

*As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17*

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### Women Empowering Women *“Shout out to all the Ladies in TCF”*

**A real woman avoids drama,  
She knows  
Her time is precious  
and  
She’s not wasting it on unimportant  
things.**

**Always remember...  
No one can make you feel inferior  
Without your consent.**

**You are the apple of God’s eye!  
*Deuteronomy 32:10***



### “Words to Grow By”

LINDA LEWIS, GMI DIRECTOR OF  
COMMUNICATIONS

### WHO ARE YOU?

**LIFE IS NOT ABOUT  
WHO YOU ONCE WERE.  
IT’S ABOUT WHO YOU  
ARE NOW, AND WHO  
YOU HAVE THE  
POTENTIAL TO BE.**

*Therefore, if anyone is in  
Christ,  
he is a new creation; old things  
have passed away;  
behold, all things have  
become new. 2 Corinthians:  
5:17*

**And remember...it’s not always  
about Who you are but Whose  
you are! *Ephesians 2:10***



## Jehosphaphat BY PASTOR MIKE HERNANDEZ, CHURCH OF THE HARVEST

After King Solomon, the nation of Israel was torn into two different nations. Ten tribes split away from the reign of Solomon's son and formed the nation of Israel while two tribes stayed loyal to Solomon's son and called themselves Judah. The books in the Bible titled 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles records the history of the kings. This month, we will study one of the kings of Judah named Jehoshaphat.

*Now the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to the acts of Israel. – 2 Chronicles 17:3-4*

As you study the kings of Israel and Judah, a simple pattern emerged. When the kings obeyed God, life was better for them and for the nation. When the kings didn't obey God, the nation was typically under oppression from their enemies. You see this same pattern in the book of Judges. When the people obeyed God, life was better, but when they didn't obey God, they lived in oppression. I think the same pattern exists for us today.

Jehoshaphat chose to follow God. Even though he obeyed God, Jehoshaphat still had challenges. One such challenge occurred when he was about to be attacked.

*Then some came and told Jehoshaphat saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria, and they are in Hazazon Tamar" (which is En Gedi). – 2 Chronicles 20:3*

What do you do when you are faced with an enemy that you cannot defeat? We have all experienced these moments. We can learn from what Jehoshaphat did.

*And Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. – 2 Chronicles 20:3*

Whenever we get into an impossible situation, the first thing we should do is what Jehoshaphat did...seek the Lord. So many times we start with thinking of solutions or talking to people instead of seeking the Lord. Praying immediately doesn't always give us answers, but it should change our perspective. When we start praying, a good way to start is by praising God. This is what Jehoshaphat did (2 Chronicles 20:6-9).

When I say praise God, I mean start by declaring the goodness of God. Say things like "God, you are holy, you are righteous, you are powerful." Praising God also includes remembering how He has been faithful to you. "God, I remember that time that you saved me..." Finally, praising God is declaring His promises to you. "God, you said you would never leave me or forsake me." When we praise God, we see Him as bigger than our problems.

After starting with praise, Jehoshaphat then presents his request (2 Chronicles 20:9-12). It is important for us to share our requests with God. We must remember, however, that God is not a genie where we make a wish and expect Him to respond. Instead we share our request and trust God to hear us. When I pray, I have never received an audible response from God, but it is common for me to feel peace after praying.

## Jehoshaphat CONT. BY PASTOR MIKE HERNANDEZ

*You will not need to fight this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you.*  
– 2 Chronicles 20:17

This word came from Benaniah, a Levite or worker in the temple. One of the promises God gives us is that when we walk in obedience is that He will be with us. Sometimes we get a thought or a feeling about our situation. Sometimes, a friend or a pastor will give us counsel. Sometimes God will give us direction when we read our Bibles. However, God gives us guidance, it is important that we follow it.

Jehoshaphat got his instructions. He needed to go out against the enemy. He arose early the next morning and after consulting the people, he decided to put people in front that would sing praises to God (2 Chronicles 20:20-21).

*Now when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.* – 2 Chronicles 20:22

The Lord started moving when the people started singing and praising Him. This is one of the other lessons we need to learn. The people started praising God for what He was about to do. In other words, the people demonstrated their faith by praising God even though God hadn't intervened in their situation yet. Sometimes we need to praise God before the battle. Praise Him for His goodness! Praise Him for His mighty acts! Praise Him for what He is about to do in your life!

