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#### EAT FEARLESS FOR BREAKFAST

an you imagine your life without fear—living truly fearless in your pursuit of what sets your soul on fire? Imagine if faith, not fear, was your default and you really knew that you were capable, brave and significant. What would that look like for you?

I recently accepted a faith challenge by a CFNI alumna and owner of Strong Life, a faith-filled fitness company, to participate in her Eat Fearless For Breakfast challenge. We committed to feed faith first thing in the morning to give a knock-out punch to the lies that fear tells, and simply share encouragement. Using the Word as a brutal force for 21 days in any area where lies reign is the key to breaking unbiblical thought patterns, according to the renowned Christian neuroscientist, Dr. Caroline Leaf, speaking at this year's Voice of Healing Conference (see back page). I knew I had some areas in my life where fear reigned. But as the days progressed and I filled my mind with truth, I realized that fear was literally ruling every broken area of my life.

One particular day, someone posted in the group, "It's not who you are that holds you back. It's who you think you're not." Bam. A major lie was knocked down for the count. Some people had judged me as "not good enough" and I had believed them, felt the pain of it, for far too long. I hadn't taken on many brave assignments of late because I was left wallowing in the muddy puddle created by my own fearinduced tears. Lies and the fear they bring, when left unchecked, will take you down if you let it. You see, fear is a thief because it robs you before you even begin. But as I focused on His Word, He revealed truth that powered the ability to make the right faith decisions necessary to walk powerfully into His promises. Did you catch that? Lies get in the way of living the life He designed for us to live. Fear immobilizes, but freedom tastes fantastic.

During the challenge I came across this verse: "Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast'" (John 21:12, NIV). In this chapter, Jesus offers an invitation to His disciples when appearing to them shortly after the crucifixion. In the midst of their darkness, with devastating memories of the cross, the violent death they witnessed and the subsequent despair, coupled by a night of a "failed" fishing expedition, comes His offer to meet over a simple thing—breakfast. At their low point, they eat with Faith and the Fear-Slayer Himself. He tells them to invite others to partake and then is adamant that they "feed His sheep."

Even in our most desolate moments of life when lies have kept us imprisoned from pursuing dreams and relationships, or simply shaking and anxious over health concerns or financial troubles, we can find Christ in our midst in the most simple of things, like breakfast among friends. Out of a crucible of defeat, Jesus arrives and offers a "breakfast" with Him to fuel faith. It is often from this place where He reassures and then commissions by saying, "Now go spread the faith and courage I've served up!"

As we agree with the Word of God, we recognize the thoughts we've held

that are really fear-based lies. It's like putting on a new pair of glasses — the world suddenly is brighter and clearer. The fuzzy lines of fear fade, and purpose, courage, hope and truth have room to rise!

Now, I don't know what lie anchors you've made peace with, perhaps, but He wants to set you free too. But let me tell you, dear one, if you dare to dream of freedom, you must be brave enough to fight for it. The warfare in the battle is simply to pull our thoughts into obedience to the Word of God; to take every argument that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bring it into obedience to Him (2 Cor. 10:4).

Listen, those fear-causing, demotivating, sickness-accepting, friend-with-poverty, self-rejection thoughts are not of God. We can kick those thoughts out of our minds and replace them with biblical truth. The more we build faith, the more fear is revealed for the pitiful lie that it is and its power drains away. We then begin to live spirit-led lives.

So I encourage you to fuel yourself with faith as you "breakfast" each day to win the battle over fear. It takes courage. It takes persistence. But He gives us the grace and power to finally move forward and see the big reveal—the truth of what He dreams to see you walk into and emotions that are rooted in His loving kindness!

His freedom awaits! Be strong and courageous in Him, today and always! 🏶

#### Kelly Head

The Lord God is my strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army. - Habakkuk 3:19 (AMP)



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### **CFN FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS** WORSHIP AND THE PRESENCE OF GOD

#### • By Dennis Lindsay



#### WHY DO PEOPLE LIKE NOISE?

People like noise because of "presence." Have you ever wondered why restaurants have their PA system so loud? Why is it that when people walk into their homes they turn on the television, especially if they are alone? Why is it that during the holidays many people suffer from loneliness? What is it that loneliness cries out for? Loneliness wants presence, but whose presence? Sight and sound represent presence. The Bible tells us the only way to really fill the emptiness we are experiencing during times of loneliness is our relationship with Jesus Christ. God says to the believer experiencing times of loneliness, to spend time in His presence.

God has designed mankind in such a way that only His presence will fully provide lasting peace and satisfaction. When we seek God in worship, He reveals His presence to us so we can have a loving, intimate relationship with a Friend Who never leaves us.

### MARTY'S "AS THE DEER" LEADS ONE INTO GOD'S PRESENCE

It is worship that brings us into the presence of God. In Psalm 42, we read about David who expresses his hunger and thirst for the presence of God. He writes, "As the deer pants for water so my soul longs for you, oh God." One of CFNI's alumni, Marty Nystrom, wrote the famous praise chorus, "As the Deer," while he was here. The chorus has been sung all over the world. Marty shares that it was the Holy Spirit Who gave him the chords when he was struggling with depression and loneliness. Afterwards, Marty learned the blessings of entering into the presence of God.

#### GOD REPEATS HIMSELF, "I WANT TO GIVE YOU MY PRESENCE!"

It is interesting how God worked in the people in the Bible. God created Adam and Eve to have fellowship with Him and to be in His presence. Later, God visited



1974— CFNI's bookstore opened to serve the student body and the community.

1974—Between 1974 and 1976, several more apartment complexes for student housing were purchased, including Agape House.



#### THE WORD FAITH FAITH THE SUPERNATURAL ISRAEL ISRA

Abraham, had dinner with him, and made a life covenant with him. In Exodus 3:12, God reveals himself to Moses in the burning bush. In Joshua 1:5, God tells Joshua, "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you." In Hebrews 13:5, God says, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." All through the Scriptures, God reveals His presence because He wants to be with mankind.

I was returning home after completing my final master's class at Oral Roberts University when I received the most devastating phone call. All I could do was turn to God in worship. Five minutes after the call, I saw a billboard sign on the highway depicting the twin towers on fire in New York City. The billboard read, "Yea, though I walk through the valley, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." Suddenly, all fear left me; I had a rush of God's presence saying, "Trust Me." Over the next several months, my worst nightmare turned into the greatest testimony of God's deliverance. It was God's presence that carried me through.

