



# **GOD STORIES**

**Book 4**

**And More**

**Mighty Men of God**

**Dr. Gayle & Myrna Brogdon**

# GOD STORIES

*“So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come” Psalm 71:18*



This **Book 4 GOD STORIES And More... Mighty Men of Valor** are true stories that tell what God has done in, for, and through the lives of today’s ordinary men so that all who read these stories may know that the Lord God is mighty and worthy to receive all praise, honor and glory. Also, interspersed in this

booklet are encouraging biblical messages on how to daily live out your walk with Jesus Christ. These stories and messages will set you on fire to live your faith out loud every day.

The Bible is filled with examples of God using unqualified and ordinary men to work through to do the most unexpected things, such as Moses who was a stutterer who was God’s spokesman and leader. The shepherd boy David stood against and killed the giant Goliath. Peter was the quitter who God brought back to start the Kingdom. God stories continue even today in and through people who believe in and know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. For *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8)*.

**31-DAY DEVOTIONAL:** This booklet may also be used as a 31-day devotional. As you read the stories designated for each day, contemplate on the message(s). Ask the Lord, “What do you want to reveal to me? In what way(s) may I apply to my life the message(s) and/or the scripture passage(s)? Then pray and do what He shows you.

Our prayer is that everyone who reads this booklet will draw closer to the Lord Jesus Christ! For those who don’t know Jesus Christ as Savior, we pray they will.

Walking with Jesus,

*Gayle & Myrna*

Dr. Gayle & Myrna Brogdon

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<https://www.god-stories.com/blog>

## DAY 1: DO WHAT YOU ARE CALLED TO DO!

*“Do not despise the day of small beginnings.” Zechariah 4:10*

In the 1980s one evening at a church leaders’ meeting, the pastor gave direction to all the church leaders to seek the Lord as to His role for each couple in the Body of Christ.



**Gayle Brogdon**  
Los Fresnos, Texas

Myrna diligently fasted, prayed and read God’s word seeking the Lord to hear from Him, but due to work and other matters, I was unable to do so right then. After three days of seeking God, Myrna declared that the Lord had shown her, but she’d wait until I personally heard from Him. We knew that what He’d say to one He’d confirm it with the other. So, I walked into the garage,

prayed and came back into the house after five minutes saying, “Okay. I know.”

Unbelieving, Myrna inquired with a smirk, “So, God answered in 5 minutes?” I could tell she thought I was going to give her an off the wall answer, but I solemnly replied, “Watchman!” With a shocked look Myrna meekly replied, “You really did hear in five minutes. ‘Watchman’ is what He said to me, too.”

Humbly we both knew that the Lord had confirmed our calling and would have us on the wall to watch, pray and sound the alarm. We “saw” and continue to “see” the world’s evil condition, the spiritual state of people, the apathetic and complacent condition of many Christians in not reaching out to others with the love of Jesus Christ nor sharing the Good News. And God revealed how to turn those negatives we “see” into His positive solutions.

In 1985 our pastor asked us to help start an educator’s ministry which confirmed what God had already shown us. Therefore, for the next 36 years we equipped Christian educators on how to live their faith at school (educator to educator). Over 2000 educators received Christ as Savior. Then the Lord expanded our vision to see beyond just educators, but to everyone everywhere. In 2022 the Lord had ordinary people share their stories about what an extraordinary God had done in their lives. That turned into the gospel tool, GOD STORIES And More booklets, with Christians giving them to others and asking God to change the recipients’ lives. In five months, 11,000 booklets were distributed in the USA, Kenya, Mexico, Japan, South Korea. The booklets were translated to Spanish. In addition, Ron Corzine from Fort Worth, Texas joined the team for the social media aspect to help reach others worldwide with the love of Jesus Christ. As a result, he created the GOD STORIES & More website, <https://www.god-stories.com/blog>.

If God has placed something in your heart now, today is the day to begin.

## **DAY 2: SHE MADE A BELIEVER OUT OF ME.**

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11*

She was a door-to-door Avon lady by day and a Bible teacher by night and on weekends. Her name was Mrs. McGuffee. I will always remember her as a person who gave direction and inspiration to my life.

This story begins when I was a nine-year-old boy attending Sunday School and Training Union at a church in Howe, Texas. One Sunday evening in class, I was doing what



mischievous boys will do. I was throwing spitballs across the room at a friend while Mrs. McGuffee was writing on the blackboard. As I was in the middle of launching one of my bombs, Mrs. McGuffee turned quickly and fixed her eyes on me and said, “Ronnie Corzine, you are going to be a preacher someday.” I



**Ron Corzine**  
**Fort Worth, Texas**

laughed like Sarah when she was told she would have a child in her old age. Under my breath not understanding the proper phrase, I said, “Over your dead body.”

Well, my life continued seemingly on course. I was living fast and furious as a teenager, doing my own thing and giving no thought to my future. On my 18th birthday, I was invited to a citywide crusade. That night as the minister spoke, my heart was touched as I was faced with the reality of my life, how I was living it, and what I would do to make a difference in this world. Having forgotten what Mrs. McGuffee had spoken years earlier, I went forward at the end of the service and committed my life to do God’s will. I later discovered it was God’s will for me to be a preacher of the gospel. And here I am today.

I think it is ironic that many years later I received a call from Mrs. McGuffee’s family. They said that she had just gone to be with the Lord and that she had requested that I do the funeral service. Because of her influence and the impact she had made in my life, I accepted. On that day at a church in Howe, Texas, I stood and told the above story to those gathered in her remembrance. “Today, I stand here over her dead body as a fulfillment of what she spoke over me many years ago as small boy.” I then proceeded with my eulogy.

So, when people speak positive things concerning your life that you cannot explain or understand, do not despise them or their words. It could just be the Lord speaking to you through them about your future.

## DAY 3: “YOU ARE AN IMPATIENT MAN!”

*“Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.”*

*Psalm 116:7*



**Dan Rodriguez  
Harlingen, Texas**

It was over two years after the start of the covid pandemic that I was finally infected. My primary care doctor would continually ask me why I wouldn't take the “experimental jab.” I told him because I didn't want to and I believed that God had ordained my days and that I wouldn't die a day before, or live a day longer than the days ordained for me by the Lord. He couldn't understand that and told me that I was in the highest risk group —BP, pre-diabetes, over 65, plus I didn't wear a mask religiously.

When I got sick, he told me not to worry because the virus' effect was more dangerous and destructive on the body of people who were fearful. I told him that I had the peace of God and would trust the Lord and his wisdom to get me through. I contracted covid with pneumonia. He treated me and I was over the virus in less than a week. However, the residue that covid left on my lungs was a challenge. I found that I couldn't breathe normally without labored breathing. He put me on oxygen immediately and told me that my cells needed to heal.

The nights and early morning prayer times that I experienced with the Lord (I had trouble sleeping), were life-changing. Even though I wasn't sleeping normally, I felt energized as I spent time speaking to the Lord in the early hours of the morning.

One day, during my prayer and worship time with the Lord (on my oxygen machine), I told the Lord that I believed He had the power to heal me instantly. I said, “Lord, you can heal me right now, by the dawn of the morning, I can put this oxygen aside and breathe normally. I believe you are powerful to do it now!” The Lord's reply came to me in the form of a question to my heart: “What if I don't do it immediately? What will you do then?” I was stunned. I was certain that I would hear the Lord's commendation — “I have not found so great a faith ...” As I contemplated the question I wasn't expecting, I replied to the Lord that I would still worship and praise Him no matter what. Then the Lord challenged me. “What if I have something else I want to do for you before healing your body?” I knew the Lord was up to something greater than a physical healing. He then said, “You are a very impatient man.” As I heard those words in my heart, I was undone. I knew the Lord wanted to finally deal with a very real issue in my heart —impatience!

The Lord unmasked what I thought was faith and showed me my impatience even in my prayer to Him: “Lord, you can heal me RIGHT NOW!” I knew the Lord was calling me to repentance for my arrogant, impatient, demanding spirit. All I could do was simply lie prostrate before the Lord early one morning and confess my sin and said to Him, “do what you must do in me, Lord, even if my physical healing delays. I will wait for you as long as it takes.” The Lord worked marvelously in my heart and I was led to genuinely ask my wife for forgiveness for my impatience with her! It was a few weeks after that that I came to a full recovery in my lungs and returned to normal breathing with no lingering effects from the virus.

The Lord had taken me through the journey of healing and wholeness. I encourage you to trust in the Lord, today, with all your heart and let Him truly be Lord over all of your life and you will find greater riches from His wisdom, mercy and grace.

