wearing wigs to cover her hair. Otherwise, she maintained the Goth lifestyle. Everything was done for shock value.

With no identity of their own, people in the Goth life-style try to find identity from the shock on people’s faces. “We tried to scare people,” Roz explains, “and the stranger we looked the more we screamed our silent message: *Do you see me now?*”

Life Without Black

Roz already had a criminal record, and now her life was beginning to catch up with her. In addition to warrants out for her arrest, her best friend was shot by her own boyfriend. Then a boy Roz had been dating hung himself. Her world was spinning out of control.

One day a young man on her job told Roz: “I wonder what you’d look like without black?” The next day Roz had all the black stripped out of her hair and arrived at work wearing a cream-colored blouse. “You look great!” the co-worker told her.

Although she stopped dressing Goth, that small change was not enough to brake the runaway train of trouble in Roz’s life. In late 1989, giving way to her urge to steal, she not only robbed the store where she worked, but Roz let her friends come in and take anything they wanted. Roz got caught, and was arrested.

Standing in a courtroom in Queensland, Roz realized she was about to go to prison for a very long time. Looking around the room at the other criminals, she knew she wouldn’t survive. *I’ll kill myself before I go to jail with these people*, she thought. At that moment, everything she’d heard about Jesus from her aunt flooded over her, and she bargained with God for her life.

“God,” she said, “if You get me out of this, I’ll serve You.” Moments later, she stood before the judge and burst into tears. “I promise I’ll turn my life around if you’ll let me go back to Melbourne!”

The courtroom fell silent under the judge’s long stare. After what seemed an eternity, he took a deep breath and said, “I don’t know why I’m doing this, but I’ll let you off on probation.”

The Metamorphosis

“I took a 13-hour bus ride to my aunt’s house and when I

arrived, I told her I needed Jesus,” Rosalie remembers. “When she led me in the sinner’s prayer that day, I felt something evil leave me—and then I was flooded with peace. From that day forward I never stole anything, I stopped drinking and never used profanity.

“I noticed my aunt had some teachings by Kenneth Copeland. I listened to them, but the only experience I’d had with God until that day was Mass, so I didn’t understand much. My aunt gave me my first Bible and told me to read Psalm 91 and Isaiah 54:17 (*The Amplified Bible*), ‘No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper...’

“My name was Rosalie, not Roz, and I didn’t want to be Roz anymore. I wanted to start over where no one knew me, and decided on Vancouver, British Columbia. A friend agreed to go with me.” Taking a job in a video store, Rosalie worked 10-12 hours a day, six days a week. Then she had a garage sale and sold everything including her television and antique bed to raise \$1850 for the air-line tickets.

Before leaving Australia, Rosalie had learned that Kenneth Copeland Ministries had an office in Vancouver. She phoned the office, and explained to the woman who took her call that she was moving to Vancouver, and didn’t know anyone there.

“Is anyone picking you up at the airport?” the woman asked. “No,” Rosalie answered. “I’ll be there,” the woman told her.

A New Life Begins

When Rosalie and her friend stepped off the plane, they were met by the woman from the KCM Canada office who invited the girls to go with her to church.

Lifting her arms toward heaven as she praised God during the worship service, Rosalie thought, *This is church? I like it!* If she needed any further assurance God had led her there, the sermon that morning was, “Who Is the Trinity?” For the first time in her life, Rosalie’s questions were answered. When the pastor gave an altar call both girls rushed forward.

After church, several girls introduced themselves and offered Rosalie and her friend a place to stay. Then the pastor of the church offered to pay for them to enroll in Bible school.

“I didn’t feel like I fit anywhere,” Rosalie admits, “but in my room I could feel God’s presence and He became very real to me. I loved Bible school and devoured the Word.”

One day the class was challenged to write down what they desired in a spouse. Rosalie didn’t expect to ever marry, but she had to do the assignment, and gave it prayerful consideration. “I would want someone who never yelled, who never hit me and loved me just as I was,”

Rosalie realized. “I would want someone godly who loves the Lord with all his heart.”

A Desire Realized

In church, Rosalie noticed almost every time a visiting minister came to speak, they would have a prophetic word to the same man, Carsten Schwarm. One day after church Rosalie stood and as she turned to leave she noticed Carsten sitting behind her. She smiled and walked away. She would have been surprised to know that afterward, Carsten phoned his mother in Germany and said, “There’s this girl in church, and I think she’s the one.”

When Carsten proposed, Rosalie offered him a long list of reasons why he should run the other way. “I told him everything about my past,” Rosalie says, “but he still wanted to marry me.” Six and a half months after they met, Rosalie and Carsten were married in Germany.

“Carsten was everything I could have hoped for in a husband,” she recalls, “but all I knew about family life was yelling and screaming. In the early years of our marriage, when I acted that way, Carsten never lost his peace. He just said, ‘I’ll be in the other room until you’re done.’ God still had a lot of work to do in me and little by little He healed me.”

Carsten and Rosalie moved to Atlanta where they helped with a church plant. Six years later, as they were about to buy their dream home, God called them back to Canada to start a church—Lighthouse Church International in Waterdown, Ontario. Along the way, they had three sons: Joshua, now 15; Jonathon, 12; and Andrew, 7.

Because Carsten and Rosalie married outside the Catholic Church, her parents did not recognize the marriage and considered their religion a cult. They refused to accept Carsten and wouldn’t even speak to him. The couple prayed blessings over Rosalie’s parents. “One day,” Rosalie told her husband, “my dad will meet you and he’ll like you.”

In 2006, after a 16-year absence, Rosalie boarded an airplane and flew home to visit her family, with Carsten at her side. After they’d been there a few days, her father broke down and cried, “I didn’t know who to expect when you were coming back. I’m really proud of who you’ve become. You’ve done well, and you’re a great couple.” At 80 years of age, Rosalie’s father had finally given her his blessing. The whole family rejoiced that the prodigal had returned.

“My siblings hadn’t seen me for years,” Rosalie explains, “and they didn’t recognize me, not because I was no longer Goth, but because God had transformed me.” One of her sisters even gave her life to the Lord because of the change she saw in Rosalie.

God’s grace changed Rosalie Schwarm’s life from Goth to glorious, and He has a miracle in the making for you. **VICTORY**

“My siblings hadn’t seen me for years and they didn’t recognize me, not because I was no longer Goth, but because God had transformed me.”

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Partnership

Your Connection to >> Miracles!

Rosalie Schwarm needed a miracle! She had done many “shocking” things to be seen and heard, including living the Goth lifestyle for a while. But all the time she was spiraling downward, searching for love and acceptance. Through it all she came to the place where her life was out of control and her heart cried out to God for help!

At the lowest place in her life, God was right there for Rosalie, with teachings from Kenneth Copeland to help her begin the journey to a life she had only imagined. And He had the caring ministry team of Kenneth Copeland Ministries in Vancouver, British Columbia, ready to guide her and help her make connections that would take her to the life He had planned for her.