#### **GOD'S PRESENCE EMPOWERS**

Sometimes I've wondered how believers could sit for hours just worshiping God. Now I know it's His presence. Experiencing His presence is far more than just an intellectual understanding that God is everywhere—that He is omnipresent. Experiencing the presence of God means to be empowered. True worship empowers us with strength when we are tired, weary, exhausted and worn out physically, mentally and emotionally. True worship empowers us with an unspeakable, supernatural peace which we cannot understand. True worship empowers us with supernatural courage which brings contentment. Fear vanishes when we are in the presence of the Almighty. Our needs are met no matter what they may be, and we become confident that God will see us through.

#### **HEARING GOD'S VOICE IN HIS PRESENCE**

It is one thing to have the Holy Spirit living inside of us, but it's another to be aware of His presence. God not only wants us to be aware, but to be sensitive to His presence. When God speaks to us, it will always be consistent with His Word and the life of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Sometimes during the night, I may wake up and be aware of God's presence. I begin to worship Him, and ask Him to speak to me which He does. I now know to get up, turn the light on, and write down what the Holy Spirit says. If I didn't, I would not remember those encouraging words the next day.

Earlier in my life, I received a wonderful dream about future events for my family and me. I did not get up and write them down. The following morning I recalled having this incredible dream, but I couldn't remember one detail.

1976— Music has always been an integral part of CFNI. Space was needed for offices and practice rooms so the Music Building was purchased to fill this need. 1976—The first CFN-affiliated Bible school opened in Europe. *Glaubenszentrum* in Germany reclaimed a former Nazi barracks for the Gospel.

1977—More space was needed for classrooms, offices and nurseries so a large student center was built.



#### HARDWIRED FOR GOD'S PRESENCE

There are individuals who know nothing about the presence of God; yet, if or when something happens, they quickly blurt out, "Thank God." Individuals often make such spontaneous responses even though they haven't thought about God or thanked Him in years. The reason for this is that every individual has been hardwired to experience the presence of God. They realize there had to be "Somebody" Who protected them. God is actually using this situation to reveal Himself to them.

God wants us to become conscious of His presence. This has to be the greatest experience we can ever know. Life is not easy as it presents us with many distractions. For many believers the last thing we have time for is to be alone with God. We all have distractions such as family, children, education, television, the Internet, not to mention church activities. If we are truly going to experience the presence of God, we must adjust our priorities. God wants our fellowship, and He's done everything possible to make it a reality.

#### FINDING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Probably the most difficult issue in discovering the presence of God is the need to surrender. Surrendering is at the heart of worship, and it is a prerequisite for entering into the presence of God. Surrender is not a popular word. It implies losing, and no one likes to yield to a stronger opponent. In today's competitive culture, we've learned to never give up or give in. However, surrendering to God should be an automatic response once we have felt His amazing love and mercy. We surrender ourselves to Him, not out of fear or duty, but in love, "because He first loved us." Entering into the presence of God during times of worship brings God pleasure, and this happens when we give ourselves completely to God.

#### **ENJOYING THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

Anyone who is familiar with CFNI worship knows that there is something unusual and special about this expression. My sister, Shira, and other visiting speakers who have traveled all over the world visiting schools, churches and ministries have observed that the worship here is unique. It is something the Holy Spirit Himself implements—not mankind regardless of our abilities and giftings. Students will tell you that what they enjoyed the most while attending CFNI is the worship they experienced. The presence brings renewing, refreshing and healing. It is not possible to be in His atmosphere—His presence—and not leave changed!



1979 — An ambitious construction project doubled the size of the Institute Building auditorium from 1,400 to 2,500 seats. 1980—CFN bought a four-story building in Israel—the Jerusalem Center—as a chapel for Jews, Arabs and American tour groups. 1980 — CFN received its largest gift—the deed to 41 acres—worth \$1 million. This paid off the mortage on the Cornerstone apartment complex.



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told on to your By Michelle Ofori-Ansah

Dr. Marilyn Hickey was recently awarded the 2015 Freda Lindsay Award. This award honors one outstanding woman in ministry each year. Below is the encouragement Dr. Hickey shared from her years in ministry concerning dreams and how to press through to see those dreams fulfilled.



Dr. Marilyn Hickey is a Bible teacher who travels all over the world holding crusades and delivering Bibles and Christian books even to closed countries. She has a daily television program, Today with Marilyn and Sarah, that she hosts with her daughter, Sarah Bowling. Her simple goal is to "Live the Bible and experience the miracles." Find out more on her website marilynandsarah.org. Everyone has dreams. Some dreams have become realities, while others are forgotten. Some are deferred and others remain fresh and new. The difficulty comes when you try to hold on to Godgiven dreams when their fulfillment is delayed. Dr. Marilyn Hickey, an accomplished Bible teacher who travels around the world to spread the Gospel, explains, "You have to hold on to your dreams because dreams don't make you popular." Unfortunately, even the people closest to you can try to discourage you from following your God-given dreams. Your family may have a dream for you, and while they may want the best for you, their idea and God's idea about what is best may not line up.

#### DON'T GIVE UP

Joseph, in Genesis 37, faced family pressures that led to his dream being deferred. His brothers, angry and jealous of him, sold him into slavery. His dream seemed impossible. But in looking at Joseph's life, Dr. Hickey sees the first thing that will allow you to maintain hope for the fulfillment of God-given dreams. "You have to choose to keep holding on to your dream, because your dream won't happen in one night; it is a process." Even as Joseph was torn from his family and traveled toward a future as a slave in a friendless land, he held on to his dream. It didn't happen overnight, but he refused to give up on it. This tenacity kept his dream alive.





Dr. Marilyn Hickey with some members of the Freda Lindsay Award Committee at CFNI. (Anna Kendall, Marilyn Hickey, Ginger Lindsay, Alta Hatcher)

#### PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Arriving in Egypt, Joseph was bought by Potiphar to serve in his house. As a slave, Joseph didn't despair. He chose to do what he could, even in that environment to see his dream fulfilled. As Dr. Hickey describes, "He practiced. He was an administrator. He knew how to organize things and get people to work together; so he practiced those skills." Even when he was thrown into a dungeon after being falsely accused of rape by Potiphar's wife, he still practiced. "The prison officials saw that he had so much administrative ability that they put him in charge of the prison. He's practicing in prison—not having a pity party," Dr. Hickey said. Joseph would not be discouraged by setbacks that could have completely demoralized others.