*“I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, For the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling ... O Lord, truly I am Your servant ... You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving.”*

*Psalm 116:6-8, 16-17*

Call upon Him today with a humble, repentant heart. He still hears and He still saves!

## **FACING THE STORMS!**

*"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17*

You know those storms that come out of nowhere and blindsides you?

It is during these seasons of intense warfare and attack, that God proves Himself to be a very present help in

our time of need. (Psalm 46:1) Whatever we may be facing today will indeed pass and we'll end up looking back on the situation and realizing that what our enemy meant for bad, God turned it all around for our good (Romans 8:28).



So today, be encouraged. No matter what might be going on; no matter who or what is coming against you; no matter how hard the enemy tries to shake your faith, know that the Lord is on your side and remember what the Word of God promises to you: *"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 54:17).*



## DAY 4: IN GOD I TRUST!

*“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust...” Psalm 91:1*



**John Cavazos**  
Olmito, Texas

In 2007, I had retired from public education to become the principal of a local Christian school. My wife and I had reviewed our financial outlook with the change in employment with our financial advisor. He didn't know how we would make it financially, but I felt at ease and was following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

After about four months into the school year, I received notice from a collection agency for the VA administration stating that I owed the government more than \$19,000 dollars for failure to pay for a home loan to the federal government.

I had lost a home that sold at auction for about \$15,000 less than its value. I had made previous arrangements and had been making payments to pay back the difference. I received documentation from the government stating how much had been paid towards the difference. They threatened to garnish my wages and wanted the total paid ASAP!

I never panicked and prayed to God for guidance. I talked with my Father, stating, “Lord, both Mary and I serve the church as Directors of the Helps Ministry; we are actively involved with community outreach, serve in the summer with the Youth summer camp working the kitchen, and are tithers.”

I kept quiet and let the Holy Spirit speak.

I got the word to talk to the local congressman situated in Brownsville, Texas. I went to his office and showed him the documentation I had. The congressman's assistant set me at ease and stated that he would plead my case.

After about a week I received a phone call from the congressman's office asking me to meet with him later that day. He said, “They're willing to settle with you, just make them an offer.” I thought, Lord, help me out here and the number 5 came to my mind. Lord I don't have five thousand to give them—I heard an inner voice say \$500.00! I told the congressmen's assistant \$500.00. He presented the offer and it was accepted! Thank you, Jesus!



## Day 5: HE WILL ALWAYS MEET OUR NEEDS!

*“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19*

After taking a very large pay cut to pursue my dream job, my wife and I were faced with the simple task of buying “back to school” supplies for our three young children. My wife gave me the list on a Friday night and we needed \$50.00 in supplies. After paying bills, we literally did not have a dime left.

On Saturday, our son was playing youth football and the whole family was to go. I passed and told my family that I had something else to do. After they all left the house, I fell apart. I was a failure as a father and as a husband. I wept. I wondered why the Lord would allow me to get this job if I would end up not being able to provide for my family. I was broken. Instead of getting to the point of anger, I got out my Bible and read verses about God’s provision. I realized that He alone could provide. I just did not know how. I hit my knees and asked Him to meet this need for my family.



**Rod Fetters**  
**Ossian, Indiana**

Just a few minutes after giving it to the Lord, my wife and children came walking through the door. They were all so excited so I asked them what was going on? That is when they explained that after the game, they sat on the sidelines of the field talking and before they knew it, they were the only ones left. Since everyone was gone, they decided to walk across the middle of the football field in a direct path to the car. While they were walking across the field, my wife looked down and there, laying on the grass, was a \$50.00 bill! On the 50-yard line! I could not believe it!! God had provided in a special way for my family! We immediately grabbed the school supplies list, went to the store, and bought everything that they needed. The cashier rang it all up and the total was just a few cents less than \$50.00! What an amazing God who loves us and provides for our needs!



### **TO PONDER:**

Was there ever a time in your life when you had little or no money, but God provided what was needed? A thankful heart is always an appropriate response.



## DAY 6: LIVE AND WALK IN THE SPIRIT

*“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:25*



**Lynn Johnson**  
Harlingen, Texas

Years ago, as I was trying to learn to walk and flow in the Holy Spirit, Tami and I were walking in a downtown Houston park in mid-winter. There was a very animated man trying to hand out a paper, shepherding his cause. He appeared homeless and poverty stricken. People were giving him a wide berth. As we walked by, the Lord told me to go talk to him. Tami grabbed my hand as I turned around and said to me, Let's go. I walked over to him and my oldest son went with me to try to save his dad.

The man tried to hand me a paper and as our eyes met, I asked him, what do you want? He looked at me funny, took a deep breath and said, I have cancer and want to go to Galveston to see my mom. I need a bus ticket to get there.

I said OK, but I want to pray for you first. His face had a look of shock. As my son and I laid our hands on him and began to pray his shoulders began to shake and then he began to cry. When I finished praying, I hugged and wished him well. He grabbed me and then told me that very morning he had asked the Lord to send a Christian to help and pray for him. Then it was my turn to cry.

That was the start to my journey to tune in to the Lord and be used of Him. It's a very interesting and exhilarating way to live, and I love when I hear THE VOICE and respond correctly. *“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:25*

### **DON'T GIVE UP!!**

**I want to see what happens if I**

**DON'T GIVE UP!**

What would you miss out on if you gave up right now? What if Joshua had given up marching on the sixth day?

What if Naaman had quit dipping on the sixth time down? What if Noah had quit building the boat a year before he got it finished? What if David had backed out of facing the giant? What if Jonah had given up in the belly of that great fish and let the fish consume him?

Maybe you don't feel like you can go on, but can you really afford to quit? Don't give up. Keep moving forward. Keep trusting Jesus. Help is on the way!!!

## DAY 7: BE LIKE CORN?!

*“A bruised reed he will not break...till he has brought justice through to victory.” Matthew 12:20*

*“for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again...” Proverbs 24:16*

God, did you say “Be like corn?!”

For the past 2 years I’ve tried my hand at growing corn with tiny levels of success. Both years, when wind and rain flattened my corn, I panicked. Worried, I went out and tied stakes, propping them up and hoping they weren’t ruined. Thankfully, my hard work and attention paid off with a modest harvest.



**Todd Aten**  
Brownsville, Texas

This year, my health issues have taken a lot of my gardening pleasures away, but I still had some corn seeds, so, with a Darwinist approach, I planted them with all of the “care” that I could muster. They sprouted and I was happy to watch them grow.

Then came the storms. High winds, rain and pea-sized hail. My corn was flat on the ground! Feeling defeated, I just left it there. I simply didn’t have the strength or ability to try to save it again this year. But guess what? Two days later, it perked and straightened up. Yay!

Then another storm, same result, same reaction and oddly, the same result – it sprung up again! WOW! A miracle I’m thinking! But then, ANOTHER freak storm...

In a span of 6 weeks our 3<sup>rd</sup> storm had hurricane force winds, rain and hail. The corn plants were all stuck flat in the mud. The stalks were not severed, but they were bent over 90 degrees like a clenched index finger. I surmised that not even miracle



corn could overcome that! But 2 days later, guess what?? Yes, that’s right. My corn is over 4 feet tall and beginning to bear fruit! The stalks still show the bends and the broken rigidity, but tall it stands!

So, God spoke to me what I will repeat to you: “Be like corn!”

## DAY 8: THE LAST DOUBT

*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6*



**Dr. Billy (Joe) Powell**  
Pryor, Oklahoma

March 3, 1963, I answered God's call to the ministry. He dealt with me for about a year and in that year I prayed and read the Bible through for the first time. I was working for an oilfield supply company. I can remember the day a doubt crept into my mind. I was the only one in the office. I stopped what I was doing and began to have a conversation with myself and God. I thought and prayed "This can't be happening to us. Why would God call me to the ministry? Why haven't I received an invitation to preach or to pastor a church?"

That evening our family went to Wednesday night Bible Study. My pastor met us at the front door of the church building and said, "This afternoon my son called me (who was a pastor) and asked if you would preach for him in a couple of weeks." I responded, "Yes". Then I prayed, "Thank you Lord for the affirmation of my call."

That was the quickest answer to prayer that I have received in my 55 years of ministry. It was also the last doubt that I had about my call to ministry. I have never thought of leaving the ministry. I have had doubts about the change of ministry, such as, being called to Venezuela as foreign missionaries for thirty years. In 55 years of ministry, we have fulfilled many ministries. Each time, we asked God's will and have found Him faithful to let us know exactly what He wanted us to do. That is why Proverbs 3:5-6 has become my life verses. *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."*

### I AM

*"And God said unto Moses, I Am That I Am. And He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you." Exodus 3:14*



I AM...