Rosalie now ministers alongside her husband and children to help others experience the miracle-working, life-changing good news of God’s love and acceptance.

Kenneth Copeland Ministries is here to help you find the depth of God’s love for yourself. In all our offices, we have faith-filled ministry teams ready to help you connect to your miracle!

Go to kcm.org to locate the office nearest you.



REAL PEOPLE. REAL NEEDS. REAL VICTORIES.

GoodNewsGazette

“Blessings are upon the head of the just....” (Proverbs 10:6)

Stirred Up and Full of Faith

I am new to watching the BVOV broadcast. I grew up Catholic and was not raised to read God's Word on my own. I knew a lot, but as an adult I now know how important it is to read and know God's Word. Your ministry has been crucial in helping me do this and taking baby steps into a more fulfilling relationship with God.

The broadcast has been a great way to start my day. I have memories of my grandfather watching Brother Copeland on TV when I was a child. Now, I am watching his grandson on television. Jeremy's teachings have been so effective. My faith in Christ is filling me and I am empowered. I am stirred up and I love it!

Melissa Blocker | Pennsylvania

I Have the Victory

I have been a Christian since I was a little girl. But it wasn't until recently my eyes were opened, and I realized I am not defeated and I have victory through Jesus in every area of my life. My parents, who are KCM Partners, sent me the 2005 Prosperity Overflow Convention CDs. I started listening to them and reading the Word every day. Suddenly, things I have read and heard all my life started springing to life in my spirit. I decided right then I was done living a defeated, average life. I made a decision to do away with negative talk and only speak what the Word of God says concerning me.

Since that time I have become a Partner with your ministry and several months ago I sent you my first seed, along with a prayer request that I would find a job. A short time later I received a letter from you saying KCM was standing in agreement for my request to come to pass. As soon as I read those words my phone rang. It was a company I had interviewed with telling me they wanted to hire me.

I've also been confessing the Word over my bills and finances. I received an unexpected check from my car insurance company with a letter telling me they had been overcharging me, and the check was to reimburse me. I'm telling you, God is so good! I can't even begin to come up with words enough to describe His goodness. Thank you, KCM, for all you do.

M.U. | North Carolina

God's Protection Hinders Hurricane

Hurricane Ike was no match for God! Thank God for the teachings you have provided regarding the authority of the believer. I started rebuking the hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico when I learned that we, as believers, have authority over them. During Hurricane Ike, the Lord had His hand of protection around us. We lost an outdoor light and the wind took the paint off the eaves of the house, but we had no damage. Our power was restored within 24 hours and my roses were blooming a couple days later. Because we are blessed our neighbors also got to enjoy the blessing of restored power!

I'm so grateful for the life Jesus demonstrated and the powerful Word of God that has been revealed through your teachings. Thank you for your obedience and thank God for His divine protection and provision.

Wendy Hrnir | Texas

Strand of Pearls Brings Joy

I just wanted you all to know how the Lord has used you to minister richly to my family and me. *Strand of Pearls* is unanimously our favorite music CD. I've watched our family's attitudes soften toward each other as your CD of family favorites has brought many hours of joy and reflection. God blessed us with a country home, we love every aspect of it and *Strand of Pearls* is a great complement to it!

Joyce Hernandez | Nashville, Mich.

To order this product, please visit kcm.org or call 800-575-4455.

The Word Works

I have been doing as Brother Kenneth and Sister Gloria teach us to do: Sit down and write down the scriptures that pertain to our situation. I do this every morning and pray them. I have been healed of type 2 diabetes. I have energy and the diabetes is gone. Thank you!

J.E. | Canada

God's Word Provides Deliverance

I attended the Believers' Convention in Milwaukee and my walk with God has been excelling ever since! This has been a year to celebrate, because Satan tried to cripple me financially—but to no avail. Because of God's Word you taught me to use and understand, God moved powerfully and delivered my family. Even my husband, who is not yet saved, saw it and agreed with me that God did it.

The Holy Spirit told me in January last year to budget my bills differently than I had been. I wanted to increase my giving and didn't know how, so I simply did what He said. In March I found out I had a large amount of Social Security tax to pay and set myself on a quarterly payment. Well, I stood fast on the Word that God would provide the money. Then, in June I was served an \$11,000 bill from my previous marriage. This was a total surprise, since I didn't know it existed at all. This threatened us with an additional large bill for at least five years. Our home is paid for and we didn't want to borrow against it. My truck was also seized for payment on this debt.

I will have you know I didn't stand for that; I put God's Word to work! When I returned from the convention I found out the debt was totally forgiven and my truck was returned to me at no expense. It's as if it never happened. Hallelujah!

T.W. | Michigan

Miraculous Recovery

I am writing to thank you for your fervent prayers on behalf of our son. Many miracles took place. We have no name for what happened to him, except there was infection in every organ and his life was almost gone. As God began to work, one by one his organs began to function. Heart, liver, lungs and last were kidneys. The team of kidney doctors said they are the most unforgiving organs and our son would be on dialysis for the rest of his life. But God healed his kidneys and they are like new! Our God is an awesome God.

L.B. | Ohio

A New Beginning

Thank you for your prayers over the last several months of my incarceration. I was facing life in prison. I lost my children and business, and my mother and father were growing more ill by the day. I thought it was over for sure.

I was in violent holding and almost committed suicide. I can tell you a voice came to me and said, *No you will not. What about Me—God? Just pray to Me.* So I took the object down from my throat and prayed. When I finished, I wept and kept praying.

The first item I saw when I was put in a cell with others was a BVOV magazine. I picked it up and began to read the prayer in the center of the magazine. Let me tell you: I have been a believer ever since. Thank you, Ken and Gloria, for the information God gave to you for your prison ministry and the Bible you sent. I am free from Satan and his darkness and I am a true child of God—living in the light! Even my folks are better and things have improved 110 percent. Praise God! I am strong and gaining strength every day!

A.W. | Oklahoma

Prayer Is Our Priority. Please Call 800-600-7395.

Ministry Changes Lives

Thank you for the many times you have ministered to me and my family through all the little booklets you have sent. I have a transformed marriage and our finances have improved. This is the third month we have not been overdrawn at the bank, probably in 20 years! Also, depression for me is a thing of the past after a lifetime of battling it. Our Christian children's club is going well and numbers have suddenly been increasing, so much so we often have to have more helpers.

I just wanted to share these good things with you, especially after learning so much about THE BLESSING. For the first time I see an increase of THE BLESSING operating in our lives. We continue to pray and support your ministry constantly. Many thanks again.

K.R. | United Kingdom

Thank You for the Truth

Thank you, Kenneth and Gloria, for being faithful, telling it like it is and for the truth.

The last three years have been the hardest of my life. There were times I really felt I just could not go on. But, you were there. I watch you on my computer every day!

