

THE LAMP NEWSLETTER

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105 KJV).

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LIFE’S DISAPPOINTMENTS -2

Part II: The Biblical Aspects

Dear Readers,

Since the March/April 2012 issue, I have received increased emails, phone calls, Facebook communications, and personal face-to-face conversations with people, family members, and friends facing intense life’s disappointments. Many have major let downs, struggles and frustrations with painful situations in their lives. Some feel hopeless and are in great despair.

While some are on the “Hallelujah! Praise the Lord road,” giving testimonies and praise reports of great things happening in their lives, others are on a long and slow walk through the valley. Those who are truly hurting have heartaches. Their disappointments range from financial issues, family crisis, unemployment, layoffs, marital problems, divorces, separations, home foreclosures, disobedient children, disrespectful teens, young adults with issues, health emergencies, aging parents dilemmas, and more.

WHEN LORD? WHY LORD?

When you are trusting God to change things, but it doesn’t “suddenly” happen, you wonder why. When your back is against the wall, and you are crying out to God to come to your rescue, you feel like there is no hope. You can’t feel His presence. Honestly, it is frustrating to pray and to only feel disappointment because nothing happened! Oh, I know. I understand.

You began to feel like you are alone and forsaken. After all, you have prayed, fasted, cried out, increased your Bible reading, done all of the right things, and yet nothing has changed. In fact, situations and circumstances have only turned worse. “Why Lord?” “Why me?”

BIBLICAL ASPECTS

The saying, "Misery loves company," could apply to the various characters in our Bibles. God knows that Satan will make every attempt to drag us down in depression, fear, anxiety, and worry. Satan will head in our direction when he sees our casted down look, disposition, attitude, and hear the words of defeat coming out of our mouths. He is on alert looking for any tiny opening in our lives to enter in to destroy our peace, joy and faith in God.

The Bible says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8 KJV). The word "*devour*" means to *consume*. **Consume:** "eat, use up, completely destroy, absorb all of the attention and energy of something," as defined by the Oxford University Press.

SATAN'S PLANS

When our hopes, plans, dreams, and lives are dashed down in disappointments, and we are low in spirit and our faith is crushed, Satan wants to bring into our lives:

- **Discouragement**
- **Anger**
- **Bitterness**
- **Worries**
- **Frustrations**
- **Nightmares**
- **Unbelief in God**
- **Tormenting thoughts**
- **Temptation to sin, do wrong**
- **Hopelessness**
- **And more!**

Satan desires to implant negative thoughts in our minds. If we accept them, we will get negative results in our lives. When we can't believe that things are going to work out for our good, as God said, then we have NO FAITH. Without faith in God, we cannot activate the promises and the blessings that He has for us.

JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER!

God left a record in the Bible of what men and women of faith went through. He has given us examples of those who suffered great tribulations, tests, trials and what seemed to be hopeless situations. He has given us testimonies after testimonies of those who suffered many things and how He brought them through and out to victory!

I am so truly glad and very thankful that the Bible is full of people who had discouragement and despair. God shows us how these people faced tremendous problems and great disappointments living their everyday lives. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ wants us to see how He will bring us out. He wants us to know that He is our Deliverer!

To see the move of the Lord in our life's disappointments, it is extremely important to understand what God is doing. He has a plan and purpose for our lives.

His plans and purposes are different than ours. He said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8 NIV). Plainly, God wants us to know that it ain't no way that your ways can even measure up to Me. You can't

touch Me! I am God and you are NOT!

In my preparation for writing on this subject, "Life's Disappointments," God lead me to study what happened in various biblical people's lives. He showed me how they struggled and were upset by what they were going through. Just like you and me, they felt hopeless and in great despair. Let us look at their problems, how long they went through, and what were their results in these trials. Here are a few:

ALL NIGHT FISHING - Simon and the fishermen - They fished all night and could not catch a fish! Next day, their prayers were answered. **Luke 5:4-11**

A DAY IN A RAGING STORM: WILD WINDS AND HIGH WATERS - Disciples were on a ship on a lake. **Luke 5:23-25**

MORE THAN 4 DAYS - Mary, Martha and Lazarus - Lazarus first got sick, then grew worse, and died. He was buried in a tomb. Dead for days. **John 11: 146**

12 YEARS - Woman with the issue of blood. Went to all the doctors. Used all of her money for medical help. Could not get better. **Luke 8:43-48**

38 YEARS - The crippled man at the pool of Bethesda. Can't walk. No man came to help him in 38 years. Laid on his smelly mat like a homeless man. **John 5:1-8.**

THE KEY IS FAITH!

