



# Taste and See...



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## What if God Loves You? \_\_\_\_\_ *Rev. Canon Gene Packwood*

What if God loves you?

What if Caesar Augustus' issuing of that census decree which sent Joseph and Mary off on the road to Bethlehem, expecting a child, and the baby being born and wrapped and placed in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn really is

part of a divine plot to show you that the Father Himself loves you?

What if that really set the angel and the glory of the LORD off, and scared the shepherds out of their wits? What if there really was then, and is now, a great company of the heavenly host praising

God and saying, Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace to everyone on whom His favour rests? What if God's favour rests on you?

No, really; what if God loves you?

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I invite you to read Isaiah 9:2-7. It begins, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.” What if, when Isaiah wrote those words 2,700 years ago, not only did God already have Jesus – the child born, the son given, the great light – in mind, but also you and me; to light up the dark places in our souls and lives, wherever we are, right now? What if God loves you?

The passage from Isaiah ends with: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.” (Is.9:6-7)

What if the grace of God that brings salvation has really appeared to all people? What if the salvation bringer really is Jesus? What if He really is a Saviour sent to save you and me? What if Jesus really is making a glorious appearance here in the Scriptures, in the bread and the wine of our Eucharistic feast, newborn baby no longer, but our Mighty God and Saviour, who gave himself for you and me to redeem us from all wickedness done by, or to, us and to purify us for himself and make us his

own? What if God loves you?

What if he loves your kids? How can you make sure they get that?

“Rejoice,” wrote Isaiah. Celebrate. Have fun. Kids are attracted to genuine joy and fun.

Set them a Christmas-spirited example by saying “No” to godless living and the sinful, indulgent pleasures Paul wrote about in Titus 2:11-14: “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.” So, live self-controlled, upright and godly lives, eager to do what is good. Kids respond to goodness. They’ll see the God who loves them in it.

Hurry, like the shepherds, to find where Jesus is and go there. Church on Christmas Eve is an excellent start! Come often, and bring your kids with you. Make sure they hear the story, over and over again. You know how they love to have stories repeated – just try and skip a page!

Amaze them with the good news

that God really does love them. Like Mary, treasure these events and what they mean, and take them home and ponder them in your hearts with your kids. Like the shepherds, go home glorifying and praising God for all the things you are hearing and seeing about Jesus, and all that you will enjoy together over the Christmas holidays.

What if God loves you? Why is that important? Because, if this is all true, it changes everything. It can no longer be just Christmas that’s magic. Everyday life gets re-enchanted. Angels, glory and heavenly hosts, blessed hope, amazing grace, and Jesus himself – Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, the Christ – will light up your everyday lives and the lives of your children like a Christmas tree. Batteries are included.

What if God loves you?

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*Taste and See...*

## From the Editor

*Alison Stortz*

Once more, Christmas is just around the corner – that magical season of light and celebration. When I saw the slate of articles for this issue, however, I was surprised by what seemed to be a shortage of seasonal references. Healing, conviction of sin, discipleship, revival, trust and obedience: where, I thought, is the Christmas joy?

But fear not, it's in there. Francis MacNutt once said, "the Christmas story heals the very deepest of our human needs – the sad feeling that God is distant, that we never see Him, that sometimes He doesn't seem to care." But, in the power of the Holy Spirit, God became visible. So, gentlemen (and ladies), "rest ye merry... Remember Christ our Savior/ Was born on Christmas Day/ To save us all from Satan's power/ When we were gone astray."

The Holy Spirit was present at Jesus' conception, throughout His ministry, and He is with each of us, wherever we are, today. In the power of the Holy Spirit, we can pray for and receive healing, repent of our sins and ask God's forgiveness, recognize Jesus as our Saviour, and step out in faith to follow Him. Not just Christmas Day, but every day.

Healing, conviction of sin, discipleship, revival, trust and obedience: these are, truly, "tidings of comfort and joy." Thanks be to God! Merry Christmas!

I look forward to hearing from you.  
*Alison* ☺

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# Healing, Ministry and Us

*The Very Rev. Dr. Donald P. Richmond*

Followers of Jesus Christ are called by God to be and become ministers of reconciliation (1Cor.12 and 2Cor.5:11-21). This means that, regardless of all of the gifts that are identified in these texts and elsewhere in the New Testament, healing is central to all of the gifts and graces of God. There are many reasons for making this assertion, but one commands our considered attention: God identifies Godself as the God who heals. One of God's names is Healer (Ex.15:26). Consequently, who God is and what God does are communicated in and by and through healing (Ex.15:26, Is.53:4-5, Matt.8:17, 1Pet.2:24).