Last May my husband left me after 40 years of marriage. I felt so thrown away and devastated, but *you were there* with God's Word and it was always what I needed. I am so thankful for you. I have been a Partner for a number of years and I love you so much.

Karen Harland | Washington

Unexpected Income Is a Blessing

I am sowing seed and believing for a hundredfold return. I was saved 15 years ago through your preaching. I heard about prosperity, the new birth and healing from you, all for the first time. Last year I received over \$11,000 in unexpected income. Praise God for His blessings.

S.F. Indiana

THE Unbeatable SPIRIT of FAITH

No matter how difficult a situation you may be facing today, God can turn it around! >> The doctors may have told you there's no hope. Your bank account may be empty and the creditors knocking on the door. There may be trouble in your family or on your job. Your problems may be stacked so high, you feel like you can never overcome them. But don't let the devil fool you. He has never devised a problem that faith in God can't fix.

Nothing intimidates God. It's just as easy for God to heal cancer as it is for Him to heal a headache. It's as easy for Him to buy you a new home as it is for Him to pay your rent.

Even in times like these when the whole world seems to be in trouble, God can bring you through in triumph. He can do for you what He did for the Israelites. Exodus 10 says that when darkness covered the nation

of Egypt in which they lived—a darkness so thick the Egyptians couldn't see each other or move for three days—"all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings" (verse 23).

Think about that! If you'll dare to believe God's Word, you can have light in the middle of a dark world. You can have protection in the middle of a dangerous world. You can

live healed in the middle of a sick world. You can live prosperously in the middle of an impoverished world. You can live free in the middle of a captive world.

But let me warn you, you can't do it by dragging around in an attitude of defeat. If you want to walk in that kind of constant victory, you must develop a spirit of faith and persevere in that spirit even when the devil is putting pressure on you.

People with the spirit of faith always receive the blessings of God. They may go through tests and trials but they come out supernaturally every time.

I like those odds, don't you? I like to beat the devil every time. And, glory to God, we can do it if we'll walk continually in the spirit of faith.

The Apostle Paul gives us some powerful insight about how to cultivate that spirit in 2 Corinthians 4. Read carefully what he says: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (verses 13, 18).

Open the Window

The first and most fundamental fact these verses reveal about the spirit of faith is that it *believes*.

What does it believe? The Word of God. What's more, faith believes God's Word just because God said it—whether natural circumstances seem to agree or not.

That means if you want to maintain a spirit of faith in the area of healing, for example, you must start by getting your Bible and finding out what God has said about healing. Then you must choose to receive that Word as the truth. Don't shut your heart to it by saying, "Well, that's not the way my church teaches it," or "That's not what my grandmother taught me." Just say, "The Word says healing belongs to me and I believe it!"

Then keep putting the Word in your heart day after day until faith rises up within you and your body begins to line up with that Word.

"Well, Gloria, I tried that one time and it didn't work for me. I guess I just don't have as much faith as you do."

Certainly you do! The Bible says, "...God hath dealt to *every* man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3). Since that scripture was written to born-again people, you can be assured that if you've made Jesus the Lord of your life, you have faith within you.

You may not be acting on it. You may not be speaking it. But it's in there and the more you hear the Word of God, the more it will develop and grow, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

Why is it so important for you to develop your faith? Because faith is what connects you to the blessings of God. It's the force that gives those blessings substance in your life (Hebrews 11:1). And besides all that it pleases God (verse 6).

It's faith that reaches into the realm of the spirit, grasps the promise of God and brings forth a tangible, physical fulfillment of that promise. It brings spiritual blessings. It brings the car you need, or the healing for your body. It brings action in this earth.

Romans 5:2 says we have access by faith into the grace of God. Therefore, if you want grace for the new birth, you must receive it by faith. If you want God's grace for healing, you must receive it by faith. If you want God's grace in your finances or any other area of your life, you must get it by faith.

I like to think of it this way: When you believe the Word of God, you open the window to your life to give God the opportunity to move there.

Nothing intimidates God. It's as easy for Him to buy you a new home as it is for Him to pay your rent.



Oddly enough, that bothers some people. They can't understand why God needs *an opportunity*. After all, He is God. Can't He do anything He wants?

Yes, He can. And He wants to respond to our faith. You see, He is not like the devil. He doesn't force Himself on you. He waits for you to give Him an opening by believing His Word.

We Believe...Therefore We Speak

That's what Abraham did. When God told him that he and Sarah were going to have a baby, Abraham just took God at His Word. In light of the circumstances, that was quite a step of faith. After all, Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 and barren.

Most people would have been overwhelmed by those problems. But not Abraham. He "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Romans 4:3). Even though in the natural realm it was impossible for what God said to come to pass, Abraham believed God anyway.

That's what the spirit of faith does. It stands in the midst of the most impossible circumstances and believes God anyway! Then it begins to speak.

It doesn't say just any old thing, either. It speaks the Word of God. When cancer attacks, faith doesn't say, "I'm dying of cancer." Faith says, "I'm healed by the stripes of Jesus. Therefore I'll live and not die, and declare the works of the Lord."

"Well, I'm just not comfortable with that confession business. I like to believe God quietly."

That may be what you like, but it's not what the Bible teaches. The Bible says, *we believe, therefore we speak* (2 Corinthians 4:13). If you want to change your circumstances, you must have faith in two places—in your heart and in your mouth.

That's why God changed Abram's name to Abraham. *Abraham* means "father of many nations." So every time Abraham introduced

himself after his name was changed, he was actually saying, "Hello. How are you? I'm the father of many nations." To most people that probably sounded ridiculous because, at the time, Abraham was still a childless old man married to a barren old woman. I'm sure they thought Abraham was a little crazy.

But he wasn't. He was simply following the example of God, Himself, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17). By speaking in faith, Abraham was doing exactly what God did when He created the earth.

Read Genesis 1 and you'll see what I mean. There the Bible tells us that in the beginning "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep" (verse 2). Yet God didn't look at that darkness and say, "Oh my, the earth sure is a dark place!" If He had, the earth would have *remained* a dark place.

No, God changed the natural circumstance by calling things that be not as though they were. He looked at the darkness and said, "Light be!" and light was. God spoke out by faith what He wanted to come to pass.

All the way through the first chapter of Genesis we see God creating by speaking His Word. Over and over again it says, *God said...God saw...and it was good*.

That's how we operate too, when we're living by the spirit of faith. We say God's Word...we see the result... and it is good!

One thing you must understand. I'm not just talking about saying God's Word once or twice. I'm talking about consistently speaking words of faith. If you get on your knees in prayer and say, "I believe I receive my financial needs met, in Jesus' Name," then go to dinner with your friends and say, "I'm going bankrupt. I can't find a job. I'm about to lose my home. I don't know what I'm going to do," you won't get anywhere.

It's what you say continually that comes to pass in your life.