Moses asked the LORD, who shall I say sent me when they ask. The LORD said, tell them, "I AM" has sent you.

Today God is still the great I AM. If you need healing, God is saying, "I Am healing." If you need peace, God is saying, "I Am peace." If you need hope, God is saying, "I Am hope." If you need provision, God is saying "I Am your provider." If you are depressed, God is saying, "I Am your joy." Whatever you need today, God is saying, "I AM."

## DAY 9: EQUIPPING THE CALLED

*“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10*

All through my life I have never been drawn to babies, children and especially teens. I have literally switched the side that I was walking in the store on many occasions in order to avoid passing by the teenagers walking my way.

One day after church, I stuck my head into my Pastor’s office asking him to pray for me because I was considering taking a part-time job. He smiled and said that he would but at the same time asked me if I would pray about leading the youth at our church. I smiled and said that I would be glad to and left. I remember haphazardly praying several times “telling” the Lord that I knew I was not to lead the youth but I did want to pray about it because of the respect that I had for our Pastor.



**Rod Fetters**  
Ossian, Indiana

Move forward about three months to a church leadership meeting. As the meeting opened, a woman raised her hand and said that she had something she needed to say. She said that while she was certain that the Lord had prepared someone to lead the youth of our church, because they were not being obedient to the His calling, that she would step in and lead our youth until this person submitted to the Lord’s direction in their life. You could have knocked me over with a feather! I knew that the Lord was asking me to lead the youth and I told Him “No”.

A few weeks later, we had our first youth meeting. It was fantastic! I grew so much in my walk with the Lord! Young people gave their lives to Jesus! While to this day, I feel totally inadequate to lead young people but there is a tried and true saying that “the Lord doesn’t call the equipped; He equips the called”. I am thankful for being obedient to his call in my life to serve the youth at my church!

### **TO PONDER:**

What does “equip” mean in “the Lord doesn’t call the equipped; He equips the called”? By definition to equip means "to provide someone with what they need to fulfill their purpose." But not just any purpose, a God-given purpose. A purpose that is much greater than anything you could have ever asked.

What has God called you to do? \_\_\_\_\_

How has God equipped you for your calling? \_\_\_\_\_

# DAY 10: SEVEN KINDS OF PEOPLE IT IS HARD TO HELP



By Ron Corzine, Fort Worth, Texas

would be beneficial if you walked with them." As everyone was leaving, the instructor saw a younger man raise his hand in the back. "Yes, sir?" she asked. "I wondered if it's alright if she carries my golf clubs while we are walking?"

After many years in ministry, I have seen that people's motives and character quickly find the surface. Most leaders can pick up on self-awareness, jealousy, laziness, integrity, and honor during the briefest of conversations. And like the young, soon-to-be father, our ulterior motives can come out of us so fast that we rarely catch it until it's too late.

One of my greatest joys is seeing men and women receive wisdom and instruction and use it to bring about real change. We live in a world that expounds the idea that we cannot be different. And it is that mindset that even keeps us trapped in a body that we do not like. But change can and does happen in some people every day. On the other side of that coin is one of my biggest frustrations. It is hard to watch some people who have all the talent, skill, and potential waste it because they would not grow, develop and change. I have seen it so many times it makes me sick. In fact, early on, when mentoring or teaching someone, I can recognize issues that make it almost impossible to help them until they own that part of their character. Perhaps in trying to help others, you too have identified those traits. Maybe you have seen some in your own life. Let's look at seven people who are hard to help in either case.

## 1. It's hard to help people who won't separate from the wrong people.

Changing can be challenging, but trying to change big things in your life while staying plugged into the wrong crowd never works. I talked to a recovering alcoholic once about his journey out of drinking. I have never struggled with alcohol, so I was curious about how he had made a change that had lasted over 20 years. He told me that it was hard at first because his friends and family were the patrons of a local bar. He said, "I was fine with not drinking, but I didn't realize that I didn't fit in anymore without drinking." He had several relapses trying to hang out there while remaining sober. The change happened when

he realized that he had to find a whole new community of friends. He made some at AA, a gym, and a church he started to attend. After that, his journey to recovery was much easier. If people cannot have the courage to walk away from the friends who are "kindly" hijacking their lives, then there is a tiny chance they will make different decisions.

## **2. It's hard to help people who can't respect proven achievers.**

In my experience, God uses us all as road maps for others. For some, we serve as a warning. For others, inspiration on how to navigate specific issues and problems. Some people become so irked with their lot in life that they build walls against other people's successes. They can hear a story of someone who overcame the exact same obstacle they have and then dismisses them as having "got lucky." When a man cannot look up to anyone, it is an issue of pride. I used to believe that only the successful and wealthy struggle with pride. I have since learned that pride is not a respecter of gender, status, or nationality. Pride becomes the warden, never allowing them to follow another out of their trap.

## **3. It's hard to help a person who only wants your resources and not your wisdom.**

There are reasons people get into messes in their life. And although there are times that they had no fault in it, they could have avoided it more often than not. So, when people ask for my help, I always like to see if, along with my resources, they would like some instruction and wisdom. It is my great joy to help; however, when I sense that they just need me for what is in my pocketbook, I realize that my help will only serve as a Band-Aid on a gaping wound. A person who refuses to seek wisdom before resources often live the life of a victim their entire life.

## **4. It's hard to help people who have never been broken.**

When we are young, we see failures as our worst enemies. We avoid them at all costs, and when they hit our lives, we try to spin the story, so it really wasn't our failure. However, as we get older, many of us start to see failures in our life as defining moments and some of the greatest times of learning. We may never love them, but we do see them more as a needed slap in the face to give us a clearer vision. A person who cannot own a failure or has ever felt the sting of being broken is often too detached from reality to understand a change on their part is needed. We can only watch and wait for people like this until God interrupts their world and brings them crashing to their knees.

## **5. It's hard to help someone who blames you for their issues.**

I have seen this a lot with children. Kids leave home, and then life hits them in the nose. The next thing you know, they blame the parents for not hugging them enough or hugging them too much. Maybe their bedtime was too early, or perhaps you did not fill the encouragement quota. I have watched parents feel like trolls because a twenty-something know-it-all is playing psychologist in everyone's life. As this unfolds, parents often try to step it up more and fix things.



All this does is give the child more things to rant about. Until they stop blaming the parent, the parent cannot really help. Life is not a fair place. In fact, it can be downright hurtful. No one leaves home 100% ready for what is coming. But when people stop blaming others and choose to resist bitterness, they can position themselves for receiving help. If someone blames or accuses me for their lot in life, I am the last person who will fix them. I cannot care more about your life than you do.

#### **6. It's hard to help a "Know-It-All."**

Not much to say here. We all have had people who needed our help, but in the end, they wanted to teach us how to help them out of their mess because they are the authority on it. It makes NO SENSE AT ALL! When they show up in my life, I simply smile and understand I am not needed. They have it all covered...or at least they think they do.

#### **7. It's hard to help people who don't understand responsibility.**

The word responsibility means "able to respond." When a man or woman cannot take the burden on their shoulders, helping them becomes an exercise in futility. Odds are, they will always get bogged down in the mud of fault. Not everything we go through is our fault, but it is still our responsibility. I know a man who got a very rare sickness. He did nothing to bring it on himself, and doctors do not know what caused it. He said he felt sorry for himself for the first week and pouted while being hospitalized. Finally, his doctor told him that a bad attitude would kill him faster if he didn't take personal responsibility for fighting this illness. Her words were enough to snap him out of it. Within a week, he had made enormous improvements. Only those who take responsibility will change things that must be changed.

I have spent my life encouraging others and helping people reach their dreams. I have also spent countless hours scratching my head and wondering why some won't become all they could be. In training leaders, you get a front-row view of growth's cause and effect. It never gets old. You will also encounter moments when only God can intervene and put one's life in order. If you can recognize it early, it can save you time and frustration.

### **WHERE DOES MY HELP COME FROM?**



When things look down, just look up. "I lift up my eyes to the hills--where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD." Psalm 121:1-2

Psalm 121 is all about God's protection on whatever journey in life that we are on. It is a short psalm and one that is worth praying for frequently. It will encourage and strengthen your heart.

## DAY 11: HE KNEW HOW TO FORGIVE

Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.

My dad was the most forgiving person I have ever known.

Maybe that is why he whistled and smiled all the time.

I can remember as a small boy watching as church leaders would knock on our front door and invite my dad outside for a talk. A little while later he would return and mom would ask, “Do we have to move again?”