In these situations, we can see the struggles with:

- Keeping your job successful, business failures-Simon and the fishermen
- Weather conditions, travel, and accomplishing your plans in ministry
- Family matters, health problems, sickness, and death
- Friendship matters - Jesus was a friend to Mary, Martha and Lazarus
- Public shame, finances, poverty - women with an issue of blood.
- Abandonment, no public help or assistant, homelessness, disabilities, The crippled man.

Jesus came and everything changed! He spoke and things changed. He said do this and things changed. VICTORY CAME! Deliverance showed up!

But, what made it all happen? Why did it happen? Jesus was moved by the faith of each one. He was only touched by their faith and willingness to do what He asked them to do. Their obedience to His word or command changed things. However, His utmost concern was to see and feel the faith of each person! He was looking for their faith to kick in and intensify in the struggle. Faith is the key!

With the disciples on the ship and the raging storm, they became fearful and could not speak to the storm to stop. Jesus rebuked them, because they did not have faith. But, he did stop the storm. He spoke into their lives about the importance of the power of faith. Faith is power.

Concerning Simon and the fishermen, Jesus spoke into their lives. He told them what to do.

They earnestly listened to His instructions and things immediately changed. This is what He wants. He wants to speak into our lives. And He wants us to follow His instructions so that we can unlock our blessings!

Regarding the woman with the issue of blood for 12 years, (Luke 8:43-48) Jesus was on His way to Jarius' house to see about his very sick daughter. While on His way there, He was interrupted by that woman with the issue of blood. There was a crowd around them. She got down on her knees and reached out and touched the hem of His garment. IMMEDIATELY . . . IMMEDIATELY HE RESPONDED! He felt her faith! She was healed and made whole!

FAITH INTERRUPTS JESUS! Our faith puts a demand on His attention!

Now, remember, while all of this was happening, Jarius received a message from a man saying that his sick daughter had died and that there was no need for Jesus to come (vs. 42). What horrible news! How disappointing!

However, what I love is that Jesus was listening! He heard the bad news about Jarius' daughter dying. But, praise the Lord! Jesus responded and said to Jarius,

"Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole" (vs. 43). Glory to God! Jesus came to the house, took care of getting all of the unbelievers out of the house, and he spoke to the girl to arise and she came back alive!

THE REAL DEAL FOR JESUS

In all of our situations of tests and trials, Jesus is looking for our faith. It is as if He is checking to see if we are alive in His word. He is waiting to see us move toward Him. We must reposition ourselves to move out of despair, hopelessness, and disappointments to come to the other side! We must stretch the faith that we have, like that woman with the issue of blood and see ourselves moving toward Him. Even if it takes public shame and rebuke, little or no finances, or something else to touch Him with our faith - we need to reach out!

Now, the man who laid at the pool of Bethesda for 38 years had nobody to encourage him to get in the pool. He had no one who cared. He was brought there to fend for himself. He had nothing but that smelly mat, which he had been laying on for decades . . . nearly four decades! Imagine! Where was his family? He didn't have one friend who was concerned.

Lord, help us! If that was us . . . I wonder if we would have attempted suicide and given up? You know, I used to make bad comments about how that man did not even try to roll himself over to the pool and just flop in the water. I even said that I would beg others to help me. I was critical of this man for not attempting to save himself from his conditions. I even have joined the criticism of Christians: laymen and clergy, who are critical of him saying to Jesus that he did not have a man to put him in the pool when Jesus spoke to him about being made whole (John 5:6). The precious man said, *"Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me"* (vs. 7). I must admit, I said that he should have really tried!

BUT JESUS isn't like me. The Bible says, *"Jesus saith unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk"*

(vs. 8). *“And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked”* (vs. 9). Jesus looked on the man with compassion and concern. I looked on the man with criticism and judgment. Don’t shake your head. Many of us have done this to others in their hours of despair and trials.

JESUS’ PURPOSE AND PLANS

Jesus has a purpose and plan for everything in our lives. He has a real deal. We want this and that our way. We get mad and upset because it didn’t happen as we planned. We are disappointed and discouraged. We allow Satan to come in and make us say bitter things against our Lord for not giving us what we want. We are a sad group.