There are various types of healers and forms of healing. There are healers who are simply *followers* of Jesus Christ - those who are interested in healing ministry because it is the foundation of Christian life and living. These are committed, caring and compassionate people who wish to advance God's healing grace in the world through their Christian identity, as a form of Christian witness to the love of God for human beings. As well, there are *functional* healers as followers of Jesus Christ - those who, while not having the charism of miraculous healing, still have a calling to the vocation of healing ministry, to the healing works of mercy. Finally, there are those functioning as healers in the *fullness* of

Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit - those who have both a calling and a specific charism to this healing vocation.

In John 20:22, we read that Jesus breathed on his disciples and told them to "receive the Holy Spirit." To be a follower of Jesus Christ requires the reception of the Holy Spirit - the breath of God received into the human soul. The Spirit of God is the life of God within us (Rom.8:8-9). The reception of the Holy Spirit is intimately related to the forgiveness of sins (Jn.20:23) and emphasized in Saint James' account of healing ministry (Jas.5:14-16). While it is important to appreciate that not all followers of Jesus Christ are engaged in Confessional or Sacramental healing ministries, the ministry of forgiveness is the responsibility of every follower of Jesus Christ. To be a follower of Jesus is to exercise the ministry of reconciling mercy, the foundation of healing.

The reception of the Holy Spirit is the "bottom line" in healing ministry. If we do not know the healing of God through salvation "in Christ," and salvation suggests some measure of substantive healing (Francis A. Schaeffer), then it is not possible to even minimally minister healing to other people. We cannot give what we have not received. Every follower of Jesus is an ambassador of reconciliation.

But there is more: progressing from following to functioning. The disciples who were breathed on in John 20 are the same disciples who received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. This is important. Shortly after breathing life into his disciples, Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem until they received the "Power from on High": the Holy Spirit. But why? Hadn't they already received the Holy Spirit? They received God's life (the Holy Spirit) in order to be *followers*, and now these followers needed the Holy Spirit in order to *function* in the gifts that God had to give them, and to us! They need to be both *enlivened* and *empowered*. In John 20:22 the Holy Spirit came within, but in Acts 2 the Holy Spirit came upon them.

The Holy Spirit coming *upon* the followers of Jesus Christ, for gifted ministry, is part of the Christian experience and inheritance. The gifts of God are for the people of God. God wants to gift us, and it is essential that we become recipients of this graced gift. Waiting on God, for God's time and God's Spirit, is an important part of spiritual empowerment. Some people, like in Acts 2, receive "tongues" and others receive different gifts (1Cor.12), each one for the "building up of the body," encouraging unity, and extending

*(Continued on page 5)*

the love of God within, between and beyond us.

It is also important to see God's gifting not just as a one-time event, but also as an ongoing attitude and disposition in spiritual ministry, including healing ministry. We need the Holy Spirit's power to come upon us in order for us to function effectively in the ministry or ministries to which God has appointed us. No Paraclete, no Power!

As we move from John 20 to Acts 2, and then from Acts 2 to Acts 4, we see that some of the disciples who were empowered in Acts 2 needed additional filling in Acts 4. They asked for this. They received this. Here is an *ongoing fullness* that is available to every follower of Jesus Christ in order to more fully and faithfully communicate Christ, which is an extension of what occurred in Acts 2. This is what we all need as followers of Christ who want to function in healing or other ministries with fullness and ongoing fullness. As Saint Paul put it, these disci-

ples were perpetually filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph.1:13-14, Eph.5:8). We also need this in order to follow, to function and to know the fullness of the Holy Spirit in us and through us.

Then, of course, we need to walk in the Spirit (Gal.5:16) - to cultivate the gifting and calling that is within and among us through The Paraclete, The Page, The Prayers, and The Presence.

### THE PARACLETE

Followers of Jesus Christ are people of the Spirit. Watchman Nee, a spiritual luminary of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, points out that it was the breath of God released into the dust of humanity that made us living souls. By our birth, by our creation, we are living souls - all of us, without exception. After the fall of Adam and Eve, however, we lost our Edenic innocence and fell out of our covenant relationship with God. We were living souls, but not life-giving spirits because, according to Saint Paul, we were "dead in our tres-

passes and sins."