**Ron Corzine**  
Fort Worth, Texas



You see dad was a pastor of small country churches. He loved people and was faithful in helping them any way he could. But he also refused to compromise; therefore, he spoke the truth in love. The problem it seems was most people loved their ways more than God’s Word. So, dad would occasionally hit a nerve and they would respond. But with God’s help he would forgive quickly and

move on.

Forgiveness. It can be such a hard thing to do, but it is liberating to the soul. What makes it difficult for most people to do, is the way we define it. We think of forgiveness as meaning that we should say all is forgotten and things will go back to what they were. This Biblical definition of forgiveness is very hard for most of us to swallow. How can you forget the unforgettable? How can you forgive the unforgivable? To enjoy the benefits of forgiveness, however, we needn’t go that far. All that’s really required is that we make the decision to move forward, to let go of the offense and the hurt and release the individual(s) from what they did. We don’t have to condone what’s been done. What’s wrong is still wrong. We don’t have to invite the person back into our lives or even become best of friends. What we must do is allow ourselves to release all the negative emotions associated with that person.

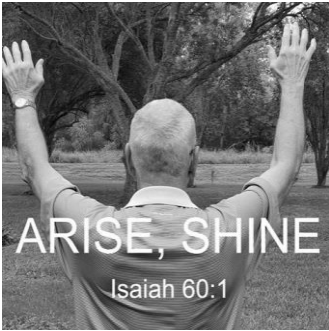
As long as we hold on to the pain and hurt, we are choosing to allow that person’s past actions to continue to hurt us, therefore developing bitterness. We must choose to let go and stop allowing them to hurt us. This is an understanding of forgiveness that’s more doable for those who feel they are less saintly.

I once read and made note that the inward component of forgiveness consists of enjoying the sense of emotional relief that comes when the burden of a grudge has melted away. The outer component involves extending one's attitude of goodwill and mercy outward to others.

Sometimes the public expression of forgiveness results in reconciliation whereby the relationship continues on as before. Sometimes it doesn't, and in certain cases it is inadvisable. But if I truly from my heart have forgiven them and released them, then I can move forward and experience as well as enjoy the benefits of God's forgiveness toward me.

## **ARISE, SHINE! LET GOD ARISE!**

*"Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him." Psalm 68:1*



It is time for **ALL** Christ followers to "**ARISE, SHINE**, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you." Isaiah 60:1-2

Evil is rampant throughout the world. Our world needs revival! More and more Christ followers are beginning to **ARISE, SHINE** and stand united as one voice praying fervently and overtly proclaiming

the Good News. They are bold and live their faith out loud like David, standing against Goliath, declaring: "*I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty.*" Eph. 6:10-12 says, "*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 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 heavenly realms.*"

The song, "Let God Arise!" (See lyrics below), is based on Psalm 68:1-3, which says: "*Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.*"

Let God arise and His enemies be scattered  
Let God arise and His enemies be scattered  
Let God arise and His enemies be scattered

Let God  
Let God  
Arise!

## DAY 12: WE ARE NEVER TOO OLD

*“For God’s gifts and callings are irrevocable.” Romans 11:29*

I first heard this scripture as a young business man some forty plus years ago. My wife and I, with two small children to be responsible for, began attending a small church thinking we needed to set a good example for our children. At that time neither my wife nor I knew much about the Bible but both of us had attended church and Sunday school when we were young. After sitting and listening to some terrific teachers/pastors for about six months we began to understand it was better to serve than to be served. We wanted to be involved and help.



**Ken Ehlert**  
Houston, Texas

While we both knew we had special talents in the business world, because after all, we are trained from the time we are children on into our young adult lives that we need to find that area in the job world where we could use our talents to succeed. We didn’t realize that scripture carried our giftings and calling to the spiritual world.

I became an usher; my wife became a children’s Sunday school teacher. In a short while my wife and I both became leaders in the children’s ministry. It wasn’t long before we realized that we needed to reach out to the parents of the children teaching biblical truths of God’s example on raising a family - being good parents. That graduated to God giving us the desire to see better marriages in the church and our community. We began to see that our giftings and callings were to the family. As we matured, we gradually began to see that this scripture actually carried over from the spiritual world into the physical world. Even in the workplace people were drawn to me for advice about their homelife, marriages and children.

Over the years there have been a few career changes, ups and downs, many moves from city to city, state to state. Of course, all the questions of how will we do? Will we meet new friends? Will we find the right church? How will we fit in? Can God use us here? In 2019, I “retired” fully from the business world and we moved to a different state to be with our daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter. All the previous questions came up again. But now, the new perspective is: “We’re retired, we’re much older now. How can God use us?”

As we got to know people at our new church, they began asking us questions about what we did in our prior churches. Before long we were given the opportunity to again minister to marriages, this time blended families. God has affirmed over and over to us that His giftings and callings are irrevocable. No matter your age or your stage in life. *Ephesians 2:10* “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” Many blessings for you are called!

## DAY 13: ANANIAS, MIGHTY MAN OF VALOR



**Paul Diehl**  
Harlingen, Texas

Ananias in Acts 9 proved to be a valiant man. The Holy Spirit directed Ananias to go pray for Saul. Ananias' response: "I have heard about this man. He wants to jail and kill believers. You want me to pray for him?" Yet, in the face of possible arrest, Ananias obeys God and goes to Saul. He delivers God's message and prays for Saul to be healed. This event culminates the transformation of Saul into Apostle Paul.

There are three attributes in Ananias that enabled him to be a valiant man. First, Ananias had developed a relationship with God. Ananias recognized the voice of God. "The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias,' and he said, 'Here I am, Lord.'"

Second, Ananias had a transparent relationship with God. He had no problem telling God how he felt. "Are you sure about this assignment? This guy arrests believers and throws them in prison. He even has them stoned to death. That is a real possibility. Are you really going to use him?" God is not bothered when we share our thoughts and feeling with Him. That is what our relationship with God is all about.

The final attribute is obedience. Ananias enters the house where Saul is staying. He proclaims the message that God had given him, lays his hands on Saul and prays. Saul is healed, filled with the Holy Spirit, and baptized. Saul is now the Apostle Paul.

As we strive to become the men God has called us to be, let us develop these same attributes we see in Ananias: a relationship where we recognize the voice of God, we share our thoughts and fears with Him, and we walk in obedience to His directions.

### WHAT FRUIT DO YOU HAVE?

A GOOD TREE CANNOT  
BEAR BAD FRUIT, AND A  
BAD TREE CANNOT BEAR  
GOOD FRUIT.

- MATTHEW 7:18

No matter how talented, rich or educated you believe you are, how you treat people reveals who you really are. Do you demonstrate kindness, integrity, generosity, unconditional love...??? Or the Opposite? What fruit grows on your tree? ~Matthew 7:16-20

## **DAY 14: GOD'S WORD NEVER RETURNS TO HIM VOID**

*“As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is My word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” Isaiah 55:10-11*

In 1977 God had given me a word that one day Debbie (my wife) and I would someday serve Him in China. He had opened many doors on this 10-year journey, leading us to this final step, graduating with a Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language. It was May of 1988. The English Language Institute-China had already accepted me to teach. In July we would travel to San Dimas, California, for three weeks of orientation. After that, on to our designated university in the People's Republic of China for the 1988-89 school year. I walked across the stage when they called my name, picking up the scroll of congratulations. Our diplomas would be mailed to us later. Dinner with friends and family celebrated this wonderful milestone.



**Paul Diehl**  
**Harlingen, Texas**

One week later, I received a letter from the university, but it did not contain my diploma. Instead, a letter informing me that my 12 transfer credits from another university would not be accepted. I had not graduated after all.

What were we to do? As we prayed, the Lord reminded us that Jesus is the head of all rulers and authorities. I needed to trust in Him and appeal to the university authorities just as Daniel had made an appeal to the authority in charge of the Jewish captives' training and diet. So, I talked to my faculty advisor, and together we talked to the Dean of the English Department. The Dean stated that the only course of action would be for me to make an appeal to the vice-president of academic affairs. He was the only one who could bypass this university policy.

The night before my appointment, Debbie and I prayed that God would give me favor in the eyes of the vice-president. On the drive to the university, I prayed again and again, “Lord, give me favor.” As I met with the vice-president, he assured me that the university's policy was to never accept credits from any “non-accredited” school unless there were extenuating circumstances. He listened politely as I explained my position. At the end of our meeting, he told me that he would send me a letter informing me of his decision. As I left, I prayed, “Lord, give me favor.”