Jesus has a bigger plan and purpose. That crippled man was a sinner. He was out there sinning and throwing his life away. He allowed the devil to speak into his life and he yielded to sin. I don’t know what it was that he did. However, Jesus went to find that man. That crippled man had walked into the temple. Jesus saw him and went to him. Jesus said to him, *“Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee”* (vs. 14). Jesus is concerned about the now and eternity. He wants us whole and living the victorious life!

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

When Jesus healed the man, it was on the Sabbath day. This was the Jewish high holy day. These rules were to be kept and nothing else was to be done on that day. Jesus worked on that day because, *“My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”* (vs.17). Jesus was committed to do the will and plans of His Father.

At the time of the healing of the crippled man, the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus for two reasons, *“Because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but also said that God was his Father, “making himself equal with God”* (vs. 18). From that moment on, Jesus boldly and openly proclaimed everything that needed to be said about who He is, the Father, the scriptures, and the Kingdom of God. He did not back down. Jesus took authority! He let them know just what He was up to!

For everything that happens in our lives, God has a divine plan for it. He wants to use every opportunity in our lives, good, bad and ugly, for His glory and purpose. We feel rejected and unloved because of our disappointments, when it is more than we can even imagine! God has a divine reason for the things that come and go in our lives. He is looking beyond the surface of things. He goes deep and wide when we merely scratch the surface. We cannot even understand His purpose. We get confused and caught up on the *“gimmy, gimmy! I want it! I need it! I am Your child, Heavenly Father! Boo-hoo!”*

And you know what, as painful and horrible as so many of my own disappointments have been, finally, I see that God has a bigger plan for my life. He has a great big plan that goes beyond what I want to what He needs to do in my life so that He can unfold the plan of the Kingdom. It is not about me, but Him. He wants to work through me to do what must be done for eternity.

When I press pass my disappointments and seek Him completely, in order to have His plan

manifested in my life, then my faith in Him will convert what is happening against me. Then, and only then, will God work on our behalf. When we seek His will and His plans, then what is best for us will come forth! We can INTERRUPT the plans of Satan by generating faith to be alive! Jesus moves in our faith! Faith is the key!

Don't throw in the towel! Depend on God! Your opposition puts you in position for a blessing! You will see a miracle created and active in your life. Nobody likes to go through disappointments and hardship. But, on the other side of it, we can obtain the blessed life that God has waiting for us.

**From Pastor Toni L. Gatlin's book, THINKING THANKFUL THOUGHTS.
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GOLD NUGGET # 29

*"Disappointments are a part of life. Left unchecked roots of bitterness grow, causing nothing but trouble. Like a virus is to a computer, so are bitter thoughts to the mind. Bitterness is a signal your focus is wrong.
(See Hebrews 12:5).*

This is what I've learned from life's disappointments. Instead of dwelling on thoughts of disappointments, I now think of them as "His-appointments." What I regard as a disappointment is actually a new appointment from God for my life."

Pastor Tonie L. Gatlin lives in Portland, Oregon. She is the vibrant pastor of LBE, Love By Example. She is also the author of several books, workbook, and producer of ministry DVDs, videos, and cds. Pastor Gatlin is married, a mother, grandmother, and a devoted friend to the needy.

www.lovebyexample.com

Pastor Gatlin is a wonderful supporter of my ministries and activities through the five years that I have known her. I am thankful for her donations and contributions to my work, Write the Vision Ministries and Media Products, Int'l.



Since the beginning of time, there has been spiritual warfare going on between good and evil, God and Satan. Here is just one of Satan's strategies to destroy your faith. I call these "Faith Killers." There are six more in my book, *Faith: Use it, or Lose it.*

DISTRACTIONS

The adversary deals with us through our five senses: see, hear, taste, touch, and smell. Satan wants to distract us by getting us to focus our attention (our eyes) on material things instead of the spiritual things of life, on men rather than God.

Keep your eyes on Him. Focus. Focus. Focus. Let me share with you a personal story. I call it *"Whatcha Looking At?"*

My cordless phone rang. By the time I found it, it had stopped and the answering machine had picked up. The familiar voice said, *"Mary, call me. I need to talk with you."* I love the person dearly, but she was always in distress, so I really preferred not to return the call. I was having a pretty good day and wanted it to stay that way. However, because I am not a fair-weather friend, I dialed her phone number.