When the people started praising God, God brought confusion into the enemy's camp. The people in the camp started killing each other so when Jehoshaphat showed up, all that was left was dead bodies and a lot of plunder.

*When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much.* – 2 Chronicles 20:25

The end result for Jehoshaphat was that when faced with an enemy he was powerless against, he sought the Lord, received instruction from the Lord, obeyed the Lord, praised the Lord before the battle, the Lord went to battle for him and Jehoshaphat received the spoil of the battle. Even though it won't always work out exactly like this, this is a process we all can follow.

## Hearing from God (Pt. 2) BY BEVERLY BROWN, GMI VOLUNTEER WRITER

Last time we discussed hearing from God through His word. This is the most common way He speaks to us. His word tells us about things of the past and foretells things of the future. It has poetry and wisdom. It tells us about our Savior. And it tells us His will and His way.

The next common way the Lord speaks to us is to our spirit. We are made up of three parts--spirit, soul (your mind, will and emotions), and body.

Our spirit is the essence of us--it is our being. It is the part that is born again when we accept Jesus. It is brand new when we are saved.

So, to reiterate--the next common way the Lord speaks to us is through our spirit. Sometimes it's a "still, small voice."

Have you ever had times that you just "knew" something? Like, maybe when you should not go a certain place. Or you just knew when a certain person was not good to be around. Or it might even be something like you knew you should go right home. Or you might have even known when someone needed your help. Or know you were doing the right or wrong thing.

We know these things in our spirit. When we seek to hear from God, often He will give us peace about the thing we have asked about, or sometimes we will get an uneasy feeling about a decision we need to make.

The closer you draw to the Lord, the more sensitive you will become when He speaks to your spirit.

I have many examples of when the Lord spoke to my spirit. This is one of them:

My mother-in-law was in the hospital very ill. She went in on a Wednesday.

I visited her Thursday but not Friday.

On Saturday, I picked up my sister-in-law from the airport. We went directly to the hospital.

When we got there, my mother-in-law was awake and talking. She was having a hard time breathing and got choked easily but other than that seemed okay.

We left thinking everything was going to be okay the next day.

The next morning, I called about 8:00 to check on her. My sister-in-law told me the doctor had been in. He told my sisters-in-law who had spent the night with their mom that my mother-in-law had 24-48 hours to live.

When I got there a little later that morning, she was sleeping, and my sisters-in-law had already left to go home, so I was alone with her.

I called my husband and father-in-law and family in to see her. My children came to say goodbye.

As the day wore on she was about the same.

About 2:30 I had an urgent feeling that it would not be long, even though, according to the doctor, she had another day or two.

I called my sisters-in-law who still had not come back to the hospital. "When are you coming back up here?"

"We were going to shower and then come back up. Do we need to come now?"

"I think you better get up here as soon as you can," I replied.

"Okay. We will."

They lived about 35 minutes from the hospital. They arrived back to the hospital at 3:30. My mother-in-law passed at 3:50, 20 minutes after they got there.

The urgency I felt was the Lord speaking to my spirit. Because of me following His prompting, my sisters-in-law and their families were able to be there when my mother-in-law passed.

The more we obey His prompting, the more sensitive we will become.

Listen to that still, small voice. In doing so, you will be guided by the Holy Spirit.

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**From The Yard!** *Here are some Inspirational Articles from your Brothers and Sisters Still Behind the Walls*

### **A Lesson in Enduring Faithfully Through Adversity by Tony B. - El Dorado**

I just want to share my most recent encounter that I experienced at the hand of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In December 2019 I lost my private industry job. And with it I lost my financial goals and aspirations for my present and future. Immediately I was angry with others whom I believed had a hand in my firing. Yet after a few hours, a heavy spirit of praise moved me to thank God for my release, for my experience in a new field, as well as my much improved financial position as a result of wisely saving my money during my time of employment. I continued to praise God.

Until, (yes, until...) I was troubled with another trial/adversity when I was verbally abused and tossed in segregation with a Class I disciplinary report pending. I was angry, yet I strived to find God in the midst of my troubles.

My spirit led me to read Job, and I instantly dove deep. The Word, coupled with my humble and deeply saddened heart, began to minister to me.

The Word ministered to me by allowing me to get intimately and personally involved with what Brother Job was experiencing. For the first time, in which I read Job, I can truly say I identified with my Brother Job. I understood (to a small, tiny degree) of what he felt.