The following week, in the mailbox was a letter from the university. Sitting down together, Debbie and I opened the letter. "This correspondence is to inform you that the university has decided to accept your transfer credits. You have fulfilled all the requirements necessary to receive a Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language. Your diploma is being sent to you under separate cover. Congratulations."

A second, greater celebration took place that evening. God was showing us that He really is the head of all rulers and authorities. He can direct the hearts of leaders where He wants them to go, even making exceptions when no exceptions are made. He was confirming His calling and direction for us at this time. This was God's will and nothing was going to stop His will. Two months later we were in China. God had fulfilled His promise.

Has God spoken to you about a direction or ministry? As you follow His leading, trust Him to bring His plan to completion in your life even when circumstances seem to oppose what you are doing. He will do it.

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6*



## **IT WAS FOR FREEDOM THAT CHRIST SET US FREE**

*"For in Him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:28*



**Ron Corzine**  
Fort Worth, Texas

Christians in general need to lighten up! Our life should be one that is filled with peace and joy. People will be drawn to the Jesus in us when they see the quality of peace and joy we are experiencing. Even in difficult and painful circumstances that often cause us to be emotionally unhappy, Christians can experience spiritual joy because our joy is found in Him. Do not freeze up spiritually with analysis paralysis. I will say it once more for emphasis: We can just live, allowing Christ to naturally and normally express Himself through us. "For in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). God is not all uptight so there is no reason for you to be.

## DAY 15: MIGHTY MEN OF VALOR

Little boys who grow up to become godly men or what the Bible refers to as 'Men of Valor' do so by seeing other men who they aspire to become like.

Were it not for men like my biological dad and my spiritual dad Clyde Causey I don't believe I would be the man I am today.



**Ron Corzine**  
Fort Worth, Texas

You see men have a way of rubbing off on one another — for better or worse. We will be influenced as well as influence others simultaneously. Therefore, we must become intentional in becoming the man God designed us to be while maintaining an awareness that we are influencing others at the same time.

Let me be clear — Becoming or being a man of valor does not include perfection. There are no perfect men. But I believe being a man of valor has characteristics such as being a courageous protector, a decisive leader, and a faithful partner. One who can stand alone and inspire others while being sensitive as well as being able to cry and bond. As men we also need to be vulnerable and transparent. We must be willing to allow others to see and know the struggles of our journey and allow them to follow.

Someone said, "A real leader (man of valor) will take you where you would not dare go on your own."

It was Jesus who said, "*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.*" *Matthew 4:19*

Let me encourage all men to rise up and become the men that your family, friends, and community are looking to follow.

### PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES!

**Gayle Brogdon** (Los Fresnos, Texas) says: People all around us are dealing with difficulties and hurting. And today someone you know needs your encouragement. To effectively reach out to others requires us to put ourselves in their shoes. Two passages that express this are *Hebrews 13:3 "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering"* and *Romans 12:15 "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."* **PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES!**



## DAY 16: WHY SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY?

*“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelations 12:11*



**John Cavazos**  
Olmito, Texas

In 2002 I was diagnosed with cancer. While waiting for the diagnosis of what kind of cancer I had, and the stage I was in, I gave God thanks for the fifty-two years of life He had given me. I thanked Him for my children, by name and for my wife Mary. While waiting for the results of the biopsy, I received the message three time—“by His stripes...”

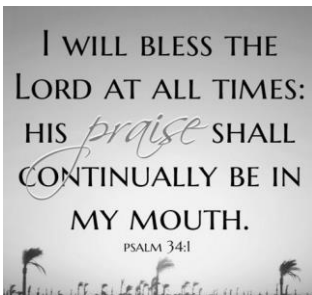
I shared my testimony with our pastor and he asked if I would be willing to give the testimony with him and his wife at the local TBN affiliate. I agreed. After the session aired, I received three notices from friends about the testimony.

Years later, I wondered if it had changed anyone’s life. I know it had changed mine and Mary’s. Ten years later, I was working with a charter school and was attending a workshop in San Antonio, Texas. I woke up, prayed and went down to the restaurant to have breakfast. The waitress came over and offered me coffee. We started to chat and started talking about our Christian beliefs. She gave a testimony on how Christ had worked a miracle in her husband’s life. He had lived a life of addiction, but God had changed him and her as well. They had started a street ministry in downtown San Antonio.

I shared how my pastor had asked me to go on the local TBN station to give my testimony. I shared that testimony with her. Then I noticed her eyes get big and she got teary eyed. She said, “That was you! – My husband heard your testimony and that’s why he changed his way of life and now we have a street ministry!” I got teary eyed. You never know who your testimony will impact! God’s power spans the world.

### PREMEDITATED PRAISE

As we get dressed today, let's put on the garment of praise (Isaiah 63:1) and purposefully choose to bless the Lord throughout the day like the psalmist David declared, *"I WILL BLESS the Lord AT ALL TIMES. His praise shall CONTINUALLY be in my mouth."* (Psalm 34:1) My friends, let's clothe ourselves today with "Premeditated Praise" and have a praise day blessing the Lord!!



## DAY 17: GOD'S ANSWER IS "NO!"

*"You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." James 4:3*

In 1978 I accepted a new job in Brownsville, Texas teaching at the university. In preparing to move, we of course were looking for a house. We looked at several but none satisfied either of us. We had prayed and asked the Lord to lead us to the house we were supposed to have and he did.

Three years later I prayed to be debt-free and God answered by selling our house for double what we paid for it allowing us to build another one debt-free in Los Fresnos. As a result, we invited our friends and pastor to come to an open house to dedicate our new home to the Lord and we have lived here ever since (41 years).

During a recent conversation my wife presented the idea about using our home as a vacation site for tourists, since we live very close to South Padre Island and rental property for families is in great demand. Since this idea had never been discussed before, I told her that we need to pray and seek the wisdom of God. So, we did. Keeping in mind that we had dedicated this house to the Lord and that He had provided funds to pay completely for the house, pay taxes/upkeep all these years and after a house fire, He even provided funds for remodeling the entire house.

While I prayed about our home being a potential vacation rental, the Lord emphatically asked me in a small still voice, "So, you want to use this house that you dedicated to Me for profit? Really? Do you need the money?" Then He continued with questions about keeping His house Holy and undefiled.

Upon realizing how wrong I was in even asking about having unsaved people stay in His house, I answered "No." This ended the prayer time! His answer had come clearly and quickly concerning using His house to rent. "NO!!!"

I related to my wife what had been shared concerning the renting of our home and that God's answer is "NO!!!" For James 4:3 says, *"You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures."* James 4:3



**Gayle Brogdon**  
Los Fresnos, Texas



**JAMES 4:3**

When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

## DAY 18: THE MIRACLES OF THE POWER OF GOD

*"His great works are too marvelous to understand.  
He performs miracles without number." Job 9:10*



**Jimmy Perez**  
Brownsville, Texas

Back in September of 1988 I woke up with pressure on my chest and I had a black out as I walked into the kitchen. My nephew, who is a doctor, advised me to go to a cardiologist as soon as possible. It was hard for me to imagine having heart problems at my age.

After many tests the cardiologist, Dr. McCleen, told me I had several blockages in my heart and needed surgery as soon as possible. One of my sisters insisted that I get the surgery in San Antonio. She had a friend who worked for a cardiologist and thought she could get me in without an appointment.

I felt so helpless because I knew that I was facing a very critical situation as per my conversation with the doctor. With the help of my sister's friend, I was able to get in to see the doctor without a prior appointment. This cardiologist told me he was taking me only because Dr. McCleen had trained under him in San Antonio. It was only because of this he was willing to perform the surgery as well. Once in his office I was subjected to extensive testing all over again since I had no records from Dr. McCleen.

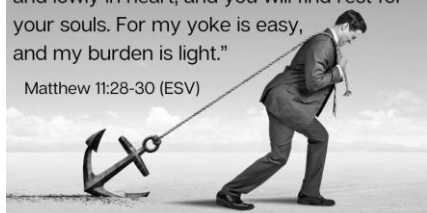
The doctor then informed me that I had ninety five percent blockage in five of my arteries. He spoke to my wife and my family and asked them to pray for him as he performed the surgery because I was in very bad shape.

After the surgery I had no pain. It was as if someone was taking the pain for me. I wanted to walk after I woke up but of course this was not allowed. After ten days I was released from the hospital. Everything I experienced was so unreal. I knew this was a God intervention. Surely God had me in the palm of His hand.

### **COME TO ME . . . I'LL GIVE YOU REST!**

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)



*"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)*

## DAY 19: HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

*“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9*

I was on the sofa and being visited by the landlord. He told me of God’s love for me and if I would give my life to Jesus then it could change. I was 15 years old and had been in a minor car accident and had many thoughts. How did I get here in the Bronx, New York, living in an apartment with my mom and two sisters?