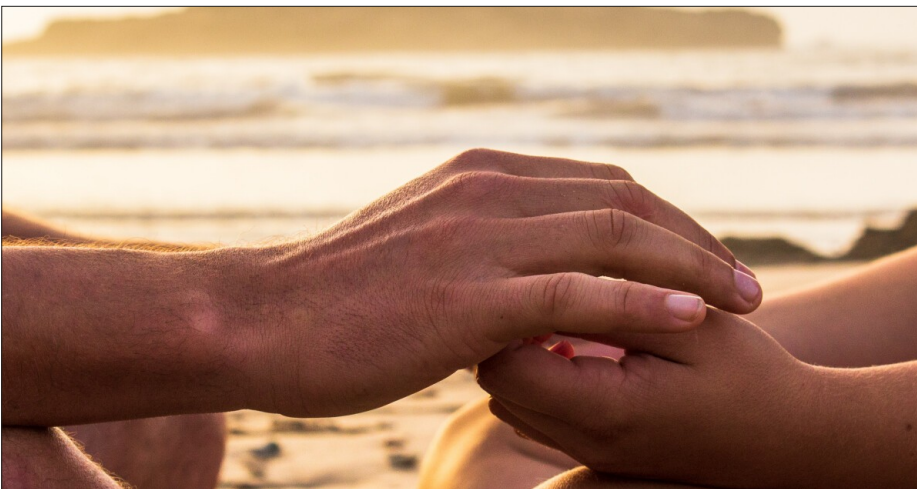
So how are the dead made alive? The Spirit of God! Now, if we are "in Christ," we are life-giving spirits in the *follow-function-fullness* framework provided above. As living spirits, followers of Jesus, we must strive to live and walk and operate in and by and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

### THE PAGE

Anglicans are people of the Paraclete, and also people of the Page, or rather two "pages": The Bible and *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). The best way to have the Holy Spirit work through us is to allow him to work in us. There is no better way, in my opinion, to open ourselves up to the Spirit of God than through devout daily devotions. While sacraments and sacramental living are crucial, we must be immersed in Scripture in order to be immersed in the Spirit. The Bible and BCP encourage this.

Scripture is essential to our beliefs and behaviors. Similarly, as the BCP is steeped in a robust scriptural and spiritual tradition, it is in a certain way also essential. In the BCP, we Anglicans have one of the richest resources for spiritual development ever devised and, at times, revised. If we want to function effectively in our gifting, in God's manifold graces, we should begin to utilize the Daily Offices outlined in the BCP.

(Continued on page 6)



It is stunning to me that there are Christians who think that they can effectively live as disciples without embracing certain disciplines, who think they can walk by the Spirit without walking in the Scripture, who think they can live an exalted Christian life without embracing essential devotional priorities, principles and practices. The Page is essential to spiritual living and ministry, healing gifts included. Developing a quiet life grounded within Scripture and the BCP has the unique capacity to cultivate space in our lives by which the quickening of the Holy Spirit can occur.

### THE PRAYERS

Prayer life is essential to Paraclete power. Prayer is an ongoing conversation with God that requires waiting and, at times, weeping. No prayer means no power!

Free and unscripted prayers are powerful, and I encourage the use of “tongues” and “groaning” in this regard. But during those times when we are dry, depressed, lacking discernment or direction, the BCP also helps us to pray well. There have been times, after I have offered an unscripted (and I trust Spirit-led) prayer, that someone has told me that I prayed beautifully. It was a wonderful compliment, but one that I did not deserve. If I did “pray well,” it was because I immersed myself in the prayers of the BCP. I used - and memorized - the BCP so much that it, I trust by the

Holy Spirit, became my own language. As well, if I did “pray well,” I prayed in and by the Holy Spirit.

Those of us who want to engage in prayer ministries, especially in healing prayer ministries, are wise to become immersed in the BCP and its many prayers. At times, a scripted prayer is the exact word that the Holy Spirit needs to use. Learn God’s language. Learn our Anglican language. Language is the foundation of culture and, if we want to have a healing culture, we must use the Bible and BCP language we have been afforded.

### THE PRESENCE

What do we bring into any ministerial opportunity? To be sure, we bring Paraclete, Page(s), and Prayer. But, most importantly, we bring the Presence of God in Christ by the vehicle of our own Spirit-submitted presence.

Sometimes people do not look or feel like they are being healed. This does not mean that some form of substantial healing has not occurred. If we pray to God in Christ by the Holy Spirit, in faith, God does work. God does move. God does act. God does heal! However, this said, it may not always look or feel that way. *Presence* closes this gap between God’s overall intention to heal and the actualization of that healing, which may, in fact, not be entirely actualized until we reach the “there and then” of eternity in and with God.

Without a doubt, this does not feel good for the person engaged in ministry, healing ministry in particular. It makes us uncomfortable. It leaves us with questions. It really leaves us entirely vulnerable. And this is precisely the point!

When we do not see or experience the movement of the Holy Spirit in the moment, although I must be clear that the Holy Spirit *is* present and does act, it puts us on the exact same plane as the person needing healing. They have no means of help without God, and neither do any of us. Vulnerability is the powerful conduit of God’s great and mighty presence and power. God’s grace uses our shared vulnerability in order to create a bridge between the healing team and the person (s) requesting healing. Vulnerability, very much in keeping with the naked vulnerability of God becoming Man, is a chief means for charismatically-infused connection.