I also was frustrated with Job's friends' misdiagnosis of why Job was going through so much. They just had to believe Job had sinned or done something wrong or God would not be allowing those hardships to come upon him.

Yet what touched me and endowed me with instant wisdom was verse 1:22, "In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong."

How many times have we had our moments of trial, tribulation and heart ache and we blamed God? Or asked God, "Why" accusingly? For me, I learned just how immature I had been up to this point. Just how wrong I had been in blaming God. And how I needed to repent of this short coming. And so with a deeply contrite heart, I apologized and made a commitment with myself not to ever blame, accuse or "charge God with wrongs" ever again.

And with doing so I learned to suffer as a faithful soldier entrusting myself to God's care. And in return, it brought me enduring comfort. And a "closer walk with Thee", endowing virtues that are priceless and more valuable than silver or gold. Thus in an eye opening moment I realized how much richer I became as a result of the firing from my private industry job, and how much more my financial goals and aspirations are secure and hidden in Christ.

Thanks be to God! As we all look back upon our lives, we should confess and repent for the times we've blamed or accused God for our trials. And instead of asking God "why" in an accusing tone, ask God "why" in a help me to see what you are doing in me tone.

I love you all my brothers and sisters in Christ. Continue to strive as a faithful soldier in the Lord knowing that your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, all around the world, are doing the same.

## From The Yard! Cont.

### **I Miss You! by Charles J. – Hutchinson**

I can remember all the good times and the fun we had as a kid growing up, all the delicious food you use to cook and all the times you use to tell me to be good and the whooping I'd get when I wasn't...  
I miss you!

I know there's no manual on how to raise kids and you did your best. Your life wasn't always that great, yet you hung in there. Things for you didn't always go as planned but you still made do...I miss you!

I remember all the physical abuse you had to endure and I was either powerless or too scared to do anything, but you survived it. I can still see the cuts and bruises and remember sharing your tears. I can remember my fears of thinking of losing you, while you were out for three days, at the hand of my father, but you pulled through.

I can remember your days of getting drunk and you nursing your hangovers, fraught with puking and headaches, and my asking you to stop drinking and you would say I will, even though you didn't stop...  
I miss you!

Now I sit here in prison wishing I could have all those days back just so I could tell you of all the pain I had to endure at others hands. I wish I could tell you all the things that bothered me. I sometimes wish we could go back to the way it used to be...I miss you!

Remembering all the times you use to have to get me back in school, the times you use to have to go to court with me, seeing all the hurt in your eyes from my stupidity, how I acted. And how could I ever forget about your getting arrested because of me...I miss you!

Now, I replay over in my head all of our phone conversations we had over the years and thinking, I did this to you. Remembering it like it was yesterday, the visits I use to get from you, and hating to have to say good bye at the end of those visits...I miss you!

Thinking about all the things I've done wrong and wishing that I could undo them. Knowing all the hurt that I have caused you and wanting to undo it. Thinking about the life I took, wishing I could give mine to bring her back. I think about all the hurt & pain you had to endure because of me...I miss you!

I can still remember feeling that my world had just ended. And at that time, nothing no longer had any meaning to me because I was just told that I no longer had you in my life...I miss you!

Mom, I need to say these words to you now knowing that my life isn't the same anymore without you in it. It's hard to think of not having you around. So, I say this and hope you hear me from up above, I love you with all my heart and I am sorry for all the heartache I caused you and all the pain you went through because of me. I didn't get a chance to tell you before you passed on so I say it now, "I Love You Mom and...I really Miss You!"



Things that make you go Hmmmmmm or Giggle...

**DON'T OPEN THAT DOOR**

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it. - GENESIS 4:6-7 MSG



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**Going Down!!**

As the storm raged, the captain realized his ship was sinking fast. He called out, "Anyone here know how to pray?" One man stepped forward. "Aye, Captain, I know how to pray." "Good," said the captain, "you pray while the rest of us put on our life jackets - we're one short."

**A little shove.**

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Bible class. As she ran she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!" As she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late... But please don't shove me either!"

## Poetry Corner

**Forgive**

Forgive someone. Today forgive.  
Turn from bitter to positive.  
End frustration, anger, pain;  
Wash the anguish from your brain.

No need to reconcile or tell;  
Just feel better and get well.  
A brand new, peaceful life to live,  
That's your gift, when you forgive.