#### SOW INTO OTHERS' DREAMS

Next, Joseph took advantage of the opportunity to sow back into someone else's life. Two men approached him and asked him to interpret their dreams. Dr. Hickey shared, "Joseph could have said, 'I can't even get my own dreams to come to pass; why would I help you with yours?' But he didn't. He sowed into the dreams of others." Joseph interpreted these men's dreams taking the time to help them understand what these dreams meant, which led to one of them being reinstated in Pharaoh's palace. Unfortunately, his contribution was forgotten for two years until Pharaoh had a need. Still not bitter and still believing in the possibility of his own dream's fulfillment, he sowed into Pharaoh's dreams.



#### FORGIVENESS IS KEY

After Joseph accurately interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, Pharaoh asked him to be his administrator. "Joseph could never have been an administrator of a nation if he hadn't been practicing," stated Dr. Hickey. All those years as a slave and a prisoner were actually bearing fruit as Joseph's finely honed skills were being used on a greater stage then he ever imagined.

At this point Joseph is running a nation. He has saved Egypt from a famine, and is actually helping to fill Egypt's treasury by selling the excess grain that he stored. It was when he was at his time of greatest success that he encountered his hardest test. Joseph's brothers appeared before him to buy grain. Dr Hickey says, "I think if I had seen my brothers after all they had done to me, I would have slapped them sideways! I mean, they tried to kill him. But he didn't do that; he forgave them. And that is the fourth thing you have to do in order to see your dreams fulfilled. You must forgive." The power of forgiveness frees you to enjoy the dreams God has given you.

#### A DREAM FULFILLED

Dr. Hickey continues, "Are you going to have problems on the way? Oh yes, but your God-given dreams are so important. If you let go of your dreams, you will lose the supernatural in your life. Instead, hold on to your dreams, keep practicing, keep sowing and then be sure to forgive. As you do these things, know that your God-given dreams will be fulfilled."

# ERUSALEM 2015

### EMPOWERED21 🥢 GLOBAL CONGRESS

#### • By Kelly Head

Could it be that the Church will see something happen just as it was in the days of the Bible patriarchs—like when Joseph reunited with his younger brother, there was plenty of food for his brothers' families and also the Egyptians (Gentiles), asked Dr. Dennis Lindsay, President of Christ For The Nations and speaker at the recent Empowered21, a congress held this year in Jerusalem on Pentecost.

The goal of this annual congress is to seek the outpouring of God's Spirit to witness a fresh thrust of power to accelerate world evangelization in the 21st century and Dr. Lindsay shares his view of this historic congress. "Just as in the days of Joseph, so it is today. In this wave of God's spirit that began in Jerusalem, I believe He is about to bring forth the 'Benjamin Generation,' the youth of the world that results in a massive world harvest in which souls of every nation will receive spiritual food—both Jews and Gentiles."

Christ For The Nations leadership, headed by CFN President Dr. Lindsay, were invited to speak at the 2015 congress as part of the ministry track "Happening Now: The Book of Acts," and were joined by a 49-member team of students and friends of the ministry. Other speakers representing CFNI included CFNI Executive Director Dr. John Hollar, International Ministries Director Rod Groomer, Maoz Israel Ministry Co-founder Shira Sorko-Ram and Kobi Ferguson of Yeshua Israel. Empowered21 2015 brought together more than 4,500 Spiritfilled believers from more than 70 nations who converged in Jerusalem. Another 150,000 people from 127 nations viewed the congress via live stream. "It was marvelous to think that people from every continent were watching the congress live online with one focus in mind—another awakening, worldwide, of a Holy Spirit outpouring," Lindsay shared. "Even though I have been to Jerusalem some 25 times, I have never experienced as powerful a time as we did this Pentecost Sunday."

CFNI alumni worship leaders Klaus Kuehn, Thomas Miller and Ana Paula Bessa Valadao also brought their anointed worship to the main services at the congress. "We celebrated a joyous time of worship and exhortation that was perhaps a depiction of the coming wave of God's spirit," Lindsay shared.

Lindsay said he believes that what took place at this recent congress in Israel is a precursor to an imminent powerful move of the Spirit in Israel and beyond. "As we know, at the Body of Christ's first Pentecost God's power came down in a mighty way and the disciples received an anointing that changed the world. Now, something again has happened, which I believe will usher in another spiritual 'tsunami' that will circle the globe and cause the Church of the living God to expand its borders to the ends of the Earth. The







heavenlies were shaken during this recent Pentecost Sunday in Jerusalem and the tidal wave will no doubt sweep around the world with the power, grace and mercy of our Savior," said Lindsay.

Believing that this day of all days should be celebrated in the Spirit-empowered church, the Pentecost Sunday Initiative began, through the Empowered21 network, to call local church leaders around the world to preach and teach on the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday and the days leading up to it. Organizers of the events said they believe that by celebrating and focusing together on this one day around the world the Church could witness the Spirit-baptism of thousands and perhaps millions of people. This outpouring would bring a harvest unlike anything that has occurred in Jerusalem over the past 2000 years. According to the CFNI Empowered21 2015 liaison Celeste Groomer, assistant director of CFN international ministries, who attended the congress, it was a significant event. "As participants, we left with a sense that God is very much 'up to something' that has yet to be revealed in the natural. It was unprecedented, both in its focus on the desire of the Holy Spirit to have personal influence in people's lives, and the worldwide hunger for God to move in the Body of Christ," said Groomer. "As the weeks and months follow this gathering, we will be keenly watching news in Israel and around the world. Assuredly the Holy Spirit is up to something and we at CFNI anticipate the ministry being used by the Holy Spirit in another great heavenly outpouring to reap the harvest in these last days."

To learn more about Christ For The Nations Israel tours visit CFN.org.

## The Next Great Awakening is Now

#### • By Belinda Elliott

Are you ready to see revival come to the world? Fasten your seat belts, because the time has come! That's the message Dutch Sheets wants Christians to know. The acclaimed author and evangelist who has ministered around the world says God is ready to pour out His spirit again.

It was 25 years ago when God first gave him a message that He would send a Third Great Awakening and it would begin with a younger generation. Recently, God has been reminding Sheets of all the miracles he has seen through his years of ministry and of the visions God gave him 30-40 years ago. He told Sheets the time has come for another great revival. "The Lord said, 'I'm bringing you full circle,'" Sheets recalls. "I knew when He said that it wasn't just me, it was a plural you, the Body of Christ." The Lord also told him these things would be done at a higher level. "I believe the signs and wonders we're about to see will be greater than we've ever seen."

After sharing this message recently in Oklahoma, a Jewish rabbi approached him and asked if he had ever studied the Hebrew word "testimony." The rabbi, who is a Messianic believer, explained the word means "do again."