Let me give an example. Many years ago, I read that Mother Teresa did not feel the presence of God in her life for almost fifty years. A Christian critic suggested that this was a clear proof that there was no God: if God does not show up for Mother Teresa, who will God show up for? (At least, as I read the story, this was the implication.) But the critic entirely missed the point. Mother Teresa worked in India, in an

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# Conviction, not Condemnation

Ven. Perry Cooper

A few weeks ago, Rev. Eddie Quann and I attended a Billy Graham Evangelism Summit in Halifax, NS. The theme of the summit was, "I am eager to preach the Gospel" (Rom.1:15). We heard from a number of plenary speakers, each of whom represented a different Christian denomination.

All the speakers shared an unabashed belief in the authority of the Holy Scriptures coupled with a fire-in-the-bones conviction that the Holy Spirit wants to bring holy revival to Canada. The four hundred participants at the summit were encouraged to pray for revival, talk about revival and be living witnesses to the saving love of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Hugh Osgood, a speaker from the United Kingdom, spoke about the need for conviction of sin (individual and corporate) before revival can take place.

Dr. Osgood reminded us that Christians have a tendency to confuse conviction and condemnation. As he put it, "conviction of sin comes from the Holy Spirit, while condemnation is of Satan, whose job it is to accuse the brethren (Rev.12:10). Satan would have you dwell on the shame of your sins, while the Holy Spirit points you to the blood of Jesus for forgiveness."

From time to time we need to be reminded that, wherever the Holy Spirit is at work, the enemy is also present, seeking to steal, kill and destroy. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul tells us that we are in a constant spiritual battle where the forces of good and evil are at war with one another: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heav-

enly realms" (Eph.6:12).

The parish in which I serve is actively praying for renewal and revival. If there are impediments to revival, including unconfessed sin and unforgiveness between church members, we want the Holy Spirit to reveal it so God's forgiveness can be offered and relationships restored. "He who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy" (Prov.28:13).

Dear Lord, when the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, may we not fall under self-condemnation. Let us instead place our trust in the blood of Jesus for forgiveness and newness of life. Amen.

*The Ven. Perry Cooper is rector of the Parish of Chatham in Miramichi, NB.*

## HEALING, continued

area that experienced utter poverty, utter need. How could anyone, Mother Teresa included, relate to such devastation and heartache if not exposed to the same experience? Mother Teresa, not knowing the tangible presence of God for fifty years, now knew such devastation and heartache and heartbreak. *She became utterly like them in order to effectively minister to them.* It was the Jesus Way. It was her way. It is the way of any follower

of Jesus who will minister effectively to others.

It is essential that every would-be minister (lay or clergy) understand and experience the empowerment of God. We must be called, confirmed, and commissioned; appointed, acquainted and anointed. But, above all, we must intimately know vulnerability in order, by faith and by God's mercy, to effectively be a healing and hopeful presence to others. If God does

not show up, we are unable to help. But God does show up, even when we don't see or feel it. When we sign up for true ministry, lay or clergy, we sign up for vulnerability and the fellowship of Christ's suffering. It is the only way to resurrection.

*Donald P. Richmond, DD, a widely published author and illustrator, is a retired Anglican Priest and Oblate with the Order of Saint Benedict.*

# The Spirit is Better Than...

*Rev. David Matthews*

In the book of Hebrews, we hear the message, “Jesus is better than...” This is a recurring theme throughout the book. The book is written as an attempt to convince the Jewish audience that Jesus is better than the traditions, the history, the law, the angels, Levi, and even better than Moses himself. Jesus is better. It is a bold claim... Jesus is BETTER!

I would like to suggest something further. Not only is Jesus better, the Spirit of God is better than the spirit of this world.

To make this point, I’m going to need a little help. I’m going to call upon the testimony of the world itself, and the testimony of art. So today we call movies to the stand.

At Christmas time, movie after movie (no matter how cheesy) will remind us that there is something special about the Christmas season. There is “a certain something” in the air. There is something warm about the spirit of humanity. There is a hope that ex-

ists and is being seen through the gloom of darkness; a hope that exists beyond the life we have accepted as normal. I believe this is art giving testimony to the truth.

The “Spirit of Christmas” referred to in so many movies is really the Spirit of God manifesting in this world, transforming all that He touches, making this world a better one, making humanity better, making us as individuals better. So, I call upon that testimony: what is really going on, and why?

The most skeptical and pragmatic of us would of course recognize immediately that movies are a form of art, and art (at least most art) is made because it makes money. So, obviously cheesy, heartfelt, humanity-elevating movies are made at Christmas because they make money. With this point I agree, absolutely!