As soon as I heard the tone of her voice, I wanted to hang up. But I knew she could see my name on the Caller ID, so I took a deep breath and said, *"Hey, Girl. You sound down. What's up?"*

Before I could get the words out of my mouth, she gave me a litany of complaints. I listened sympathetically for a while, but soon realized that this conversation could go on for hours.

I had a choice. I could start complaining about my own challenges, or I could turn the situation around. I decided to give my friend an illustration.

"I want you to close your eyes," I said. *"Now, envision a plain white sheet of paper. There is nothing on the paper, except for a small black dot in the center of the sheet. Tell me what do you see?"*

"A black dot," she replied.

"That's the problem," I told my friend. *"You are looking at the sheet of paper the same way you are looking at your life. Instead of seeing all of the white space, you are focusing on the black dot. Change your focus. Rather than staring at your problems, look at your blessings."*

When I heard her shout, *"Hallelujah. Thank You, Jesus,"* I knew I had made a breakthrough.



Dear friends, this is an excerpt from my book, *Faith: Use It, or Lose It*. You can purchase the book on my website: www.leavesofgoldconsulting.com. It will increase your faith. There are a dozen inspirational short stories in the book. One called, *By Fire*, is written by the publisher of this newsletter, Mrs. Wanda Burnside (page 67-69).

Thank You to . . .

MINISTER MARY EDWARDS, the editor of The Lamp Newsletter and contributing writer. Minister Edwards has always stood so faithfully with my ministries. Since the beginning of this newsletter, she has give her time, prayers and support. I am very thankful.

Recently, Minister Edwards gave a generous financial contribution to help in the production of this newsletter. She also donated printing coupons from a major company for my printing needs. As an added blessing, she gave stickers for my children's ministry!

AUTHOR RAMELLE T. LEE, the founder of Touching Your Heart Ministries and an administrator of The Called and Ready Writers, is a tremendous supporter of my various ministries, too. I thank the Lord for her kindness and concerns.

She gave me a major contribution of 252 copies of her anointed and beautifully designed poems. God provided many ways for Simmie and me to distribute her poems to minister hope, healing, encouragement, peace, and joy into the lives of 252 people. God opened many doors for this to happen.

Simmie and I took them to two churches, to the sick, children, youth, and others.



BRAVO PLAYWRIGHTS...

***Izola Bird of South Bend, Indiana**

***Ronsher Brooks of Ypsilanti, Michigan**

***Vanessa Lynn of Detroit, Michigan**

These godly and phenomenal ladies are presenting stellar performances on stages across America and Canada! They are on the cutting edge in writing entertaining drama that is having an amazing impact on lives.

They are filling auditoriums, concert halls, theaters, and movie places. These playwrights are dedicated to writing drama with a stirring message that has never been experienced before.

When their performances are in your area, please go! Give them your support and prayers. BRAVO LADIES! BRAVO!

CONGRATULATIONS!

GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Graduate - Ms. Jolayna Lea Palm- Niece
Master Degree in Education and Business
Eastern Michigan University - Ypsilanti, MI

Graduate - Ms. Jamisha Kearney – Niece
Cass Tech High School in Detroit, MI



HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES . . .

God Bless You!

MAY

May 5 - Mr. Anthony Washington, Cousin
May 6 - Mrs. Marcia Washington, Cousin
May 25 - Author Ramelle T. Lee, Precious Friend
May 29 - Songstress Regina Morna Palm, My Sister

JUNE

June 7 – Dad’s 88th Birthday – Deacon Simmie Lee Burnside, Sr.
June 9 - Mr. Donald Brooks, Minister M. D. Edwards’ Son
June 13 - Poet Yvette Wilburn, Precious Friend
June 16 - Dr. Kai Palm, M.D., Niece
June 16 - Ms. Jennifer McCann, Cousin
June 17 - Ms. Jolayna Palm, Niece
June 27 – Ms. Sylvia Call-Burnside – Sister-in-law



Engaged!

Many best wishes to...

Ashley Naylor of Michigan
Joanna Toussaint of Georgia
Katelyn Gallagher of Philadelphia



HAPPY 40TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

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Michael and Michele Barnes

Have a glorious celebration!

Baseball Champions! Hooray!

Congratulations to Chase Chadwick and The RAYS

of Sarasota, Florida!