You see, my family had moved from Jamaica, West Indies eight years before. We were doing really good and then it all fell apart. My mom and dad separated and eventually got a divorce. I was twelve and the family decline began. We lost our big home in Brooklyn, New York, and had to live out of suitcases for many months. At times we were homeless in New York City. We would find an apartment and several months later I would return home from school and find an eviction notice on the door and the lock would be changed. This happened again and again several times.

After quite some time, we found this apartment in the Bronx. We found out that the landlord was a pastor and the church van would pick up my sister every Sunday. It was this same pastor that told me about Jesus after my minor car accident. There on the sofa, I decided to give my life over to God and since then my life has not been the same. I received a peace in my soul where before there was war.

My situation changed little by little. I became a part of this church and learned about Christ’s love for me and His ever present help in times of trouble. (Psalm 46:1) I had much more trouble. Our family broke apart and I was on my own for the next several years. During this time when I was in high school, I shared an apartment with several guys from the church.

After graduating high school, God enabled me to go to Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was there where I met incredible friends and after graduating college I moved to Tulsa where I eventually met my wife. God showed me that no matter what trouble you face in this life His grace is all sufficient and will keep you and take you through if you will follow His lead and not go your own way.



**Cecil Cunningham**  
Tulsa, Oklahoma



## DAY 20: GIDEON, MIGHTY MAN OF VALOR



**Lynn Johnson**  
Harlingen, Texas

Gideon--As with most men who become a Mighty Man of Valor, God finds us hiding on the threshing floor insecure and fearful. He calls out to us Mighty Warrior (those things which be not as though they were) as we see ourselves as the least in our clan and our clan as the least in the tribe.

As we tell Him we are fearful, can't speak well, and can't lead, He works through all of our insecurities showing us His power with fleece wet, fleece dry and the Midianites proclaiming their demise to Gideon from a dream. Then God strips a mighty army down to 300 men so He will get the glory and then defeats that enemy.

I love Gideon because I relate to him so well. Most Mighty Men of Valor become that way when they realize that they have nothing to offer and God fills them with everything they need to do what He has called them to do. He made them Mighty Men of Valor in Bible times and He is still doing that in very ordinary men today.

\* \* \* \* \*

### MAN TALK!



**Carl Flowers, Sr.**  
Edinburg, Texas

I want to encourage any man out there who has been on top in business, career, or your game but somehow find yourself sinking into a place of unrest, not sure of yourself, frustrated and feel like you are losing it all. When you were on top everyone wanted to be close to you, yet you still felt all alone. Now in this state of mind you find that all those people were not close to you at all. You are probably thinking that you are all alone and nobody cares. Let me tell you right now there are more men feeling like you but there is Hope. I find my Hope in God. I find my peace in the little things He allows me to do. I find comfort in helping those God puts in my path.

I know this might not work for everyone but it works for me. In that dark moment talk to God, find someone to help and let your light shine if only to that one person. Men, you are important to God, family, work, and community. Do not be deceived or discouraged. You are not alone.

## DAY 21: MAN TALK . . . ADVERSITY

I want to talk a little bit about something men face every day and have trouble accepting it as life challenges that we must overcome. It's part of being a man. The life challenge is adversity. The definition of adversity is a misfortune, a troubling situation, or hardship. There are six types of adversity that you may encounter in your lifetime: self-doubt, physical injuries or illnesses, rejection, poverty, losing a loved one, and struggling to succeed in your selected career: self-doubt. News flash! Men you are not alone. Adversity hits us all. It's not so much that it comes but how you handle it is what matters and will determine how you come out.



**Carl Flowers, Sr.**  
**Edinburg, Texas**

It is adversity that makes a plane fly. As the engines produce thrust the wind that blows against the plane produces it to lift which allows the plane to fly. When the plane hits turbulence during its flight, the pilot adjusts the attitude of the plane which affects the plane's altitude. Just a few minor adjustments and the plane continues to fly through the adversity that was presented. So, what do how planes fly have to do with the adversity men face daily? Men, we are built with an engine created by God called our brain and it is equipped with a will to succeed and accomplish things in our life. So, when life throws adversity our way, and it will, all it takes is for us to do is adjust our attitude which will affect our altitude. We are equipped with a very powerful engine whose thrust and force has enough power to elevate us over any adversity life throws our way. Just as it is with the plane there are lives depending on the pilot's ability to navigate the plane and adjust its attitude whenever adversity comes its way. Men, there are lives depending on us to adjust our attitude and fly above life's challenges. Check your gauges, make the necessary adjustments and soar through, above, beneath or around the adversity you face daily.

No weapon formed against you shall prosper. They will form but will not prosper. God has our back. Fly high every day and soar into the life God has afforded you in Christ Jesus. Jeremiah 29:11 says, *"I know the thoughts and plans I have for you says the Lord, plans of good and not evil, plans to prosper you and give you a hope and future..."*

The greatest adjustment we can make, Men, is to fall to our knees and ask God for help. When we realize we do not have to wear that big "S" on our chest all the time and admit we need help, God will step in and make a way. Attitude adjustment will affect our altitude.

## DAY 22: GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

*“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28*



**Dion & Cecelia Chavez**  
Harlingen, Texas

Years ago, my wife and I were working through some financial challenges. In short, we had overextended ourselves and had more out-go than in-come. Mind you, the predicament that we found ourselves in were the consequences that we had reaped from not managing and stewarding our finances properly. During this time, my wife and I repented of making irresponsible choices and then prayed and asked God to intervene in our situation. In time, we realized that the resources we needed to get caught up wouldn't come from the church, the welfare office, or an anonymous

donor.

God, who is more than faithful, took us through a “resetting process” in which He brought Kingdom order to our priorities. The word of God says that when we seek first the Kingdom of God then all that you lack or need for God's purpose will be added to you. God has an eternal purpose that involves us living out his Word here on planet earth. Scripture teaches that God's Kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but rather it is about living a life of righteousness, a life of peace and a life of joy in the Holy Spirit. Because priorities have to do with what matters to us most, God began to show us how to honor Him with our putting Him first in all things, including finances. We are truly grateful that God has given us a life abundant in Christ Jesus.

We now recognize that faith is not only about believing God, but it's about trusting Him even when you don't understand all your circumstances. Today, we are blessed with the understanding and assurance that when you put God first then He will provide, protect and deliver you. God is faithful in all things, and He has shown my wife and I that He is worthy of all our trust. He does make all things work together for good for those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose.

*“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”*

*Romans 8:28*

## **DAY 23: CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD!**

*“Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him.” Psalm 127:3*

We didn't know what would happen when we became foster parents in 2018. After our first foster placement ended in what felt like failure, I (Gerald) wanted to immediately end our foster care journey. God had other plans. We continued to foster even though I was reluctant and wanted to keep our home closed.

Just a little over 2 years later and fostering several more children, we adopted a little boy. Zane came to us as a newborn premature baby at just 4 pounds because he had drugs in his system. He also came with no siblings of his own. We hoped we would be able to adopt another child as a sibling for him at some point. What we didn't expect was for God to send us another baby, Moses, 2 years later! You see, Moses was abandoned at the hospital and legally given up for immediate adoption. We just happened to have space in our home for one more foster child. The opportunity we hoped for had been made possible miraculously. Zane now had a little brother!

God gave us our first miracle in Zane, now 4 years old, and our second miracle in Moses, now 2 years old. Who would have thought that we would be starting our family over in our 50's? God did!

**Gerald and Faith Varlack** are both middle school teachers with Uplift Education in Dallas, Texas. They have 3 adult biological kids and 2 adopted children.



## DAY 24: TRY ME AND SEE

*"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse...and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes..." - Malachi 3:10 & 11*



Steve & Michelle Hale  
Brazoria, Texas

Towards the end of 1993, our family was growing to the point where we needed to buy our first house. My wife, Michelle, was convinced that renting was a waste and started looking for properties to buy. I was a little less motivated and reluctantly went through the motions of house shopping. We found a great little starter home and were soon sitting at the table for closing.

We were inexperienced in the process and learned that since we were first time home buyers we only qualified for an Adjustable-Rate Mortgage (ARM) which meant that the rate of interest on our loan could go up or down 1 percentage point each year depending on the economy. While we didn't know much, we were smart enough to know that this could be devastating to our fledgling budget and dreams of owning a home. In a matter of several years, we could find ourselves in a real financial crunch. We looked at each other and clutched hands. What we DID know was that God is our complete provider. We had committed early on to make tithing a priority knowing full well that God would *"...open the windows of heaven..."* and that He would *"...rebuke the devourer for our sakes..."*. After silently praying, we both signed on the line and took the keys to our new home.