Call yourself prosperous. Call yourself debt free. Be like Abraham and by the spirit of faith call things that be not as though they were.

It's what you say *continually* that comes to pass in your life. So if you're believing God for finances, make it a habit to say things like this: "According to Deuteronomy 28, lack is a curse of the law. And Galatians 3:13 says Jesus has redeemed me from that curse. Therefore I'm redeemed from the curse of lack! My needs are met according to God's riches in glory by Christ Jesus!"

Then every time your bills come to mind, call them paid in the Name of Jesus. Call yourself prosperous. Call yourself debt free. Be like Abraham and by the spirit of faith call things that be not as though they were.

Keep Your Eyes on the Word

Right now you may be thinking, *I really want to do that. I want to walk and talk by faith. The problem is, every time I look at the mess I'm in, I get discouraged*.

Then stop looking at that mess! Instead, focus your attention on the promise of God. Keep His Word in front of your eyes and in your ears until you can *see* it coming to pass with the eyes of your spirit.

That's what the spirit of faith does. It looks "not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Of course, I'm not saying you should ignore your problems or close your eyes to them as if they aren't real. They are real. But according to the Word they are *temporal*. That means "subject to change." And you can be assured that if you keep looking at the Word, they *will* change!

Once again, we can look at Abraham's life and see proof of that. Romans 4:18-21 says that he:

Against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Abraham didn't consider his body. He didn't focus his attention on the fact that he was 100 years old. He wasn't looking at his wrinkled, old self saying, "Come on, old man. You can do it!" No, he knew he couldn't bring forth a child. He'd known that for some time.

He wasn't looking at his own ability. He was looking at God. He kept his attention on the power and promise of God until he was fully persuaded that God could *and would* bring it to pass.

That's What I Call Victory!

If you want to develop the spirit of faith, that's what you'll do too. You won't consider the natural impossibilities of your situation. God certainly doesn't. Ken and I have found that out by experience!

More than 40 years ago when Ken was praying down in the riverbed in Tulsa, Okla., God began speaking to him about preaching to nations. God said way back then he'd have a worldwide ministry.

It was clear God hadn't considered our bank account. We hardly had enough money to get across town—much less go to the nations! But God didn't expect *us* to fulfill that call. He intended to do it Himself with our faith. He intended to provide the power, the resources, the ability—everything! All He expected us to do was believe.

That's all He expects you to do: *Only believe*. Isn't that simple?

If you'll just believe, if you'll just spend your time considering God's Word instead of focusing on your own limitations, you'll end up just like Abraham.

Exactly how did Abraham end up? Very well, I'd say.

He and Sarah not only had that baby God promised, they also lived long enough to raise him. Then, after Sarah died (at 127 years old) Abraham (who was 137) remarried and had six more children. He became exactly what he and God said he was—the father of many nations.

Now that's what I call victory! That's what I call the *spirit of faith!* **VICTORY**

Focus your attention on the promise of God. Keep His Word in front of your eyes and in your ears until you can see it coming to pass with the eyes of your spirit.

Salvation Prayer

If you do not know Jesus as your Savior & Lord, simply pray the following prayer in faith, and Jesus will be your Lord!

Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your Word says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" and "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:9). You said my salvation would be the result of Your Holy Spirit giving me new birth by coming to live in me (John 3:5-6, 15-16; Romans 8:9-11) and that if I would ask, You would fill me with Your Spirit and give me the ability to speak with other tongues (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:4).

I take You at Your Word. I confess that Jesus is Lord. And I believe in my heart that You raised Him from the dead. Thank You for coming into my heart, for giving me Your Holy Spirit as You have promised, and for being Lord over my life. Amen.

If you have just prayed this prayer, please contact us and let us know of your decision. We have a free Salvation Package we would like to send you to help you begin your new life in Jesus! Simply write and ask for offer #50801, check the circle on the response form in the center of this magazine or call 800-575-4455.

BY KENNETH COPELAND

Blood

When gets thicker than water

When I was a kid, I always wanted a blood brother. I wanted one so bad, I didn't know what to do. I never had any brothers or sisters, so I tried to get my friends to become blood brothers. ✱ I remember thinking, *Indians are supposed to have blood brothers...*

I never could find any white boys who wanted to see their own blood. It was neat in the movies, but when it came time to make “the cut,” they didn't want any part of it.

Today, in our “civilized” society, we are not very aware or conscious of covenants—at least, not like our ancestors were—particularly, blood covenants.

In ancient days, among all tribes of people and all civilizations, there was the common practice of covenants made by blood. These blood covenants were a matter of totally giving oneself to another for life—without reservation. They meant complete loyalty. What's more, once a blood covenant was cut between two individuals or families, that covenant was an agreement that lasted for at least eight generations.

With the passing of time, however, and the more “sophisticated” our cultures became, the human family strayed from such covenants. Consequently, today, many believers are unaware of their own blood covenant with God. They have no real understanding of eternal promises written in the precious blood of Jesus.

In that covenant of blood, God has provided everything

we need to take authority over our flesh and let the image of Christ be fully formed in us. God's covenant has given us the power to succeed in every task and fulfill every dream He has put in our hearts. So, let's take a close look at the rich depth and range of promises God made in His covenant with us, sealed in the blood of Jesus.

In the days of the ancient Hebrew nation, families cut covenant as well. In fact, the Hebrew word for *covenant* literally means “a cut where blood flows.”

These blood covenants were the principle behind scriptures such as Proverbs 18:24, which says, “There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” They were also the reasoning behind phrases such as, “Blood is thicker than water.”

The motive behind blood covenants was, quite simply, differences—covenants were based on the strengths and weaknesses of the parties involved.

For instance, one family or tribe might be good farmers, while a neighboring family or tribe might be known for being superior warriors. So, why not come together and cut covenant and enjoy the benefits of each other—especially if the farmers were always getting

robbed, and the warriors were always going hungry.

Before these covenants could be made, however, there were usually lengthy discussions between both parties. After all, an agreement made in blood spanning eight generations was serious business.

To better understand the significance of blood covenants, as well as our covenant with God, it would help us to walk through the seven steps of a traditional Hebrew covenant ceremony.

Step 1: Each family, or party, chose a covenant representative.

The person representing the family was always the family's best—the smartest, the strongest, the fleetest of foot.

Likewise, the animals to be used in the covenant ceremony were always the best. They were carefully selected and prepared. The Hebrew people had learned this early on when God instructed them to offer only the best when bringing sacrifices to Him. He didn't want any one-eyed, diseased animal on His altar.

Consequently, this is where the term *the fatted calf* came from. In today's terms, we commonly think of the fatted calf being the best of something to consume. Actually, it was the choicest one set aside for covenant ceremonies and sacrifices.

Finally, a covenant site was chosen, and the families would come together. Each family's council of elders was placed where they could watch closely and hear every word spoken.

Step 2: The covenant cut was made.

