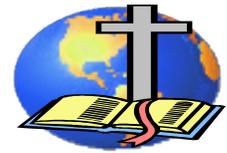




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STRIVING TO DO GOD'S WORK, GOD'S WAY, FOR GOD'S GLORY

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June 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord Jesus,

If we had the privilege to study Acts 9 together, we would be reminded of Paul's personal testimony of conversion from his perspective. But in Galatians 1:15-16a, the Holy Spirit gives a picture of Paul's testimony of conversion from God's eternal perspective! He declares, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and CALLED ME THROUGH HIS GRACE, to reveal His Son in me..." Paul tells us that it was a mighty "CALL OF GRACE" that had awakened his wicked heart; illuminated his blinded mind; and that revealed the Lord Jesus to him and in him! It was the awesome power of God's "call of grace" that transformed this blaspheming persecutor into a powerful proclaimer of Jesus Christ; and caused him to be a compassionate and courageous missionary. It has well been said that "If a person rejects Jesus and is condemned, it is entirely their fault. But if a person embraces Jesus and is gloriously saved, it is ALL OF GRACE"!

Brothers and sisters, the scriptures instruct us that every physical miracle which was performed by Jesus was given to illustrate spiritual truth. For instance, we remember that mighty miracle of resurrection which was worked by the King of Grace in the town of Bethany. The Word of God tells us that Lazarus had died 4 days previous to Jesus' arrival. He was already buried; and as you well remember, Martha said to the Lord, "By this time there is a stench!" Yet, the One who said "I am the Resurrection and the Life" stood outside of the tomb of this one particular man and cried, "Lazarus, come Forth!" Friends, there was a supernatural power within that call, which contained the energy and the ability to raise a dead man to life! The King of Grace issued a "call of grace" resulting in the miracle of a physical resurrection. But we cannot miss the spiritual truth from this miracle. Just like Lazarus came forth from his tomb of physical death, every sinner, who is truly converted, comes forth from the tomb of spiritual death. There must be this "call of grace" to transfer them out of the Kingdom of Sin and Death and into the Kingdom of Grace and Life.

It has been my privilege and joy to proclaim the 'gospel call' all over this world, in the last 28 years! I have been commanded, by my Master, to "freely preach the Lord Jesus" to all sinners everywhere; and to "freely offer forgiveness" in His Name. But the stark reality is, that if sinners are left to themselves, they will always stick their fingers in their ears. They will (100 % of the time) close their ears to the 'gospel call'. They will either make light of the gospel, in neglectful and apathetic rejection; or they will respond in antagonistic refusal & rebellious resistance! But thank GOD, that there is another call which is infinitely more powerful than the call of this pitiful preacher. This is a call that comes to sinners with a miraculous and marvelous power which brings forth glorious consequences. This call is accompanied by the "life-giving" power of God's Grace, which grants the sinner the desire and the ability, to do what they would have never done, if they had been left to themselves! (Which is to repent and believe the gospel)! This 'call of grace' contains the miraculous power to accomplish the purpose for which the 'gospel call' was given. It is that same awesome 'call of grace' which was issued by God to Abraham, calling him out of paganism in the Ur of the Chaldees. It is that supernatural call of grace which was heard by Simon Peter, when Jesus simply said, "Follow Me". There was a miraculous power within that call, which gave Simon Peter the desire and the ability to "leave his fishing nets behind and follow Jesus". It is that mighty call of grace that 3,000 Jews heard on the day of Pentecost, that pierced them to the inner core of their being, so that they cried out to Peter and the others, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" It is that same supernatural 'call of grace' that Saul of Tarsus heard from the Lord Jesus saying, "Saul, Saul".