The rabbi told Sheets, "We believe that when you talk about what God did yesterday, the same power is released again today when you're doing it in faith and you're doing it as an honor to Him. We believe when you tell the story He does it again."

The rabbi explained that this is why it is so important for Jewish people to tell their children their history. The power that God demonstrated through their deliverance from Egypt and in the Passover is released again as they tell these stories. The rabbi also said his community has been seeing people healed from illnesses just by hearing the testimony of other believers who have been healed.

As Sheets began to study the deeper Hebrew meaning of the word testimony, he was led to a similar



"We're coming into a season where the power of God is going to be so strong that we're not going to see just one at a time set free; we are going to see crowds of people set free."

word, "remember." In one of the meanings of the word remember is a sense of action. "When this word is used, the remember-er has to do something," Sheets says.

This idea answered a question that Sheets had wondered about for years. There are several instances in Scripture that say, "God remembered," such as when He remembered His promise to Abraham or remembered Hannah and she conceived. If God is allknowing and never forgets anything, why would the Bible emphasize His remembering of things?

"The word doesn't just mean think about," Sheets explains, "it means think about and do." When God calls something to His mind, He is so powerful and miraculous that action follows automatically. "He can't even think about it without power starting to be released," Sheets says. "When He thinks about it, He starts to do something."

Sheets has seen this type of remembrance happen in worship services. In one service, the speaker spoke of Mary who poured her alabaster box of expensive ointment on the feet of Jesus as a precious act of worship. As the speaker began to recall the details of the story, God's power and a spirit of worship was released among those in attendance. "Then I remembered," Sheets recalled, "Jesus said that everywhere the gospel is preached I want this talked about as a remembrance. I used to think that was strange, that He wanted to honor her that much. What if it wasn't just to honor Mary? What if He knew that when you told the story and talked about that, that the same spirit of intimacy would be released into the room?"

That is what can happen now as people remember and share all the things God has done in the past. "We're coming into a season where what some of us saw 30 to 40 years ago, we're going to see it at a completely different level," Sheets says. "We're coming into a season where the power of God is going to be so strong that we're not going to see just one at a time set free; we are going to see crowds of people set free."

Sheets believes the Third Great Awakening will usher in a time of creative healing miracles such as limbs growing, and mass deliverances such as entire college campuses getting saved. "When God starts pouring out His spirit in a true revival, everything that we want to see happen gets really easy," he explains. "Miracles start happening regularly."

"This will be the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit that has ever occurred in all of history, and I'm including the book of Acts," Sheets continues. "I believe you have been chosen by the Lord to be a part of the generation that gets to be on the front lines of that."

What is more exciting is that Sheets believes this movement of God has already started. Christians just need to step into it by faith. "You can either wait for this and keep saying it's coming, or you can start setting your heart and your faith through prayers and fasting," he says. "You can just start decreeing it's here now and say, 'I'm going to deliver people, heal people, and cast out demons.' You need to move into this. You are going to change nations."

Dutch Sheets is an internationally recognized author, teacher, and conference speaker and is a former Executive Director of CFNI. Find out more at dutchsheets.org.

A CALL TO SHARE THE BLESSINGS OF GOD

#### By Belinda Elliott



any unsaved people do not understand that God is a God of blessing. That's what Fred Markert, director of Youth With A Mission's Network for Strategic Initiatives, is challenging Christians to understand and share with others.

"God wants to bless us so much that He sent Jesus to help us because He has a good heart toward us," he explains. "The biggest problem with people who are not saved is that they have a faulty understanding of Who God is. They think He's harsh, He's mean, He's judgmental. They get that idea from a lot of His followers who tend to be harsh, mean and judgmental."

Instead, Markert states that believers need to introduce the whole world to the beauty and delightfulness of God's nature. We need to communicate God's patience and kindness—not by diminishing the idea of sin, but by expressing God's standard of holiness as His loving limits for us. "We're all moralistic. 'Thou shalt not do this,'" he explains. "Rather, we should share that God designed you to be blessed when you do this, and if you do that instead, it is not going to bless your life, and then be able to demonstrate it to them so that they understand the beauty of God. We've lost that in the Church."

He points to quality of life among various nations of the world as evidence of God's blessings. "The countries with

the best quality of life are Christianized countries because Jesus said, 'I will bless you.' When 30 percent or more of any society follows Christ, the whole society gets in on the blessings." Markert adds that looking at statistics such as infant mortality and global poverty shows that as a nation becomes Christianized, God brings blessings to the lives of the people, which improves their health and their economy in addition to their spiritual lives.

"This is where the evangelical church has gotten off track," he says. Rather than condemning people as "filthy rotten sinners" who need to "turn or burn," Markert suggests showing people how God wants to bless them for being obedient. "We need to learn to preach the Word in such a way that people are wooed, that they are drawn to love the delightful God," he says.

Markert believes that just as God planned to bless all nations through Abraham, God wants to bless the nations through believers today. However, many Christians are not taking this message to the world. "Most Christians never share their faith even once in their life," he says, "but it is inseparably linked in Scripture. We are blessed to be a blessing to all the nations of the Earth. Jesus said it to the entire Church: 'Go into all the world.'"

This complacency, especially in the younger generation of American believers, is resulting in many never being able to hear the gospel of Christ. Though America is the largest missions-sending country in the world, young Christians are not volunteering for mission work as much as previous generations.



He points to Iran as one place they are desperately needed. Young adults there are rejecting Islam. Many see Allah as a "mean, nasty" god who is not capable of producing the beauty they see in nature, Markert explains. He believes there is a generation of young Iranians who are more open now than ever before to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

"The Church is not rising up like we should to help Iran come to the Gospel," he says. "People here are afraid to go to Iran. But, of course, Jesus didn't say go into all the world where it's totally safe and there are never any would brutalize His own Son?' We are so steeped in Christianity that we don't realize how aberrant it can sound to some people who are outside because they don't understand the reality of Who God is, so they misinterpret a lot."

It is up to Christians to help them understand. God is a missionary God, and the Bible shows our missionary God trying to communicate with His creation. If we are to be His disciples, we also must be missionaries who are ready to share the faith with lost people near and far.

#### "We need to learn to preach the Word in such a way that people are wooed, that they are drawn to love the delightful God."

problems. He didn't say go into all the world where electricity works 24/7. He didn't say go into all the world where the food tastes really yummy. He said, 'Go into all the world.'"