At the end of year one, we received notice that our interest rate had dropped one point lowering our payment. After year two, another drop. The same for year three, four and five which in turn continued to lower our house payments. After the fifth year, the rate stayed the same for the next 5 years. Not one time did the interest rate on the loan go up. We were able to sell that house and make enough to buy a larger home for our expanding family. Verse 10 in chapter 3 of Malachi the Lord says *"...TRY me and SEE if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing for you!!..."*(my paraphrase).

When we are faithful in our giving, He will make a way! It's been said that *faithful, faithful, faithful* produces *fruitful, fruitful, fruitful.....EVERY time!!!* We learned that being faithful in our giving opens the windows of heaven for the fruitfulness of the Lord! He is true to His word and *"watches over it to perform it."* (Jeremiah 1:12)

## DAY 25: I AM CONVINCED

*"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits." 2 Timothy 2:6*

Jesus saved me while I was stationed at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, NC. I had gone to the Ammunition Supply Point to turn in residue. The person in charge of the residue yard was Mr. Tommy Burns who later became my pastor. He asked me did I attend church and was I saved, and I boldly answered "No" to both. I further told him why should I attend church on Sunday, if I planned on cursing and smoking all seven days of the week anyway.

One Sunday morning I woke up my wife and said we are going to church. I told her a pastor I met at work had invited me to hear what he was talking about. When we arrived, he wasn't even preaching that Sunday but had a guest preacher. At the end of service during the altar call the guest preacher said, "There is a man here that is not living right and his son is watching everything he is doing thinking it is right but he knows it is all wrong."

I remember telling God I am going to the altar because that is what my family needed from me and God told me that I had voids in my life that only He could fill. I must come to Him for that reason and He would draw my family. I gave my life to Jesus that day and immediately began proving God at His word that week. I said Jesus the Bible says that You are a deliverer; I need to be delivered from smoking. I attended church the following Sunday delivered from smoking without even experiencing any withdrawal symptoms. I accepted the Lord over 20 years ago and I have been convinced since then.



**Mark Wrench**  
San Antonio, Texas

## LET'S GO FISH'N WITH JESUS!

"I am going fishing." said Peter as he went fishing without Jesus. When Peter directed himself (not Jesus directing), he caught nothing (John 21:1-3) When Jesus spoke to the disciples, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you will find a catch" and they did what He said; results occurred. (John 21:3-11)

Are we seeking Jesus to direct our daily lives? If so, what He says (His promises), He will do...it will happen! **Let's go Fish'n with Jesus!**



## DAY 26: FROM ENEMY TO CHIEF PROPONENT



**Dan Rodriguez**  
Harlingen, Texas

One of the men I admire most in my life is Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul, although a very religious Jewish man, was an unbelieving blasphemer, persecutor and an insolent opponent of Christ and the Christian church. Paul, however, was transformed into a promoter of that which he had been a rabid enemy of—Jesus Christ. Why? How?

There are many reasons why people change camps, causes or direction in life. For the most part, people do so because doing it would bring them greater benefit. They will do it

for money, influence, or power. Paul did it for none of these. Paul already had influence and success. He was moving up in his world. He wrote: *“I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers” (Gal. 1:14).*

Paul would switch from this to ... well, listen to his own testimony: *“in labors, ... imprisonments ... countless beatings, and often near death ... Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in ... danger from robbers, danger from my own people ... danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea ... in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure” (2 Corinthians 11:23-27).* Paul’s journey of faith ended in Mamertine prison in Rome where he was beheaded for his faith in Jesus Christ.

What would lead a man advancing in influence and success for this? It doesn’t make sense, does it? What must happen to a man psychologically to make this shift of direction in life—from a persecutor of Christ, to His chiefest proponent and Preacher. The only thing that can possibly explain it—He met the Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, on a road to a city with instructions to jail followers of Christ.

*“For I am the least of the apostles,”* he humbly wrote, *“unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am...” (1 Corinthians 15:9-10).*

Have you met this Christ who changed a doubting blasphemer’s life? Call upon Him now, **HE IS ALIVE!**





## DAY 27: CONVICTION REACHED INTO MY HEART

*“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” Romans 10:9-10*

Most people aren't “stupid”; they have at least enough sense to come in out of the rain.

If you're **SAVED** you know it, and if you're not saved, to be honest, your heart can tell. My heart was telling me this years ago. I didn't understand it then, but my heart did. I needed Jesus.

During the mid-80's I delivered pizza in a mid-upper-class neighborhood in Austin, Texas, the Hill Country. I was lucky enough to find a trailer house in that area just off the waterfront and shared living expenses with a high school buddy. At that time, Danny, a working companion ministered things of the Lord to me, things of the Bible. These things magnified what my heart was telling me. Many times, as a delivery driver I would go to places, houses, and see people who could be seen as ‘having it all’ but also many times as I looked into their eyes, I saw only misery. Surely these people have enough sense to come in out of the rain. I did. I thought to myself what are they missing? What am I missing? It may sound funny but it actually scared me. I didn't want to have it all one day only to be miserable.

I found myself reading the Bible, more exactly, the four Gospels. I read the Word of God with a beer in one hand and the Living Word in the other. Before long I felt the hand of conviction reach into my heart and it yanked me to my knees. All my sins, my misdeeds, lay before me. I thought what a patient, loving God to put up with that. I repented of my sins then and there. Sobbing I asked Jesus to come in to my heart. When you do this, the Bible says (old things pass a way, all things come new). This is the experience of being saved.

Now, I understand what my heart was trying to tell me. What is your heart telling you? For me, I had to give God my guilt and shame and refuse to believe the lie that the Lord wanted to take away all my fun. What do you have to give up? The Bible says today is the day of salvation and if we believe with our hearts and confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that he died for our sins and that He rose from the dead to offer us eternal life, we can be saved. Ask Jesus to come live in your heart and you also can possess the saving power of God, His Holy Spirit. Come in out of the rain and be saved.



**Dave Truman**  
Los Fresnos, Texas

## DAY 28: DID YOU THINK TO PRAY?

*“Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7*



**Jerry & Kathy Rauch**  
**Bluffton, Indiana**

We were so excited to be able to travel to Paris! But our excitement was dampened when our flight from Fort Wayne to Chicago was cancelled with no other departure options available the rest of the day. Realizing our need to make connection with our travel group in Paris the following day, we asked the lady at the counter about outbound flights from Indianapolis to Paris. There happened to be one routed through Dulles International Airport in Washington D.C., so we opted for that flight, though we barely had enough time to make the drive to Indianapolis.

However, since we had to change airlines in order to get a flight out of Indianapolis, there was no flight number or gate information for our flight from Dulles airport to Paris. We were simply told to check the overhead monitor at Dulles. When we arrived in Washington D.C., and got to the correct terminal, everything was dark, even the electronic flight monitors. Time was ticking and we knew our flight would be leaving soon. Panic set in when we could not find a single soul in the darkened corridors to provide information about our flight number or which gate we were to be at. We feared that we would miss our flight and not be able to connect with our group once in Paris.

At this point, Kathy said, “Let’s just PRAY that God will provide someone to show us the way!” What a novel idea! Why hadn’t we thought to do that earlier?! As soon as we finished praying, out of the shadows appeared a man who told us exactly where we needed to go to find our gate. Praising the Lord for His provision, we ran to our gate with only moments to spare, boarded our plane exhausted and amazed at how faithful God is in our time of need when we think to pray.

DID YOU THINK  
TO *Pray*

## **DAY 29: GOD SPOKE THROUGH HER . . .**

*“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” John 10:27*

Because God loves us...and He's crazy about us, He will employ ways to get our attention. He uses that small still voice within to speak to us. And one of the most common ways He'll speak to us is through another person.

For instance, have you ever just been talking with someone (could be a friend...even a stranger), and you felt like they said EXACTLY what you needed to hear? Almost as if God was encouraging you straight through that person?! Well, often, that's God. And that's precisely what happened to us.



**Gayle & Myrna Brogdon**  
Los Fresnos, Texas

Approximately three weeks ago a single lady texted us saying she'd like to meet with us to help her with her prayers...specifically praying about meeting a good Christian man. Not knowing her walk with the Lord as to whether she was or was not born-again, we knew we couldn't pray in agreement with her regarding her request without first addressing her spiritual condition and her walk with the Lord. We texted her saying we'd get back to her soon. Since we knew the Lord had the answer as to what to do or not do, we prayed asking the Lord specifically what He wanted regarding her.