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There was such an amazing and liberating force within that call, that this persecutor of the church responded, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Oh dear friend, this is a call that comes to more than just the ears of sinners from preachers and witnesses; but it comes mightily to the heart of a sinner, from the God of Grace! This awesome "call" comes to the sinner, not in word only; but in a demonstration of the very power that raised Jesus from the dead! Each one of us, who are partakers of this "heavenly calling", ought to glory in the "grace of God" that has called us out of death and into life! We are part of a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people; that we may proclaim the praises of Him Who CALLED us out of darkness and into His marvelous light!

I want to say to you, that there is nothing more precious in this world, than to be present when the Lord gives a person this "holy calling". I am thinking of a precious man that I met recently, who goes by the nickname, "BUB". This man was in attendance throughout the week, in a crusade that I recently preached in Jonesville, La. Bub is a "mountain" of a man! He looks like he could be an NFL defensive lineman. He had quite a reputation for fighting and brawling with many men in this area. He was known as one mean dude. But, he had begun attending church a few weeks prior to the crusade; and was in attendance on this particular Sunday morning that the crusade began. Amazingly, Bub returned to church for the Sunday evening service. As a matter of fact, he even attended the noon meetings, which were extremely well attended by "mostly men"! As the week unfolded, Bub, began telling me his life story. He told me that he knew that he was lost. God gave me, as well as a couple of other men, a number of opportunities to plant the gospel truths into his heart throughout that week. Bub was very candid and transparent about his life of sin. As the week progressed, I found myself continually calling out to the Lord on behalf of Bub's soul. I also became aware, that many people in this congregation had also been praying for him. That week, we had the precious delight of seeing a number of men testify of the converting call of grace in their lives. We celebrated every man which testified of saving faith in the Lord. And yet, when I preached the last message on Wednesday evening, there were two particular men that were greatly burdening my heart. One of them was Bub. As pastor Craig James was giving his closing remarks at the conclusion of that last message, he said to the congregation, "God may call you at midnight; God may call you late in the night or early in the morning; but friend, when God calls, you must answer". Suddenly, we heard a scream from the back of the church. It was 'BUB' crying out, "HE IS CALLING ME NOW!" This "mountain of a man" came to Pastor Craig openly weeping; and publicly and boldly professing to the entire congregation, that the "Lord Jesus Christ had given him a mighty call of grace"! Oh friends, the entire church was either weeping or shouting joyously! Believe me friends, there is no greater blessing on this earth, than to be present when it pleases the Lord Jesus to give men and women the miraculous "call of grace"! No wonder, the Lord likens it to the birth of a child; it is 'The New Birth' taking place!

### CUBA CONFERENCE ON THE AMAZING GRACE OF GOD

It is hard to believe that it was 15 years ago when the Lord opened the door to this marvelous ministry in Cuba. This was my 26<sup>th</sup> mission trip to this communist nation. The Lord graced us with the precious opportunity to teach 540 church planters, house church leaders and lay leaders at this year's conference at Marantha Baptist Church in Holguin, Cuba. It was the best attended conference to date. The theme of this year's conference was "Walking In Victory In The Reign Of Grace". It was obvious that all who were in attendance were truly anticipating this 10-session series on the Grace of God. There was an unusual sense of focus, hunger and receptivity among the leaders. As Bro. Garry Morrison and I concluded the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of teaching on "the Call of Grace", the entire congregation broke into spontaneous applause. We were all overwhelmed and truly "glorifying God", for the reality that it was God's miraculous call of grace that liberated us from the tyranny of sin. The senior pastor of the mother church where this conference was held, Rev. Ernesto Fernandez testified, "Once again our church has been blessed through our brothers, Ed Lacy and Garry Morrison, who have been visiting us in these days. Once again, the Word of God has been taught in the power of the Holy Spirit to our many missionaries and leaders, represented by more than 500 who were participating in the conference. It is really amazing, the way our God moves minds and hearts far away from us, to assist in the needs of the Gospel work that we are doing in this province. We want to express our deep gratitude and our most special thanks for their labor of love among us".