In the ancient Hebrew covenant ceremony, the cutting of the sacrificial animals was done differently from every other sacrifice or ceremony.

The covenant cuts were made from the base of the animal's skull, lengthwise down their backbones. The animals were split and then parted down their backbones. Each half was made to fall side to side, but then propped up so the blood would flow down a pathway.

The covenant animals usually included a calf and a lamb. The calf represented monetary value. It represented the family's possessions. The lamb represented total defenselessness. In fact, the lamb used in the ceremony was so young that it did not yet have teeth. It had no defense.

By sacrificing these animals, each family was saying, “We freely bring our blood to this covenant. We come with no malice—totally free, totally loyal.”

Once the animals were cut and their blood shed on the ground, the covenant ceremony began.

Step 3: The representatives exchanged coats.

Each representative walked through the pathway of the animals' blood twice, and they did so in a figure eight. After they walked through the blood the first time, they

stopped and exchanged coats while making certain promises about who they were, what they had and what they meant to the other person. This was similar to our modern military traditions.

In our society, we know you can tell a soldier's rank by the coat he or she wears. Their coats represent their authority, their occupation or specific task, their branch of service and so on. We also know when a private walks into a room filled with soldiers, not much happens. When a general walks in, however, everyone stops everything to jump to attention and salute.

But now, imagine a private—wearing a general's uniform—walking into the room. That private would get the same response as the general. Why? Because it's the general's uniform that does the talking.

The same held true for the blood-covenant ceremony. A farmer, for instance, would come to the ceremony with a coat representing his family and his authority. A warrior would come with his. Then, at this point, they would exchange their coats, and thereby, their identities.

This adds greater insight as to why the Apostle Paul exhorts us: “Put on the whole armour of God” (Ephesians 6:11). It doesn't matter who is wearing it—it's the armor that does all the talking!

Step 4: The representatives exchanged weapons.

After the representatives walked through the pathway of the animals' blood in a figure eight the second time, they stopped again and exchanged weapons.

In those days, when men went to war, they wore a girdle, or belt. It was a girdle because their outer garments were long, flowing robes. To be able to fight, run or walk comfortably, they had to reach between their legs and pull the backside of their robe up to the front and fasten it underneath their belt. Strapped to their belts were also their weapons.

So, these covenant representatives would stop between the halves of these animals, standing in blood, and undo their belts. In doing so, they became vulnerable. With their robes hanging down, they were in no position to fight. That's when they exchanged belts and weapons.

Now, if the farmer didn't have any weapons, he at least had his fighting knife, and maybe a good axe handle to fight with. The warrior, meanwhile, probably had an assortment of ferocious looking weapons strapped to his belt.

Regardless of what they had, they exchanged weapons and belts saying, “Here's my authority and power in war. I give it to you. Any enemy that comes against you is my enemy. Anyone who curses you, I curse. Anyone who threatens you has to answer to me.

“Just as this animal has bled and died, I will bleed and die for your family the same as I would mine.”



Step 5: The representatives cut their flesh.

Once most of the covenant promises and blessings were made, the two representatives cut their own flesh so their blood was visible to all the council of elders. Then they brought their hands together, mingled their blood and lifted their hands to God. This was when the most precious of the vows was made between the families.

By lifting their hands to God, they were making the Creator of heaven and earth third party to their covenant, believing Almighty God to watch over their agreement. Each swore by God to keep the promises they had made.

By bringing their hands together and mingling their blood, they were called one family.

From that day on, the seal of the covenant was the scar on the body of each representative. If you saw someone with a covenant scar, you really didn't know who you were messing with, and you would probably think twice about stirring up trouble with them. That scar meant there was

a blood brother hanging around somewhere.

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 18:19-20? "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

The Church has never really figured out what that means—but it's covenant. When Jesus said it, He meant it. We just have not had a covenant-consciousness to understand it fully.

Step 6: The covenant meal.

The mighty climax of the whole covenant ceremony was the remembrance party.

In the Bible, the word *remember* is powerful. Exodus 2:24 tells us God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It doesn't say, "He happened to remember it." God doesn't forget. The word *remember*, there, literally means "the claw." It refers to the talon of a mighty eagle.

Among some of the Hebrew tribes, people cutting covenant were known to take an eagle's claw and put it in their face and say, "My remembrance of you is as though I were still in the blood, promising you everything I have. My covenant with you is like a claw in my brain. I cannot even see except for seeing you in my face."

This remembrance party, or covenant meal, was where the families began eating bread, drinking wine, dancing and celebrating. They would actually feed bread to one another, saying, "This is my body. I will let your family have my body, before I will let them starve."

Then, sharing wine, they would remind each other that it represented the blood they had just walked in, making them one family.

Step 7: The families exchanged names.

By the time the covenant ceremony was completed, both parties or families had new names. For example, if the Farmers and the Fighters cut covenant, Phil Farmer and the Fighters cut covenant, Phil Farmer was now Phil Fighter-Farmer, and Fred Fighter became Fred Farmer-Fighter.

Such covenant names were another indication for troublemakers to leave Phil, the farmer, alone. That was not just Phil Farmer, anymore. He was Phil Fighter-Farmer. He was not just Fred Fighter, either. The Farmer-Fighter family now had plenty of

food to sell. They had covenanted with the Farmer family. They were now one large, powerful family.

Today, we often see names of families that have a hyphen in the middle of them. That means, somewhere along the way, those two families came into covenant.

Ephesians 3:15 says "the whole family in heaven and earth is named" of Jesus. By covenant, we bear the Name of Jesus—the Name that is above every name. And by covenant, we go into all the world bearing that Name (Mark 16:15-18).

You Have a Big Brother

To understand just how passionate God is about this covenant He has made with you in the blood of His own Son, Jesus, look at 2 Corinthians 6:16-18, "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and [I] will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate...and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." This was Paul quoting from Isaiah 52 and Ezekiel 20.

Old Testament writers used a covenant word, which in Hebrew is *hesed*. It is translated as "ever lovingkindness; tenderness; mercy." These translations, however, miss the depth and power of its meaning.

Hesed is best described, perhaps, as what happens inside a mother or a father when their child is threatened. Only, it goes far beyond that.

Hesed is the force that rises inside a covenant brother causing him to want to show himself strong for the benefit of his covenant brother, or covenant family. It is a drive that far exceeds any other drive known to mankind. We've only tasted a small bit of it.

From God's perspective, *hesed* might best be described using John 3:16: "For God so *hesed* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...."

Long before God ever created man, He provided a covenant Lamb, a Lamb without spot or blemish, so if man did mess up, it would keep him from losing everything—and it would keep God from losing the family He so longed for.

After Adam committed high treason and bowed his knee to Satan, he lost the presence and revelation of God. When that happened, the first thing God did was to kill an animal in order to clothe Adam. He had been clothed with the very glory of God, but when he sinned, the glory light went out.