But why do they make money? They make money because they are “popular” and people will pay to see them. Art becomes popular when it speaks to us and when

there is something in it that resounds with us. And this brings us back around to the point at hand.

These movies draw us in because they connect with us. There is a truth in the movie that speaks to the human spirit – a truth

that we know to be more real and more desirable than common life. The attitudes of giving, kindness, purity, gentleness, forgiveness, and family are promoted by these films at Christmas precisely because our spirits recognize something truly right about these traits.

The world, of course, tries to distort these truths from manifesting in their pure form. Giving gets distorted by greed and obligation. Kindness is dismissed as altruism. Purity is slandered as being prudish. Gentleness is renamed weakness. Forgiveness is seen as foolishness. Family is marred by conflict and bitterness.

Yet at Christmas, we are reminded of the true potential of good; giving, kindness, purity, gentleness, forgiveness, and family – not as they are but as they could and should be – come to the forefront. It is as if, at this time of year, humanity realizes there is something truer than the world we are living in. We see through the lies, even if just for a moment.

Christmas movies declare that something is better about this time of year than any other. Magic is in the air. This is the human language trying to give definition to something it doesn’t have a name for. It recognizes that “the Spirit of Christmas” is our hopes and dreams finding substance; it shows the distorted and polluted things

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## From the ARM Chair

**Rev. Canon Gene Packwood**

Discipleship is a subject which seems to pop up all over the place for me these days. Archbishop Gregory Kerr-Wilson, ARM's Episcopal Visitor, believes discipleship needs to be renewed and revitalized in the church in our time. So does my priest. Then, St. Oswald caught my attention yesterday on Instagram (yes, Oswald Chambers and *My Utmost for His Highest* is now on social media!):

*Discipleship is built entirely on the supernatural grace of God.*

and, Chambers continues, that grace is especially needed not so much when in crisis or to great things for God, but

*to live twenty-four hours in every day as a saint, to go through drudgery as a disciple, to live an ordinary, unobserved, ignored existence as a disciple of Jesus. It is inbred in us that we have to do exceptional things for God; but we have not. We have to be exceptional in the ordinary things, to be holy in mean streets, among mean people, and this is not learned in five minutes. (For 21 October)*

I don't think of my life as one of drudgery, but retirement has been for me mostly a time of ordinary, unobserved, and I would say "quiet," rather than ignored existence. I'm enjoying it. It is the setting God, the Father, in his love and mercy, has ordained for

me, "to live twenty-four hours in every day as a saint," and as a disciple of Jesus. To make it count, without drawing attention to myself or trying to be spectacular, I need God's supernatural grace. So do you.

How does God deliver his supernatural grace? Through the Holy Spirit!

"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1Cor.12:7). Now that warms the cockles of an ARM Canada chairman's heart!

As I've pointed out before, to each is given. To ordinary, unobserved disciples of Jesus like you

*(Continued on page 10)*

## **SPIRIT, continued**

of this world for what they could be. It is truth.

The world doesn't know what to call it, but we as people of faith do. We recognize truth coming into the world is the work of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of Christmas is the Spirit of God... and it is better than the spirit of this world. Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness. The Holy Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son is felt keenly by many each Christmas season, even if they don't have the true name for it.

The Spirit of God does not exist only at Christmas time, His presence is just seen and felt more clearly at Christmas. To all of us who know Jesus as Lord, we can call upon Him each and every day. We have been given the power to call upon Him so that He may grow in us and we can bring this same Spirit into the world every day, wherever we go.

So, this Christmas, I encourage you to look closely at the world around you. See both the lies and the ways God's Spirit is manifesting in this world. In those moments invite God, invite His

Spirit, to enter into this world more fully. Pray, "Holy Spirit, come." Some see it as the Spirit of Christmas, we see it as the Spirit of God coming near. Some see Christmas time as a short season of good. We know it to be a glimpse of the world that could be, the world that will be. Thy kingdom come.

Come Holy Spirit, come.

*Rev. David Matthews is rector of St. Thomas à Becket in Mississauga, ON.*

and me. For the common good, which must include our equally-ordinary, unobserved sisters and brothers.

Ordinary, unobserved and ignored we may be, but not insignificant. Each of us is precious and unique, made in the image of God, for such a time as the one we're in. The Father created each one of us to play a part in creation. None of us is an accident or unnecessary.

Here are some ordinary, unobserved (and no-longer ignored?) things we can do as disciples of Jesus at this time:

- Some systematic Bible reading. An Anglican Lectionary is good because it tracks with the seasons of the Church year. Traditional and contemporary lectionaries can be found online at <http://lectionary.anglican.ca>. They can also be found in *The Book of Alternative Services* (BAS) beginning on page 450 and page *xvi* in *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). God's word is living and active (Heb.4:12). Trust me. It will get amongst you. Just keep at it.
- Observe the Advent Ember Days of Solemn Prayer on December 14, 16 & 17. You will find readings and a Collect on page 395 in the BAS and page 210 and 100 in the BCP.