*By Joanna Fuchs*

**The Blessed Name**

There is no name so sweet on earth,  
No name so sweet in heaven,  
The name before His wondrous birth  
To Christ the Savior given.

O Jesus, by Thy matchless name,  
Thy grace shall fail us never;  
To-day as yesterday the same,  
We'll bless Thy name forever.

For there's no name ear ever heard  
So dear, so sweet as Jesus.  
We love to sing of Christ our King  
And hail Him, blessed Jesus.

*By George W. Bethune*

**What Christ Is to Us**

The Shield from every dart;  
The Balm for every smart;  
The Sharer of each load;  
Companion on the road.

The Door into the fold;  
The Anchor that will hold;  
The Shepherd of the sheep;  
The Guardian of my sleep.

The Friend with Whom I talk;  
The Way by which I walk;  
The Light to show the way;  
The Strength for every day.

The Source of my delight;  
The Song to cheer the night;  
The Thought that fills my mind;  
The Best of All to find—is Jesus!  
*By Anonymous*

**"Low at Thy Feet"**

"Low at Thy feet, Lord Jesus,"  
This is the place for me;  
Here I have learned deep lessons:  
Truth that has set me free.

Free from myself, Lord Jesus,  
Free from the Ways of men;  
Chains of thought that have bound me  
Never can bind again.

None but Thyself, Lord Jesus,  
Conquered this wayward will,  
But for Thy love constraining,  
I had been wayward still.

*Found in J. N. D.'s Bible after his departure*





## If He Did It, So Can You!

Actor Danny Trejo reveals how he has been sober for the last 51 years of his life. Trejo became a drug addict at a very young age. He was a teenager when he first consumed heroin. He also became a drug counselor which actually paved his way to becoming a prolific artist.

When Trejo was just 24 years old, he was caught selling drugs to an undercover police officer. He started going to AA meetings during his sentence to prison as a way of getting out of the mess his life was.

Trejo's childhood was very pathetic. He was a Mexican immigrant struggling in Los Angeles. He was under 10 when he first smoked weed. By the time he was a teenager, he became an alcoholic having serious drinking problems. Soon he was addicted to heroin and began the trade of it too. He had become a professional drug dealer and mostly was in jail during his adult phase.

Trejo is very thankful to an inmate who told him to join his group and they could help him recover. After getting out of jail, Trejo went under their shelter and finally, he was getting better. He was so moved by the recovery that he himself became a drug counselor!

Trejo started acting when a struggling production assistant hired him in an extra role. The movie was "Runaway Train" that starred Eric Roberts. Trejo coached him for his action scenes as he had mastered the art of boxing while he was in jail. After that, the director offered him the role of a boxer in the movie too!! Finally, his sorrows were fading, and he had a chance to make his life better.

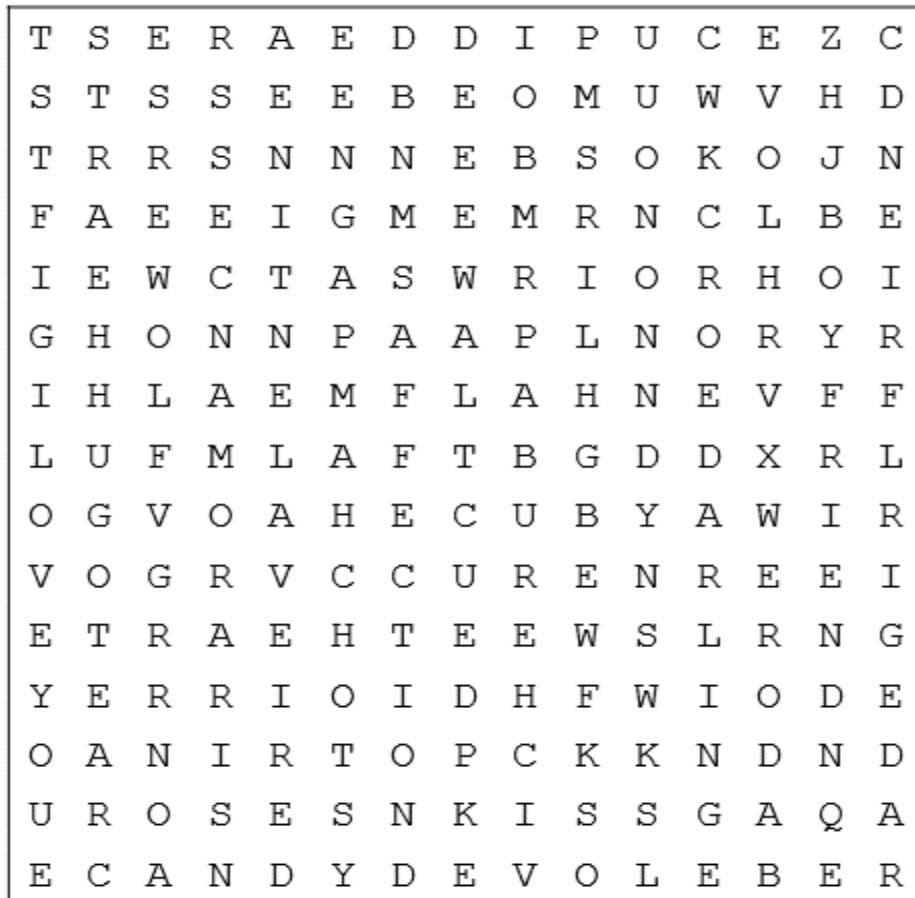
Since then Trejo has never consumed alcohol or drugs again. He is very grateful that he is out of all this now. He also attends meetings with the patients under-recovery and helps them get better. He's become one of the greatest prolific character actors of all time. Good luck to you Trejo! May you keep inspiring others!!