On July 4<sup>th</sup> we had a couple over for lunch and while we're talking, the woman shared with us, "My sister told me three weeks ago that she was going to contact you and ask to meet with you both to pray for her to get a Christian husband." The woman continued saying I told my sister, "If you ask the Brogdons to pray for that, let me tell you they will first ask you about your salvation and then your daily walk with the Lord." She even repeated all that to us several times strongly emphasizing what we would do.

We both smiled and silently inside said, "We hear You, Lord." In fact, she didn't even know that God spoke through her to give His answer to us. But we knew that we knew God answered our prayer telling us specifically what to do!

**WE HEAR  
YOU, LORD!**

*“My sheep hear my voice, and I  
know them, and they follow me.”*

*John 10:27*

## DAY 30: THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!

*"The Lord says, I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name." Psalm 91:14*



**Bobby and Lynn Crow**  
**CD. Victoria, Tam. Mexico**

In July of 2015 I had one of the greatest miracles God has ever done for me (a Missionary for 45 years in Cd. Victoria, Tam. Mexico) take place on the highway from Matamoros, Tamps. Mexico to Cd. Victoria, Tamps. There was a Missionary woman that was living here in Cd. Victoria and she was moving out of the country and she needed a ride to the States. So, I agreed to give her, her dog and a young girl and all their luggage a ride to Brownsville, Texas. When we arrived, I got her in touch with

people that could help her to buy a vehicle to take her back to her home in the United States.

I left her at the dealership and started heading back to Cd. Victoria. As I'm driving down the highway, I'm listening to gospel music and then I felt a sudden urge to pray in tongues! (Holy Spirit) So, I just began to pray! I'm driving down the Mexican highway, praying in tongues, not knowing the danger that was waiting ahead.

I had been praying in the Spirit for about 30 minutes and as I topped a little hill I see a vehicle, a pickup over to the side and there were four young men (drug cartel guys) and they all had automatic rifles! They started waving at me telling me to stop! I'm an older man and I certainly didn't want to take orders from kids, even if they had rifles, so I sped up! As I passed them, one of them shot the back tire of my truck and it was starting to come apart. Then they jumped in their truck and started chasing me. I had to slow down because my tire was coming apart, so they pulled up beside me still trying to get me to stop. Do you want to know what I did next? I took my truck and I slammed it into the side of their truck! I was taking both vehicles across the highway to a ditch. As I'm doing this, I look to my side at the truck window and there was two AK-47s pointing at my head! At this point I thought: "Okay, I'll stop."

When I stopped my truck, one guy came over with his rifle and hit my window hard with the butt of the rifle but it didn't break. (a miracle) One guy opened my door and drug me out to the back of my truck, and one guy started screaming and cussing in Spanish and telling me to get into their truck. He shot into the ground in front of me still telling me to get into their truck. I just stood there, looking at him and something came over me!

I looked at the boy, I pointed my finger at him and in Spanish I said: "NO, EN EL NOMBRE DE JESUCRISTO!" In other words, "NO, IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST!" Then another young guy came up from behind and grabbed me by my shirt, pulling my shirt so hard that the pen I always have in my pocket punched a hole in my shirt, BUT HE COULDN'T MOVE ME! I believe those guys realized something supernatural was happening because they began to back away from me.

Three of the guys continued to yell and try to get me in their truck but I continued to say; "NO, EN EL NOMBRE DE JESUCRISTO!" Then they got in their truck and went one way and another guy took my truck and went in another direction. They left me standing on the side of the highway.

Praise God a couple stopped as I was waving and they gave me their cell phone to call my family to say I was ok. When all this started at the beginning, I called our son Jeremy and told him what was happening and left the phone on in the truck, so when he heard the shots and never heard me speak again, he thought I was dead.

So, Jeremy, men from our church and the State Policemen (that attended our church) all jumped in vehicles and came up to the military checkpoint where the couple had dropped me off. Because of a tracking devise on my truck, Jeremy knew where my truck was so the State and Military officers took us back up into country roads an hour away and we finally found my truck! The bad guys had left, the truck was stripped and it was in the repair shop for 4 months but Praise God, I got my truck back, and let me tell you something that someone asked me later. "Does it help to pray in tongues? Yes, it helped me that day and I'm still alive to tell the story!"



Bobby is in a bulletproof vest that the military put on him when they went to find the truck.



The military are in the background when they found Bobby's truck that was stripped and abandoned by the drug cartel.

## DAY 31: TELL HOW MUCH GOD HAS DONE FOR YOU!

*“Return home and tell how much God has done for you.” Luke 8:39*

What would you do if you stepped on shore after crossing the Sea of Galilee, and you were immediately confronted by a naked man possessed by demons? “For a long time, this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs” (Luke 8:27). In fact, the local people had tried to confine him with chains, but he always escaped. So, what would you do? Cast the demons out of the man? Or being fearful hurry back to shore and jump in your boat and leave?

The Bible relates what Jesus did. He cast the demons out of the man. The demons entered a herd of pigs which immediately went over a cliff and drowned in the lake. When the people who had been tending the pigs reported in town what had happened, the townspeople went to see this man who was now sitting at Jesus’ feet, dressed and in his right mind. The townspeople were afraid and asked Jesus to leave.

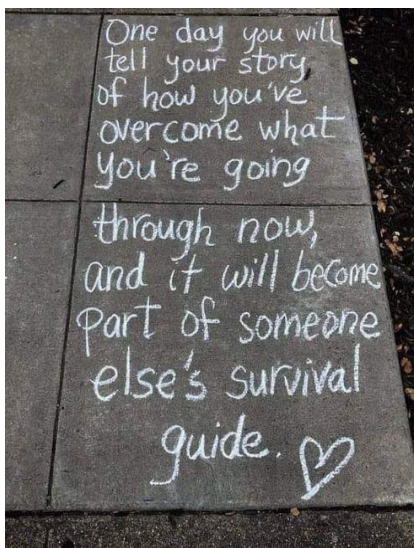
The man who had been healed was so thankful that he begged to go with Jesus, Instead, Jesus said, *“Return home and tell how much God has done for you”* (Luke 8:39).

Why would the man have to tell his family? Wouldn’t they see he was a changed man? Absolutely! But just imagine hearing him share the personal details of what happened. Have you shared with your family the things God has done for you? An answered prayer? Your conversion story? Or how He protected you when a truck was barreling down on your car during a storm and barely missed rear-ending your car when he slammed on his brakes?

The GOD STORIES & More website (<https://www.god-stories.com/>) and booklets

are full of real-life stories of what God has done in, for, and through ordinary people who have returned home and told how much God has done for them.

As you read these real-life accounts, have you become more aware of the Lord’s presence in your daily life and expect to have your own true story of something God does in, for, and through you? And when that happens, “return home and tell how much God has done for you.” As you tell your family and others, your God story will bless them and bring praise to God for His mighty power.



## **DO YOU WANT JESUS CHRIST TO BE YOUR SAVIOR AND LORD?**

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 ESV*

Here is a simple prayer to pray with earnest from your heart if you have not yet given your life to Jesus Christ and want to invite Him into yours:

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe that He died for my sins and that You, God raised Him to life. I repent of my sins and ask forgiveness. I choose now to turn from my sins and every part of my life that does not please You. I give myself to You. I want to trust Jesus Christ as my Savior and follow Him as Lord, from this day forward. Guide my life and help me to do Your will. Come reign in my heart, fill me with Your love and Your life, and help me to become a person who is truly loving—a person like You. Live in me and love through me. The Bible says if I confess with my mouth that “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in my heart that God raised Him from the dead, I will be saved (Rom. 10:9). I believe with my heart and I confess with my mouth that Jesus is the Lord and Savior of my life. Thank You, God. In Jesus name. Amen.

If you have prayed this prayer in earnest, you can also know that the angels in heaven are rejoicing because of your commitment to follow Christ. May God Bless You.

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9*





# THANK YOU & SHARE!

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”  
Proverbs 27:17*

**ABOVE ALL**, words can never fully express our heart full of love and gratitude towards You, Jesus Christ, for Who You are, what You’ve done for and are doing in and through ordinary people **ALL** for Your Honor and Glory!

**THANK YOU:** We thank each of the brothers in Christ who shared in this Book 4 GOD STORIES And More...Mighty Men of Valor their personal story of what the Lord Jesus Christ did in, through and for them.

**SHARE:** If you have been touched by the Lord through this booklet, please take a few minutes and share with us at [life4educators@aol.com](mailto:life4educators@aol.com).

With Christ’s love,  
*Gayle & Myrna*

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