And Iran isn't alone. Markert says China and India are also countries that have traditionally not accepted the Gospel, but the Holy Spirit is leading many there to accept Christ. Another group he feels is ripe for obedient, courageous believers to evangelize right here in the western world is the so-called new atheists.

"They make a big deal about the death of Christ," Markert explains. "They say, 'What does it say about a father who "We cannot come to Christian maturity without sharing our faith as a lifestyle," Markert says. "We must be active in sharing our faith so we can fully understand every good thing we have in Christ."

Fred Markert, a CFNI alumnus, is the director of YWAM: Network For Strategic Initiatives, and is a missions strategist whose ministry has brought him to 150 countries during the past 25 years. He recently spoke at Christ For The Nations where he serves on the board of directors. His CFNI messages can currently be viewed in their entirety at CFNI.TV.



AWAKEN ПК we're here to be School Ministry Europe: Evangelism and Helps HOLLYWOOD: Street Evangelism MARDI GRAS: the vessel of Street Evangelism NORTH ATLANTIC HAITI: OCEAN Children's Ministry CURACAO: Support entre al dente al Local Churches Goa BRAZIL: Crusades Worship and Teaching ATLANTIC - Dr. John Hollar

Each summer hundreds of Christ For The Nations Institute students, led by CFNI staff, embark on trips around the globe to bring the Good News and love of Christ to people in need. According to CFN President Dr. Dennis Lindsay, who actually began the first outreaches for the ministry many years ago, CFNI Short Term Mission Trips and Outreaches are designed to give students the opportunity to serve and learn about other cultures while sharing their love for God. The goal of our missions outreach program is to create a lifestyle of living the Gospel. This is also our opportunity

# God's Love

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to train leaders to go out and change the world. "There are really only three reasons the Church is still here," said Dr. John Hollar, CFNI director. "We are here to exalt God, edify others and evangelize others. We can do the first two in Heaven, but not the last. So, our real purpose here on Earth is because God's heart is that none would perish. Therefore, we are compelled to go and reach them with His love—no matter where that takes us," he said. This year 264 people on 10 teams went to 15 nations to share God's love. •

If you have a heart to learn more about missions, visit cfni.org/explore-majors-courses.

\*Some countries could not be named due to security concerns.

### David Barton: Remembering Our BIBLICAL HERITAGE

CONGRESS. JULY 4, 1776.

• By Belinda Elliott

God commands those who love Him to know their history. Throughout Scripture, God reminds us to recall what God has done in our lives and in our nation—and to be able to share that history with others. This was the emphasis of a series of recent lectures by David Barton at Christ For The Nations.

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"Jesus tells us very specifically, 'If you love Me, you will obey My commandments' (John 14:15). One of the ways we measure our love for God is not by what we say but by what we do. You want to measure your love for Christ? Just go through the 49 commands Christ gives in the four Gospels and see how well you obey them," says Barton, an acclaimed expert in historical and constitutional issues.

One such command for believers who wish to love and obey God is to remember history. "It is repeated time after time," Barton says. "God says, 'Recall the former days. Remember the former times. Know your history. Be able to recite your history to other people.'"

Barton isn't just talking about knowing the names and dates of our historical past. He is discussing the need

for believers to know what he calls providential history. "God wants us to be able to know exactly what He's been up to in our country. Whatever country you are from, you need to know what God has been up to in the history of your country because He is the One who sets the lines for the nation."

States of Mmerica.

As the culture in the United States has become more secular, the history of the country's founding on biblical principles is being forgotten by many. Barton points to many of the ideas that the country's government was founded on, which find their basis in Scripture.

"Our free market economic system came from five Bible verses: 1 Timothy 5:8, 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Matthew 25, Luke 19 and Matthew 20. Can you look at those verses and figure out how to put together an economic system?" Barton asks. "We could in previous generations, and that is why we have the system we now have. If you took out our free market economic system, you would not recognize America, the best product of Bible teachings."

He also cites the section of the Constitution that declares

America must maintain a republican form of government. "Those who wrote that clause took the idea from Exodus 18:21, Deuteronomy 1:15-16, and Deuteronomy 16:18," Barton says. "A republican form of government is what God recommended most often, and that's what we adopt and use. If we took away our republican form of government, we wouldn't recognize America. Most people today don't have a clue that it came out of the Bible."

The Constitution itself is often referred to as a godless document by secular professors. However, Barton explains that Christians who know Scripture know that to be false. "If you know the Bible and read the Constitution, you see multiple Bible verses referenced in the Constitution. Scripture is all through the Constitution; we just don't recognize it anymore."

In order to have a more complete picture of the history of God's work in our nation and the world, Barton states we also need to be students of the Bible. "Ninety-five percent of American Christians have never read through the Bible from cover to cover once in their lifetime," he says. "You can't be a biblical person and not know what is in the Book."

This biblical illiteracy has led some Christians to live in ways that are contrary to Scripture. Barton points to recent statistics about abortion as evidence. "Of those who profess to be Christians in America today, 42 percent of Christians in America say that abortion is a moral behavior," he says. "Sixty-five percent of all abortions in America are performed on Christians, and 200,000 abortions a year are performed on born-again Christians. We may be a Christian nation, but we are not a biblical nation anymore. We used to understand that the Bible is the basis of what we did."

More than just reading for facts, believers should study Scripture to find practical applications that will change how they act and think. "If you do that, it will change you," he says. "It will change everyone you touch around you. It will change everything you put your fingers into. We need to know God's Word from cover to cover thoroughly and see that it does apply to every aspect of life."

David Barton is the Founder and President of WallBuilders, a national pro-family organization. Visit wallbuilders.com for more information or view his CFNI messages at CFNI.TV.

Sixty-five percent of all abortions in America are performed on Christians, and 200,000 abortions a year are performed on born-again Christians. We may be a Christian nation, but we are not a biblical nation anymore.

# New Bible Translation Is Part of an INTERESTING HISTORY

• By Steve Strang



#### KING JAMES I RULED ENGLAND

he King James Version (KJV) of the Bible is undoubtedly the best-known version of the Bible. It was "authorized" by King James I of England in 1611 and changed the course of history. But before it was published there were decades of controversy over translating the Bible into the language of the people. And several translators actually lost their lives.

#### MARTYR WILLIAM TYNDALE

The most famous of these translators was William Tyndale, who was burned at the stake in 1536 for translating the New Testament into English. His dying words were: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." And in 1611—75 years later—his prayer was answered when the "authorized" King James Version was published.