This was a tremendous and perfect season for the RAYS! They won every game! WOW! They are a first place baseball team!

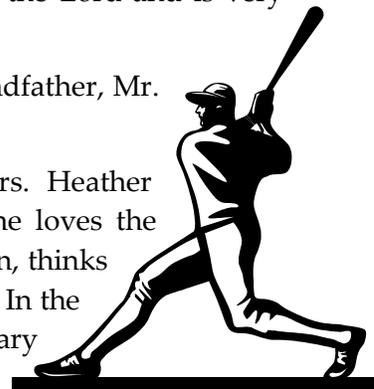
It was a fun season for the RAYS of Sarasota, Florida. This team is a Christian minor league team. The RAYS have boys and girls baseball players on their team. Prayer is allowed and character is the goal, even over winning (which good character is winning, as we know).

Chase Chadwick is a star player on this team for many reasons. He was the starting pitcher and also played first base, along with playing in other positions when needed. Chase is nine years old. He will be in the 5th grade in the fall. He ended his school year with a 4.0 average and high honors. He received awards for highest grade point average, writing, and one for having the best handwriting in the class. His entire family is so proud of him.

The Lord is very precious in this young boy's life. He loves the Lord and is very active in his church. He participates in several ministries.

His father, Mr. Keith Chadwick, was the head coach. His grandfather, Mr. Bruce Toussaint, was the assistant coach. Great job!

Chase is blessed to have a caring and loving mother, Mrs. Heather Chadwick, is supportive of him in all his accomplishments. She loves the RAYS and was there for those wonderful games. His sister, Boston, thinks Chase is the greatest! They have a strong sister and brother bond. In the fall, she will be heading to California to prepare for missionary ministries.



**-Reporter, Mrs. Carolyn Toussaint
of Sarasota, Florida**

Note: The Toussaint and Chadwick families are very dear friends. Carolyn Toussaint is the wife of Bruce and the loving grandmother of Chase, Boston and three other loved grandchildren (Joanna, Justus and Sarah). Carolyn is an award-winning writer and poet. She is a very talented artist, too.

NEW WRITING PROJECT LAUNCHED!

Yes! It is here! God has given me a new assignment in writing. It was launched May 10, 2012, the week of Mother's Day. The comments have been pouring in. They have all been very positive and encouraging. I have received tremendous feedback from my selected group of nearly 50 readers.

Those readers have asked for more! So, edition#2 titled, "Bad Hair Day," has been sent out, too. Now, edition#3, "SHINE!" will be on its way to my readers.

This new project is lighthearted with a dash of hot sauce. It features a Christian lady who expresses what she thinks and feels about things out loud. She freely gives her opinions, views, and comments on everything. She is frank and speaks from her heart and thoughts. She tells it like it is. She has a sharp attitude and speaks honestly.

However, she has a bold and straightforward love for the Lord. She is determined to live for Him. She knows the Bible and sticks firmly to the Word of God. There's a lesson in every edition.

If you would like to receive a copy of this new project, please contact me.

Mother's Day and Father's Day

God formed the family. It is His wonderful plan. He wants each family member blessed. However, Satan wants to see families struggle, have hard times, be disjointed, and labeled "dysfunctional." We want what God wants: to function in peace, love and harmony.

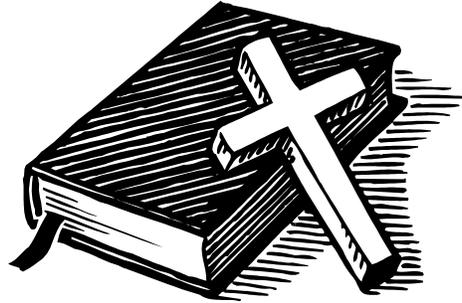
Today, there are many hurting and broken families. However, God wants to heal the family. He wants to restore relationships. He can fix what is broken and not working or functioning as it should. He will turn everything around if the family members depend on Him. He is God! He is the Creator. He will create a new life for each individual family member when they walk with Him.

If you are hurting because of the hurts and misunderstandings in your family, God wants to change things. He can create a new life for you out of your hurts. Let Him do it! He is there... knocking at your family's door... let Him in to abide with you.



CLING TO GOD'S WORD

We will face disappointments. Life comes with them. However, God has the last word! Stand on His Word and have faith!



"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians 4:7-9, 15-18 KJV).



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