Later, however, God found for Himself a man, Abram, a man with whom He could cut covenant, a man who would teach his children that covenant (Genesis 18).

But why did God require the blood of animals? He did not have any blood of His own to shed. When

Abram sinned, God said, *I'll take the blood of an animal, rather than him. I'll treat him as though he didn't sin. I'll account it to him as righteousness—because he believed Me* (Galatians 3).

Abraham believed the promises of God, the promises that were to him and his seed.

Galatians 3:13-14 says, "Christ [the Anointed One and His Anointing] hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us...that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ."

The Apostle Paul goes on to say, when God made those promises to Abraham, He was also making them to Jesus, who had not yet been born into this earth. God was making a blood covenant with a man and He expected that covenant, those words, to produce a body with blood—Jesus—wherein He could swear.

John 1:14 says, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

You and I are Abraham's seed. We are heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29). It is no longer by the blood of cows and sheep, but by the blood of Almighty God, Himself.

Ours is a covenant between a resurrected immortal Man, Jesus, and a holy and infallible God.

Which of Them do you think could ever break the covenant?

Neither.

What's more, we cannot break it. We may step out of fellowship when we sin. But all we have to do is confess our sin and step back into that fellowship (1 John 1:9).

We've been grafted into a covenant between God, our heavenly Father, and Jesus, our Blood Brother. Knowledge of and trust in that covenant will remove the fears of insufficiency and lack that men feed with such things as overeating and compulsive spending. It will remove the fears of rejection that have caused so many to seek comfort in wrong relationships and in what they put in the body and on the body instead of what they feed the spirit. God's covenant love removes men's trust in the world's ways for their security and success, and builds their lives on the unshakeable foundation of God's way of doing things.

All we need to do now is begin developing a consciousness of Jesus' blood, a consciousness of our blood covenant with God. When the devil comes against you, when sickness and disease come against you, when fear, worry, harm or poverty come against you—remember the covenant!

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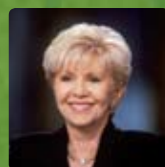
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During the 2007 West Coast Believers' Convention, Brother Kenneth Copeland spoke a prophetic word from the Lord that literally exploded in me. Since that day, it has gone around the world with me, because I have been preaching and writing about it every opportunity I get. Here is the portion of that prophetic word on which the Lord instructed me to meditate and preach:

"The manifestation of THE BLESSING, saith the Lord, is at an all-time high.... You are approaching a blessing manifestation of glory that is an explosion in ways and in intensity that the human race has never seen before.... THE BLESSING will surround you, THE BLESSING will encase you.... All debt will have

to get up and leave you the way leprosy left the lepers of old.... Debt is financial sickness. It is financial leprosy. It is a burden and is part of the curse...if you will begin to confess that this blessing manifestation is coming, you will be shocked and thrilled at how quickly you will have the glory arise and drive the debt out.... I will bless

BY JERRY SAVELLE

you beyond your income. I will bless you beyond your salaries. I will bless you beyond anything you've ever known before.... I'll bring financial blessing on you that you ain't got any idea where it came from. It has come to an explosive place. It's ready. I'm ready, saith the Lord."

An Explosive Place!

Look at what the Lord said. The Blessing has come to an explosive place. That's where we are right now!

Since we first learned about The Blessing of Abraham in the early days of our walk with the Lord, we've believed and received it. Through the years, I've noticed different people walk in different levels of blessing. I know I am walking in a different level today than I did back then. Through years of working with Brother Copeland, watching him live it out and getting the Word for myself, my family and my ministry, Carolyn and I have just kept moving from one level to another until here we are today, right in the middle of The Blessing explosion.

You can expect The Blessing explosion in your life, too. God has said He is looking for a generation of believers who will walk in The Blessing like no other generation has ever walked before. We are that generation.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:7 that "in the ages to come he [God] might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Who is Paul talking about? He's talking about you and me. We are the people of "the ages to come." We're there!

Look at how *The Amplified Bible* states Paul's message: "...that He might clearly demonstrate through the ages to come the immeasurable (limitless, surpassing) riches of His free grace (His unmerited favor) in [His] kindness and goodness of heart toward us in Christ Jesus."

Surpassing implies "like no one else has ever seen or experienced before." God told me to tell His people to get ready for an outpouring of the goodness of God. It will be a limitless, immeasurable and surpassing outpouring. Our best days are not behind but just ahead of us. And people will be watching us and talking about how good God is to His people like they have never talked before.

People Are Watching Us

The time has come for God's family to demonstrate the standard of living our Father intended from the beginning—the blessed, fruitful, multiplied life He declared over Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. Our standard of living in The Blessing should be the answer to people everywhere who are clamoring to survive.

In this day, everywhere we look and everything we hear, we are hit with news of just the opposite. Doom and gloom seem to be all the media talk about. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:1, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." Well, these are some of those days Paul was writing about.

The Amplified Bible expands *perilous times* to be "of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear]." Today's times are definitely stressful and chaotic.

Paul went on to tell Timothy to hold fast to the Word of God, because the Word contains everything that will make a person perfect and thoroughly furnished unto all good works—right in the middle of perilous times (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The answer to living a life that demonstrates God's standard of living is His Word. His written Word lays the foundation for it all, and His prophetic word builds upon it. God's written Word is filled with the foundation of The Blessing of God, and in this day, through the voice of His prophets, He is giving us steps to take to walk it out—steps that will cause people to take notice of His standard of living!

In May 2008, the Lord asked me to share with His people: *My solution to all this chaos is The Blessing!* Everywhere we go, we are encouraging people to shift their attention to God's Word whenever they hear the bad reports. So, that's all I've been talking about. I wake up every morning in a receiving mode, saying, "Get ready for The Blessing explosion!"

When people outside God's family see how His family is receiving His goodness and blessing in the middle of perilous times, they can only say one thing—"That's got to be God!" In Psalm 126:2 we see when God delivered His people, the heathen said among themselves, "The Lord hath done great things for them."



It will be a
limitless,
immeasurable
and surpassing
outpouring.



When people outside God's family see how His family is receiving His goodness and blessing in the middle of perilous times, they can only say one thing—"That's got to be God!"

God's People Have the Goods

God's goodness toward His people is the physical, tangible manifestation of The Blessing on our lives. An unbeliever may not call it "The Blessing," but he surely understands the goodness of God when he sees it—when he sees God's people have His goods!

This is the whole purpose of The Blessing explosion in these days. God is drawing the attention of people outside the family—He is extending the invitation for them to join us. And He is doing it through us!

Paul declared to the Romans, "And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Romans 15:29). We have joined in that declaration. We have decided to be God's living example of The Blessing—His goodness delivered to the world through our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe the demonstration of His

goodness in The Blessing will cause people to take another look at God and change their opinion—whatever that may be—about God.