I know it's Advent, but I'm going to fast-forward to Christmas

where, as we pray the Christmas Collects together, we will see how "we being regenerate, and made *God's* children by adoption and grace," will "daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit" in the BCP repeatedly! (pp104, 113 & 115)

In addition to that traditional goodness, imagine the radiant brilliance of that "one true light" in the BAS Christmas Collects warming and illuminating our ordinary and unobserved discipleship efforts. That light will:

- Bring us to see the splendor of God's heavenly glory ourselves (p273)
- Illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds (p274)
- Cause us to share the divine life of Jesus Christ (p275)

The result? Discipleship bright enough to light up those ordinary and seemingly unobserved efforts in ways the The LORD will surely not ignore. So why not deck your halls with some discipleship this year?

From all of us at Anglican Renewal Ministries, have a rich and wide-awake Advent and a very Happy Christmas!!

Love in Jesus,  
*Gene+*

## Thank you for your support!

Until now, for your convenience, each issue of *Taste and See...* has come with an addressed offering envelope. Unfortunately, inflation has resulted in a substantial increase to the cost of these envelopes, and next year we will be forced to discontinue the practice. We hope those of you who are still supporting us by mail will consider using your own envelope to continue blessing us, or that you will consider one of the other ways of donating and renewing your magazine subscriptions.

Your support means everything to us! Please continue to keep us in your prayers. Here are some ways to financially support our ministry work:

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- Canada Helps or PayPal through our website: [www.armcanada.org](http://www.armcanada.org).
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Christians talk about revival all the time. They pray for it and conduct revival meetings, but what is it?

I came across a great definition of revival in History of Revivals, an interview with Dr. Rick Flanders (www.ministry127.com): “*Revival is God bringing His people back to spiritual health. Put another way, revival is God bringing His people to a level of submission and faith where He can bless them the way He promised.*”

The word “revival” is sometimes called awakening, outpouring, or renewal. These words all describe the same thing: God intervenes in normal church life and radically shakes it up. I have lived through two revivals: the Charismatic revival in the Anglican Church in the 1970s and the outpouring in Toronto in the 1990s. I would like to share some insights I have extracted from those experiences.

### **What does impartation mean?**

During a revival, the Lord imparts something special to his church. The word *impartation* means to pass on, convey, transmit or bestow. A teacher imparts knowledge. In the case of revival, the Holy Spirit is imparted to individuals, often in a dramatic way. Some people fall when this happens because they can't stand up when the Lord touches them. Many are overcome with peace,

joy, well-being, heat, an electrical sensation, and a deep sense of God's nearness.

A good way to envision this process is to consider that the impartation of God's presence is like oil poured from God onto a person. In most cases, God uses another person to impart the blessing He is giving. A prophetic word given over the Toronto Blessing outpouring at the beginning was that it would be like Elijah's oil (1Kings 17:16). The oil would keep pouring as long as there were jars to be filled.

### **January 1994 Toronto**

In January of 1994, a unique move of God occurred in a small Vineyard congregation in Toronto. The power of God fell upon the people dramatically, and Christians began to manifest unusual behaviours, such as laughter and shaking. Many are aware of this dramatic outpouring, now called the Toronto Blessing. What many people are not aware of is that the second meeting of the Toronto Blessing renewal was a children's meeting.

Pastor John Arnott invited Pastor Randy Clark of St. Louis Vineyard to come to our church to conduct a series of meetings, hoping that some of the renewal fire that Randy was experiencing in his church would rub off on the Toronto congregation. A unique characteristic of the move of God

in St. Louis was that the children had been greatly impacted and were ministering the renewal to others.

Randy Clark's ministry team contained his twelve-year-old son, who was actively involved in the ministry team during the first renewal meetings. The second renewal meeting in Toronto occurred on Friday night and was designed as a meeting for ministering the renewal to children. Kids' songs and puppet plays were used to prepare children to receive the Holy Spirit. The presence of God mightily impacted kids. The entire event radically changed our view of what was possible with children.

We had been ministering to children for over twenty years and had three children of our own, so we were keenly interested in seeing God move in supernatural ways with kids. For the first sixteen years of our ministry, we had only once seen children willing to come forward and lay hands on other children and pray for them in earnest. Only occasionally had we seen children truly enter into God's presence. For the most part, we spent our time entertaining and teaching them about God, but we never really saw them become active participants in ministry. After that Friday night, everything changed.