#### MODERN ENGLISH VERSION (MEV)

Tyndale had an associate named John Rogers, pen name Thomas Matthews, whose Bible translation was known as the Thomas Matthews Bible or the Tyndale-Matthews Bible. Rogers was burned at the stake in 1555 for this translation, by Mary Tudor. I'm his direct descendent, 17 generations back, which is especially significant to me since the Lord supernaturally connected me with a group of translators who determined it was time for an update of the King James Version. It's called the Modern English Version (MEV), and it was released in the fall of 2014.



#### IF THE KING JAMES VERSION HAD BEEN FIRST TRANSLATED TODAY IT WOULD BE THE MODERN ENGLISH VERSION!

#### IT'S NOT KJV, BUT ...

The MEV keeps the cadence and grandeur of the King James Version but is in smooth readable English. In 1611, the Bible was translated into the common language so all could understand. But today it's often difficult to understand with all the "thees" and "thous." The translators of the MEV used the same Greek and Hebrew texts as the King James Version, and they made a literal translation, meaning there are no "politically correct" changes in this translation. This is a significant event for the church as this translation has the goal of helping people understand Scripture in a fresh, new way. As a believer, the Bible is inherently important to me. But as a publisher, I've always wanted to publish the Bible. In fact, we've published several study Bibles which were dreams come true for me, yet imagine how excited I am-and humbled-to now be able to publish the Modern English Version (MEV).

#### HONORING THE HISTORY OF THE KIV

The King James Version of the Bible is perhaps the bestselling book in the history of the English language. Even non-Christians know about it and are aware of the "thees" and "thous" of the Elizabethan-era English. That type of English is so archaic that no one talks like that anymore, and King James English is often hard to understand. Yet there are those who want to keep the King James as it is. They grew up with it, and it's the translation they know. As the running joke goes, these people are such ardent fans of the version that they object to any changes to the historic text by saying, "If it was good enough for the Apostle Paul, it's good enough for me."

Of course that's the punchline. The entire Bible as we know it wasn't "canonized", or recognized as complete, by the church until 367 at the very earliest (when Athanasius' letter to the Egyptian churches included a list of the New Testament canon as it is today). In addition, the New Testament was written in *Koine* Greek and was not translated into English until centuries later.

#### CHANGES ALREADY MADE

If you read the 1611 version, you'll notice it is vastly different from the King James Version we use today. Not only are there thees and thous, but also an s looked a lot like an f, so Psalms looks like Pfalmes. In addition, words such as rejoicing were spelled reioycing (in that time, j and i were close and interrelated in spelling). The King James Version has been updated several times over the years, mainly with modern spellings and new typefaces. Then in the early 1980s, Thomas Nelson published an updated version called the New King James Version which tried to update the King James into modern English. However, a military chaplain wanted a modern version that was more easily understood and, in particular, could be given to soldiers.

#### A BIBLE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Dr. James Linzey, now a retired U.S. Army National Guard chaplain and graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary, rallied and started leading an impressive group of 47 academics (the same number King James assembled) using the same Greek and Hebrew texts to do an updated version of the famous translation. Simply put, they wanted something that could be understood more easily than the King James Version. That is what we now call the Modern English Version. These academics were among the foremost scholars from across the church spectrum in 2005. Baptist, Presbyterian, Reformed, Lutheran, nondenominational, Assemblies of God, Church of God, Foursquare and others would unite to become one in this effort. The scholars represented schools such as Yale, Harvard, Gordon-Conwell, Regent, ORU, Westminster, Southwestern Baptist, Midwestern Baptist, Fuller and others. With ecumenical unity they worked until June 2013 to complete what many are calling a translation perfectly fit for today. When we met Dr. Linzey, he had yet to find someone to publish the new translation. "This is too good to be true," we immediately thought upon hearing this. We consulted with some of the church's leading scholars and pastors to evaluate the work, and the overwhelming conclusion was that we had a real treasure in our hands.

#### A PROJECT ORDAINED BY GOD

The decision was made: If Dr. Linzey had the vision and leadership to develop this translation, we knew we could use our God-given platform and distribution access to impact the world. We believe it was a miraculous series of divine coincidences that brought us this translation. In fact, because it's making God's Word accessible to more people, I consider this is the most important project I've ever done or ever will do! Not every company combines business and ministry like we do at Charisma Media. We are not publishing the MEV just to sell Bibles as a business. We are publishing it because we believe we are called to this. We are eager to see how God will use this translation to impact lives, and we want you to be a part of this as the Lord continues to spread His divine Word. If you would like to check out the MEV for yourself, it is available free online in the YouVersion app or website. It's also available wherever Bibles are sold.



#### STEVE STRANG

Steve Strang, publisher and founder of *Charisma* magazine, is an award-winning journalist, entrepreneur, businessman and author. He is founder and president of Charisma Media, which in addition to *Charisma*, publishes *Ministry Today*, the Spanish magazine *Vida Cristiana* and *Christian Retailing*. In the last 36 years he has earned a reputation as the world's leading Charismatic publisher.

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— Jack Hayford Founding pastor of The Church On The Way, and founder

and chancellor of The King's University

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### **TOP 5 FINANCIAL APPS**

We are all looking for ways to make our financial decisions smarter, simpler and more timely. Late fees? No more! Fortunately, there are many tools out there to help. We waded through them and found five that will make dealing with your family's finances less of a chore and more intuitive. Test drive these finance apps and see if they are as helpful to you as they have been to us.

#### • By Monique Rice



#### ACORNS (FREE):

Want to invest but have no idea where to start? Acorns provides recommendations for personalized investment portfolios, round-up transactions and no account minimums. Acorns lets you "Invest the Change."



#### MINT BILLS (FREE):

Tired of late fees and forgetting bill due dates? Mint Bills tracks all due dates, with real-time reminders, tracks unusual spending and pays your bills wherever, whenever.



#### LEVEL MONEY (FREE):

Level provides a quick glance at your bank account and credit cards to show you what you can spend daily, weekly and monthly. This app takes the guess work out of budgeting.



#### SQUARE CASH (FREE):

.....

Out to dinner with friends and need cash when it's time to split the check? No need, Square gives you easy access to your bank account. Send cash or request cash with a touch of a button.



#### FUTUREADVISOR.COM:

Financial apps are great, providing quick glances at your finances. But this website lets you take a deeper dive into finances as it gives you more detailed financial advice. Now that you know the tools available, make sure to download the apps that interest you. However, remember that this puts all your financial information on your phone so secure it with a password or other security device, Then, you can explore these apps and start simplifying your financial life!