Bro. Garry and I received 100's of personal testimonies of the mighty works that the Holy Spirit accomplished through the Word of God. One of the missionaries testified, "God made me profoundly conscious that I was spiritually resurrected and miraculously called unto salvation, by the grace of God. I do not have to fear the fiery darts of the enemy. Instead, I will delight in the grace of God and boldly come to the throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Another testified, "I thank God for His grace that has liberated me from the tyranny of the slavery of sin. I can live in the victory of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ." Another one shared with us, "God powerfully spoke to me during the study of Ezekiel 16:1-6, to make me aware that only He could have cleansed me from my impurity. I needed His external help to rescue me from the penalty and power of sin. I thank God for His marvelous and sovereign grace."

We also had the pleasure of being accompanied on this trip, by K.J. Pugh, who is the associate pastor of missions and education at Open Door Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, AL. K.J. developed some precious relationships with brothers, whom he will work with to conduct future "evangelistic youth camps" for unconverted high school and university students. K.J. is a godly young man who is full of "light and heat". This was the 8<sup>th</sup> time that I have had the privilege of working "side by side" with Bro. Garry Morrison, who is the pastor of Iglesia Bautista La Roca, (The Rock Baptist Church), in Easley, SC. The Lord always uses Bro. Garry in so many wonderful ways on every trip; and this trip was no different. He did a tremendous job of interpreting throughout the conference and also in the Sunday evening evangelistic service; as well as the message that he preached on Sunday morning. Bro. Garry shares some of his thoughts on this particular trip "Stepping into Cuba in the physical realm is like traveling back in time to the 1950's, with the old automobiles, the old buildings, the primitive technology, and a poverty-stricken society. Furthermore, there are very few liberties under this communist-dictatorship. And yet, in the spiritual realm, it is like stepping into the book of Acts. God is using His people, (His 'called out' ones in Cuba), to bring the true hope and peace to thousands of lives through the faithful proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Maranatha Baptist Church in the province of Holguin, Cuba, has over 1,000 members. This church has planted 4 missions that have already become autonomous churches. They have also planted 22 mission churches, with 70 house cell groups who are meeting under their authority! **This church is touching their province in many different ways. They regularly minister at the children cancer ward in the local government run hospital. They conduct yearly camps for unconverted teenagers, young adults and singles. They are continually conducting discipleship retreats for young married couples. They are ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of the elderly, at a senior center that is run by the communists! They are ministering to the mentally handicapped and witnessing to their 50 care-givers at a government run facility. And, they are having various yearly evangelistic crusades, in which we have been blessed to be the preachers on many occasions. In spite of the terrible economic conditions that the Cuban people live under, God has raised-up His church, under the leadership of Pastor Ernesto Fernandez. These brothers and sisters are loving the loss, by praying for them, developing relationships with them, and sharing the Gospel with them. These Cuban brethren are united in purpose, to bring glory to God, by evangelizing the lost and discipling the saved. They are constantly developing leaders, to whom they may commit the Word and the work of the Lord; and who will be able to teach others also. - 2 Timothy 2:2 I thank God, through His grace, that He has made me a partner with Bro. Ed in God's magnificent mission in eastern Cuba. We know that only eternity will tell the full impact that these precious opportunities of ministry have made."**

#### UPCOMING SCHEDULE

June 19-23.....First Baptist Cross City, Fl	July 24—27.....Faith Baptist, Laurel,MD
June 25.....Al Deacon's Retreat	August 3-7.....Mission of Hope, Mobile,AL
June 26-July 2..Nicaragua	August 14 .....Sovereign Grace, Andalusia,AL
July 10-18.....Kenya	August 17-20.....IEP—Gastonia, NC
3	
August 21 - Brookleigh Baptist —Gastonia, NC	