If Trejo can do it, so can you.



# Valentine's Day

February 14th



ADORE  
AFFECTION  
ARROW  
BE MINE  
BELOVED  
BOYFRIEND  
CANDY  
CHAMPAGNE  
CHERUB  
CHOCOLATE

CUPID  
DARLING  
DEAREST  
FLOWERS  
GIFTS  
GIRLFRIEND  
HEARTS  
HUG  
I LOVE YOU  
KISS

LOVE  
PINK  
POEM  
RED  
ROMANCE  
ROSES  
SWEETHEART  
VALENTINE



## Closing Words LONNIE JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GROWTH MINISTRIES INC

### Are you sorry, or are you sorry you got caught!

In our world today it has become common for celebrities, politicians and other famous individuals to apologize publicly when accused or caught doing something that wrongs someone or society at large. Many times, those apologies are scripted and sound a tad bit rehearsed. It seems our society has become satisfied with people, at least, openly admitting their guilt, even if it is not genuine. Thus, it has become a way for some to dodge the more serious consequences of their actions by saying **"I'm sorry..."**. Is that real remorse? Is that enough?

Well, it may be enough for society, but being sorry that you were caught as opposed to being sorry that you sinned against God are two totally different things. Godly sorrow is when you realize that you have sinned against God and you are saddened by that. You care more about your relationship with Him than you do saving face. Thus, you truly are remorseful. You admit to Him that you were wrong, you ask Him for His forgiveness, you turn away from that sin with no intentions of returning to it (repentance) and are very careful going forward to see that you don't do anything like that again.

God knows we are going to make mistakes. He allows mistakes to be a part of our growth process. But he wants us to do just that, learn from our mistakes, grow and mature away from them. If we continue to make the same mistake over and over and over, then it is no longer a mistake but a willful act to rebel and sin against God.

Recognize your sin, call it by name and walk away from it with a remorseful heart.

**True remorse  
is not just a regret  
of our consequence;  
it is a regret  
of our motives**



### Write Us

We would love to hear from you. If you have a testimony, a prayer request or a question about your walk with the Lord, send us a letter. We would love to pray or rejoice with you. Maybe you are a writer and you have a spiritual word of encouragement for the readers of our newsletter. We would love to review your article to see if we can use it in our newsletter. We also like to share poems from you more artistic sisters and brothers.

## What must I do to be saved?

If you have never accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, or if you have turned away from Him living a life of unrighteousness and wish to be connected to Him, then take a moment and say this prayer:

**“Lord, I confess that I am a sinner and ask for your forgiveness. I believe that your son Jesus died on the cross for my sins and was resurrected with all power. I invite Jesus to be the Lord of my life and your Holy Spirit to come into my heart to guide me for the rest of my days. Amen.”**



*Romans 10:9 says that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

If this is you, please write Growth Ministries and we will gladly help you start your new life in Christ.

**Growth Ministries, Inc., Attn: Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 4375, Olathe, KS 66063**