Paul made it clear in Romans 2:4 that the goodness of God leads people to repentance or to changing their minds. Whatever any man may believe about God, the manifestation of The Blessing demonstrated in His goodness to His people can change a man's opinion in a split second.

He will use anyone who will join in to believe and receive the good news of the fullness of The Blessing in Christ Jesus. We are walking, talking manifestations of it!

Believe It!

Carolyn and I thank God every day for the Copelands. I will never forget the first time I ever heard Brother Copeland preach. I knew he was different from any preacher I'd ever heard before. When he finished speaking that night he looked at the audience and said, "If you believe it, it'll work...if you don't, it won't." He grabbed his Bible and walked out.

Every prophetic word Brother Copeland has ever spoken over us has come to pass or is in the process of coming to pass. Because of their willingness to be a demonstration of God's goodness, we started on our journey—making the decision to receive the "immeasurable (limitless, surpassing) riches of His free grace (His unmerited favor) in [His] kindness and goodness of heart toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7, AMP).

So, here we are today, living in The Blessing explosion—according to God's Word and the words He has spoken over us through Brother Copeland and other anointed ministers He has placed in our lives.

I encourage you to go back and meditate on the prophetic word with which I began this article. It and God's written Word will change your standard of living and make you a demonstration of the goodness of God—everywhere you go you will go in the fullness of The Blessing of the gospel of Christ (Romans 15:29).

Well, we believed it then and we believe it now. And it's working for us! The Blessing explosion is working in our lives. And it will work for you, too! **VICTORY**

Jerry Savelle is president and founder of Jerry Savelle Ministries International and founding pastor of Heritage of Faith Christian Center. For information or ministry materials write to Jerry Savelle Ministries, P.O. Box 748, Crowley, TX 76036; visit their Web site at www.jerrysavelle.org; or call 817-297-3155.

Staying Connected

BY GLORIA COPELAND

Step by Step

Although God will reveal mysteries to you as you pray and seek Him for direction, don't expect Him to give you a complete set of blueprints for your life all at one time. I'm not sure He ever does that. He'll usually just reveal your next step. Often, He may not even explain to you why that step is important, or what's going to happen after you take it—or what will happen if you don't.

That's why we must learn to walk by faith and not by sight. We don't know what's coming tomorrow, next month or next year. But, God does. So we have to fully trust Him and confidently obey His instructions in big matters and small, following the leading of His Spirit, even when we don't understand them.

One thing of major importance is to know that

whatever He directs will always agree with the written Word. This helps so much to keep us from going in the wrong direction or from being misled.

That kind of step-by-step obedience will keep us constantly connected to the Master Plan. Failure to obey, on the other hand, will disconnect us. Sometimes, what even seem to be minor acts of disobedience can result in making major, long-term differences in our lives.

If you doubt that, consider Moses. Psalm 106 says that when the Israelites angered the Lord at the waters of Meribah, "it went ill with Moses for their sakes; for they provoked [Moses'] spirit,

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so that he spoke unadvisedly with his lips” (verses 32-33, *The Amplified Bible*).

One disobedient act brought great disappointment to Moses’ life. He missed part of his destiny because, under tremendous pressure, he lost his temper and disobeyed the instructions of the Lord.

If you read the scriptural account of what happened, it’s easy to see why he did it. At the time, he was leading the Israelites through the wilderness. They were in desperate need of water, and there was none to be found. As the people cried out, blaming Moses and Aaron for their predicament, Moses surely must have flashed back to an earlier time when the same thing happened.

On that first occasion, Moses had cried to the Lord and said, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.”

And the Lord said to Moses, Pass on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand the rod with which you smote the river [Nile], and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at [Mount] Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel (Exodus 17:5-6, *AMP*).

No doubt, the second time they ran out of water, Moses was remembering that initial incident. He was probably expecting God to instruct him, once again, to strike the rock. Perhaps he was even looking forward to venting some of his frustration by giving that rock a good, hard whack with his rod. His anger was surely beginning to boil as the Israelites, for whom he had laid down a good portion of his

life, gathered together once again and contended with him and Aaron, saying: “Why have you brought up the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink” (Numbers 20:4-5, *New King James Version*).

The last time, when Moses had struck a rock at God’s command, enough water had gushed out of it to meet the need of the entire nation. This time, however, when Moses cried out for instructions, God said something a little different: “Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals” (verse 8, *NKJV*).

Although God altered the strategy slightly in this case, His directions were still clear and simple. Moses should have had no trouble following them.

But there was one problem. Moses was angry. He probably wasn’t paying close attention. He had run out of patience with this unruly bunch of people. He was tired of being blamed for everything that went wrong and tired of all their bellyaching and unbelief. So he gathered the assembly together and said, “Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank” (verses 10-11, *NKJV*).

Stopping Short of the Promised Land

If the story stopped there, it would appear that everything turned out all right. Even though Moses disobeyed God’s instructions and struck the rock twice instead of speaking to it, water still came forth and the Israelites were satisfied. But the account doesn’t end there. The next verse tells us the Lord spoke to Moses and said, “Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them” (verse 12, *NKJV*).

It’s important for us to notice that God didn’t say anything to Moses about that when He first told him what to do. He didn’t say, “Now Moses, I want you to speak to the rock, and you’d better do it because if you don’t, you’ll miss your final destination. You’ll never get to go into the Promised Land.”

I don’t think Moses had any idea how much of his future rested on that one simple step of obedience. He probably wasn’t even thinking about what might happen if he ignored the leading of the Lord in that situation. Most likely, he was just thinking about how fed up he was with that rebellious group of people he’d been stuck with for so many years. Maybe he had the same attitude Christians sometimes have today: “I’ll just yield to my flesh now and repent later. This one little sin won’t make much difference in the long run.”

But it did make a difference—not only to Moses but to his brother, Aaron, as well. It disconnected both of them from a part of God’s Master Plan. Aaron was the first to experience the consequences. Shortly after the incident at Meribah:

...And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying: “Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah. Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up to Mount Hor; and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; for Aaron shall be gathered to his people and die there” (Numbers 20:23-26, *NKJV*).

Moses lived on awhile longer, but eventually, he too experienced the cost of his own disobedience. When the Israelites’ 40-year wilderness trek was over and they were about to enter the Promised Land, Moses died. Instead of letting him go into that land, the Lord said to him:

Get up into this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and look at the land of Canaan which I give to the Israelites for a possession. And die on the mountain which you ascend and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people, because you broke faith with Me in the midst of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah-kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin and because you did not set Me apart as holy in the midst of the Israelites. For you shall see the land opposite you at a distance, but you shall not go there, into the land which I give the Israelites (Deuteronomy 32:49-52, *AMP*).

There’s no question about it, that’s a sobering story. It demonstrates just how serious disobedience can be. There is a bright side to it, however. I realized that one day, when I was feeling sorry for Moses and thinking how awful it was that he went through that whole wilderness experience, put up with all the aggravations of it year after year, and then didn’t get to complete the journey into the Promised Land.