REPORT ON MINISTRY GIFTS FOR CHURCH BUILDINGS IN EASTERN CUBA

Anguilla Baptist Mission, which is one of the rural mission plants of Maranatha Baptist Church, has been packing their members into a small house for their worship and discipleship gatherings. They were in desperate need of a larger facility to meet in; as well as a place for the mission pastor and his family to live. During this trip, we became aware of an opportunity to purchase a piece of land in this rural area. There is a house on the property that is big enough for both the church to meet and the pastor and his family to live. I had brought funds into Cuba on this trip, looking for opportunities to meet immediate needs. When I was informed of this particular need and the cost of the property, my heart leaped at this opportunity to be a channel of blessing! The pastor of this mission, Bro. Eddie, began weeping with tears of joy, when we informed him that we were giving the funds for the purchase. Glory to God! What a tremendous thrill it is to be a "channel of God's grace" to this mission church. Also, we had the opportunity to see the newly completed structure for 3<sup>rd</sup> Baptist Church of Holguin. The Lord had enabled us to give the funds for it's construction on a previous trip. The church will be moving into the building in a couple of weeks. The pastor, Bro. Israel and his family, will be able to live there also! But there is more! A few years ago, God graced us with the funds to build Providence Baptist Mission which is in another area outside of Holguin. We heard the good news on this trip, that Providence has grown so much, that it is now an autonomous church, which is fully supporting a "full-time" pastor! But there is even more! The Dean of the Baptist seminary in Santiago de Cuba informed us that Ducureaux Mission, (which is another mission we had the privilege of donating the funds for it's construction), is also now an autonomous church. A few weeks ago, they held a simultaneous evangelistic outreach in the various homes of the members. They are now discipling 150 new "professing believers" as a result of that one week of "home" evangelistic outreach. Last year, we were also able to give the funds to make an addition to Upper Room Baptist Mission. Already they are filled to capacity; and they are beginning another mission point in a different home in the area! We were also blessed to support the "senior adult" ministry for the next year of outreach in that facility. Oh precious brothers and sisters, I write these things to say that YOU are a part of every one of these blessed opportunities, which are all given toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission in eastern Cuba! God is bringing forth much eternal fruit through your "labor of love" with this tremendous "open door".

Bro. Garry and I have been invited to teach a conference at the Seminary next February. That conference will be attended by all of the seminary professors; all of the professors at the 20 biblical teaching centers, which are located all over eastern Cuba; all of the seminary students; as well as many church planters! We will also be returning to Holguin next year, Lord willing, to teach a conference on "The Holy Spirit". Please continue to pray for all of these church planters, who are truly fulfilling God's great mission in the eastern half of this nation.

WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR GOD'S EXPRESSION OF HIS GRACE THROUGH YOU!

God has used many of you to be a channel of blessing to our ministry; so that we might in turn, be a channel of His blessing in many different parts of our world. I will be headed to Nicaragua shortly; and then to Kenya. We will invest many of these "temporal dollars", so that we might invest 'true riches' in the eternal souls of men and women. None of these things would be possible, except that God has raised up a small army of precious brothers and sisters that pray for us and give generously, so that His Amazing Grace might abound in the lives of more and more people, in more and more nations on this globe. The Bible tells us that God loves a cheerful giver. The Word of God promises us that He that sows bountifully shall reap bountifully with "true riches". In these difficult economic times, may all of us make a new commitment to make friends for ourselves with unrighteous mammon, that when we leave this earth, those friends, may receive us into an everlasting home! As I travel to poverty stricken places like Cuba, I am reminded, that America has been blessed with God's common grace, far above what we can imagine! May we all continue to be faithful in our use of this common grace of physical blessings, so that God may send forth "His mighty call of grace" into the hearts of more and more sinners in spiritual blessings. I pray that as you read of the tremendous ways the Lord is using your prayers and gifts in the lives of so many, it will cause you to either weep or shout with joy, first, over your own call of grace which has changed your life, but also, over the souls of others that have been changed by His marvelous grace. Together, we can look forward to that great day, when we will praise Him for the glory of His grace FOREVER!

II Corinthians 4:5

Ed Lacy