On the following Sunday morn-

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ing, Sue and I were conducting Sunday school. God came to our Sunday school that morning. Forty children gave their lives to Christ that morning; all asked for prayer, were baptized in the Holy Spirit, and fell down under the power of the Spirit.

From 1994 to 2000, Sue and I conducted a children's renewal meeting at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (Catch the Fire Toronto). During that time, we saw firsthand what God could do with children under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. We saw:

- Children willingly and quickly enter into God's presence and even become lost in His presence.
- Dozens of children lying on the floor under the Spirit of God.
- Children moving in the gifts of the Spirit. They were seeing visions, giving prophetic words, healing the sick, ministering in the power of God, interceding for the lost, praying for extended periods, and soaking adults in the power and presence of God.

Revival changes people, even children.

### What happens in a true revival?

Many churches have weekend or week-long revival meetings, but these are not true revivals. A true revival is a supernaturally God-breathed event that transforms people into lovers of God who develop a thirst and hunger for spiritual things that do not fade once people leave the meeting.

True revivals have a long-term impact on those who attend. In many cases, faith is restored, people are saved, and ministries and marriages are restored. In some cases, biblical truths that have gone dormant are restored.

Each revival has a different purpose, and the Lord imparts what He wants to give to accomplish the reason He started the revival in the first place. Here are a couple of examples:

- 1734-1743 The first great awakening revival imparted conviction of sin, and people came to Christ.
- 1906-1909 The Azusa Street revival imparted the manifestation of Speaking in Tongues and being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

True revivals are also very messy. In all cases, there are many unusual manifestations of the Holy Spirit. The meetings are often long, but attendees don't want them to stop. Ministry times are the focus of these meetings. Testimonies are also a critical component of these meetings. They are not regular church meetings.

The anointing received at these meetings is contagious and can be imparted by those who receive it to others who want it. Sue and I have seen people receive the Toronto Blessing (I prefer to call it the Father's Blessing) in people's homes, parks, and even a Curves gym. God is looking for people who want to receive, and He will fill them.

### Revival outpourings don't stop.

God chooses when to pour out His Spirit and impart a revival. The places He does become portals to heaven. Once the portal is open, He will continue to pour out His presence in that place to anyone who comes to receive the impartation given at the revival. Bethel, where Jacob encountered God in the Bible (Gen.28:18-19), is an example of this type of place.

Sue and I have proven this to be true. We have gone to places where revivals have occurred and asked God for the anointing that was imparted there, and we were immediately overwhelmed with the presence of God. God will continue to pour out His power, His anointing, on anyone who comes and asks, anyone who will seek His presence.

### What happens to revival? Why do they seem to stop?

I was once told the following alliteration that describes the four states of a revival.

**Man:** An anointed person (male or female) is often a revival catalyst. God moves on that person, and they receive an impartation to share.

**Movement:** Those who have received the anointing go to the world and impart the anointing to those who will receive it. During this stage the revival is most effective.

**Machine:** The revival becomes a

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fine-tuned machine of conferences and meetings, very polished productions. Unfortunately, during this stage, the Holy Spirit begins to be shut out, as man's agenda takes a front-and-center position.

**Monument:** The revival is a memory that people look back on, and the organization is all-important: pet doctrines are declared absolute. They will often persecute the next revival that starts in another place or organization than theirs. There is no tolerance for another opinion.

Here are a few reasons why revival diminishes.

1. People stop desiring the presence of God. I have written another article about this, called "Desire the Fire" (published in *Taste and See...*, Winter 2019).
2. Meetings become social gatherings where attendees spend more time talking to each other than seeking the Lord.
3. Offering talks take up more time than testimonies, if testimonies happen at all.
4. Division forms around doctrinal differences or political agendas. As a result, the brethren do not dwell in unity.
5. Personalities strive for posi-

tion and self-exaltation.

6. No time is given for personal ministry. The focus moves to things like worship and preaching.
7. The next generation does not embrace nor understand the outpouring, often because they have seen the good, bad, and ugly of their parents' revivals. They may love the Lord but want to distance themselves from the revival.



8. Left or right extremism begins to manifest and become more important than seeking the Holy Spirit.
9. Leadership failure. This can happen when the revival does not transition from Man to Movement. The "man of power of the hour" does all the ministry and preaching. Power corrupts, and in some situations, the Leader may fall into some sin. They assume it's OK because God keeps blessing them and think that He validates their behavior. They forget Romans 11:29: "For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable." God will keep using a person, even though they are living in sin.

Eventually, their sin is exposed, the followers of the revival are disillusioned, and the revival stops.

### How to stay revived

I have a few suggestions about how to stay revived.