As I thought about how he died on Mount Nebo, and how God personally buried him, it dawned on me: *Since Moses was a saint of God, when he died he went to Paradise!* He went to the real Promised Land! He bypassed all the fighting and wars that were required to take possession of Canaan, and went straight to the reward. So I never feel sorry for Moses anymore.

But the fact remains that Moses cost himself a major victory on the earth because he yielded to the wrong impulse. He yielded to the pressure of his emotions instead of the direction of God. He didn’t do exactly what the Lord told him to do,

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and his disobedience was an expensive mistake.

Little Promptings Can Open Big Doors

Of course, Moses’ experience was more dramatic than most of our experiences will be. None of us carry the kind of responsibility he did, so when we miss the mark the results aren’t usually quite so catastrophic. Our opportunities to obey or disobey, connect or disconnect with the plan of God, don’t normally involve honoring God (or dishonoring Him) before an entire nation. They more often involve everyday choices that are made when very few people are watching. But even those choices can cause us to connect or disconnect from God’s Master Plan for our lives. They can unexpectedly cost us dearly, or bring us great rewards.

That’s why obedience is always best. You just never know to what part of God’s plan one simple step of obedience might connect you.

Ken and I found that out big-time some years ago when we were facing one of the many financial challenges we’ve encountered since we first stepped out into ministry. In a way, we were in a situation similar to the one in which Moses found himself. It was not nearly as serious, of course—just similar. We were badly in need of money to pay past-due bills for our television broadcasts. We’d faced that need before, and God had been faithful. But this was the most onerous deficit we had experienced. We began to think about selling our lakefront property to bring in the extra money.

Although we hadn’t been instructed by the Lord to do it, we were assuming it was the right thing to do. We hadn’t signed the papers on the deal yet, but the plans were all drawn up. We were right on the verge of finalizing the sale when, as I was driving home one evening, I had a very clear impression from the Lord in my spirit. I sensed He was saying, *Don’t do it. Don’t make that deal. You’ll regret it.* It was very strong. I knew it was the Lord.

When I got home, I told Ken about it. “OK,” he said, “we’ll call it off.”

Remember in Proverbs 8:1-2 about wisdom crying out at the place where paths meet? That’s exactly what happened to me that day. Ken and I were at a crossroad. We were about to take a particular financial path—one we thought would be a benefit. But Wisdom called out and advised us not to take that path.

We could have ignored that advice. After all, we needed the money from the sale, and didn’t seem to need the land right then. What’s more, the television bills needed to be paid. We could easily have yielded to that pressure and said, “Well, we’ll just go ahead, get the money we need...and ask the Lord to forgive us later. After all, He’s merciful. He’ll understand.”

Yes, God would have forgiven us had we truly repented. He would have been good to us and blessed us all He could, but we still would have missed part of His Master Plan for us because the Lord knew several things about the situation we didn’t.

First, there was natural gas on that property. In the years

since, we’ve had a number of gas wells drilled and our ministry is being blessed by the royalties from those wells. If we’d done what we originally planned to do, someone else would be getting those royalties.

Second, we were eventually able to build our dream home on part of that land. Had we ignored the leading of the Lord, the lakefront site where our home is today wouldn’t have been available. It would have been part of a subdivision full of other people’s homes.

That’s just one of many examples I could give you of how disobeying the leading of the Holy Spirit could have resulted in making a major difference in our lives. I could tell you of other times when such opportunities to connect or disconnect from God’s plan were even more subtle than that. Many, I don’t even remember because they weren’t spectacular. So many Master Plan connections are like that. They don’t seem to be a big deal at the time. Yet if we’re diligent to heed those little promptings of the Spirit, they can open big doors into our promised land.

I’m not saying you’ll never make mistakes. We all stumble and do things we regret at times. But when you do, repent immediately, receive God’s forgiveness and cleansing, and get right back on track.

Get your heart right before God and keep it right. Otherwise, your conscience will condemn you. You’ll lose your confidence toward God and you won’t be able to hear His voice as clearly as before. The condemnation you’ll feel in your heart will hinder your ability to sense the promptings of His Spirit. You’ll start missing Master Plan connections without even realizing it.

First John 3:18-23, *NKJV*, explains it this way:

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

I love that passage because it boils down obedience to God to its simplest, basic components. It tells us we can please God and keep His commandments if we’ll simply:

- 1. Believe in Jesus, and
- 2. Walk in love

If we’ll develop the habit of obeying those two fundamental instructions God has given in His written Word, we’ll have the sensitivity of heart to pick up on what He is saying to us in other areas. If we don’t do those two things, we won’t get anything else right, either.

I’ve learned over the years that if my faith isn’t producing the results it should, I’d better check my love life. How have I been treating people? Nothing is going to work for me spiritually if I’m violating the commandment of love.

The more you practice obeying God in the fundamentals like walking in love, the easier it will be to hear from Him about the details of His plan for your life. Your heart will be

sensitive and ready to respond to the slightest divine leading. You’ll be ready and able to discern the voice of Wisdom calling out to you at the place where the paths meet. You’ll constantly stay connected to God’s Master Plan. **VICTORY**

(This article is adapted from Gloria Copeland’s *New York Times Best-Seller*, *God’s Master Plan for Your Life*.)

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8

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Find out how to foster the love of God in your heart and life through a whole new way of living.

15

Kenneth Copeland

The Power of Partnership

See how the commitment to stand with another can change *both* your lives forever!

22

Gloria Copeland

Staying Engaged in the Word of God

Find out how to engage, press in and implement the Word in your life every day—so you can do all the Lord tells you to do!

DAILY

2 Mon

3 Tue

4 Wed

5 Thu

6 Fri

God’s Design for Your Wellness

Dr. Don Colbert joins **Kenneth Copeland** to discuss God’s idea of health—so you can feel your best and resist disease.

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Choosing God’s Way and Living Whole

Kenneth Copeland and **Dr. Don Colbert** continue their discussion on health for the believer. Discover how eating the right foods increases your emotional health, love, joy and peace.

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Partnership Week

God has great things in store for each of our lives and ministries, but we can’t do them alone. Join **Kenneth** and **Gloria Copeland** for a week of insights on partnership and how God uses it to bring out the best in all our anointings!

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Revealing the Truth About Temptation

Jesus faced every temptation we could ever face. This week, **Keith Moore** teaches how to deal with temptation *without* yielding to sin.

Watch the *BVOV* broadcast again and again!
Order your audio or video copies of the *BVOV* broadcast now by using the form in the center of this magazine.

CD Daily broadcast (one week) \$10 | Sunday broadcast \$4
DVD Daily broadcast (one week) \$15 | Sunday broadcast \$10

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Branson
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March 5-7

Faith Life Church | 3701 W. Highway 76 | Branson, MO 65616 | 417-334-9233

Join Gloria Copeland for Healing School
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