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### FAIT HFUL A WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

#### • By Kelly Head

Christ For The Nations is set to release its much-anticipated annual worship album, *Faithful*, which is available for purchase Sept. 11.

The album is filled with songs, hymns and spiritual songs reminiscent of the deeply spiritual worship songs from times past. "It was inspired by the desire to appeal to worshippers of all ages," said CFNI Worship Director Jonathan Lewis, who served as the worship leader for the album. "I wanted to do something that everyone from the young CFNI students, many in their late teens, to my grandparents, who are in their eighties, would love to worship to," said Lewis.

The worship album that resulted is focused on the music, the voices and the stories behind the songs. Part of Lewis' vision for this worship album was to invite guest singers who had lived through experiences that proved God's faithfulness. The testimonies of God's goodness on this album will inspire and ignite faith. He shares, "I wanted this night of worship (when we recorded *Faithful*) to give us a chance to come and worship together, so that by the time we left, our faith would just be incredibly strengthened by how powerful our God is and how strong and faithful He is. I believe this comes through on *Faithful.*"

The guest singers presented testimonies including God's preservation through a life-or-death struggle with cancer and an almost fatal heart condition that cost a drummer one hand and most of his remaining fingers. (See their stories of faith in the following pages.) Noted worship leader Tommy Walker, an alumnus of CFNI, also joined in the recordings in story and song, as did the CFNI choir, which represented believers and nationalities from around the world.

"There is real power in testimony — inherent in the meaning of the word is God's desire to do it again, to reproduce in the life of those who hear it. So to have these people who really walked with God from the battle lines, but experienced the Lord bringing them to a place of triumph, it just adds another dimension to this album," said Kiplin Batchelor, assistant worship director and fellow worship leader on the album. "When people hear the stories and participate in the worship from that overcoming place of faith, they will experience an incredible reminder of His faithfulness, too. Faithful, we believe, will infuse them with courage and the endurance to stand and see the miracle-working power of the Lord in their lives."

Lewis said, "Captured on the album is the same thing we felt that night how great our God is and how faithful He is." And this is what makes this album important—it is a musical representation of the faithfulness of God and for the listener it will give a continuous reminder of how God has been, and will always be, faithful.

The album is set to release Sept. 11 and it is the first of a two-part series. The accompanying DVD will be coming soon. To pre-order the CD, go to cfn.org/faithful.

POWERFUL WORSHIP RECORDED

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#### PART II COMING SOON!



#### TOMMY WALKER

**CFNMUSIC** 

*Faithful*, the latest CFNI live album recording, included special guest Tommy Walker, CFNI alumnus, worship leader and the author of more than 200 worship songs including "He Knows My Name," "Mourning Into Dancing" and "Only A God Like You." He attended CFNI in the 1980s and credits his time with the CFNI worship group, Living Praise, as the inspiration that helped him discover his passion for worshipping God.

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His first "hit" song that traveled the world, "Only You," was written while he was a student worshipper. "CFNI provided the seed for what was to come in my life, for what God was going to do in my life. As a songwriter and worship leader, I got my start here. I am so thankful that I can come here, 32 years later, and lead worship again." Tommy led worship for two songs on the *Faithful* album, "Only You" and "I Love The Lord."

# UNSTOPPAB



One of the incredible aspects of the current CFNI worship album, *Faithful*, is the inclusion of the drumming worshipper who was almost silenced by the loss of his entire hand and several fingers on his remaining hand due to a rare disease. To lose your hand and fingers is difficult to imagine but becomes almost unfathomable for one whose calling is to be a drummer. Yet, Scott Grimsley still finds a way to drum and worship today, most recently drumming on the new CFNI worship album recorded in April. His life shows the grace of God shining even in difficult circumstances and proves that anything is possible with God.

"I have always felt more connected with God when I'm drumming and worshipping. I've always felt drumming was a gift God has given me, and a tool God wanted me to use to glorify Him and to reach people," Scott shared.

Scott is a graduate of Christ For The Nations Institute who was newly married when he first fell sick in November 2013. He thought it was the flu. However, he was not eating, was confused, had blurry vision, and his wife, Holly, knew something more serious than the flu was wrong with him. She decided to take him to the hospital and after performing several tests, the doctors discovered a rare heart defect. Although he was unaware of it, Scott had had it from birth. This defect had been exploited by a bacterial infection. Bacteria built up in the weakened area of his heart while his heart continued working away, pumping blood and with it infection throughout his entire body.

Scott describes, "The bacteria went into my brain and caused me to have mini-strokes, starting while I was at home. This was why I had blurry vision and was "I began to think about how God had been there the whole time, how He had been faithful through everything. This situation was not from Him—He didn't cause it—but He was going to even work this out for my good."

LEWORSHIP

confused." The doctors struggled to treat this aggressive infection, trying multiple antibiotics, but his condition deteriorated. His hands started to turn black, and they discovered blood clots in his arms that were blocking the blood flow to his hands. "My body was shutting down. I was in liver failure, kidney failure and heart failure all at the same time. Fortunately, the doctors were able to remove the blood clots. If they hadn't been able to do that, I would have lost my arms," Scott said.

While his arms had been saved, his hands were still in danger, and the root issue of infection had not been dealt with. The next step was heart surgery. The doctors had to remove the infection from his heart before it killed him, but Scott needed a specialized heart hospital in order to perform this delicate surgery. The plan was to airlift him to the closest heart hospital, just a few minutes away. However, before this emergency flight, the doctors informed Holly that he might not make it through the flight. "They told me that he was very unstable and there was nothing they could do if his heart stopped on the flight. I was told to say my goodbyes because I might not see him again," said Holly. She lay next to Scott on his hospital bed with tears flowing down her face. She knew this might be her last time with her husband. Yet somehow she felt a supernatural peace. "Despite the doctors' report, I knew that Scott was going to be okay," she said. "God just asked me to trust Him."

Scott made it to Baylor Plano Heart Hospital and had a successful open heart surgery, but at this point, his hands were still black, the tissue dead. "I had multiple surgeries that performed my amputations. I lost four fingers on my left hand and the surgeon tried to save the right hand, but he ended up having to amputate it because there wasn't any good tissue on the hand." Scott spent a month recovering in the Intensive Care Unit, waking to the confusing sight of his lost hand and fingers. Scott's first thought upon realizing his losses was that he wouldn't be able to drum anymore. "There were times I felt, 'Why me? Why is this happening to me?'" Holly describes, "It was so difficult to watch him struggle with the simple, daily things of life, and to know that this was the new normal. We were so young, and even though I know bad things happen to people every day, this was just so totally unexpected."