1. Keep seeking to be personally filled with the Spirit. Make this a priority. Perhaps go to places where the Holy Spirit has moved in the past and ask for the impartation given there. God responds to hungry hearts. Elijah's oil will pour into an empty vessel.
2. Repent of allowing the machine or monument stages of the revival to get a foothold in your church.
3. Give time for testimonies in your church. There is power in testimony.
4. Don't let political, personality, or doctrinal positions become more important than unity in the body of Christ. Practice being a servant of all.
5. Be more interested in letting the Holy Spirit run His agenda for the meeting than yours.

Here is a test. Is it more important to you to preach the message you prepared or to let Holy Spirit do what He wants? Once the Lord told Sue in the middle of her sermon to stop and pray for a

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## Trust and Obedience

Jane Jones

In this season we are living in it is hard to know who to trust, and difficult to discern what is truth and what is not.

Thanks to the internet, 'prophetic' words are coming from all directions, and from opposite ends of the spectrum. God will show the worst-case scenario to some and the best-case scenario to others. Conspiracy theories are not a new invention, but the pandemic has generated a whole new crop of confusing theories and questions. How do we

respond in these times, when things seem so confused and prophets of doom are filling our inbox?

I have been drawn to the account of the twelve spies in Numbers 13, where God instructs Moses to send one leader from each tribe to look at the land of Canaan: "Then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, "Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers' tribes, everyone a leader among them" (v1-2).

The twelve spies went into the land for forty days, and then came back to give their reports. Although they carried samples of good fruit from the land, and they all agreed that the land was flowing with milk and honey (v27), ten of the spies gave a

negative report and only two gave a positive report.

The ten spies told the people that there was no way they could defeat the people living in the land; they were too strong, they were giants, and their cities were large and fortified. These men looked at the situation through their fears: "we seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them" (v33). As a result, the people became afraid and grumbled against Moses and God.

Actually, they did more than grumble: "That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud" (Num.14:1). Then it got worse. When Moses and Aaron fell facedown before the people and Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes and tried to stir up the people's faith that the Lord would help them take the land, "the

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### REVIVAL, continued

man whose leg was frozen and could not bend his knee. Initially, Sue said, "sure, Lord, right after I stop preaching." The Lord said, "pray now, Sue." Sue stopped speaking, prayed for the man, and returned to preaching. A few minutes later, Sue noticed the man was crying. He had taken the brace off his leg. She stopped and asked if she had hurt him. He said, "no, I can't see the scars

from my knee surgery, and my knee works fine. I can fully bend my leg and don't need my brace." Always be open to what the Lord wants to do.

Sue and I plan to visit the birthplaces of the first and second great awakenings in Northampton, MA, and Rochester, NY. Our heart is to go and honour what God did and receive the blessing He gave there. The oil is still pouring, and

we plan to get filled. We bless you to desire the Spirit's gifts and be filled with His fire.

*Bill and Sue Dupley worship at Catch the Fire in Toronto, ON. This article is reprinted with permission from the author. You can read more on his website: [www.thesecondplace.ca](http://www.thesecondplace.ca).*

## TRUST, continued

whole assembly talked about stoning them” (Num.14:5-10).

Joshua and Caleb, the two spies who gave a good report, saw exactly what the others saw, but they looked at it through the promise God had given that they would possess the land. They saw that, even though the enemies in the promised land were strong, God was greater. God had given His word that He would give the land to Israel. They had faith in God and they knew that God would come through on His promise because God is faithful.

When God promised the land to Abraham and his descendants it was a done deal; they just needed to go in and take it. My ‘mantra’ right now is “BUT GOD” - He will do what He says he will do in spite of what we see or hear to the contrary. He is able to do abundantly more than we can ask or imagine.

Why did Joshua and Caleb stand out from the crowd of nay-sayers? They both spent time with the Lord and got to know His nature and His faithfulness.

In Exodus 33:11, we find Joshua choosing to linger in the tabernacle after Moses returned to the camp. Joshua saw Moses draw near to the Lord, and wanted to spend more time himself in the presence of the Lord. In Numbers 14:24, the Lord says of Caleb: “But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and

follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.” They both put their faith in God, knowing that what He had said He will do.

Trust and obedience are key to inheriting the promise. When God has made a promise, we have to play our part. We have to step out to claim our inheritance by faith and in trust. The grumblers and complainers missed out on their inheritance. They were relying on their own strength and ability and not on God’s. The lesson is Proverbs 3:5, which says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”

We are being bombarded today with negative reports. Even if they are true and factual, what are we going to do? Look at the situation with faith, not fear! We are more than conquerors. We are over-comers, seated with Christ in heavenly places. The battle is already won! We need to step out in trust and obedience and claim the victory.

May we have the courage and faith of Joshua and Caleb to proclaim the good news in the face of the bad!

*Jane Jones is the ARM Prayer Coordinator. She lives in Okotoks, AB.*

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