Amazingly, Scott wasn't overwhelmed by bitterness or anger. Scott shares, "I began to think about how God had been there the whole time, how He had been faithful through everything. This situation was not from Him—He didn't cause it—but He was going to even work this out for my good."



Scott Grimsley in the hospital for bacterial infection in his heart before amputations and heart surgery.

One story of God's faithfulness and love that Scott remembers from early in his stay in the hospital came before the open heart surgery when he was very close to death. A nurse came in to check on his vitals and Scott asked his name; it was Daniel. Scott shares, "Immediately, God spoke to my heart the words 'Daniel and the lion's den.' He said, 'Scott, this is your lion's den. You are Daniel and there are things all around you that want to destroy you. But I am not going to let that happen. I am going to rescue you from this, and you are going to come out better and stronger. I am going to use you and your story.'"

This word from God helped to sustain Scott even after the amputations. He had to relearn how to walk, to use his arms, to feed himself and cope without the hand and fingers he no longer had. He describes nights in rehab when the pain and fatigue would be intense, and his courage and faith would start to ebb. "Whenever I would start to get depressed or sad about what I was going through, I would put on worship music and focus on God. He would comfort me and give me peace saying, 'Scott, I am here. I haven't left you.'" Holly says, "Without him having that amazing strength and trust in God, things could have been much harder." One day, Scott and Holly were driving home from church, and Scott was depressed. "I was sad because I didn't think I could drum again, but then I had an idea. I said to Holly, 'Wrap a bandage around the sticks on my hands. I want try to drum that way.' She did and I could!"

Then they began their search for an actual prosthetic that would enable Scott to fulfill his calling as a drumming worshipper. The first company they approached was doubtful it could be made at all. But God led them to a company that agreed to try. They collaborated with Scott and created the first-ever, drumming prosthetic. This simple prosthetic allows Scott to use his drumsticks and continue his lifestyle of worship.

His story is a picture of the sustaining power of God's grace. Scott declares, "Absolutely nothing is impossible; you can do anything with God. No matter what you go through, God is always there, and He is always faithful. Even if it doesn't seem like He is there, you will look back and see that God is there holding your hand and standing by your side the whole way through. That is exactly what He did for me and I am still here, still playing drums, and I always will."

To take part in this prophetic worship declaring God's overwhelming faithfulness, visit cfn.org/faithful and pre-order today.



### CANCER FREE

• By Michelle Ofori-Ansah



The music lowered and all eyes were on the slim, bent figure that walked onto the stage at the recording of *Faithful* in April. It took a moment for most of the crowd to recognize that it was their beloved CFNI instructor, Michael Massa, who was coming to sing a song of worship!

One of the first worship leaders at the Institute and a beloved mentor, pastor and teacher to thousands of students, faculty and staff through the years came to sing the song "Father God," despite his loss of strength after a horrifying diagnosis.

Many were shocked because just a few months earlier Massa shared that he was in a life-or-death struggle with cancer. At the time of the recording, Massa was finishing up chemotherapy, still frail and needing help to stand on the stage, but he was confident in his triumphant testimony of God's healing work through prayer and medicine. Now, he is cancer free, and his story encourages us that God is faithful to us even through difficult circumstances. Massa's symptoms began with severe pain in his abdomen. His doctor originally thought it was just an overgrowth of bacteria in his GI-tract. Over the next month, his symptoms grew worse and rather than proactively determining what the issue was, he just ignored it. "I realized later I was afraid of finding out what the problem really was," he said.

Finally, he returned to the doctor who found a mass in his abdomen. Massa wanted to wait for treatment as his youngest son's wedding was around the corner (and he was officiating). But a couple of weeks after the diagnosis his wife Nancy and their family realized he was in much worse shape than he was acknowledging so they quickly took him to the emergency room. At this point, he had lost 70 pounds due to extreme pain and lack of appetite. Within 30 minutes of entering the hospital, he was admitted to the ICU and he didn't leave for eight days. "The doctor told me that I was within two days of dying, so Jesus saved my life in spite of my stubbornness and in spite of my fear. He was still faithful to His promises to me, even though I wasn't aware of my great need," he declared.

Massa was diagnosed with lymphoma, a large mass in his abdomen. But he always knew that God was not the source of this disease. "I know the enemy attacked me. The sickness did not come from the Lord," he said. The couple stood in faith for his healing. At the same time, they pressed forward with the recommendations of their doctor, including chemotherapy. Unfortunately, there were serious side effects he had to deal with. "One medication I was on would cause panic attacks and extreme anxiety especially in the evening. That had never been a problem for me; it's just not in my nature. But now I would be like a 3-year-old, who was afraid of the dark, lying in bed trembling and terrified. Nancy would come, embrace me and stay with me. This happened over and over again for a couple of weeks. I am convinced that the drugs were opening me up to a spiritual attack, and that demonic activity was taking advantage of this season."

"Nancy and I are convinced that healing came to us through the prayers of the CFNI student body... There was a substantial spiritual awareness that God was daily carrying us."

At this time, his support was his wife, who would pray with him, for him and against these spiritual forces of fear. But he also felt the prayers of family, friends and more importantly the CFNI student body who saw Massa as a member of their own family. "Nancy and I are convinced that healing came to us through the prayers of the CFNI student body. There were others praying, but the student body was praying consistently, day after day. There was a substantial spiritual awareness that God was daily carrying us." They stood on God's Word for healing and through the love and prayers of CFNI students, they walked through the various stages of chemotherapy, including further weight loss, hair loss and weakness.

Now cancer free and on the other side of this ordeal, Massa gives his perspective on this unexpected detour. "Throughout this journey, I never had a moment where I was upset with God because I didn't see it as coming from Him. I was always aware that these mutating cancer cells are fighting the processes the Lord has established for our health. They are rebellious to the will of God in my body. My testimony is that there is no cancer in my body! I'm gaining new strength all the time, and I have gained 30 of the lost pounds back—I don't actually want all 70 pounds back!" he joked.

"I want to say thank you to everyone who prayed for me, and to let you know that God is absolutely trustworthy. Don't ever doubt when you're praying for someone, but believe that God hears you and responds just like He did for me," he encouraged.

Michael Massa is an instructor and the Institute Chaplain at CFNI. Michael's ministry is called Convergence Ministries, which serves leaders and churches. He and his wife, Nancy, live in the Dallas area and have four children and two grandchildren.

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