

January

AN EXTRAORDINARY WOMAN
The Woman with the Alabaster Box
Luke 7:36-38

The Root word of extraordinary is **Ordinary**. To be ordinary is to be regular, normal, customary, usual, commonplace, every day, familiar, average, same old – SAME OLD. You know ordinary; nothing fancy; nothing different. Ordinary, the things you do without thinking; business as usual. The people who never change; never making a mark on life. No 6 thousand square feet homes; no Bentleys in the drive way. Just ordinary people.

EXTRA is the additional, to go further, the added amount. When you add the prefix 'extra' to the word Ordinary it completely changes the meaning of the word. There is nothing Ordinary about our God. God is EXTRAORDINARY! God is Supernatural! When He adds His Super to our Natural we become Supernatural – we become extraordinary. We can cast out devils, speak with new tongues, drink deadly things and not be harmed, lay hands on the sick and they recover. No longer do we have to walk or live in the ordinary. We serve an Extraordinary God!

God initiates His work with Ordinary people and He makes them Extraordinary. Our job is to make ourselves available to God. You don't have to be an ordinary usher. Be the best usher that God is calling for. Allow God to place His Stamp of Approval on your ordinary and see what happens. You don't have to be an ordinary choir member. You can be one of the best choir member in the choir stand: you attend choir rehearsal, you are on time, you obey the rules. You are extraordinary!

The New Testament tells us of two, among others, extraordinary Women who owned a valuable stone box made of marble that held a precious ointment. This ointment was used to anoint the feet of their Savior Jesus Christ.

This ointment was housed in an ALABASTER BOX. The word 'Alabastron' from Greek translation refers to a very expensive perfume vase; flask or jar. Alabaster was a hard carved stone resembling white marble. It was considered a precious stone. The Alabaster box kept its contents pure and unspoiled. God requires a sacrifice of Praise that is both honest and true. My praise must be undefiled and unspoiled. When I sin I spoil my praise. It must be pure. It is what I owe God. Can't come up short, I owe Him a pure praise.

My praise must come from the bottom of my heart in a special place; from the depths of my soul; in my personal alabaster box. I owe God PURE Praise. Can't give Him praise that is phony and for show. He's been too good to me to give Him less. I owe God a

uncontaminated and untainted praise. He paid for my praise on Calvary. I owe Him my best praise. The oil in which He has anointed me cost Him his life. It is the Oil of the Holy Ghost. Christ died so that I could be SAVED, SANCTIFIED AND FILLED with the Holy Ghost.

CeCe Winans sings:

*"You weren't there the night Jesus found me
You did not feel what I felt
When He wrapped His loving arms around me and
You don't know the cost of the oil
Oh, you don't know the cost of my praise
You don't know the cost of the oil
In my alabaster box!"*

The Bible speaks of these two women who anointed the feet of Jesus: Mary of Bethany, according to Matthew, Mark and John, and then there was the Woman of [Luke 7:37](#). Though both acted from a sincere heart, their personalities and reasons for anointing Jesus were different. One was at the house of a leper and the other at the house of a Pharisee. One prepared Jesus to die on the cross and the other was preparing for forgiveness of her many sins. One's name was given: Mary of Bethany and the other remained anonymous; she was just an Ordinary Woman.

Mary of Bethany is not labeled a 'sinner' but the [Luke 7:37](#) Woman is. Mary of Bethany came in preparation of her Lord and Savior going to the cross. Jesus said, "She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial." [Mark 14:8](#). She was not weeping as she carried out her mission. However, she was an **Extraordinary Woman!**

February

Hidden Gifts

I Corinthians 12:1-7

Ephesians 4:8

"...He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." In *Ephesians 4:8*, God established in His Word that He has given Gifts unto all men. There is no stipulation; no prejudice; no respect of person, size or gender, but He gave gifts unto men; unto mankind. There is **no little gift or big gift** that is specified. He gave gifts unto men. It is **our job** to discover and to realize what gift is our personal endowment. There is no room for jealousy, because there are *diversities of gifts*, but the same Spirit. There is no room for envy. There are *differences of administrations*, but the same Lord. And there is no room for haters. Because there are *diversities of operations*, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

When we begin to realize that we are all on the same team, the enemy will have to take flight. We are divided in beliefs and doctrines primarily because we want to believe that our gift is better than the other person's or other church's gift. Our choir sings better than their choir. Our pastor preaches better than their pastor. We have the more excellent gifts operating in our ministry. Paul warned the Corinthians of the futility of fighting over the gifts. Every gift that God has granted is needed in the Body of Christ for the up building of the Kingdom of God. Your gift may not be to sing solo, but work behind the scenes – you are needed. You may not be the one to direct the processional, but you are needed to greet the visitors, the saints and the sinners as they come through the door seeking solace and salvation.

"...He led captivity captive..." Christ has bound everything that would keep you from recognizing or using your gift. *Matthew 16:19* "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." GOD'S WILL IS ALREADY ESTABLISHED IN HEAVEN. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Whatever is lawfully loosed in heaven can be loosed here on earth. God gave us the key. He has given us ACCESS to the gifts of heaven. We must SPEAK it! The power of life and death is in the tongue. To bring it to **manifestation** it must be spoken: your dreams, your desires, wants and wishes must be spoken.

What you speak here, God has already done in Heaven. So, what do we speak? WE SPEAK THE WORD. When sickness comes, we say "By His stripes I am healed" and we loose healing. There is no sickness in Heaven (everyone there is healed). When the money is low or even gone, we say "He will supply all of my needs according to His riches in Glory" and we loose prosperity (there is no poverty in Heaven). When Mae Qua Shonda has gone astray, we say "I have trained her up in the way she should go and when she is old she shall not depart" and we bind the hand of the enemy that wants to take her life and we loose obedience. When the spouse is stepping out, we say "Marriage is honorable" and we bind the spirit of whoredom and we loose fidelity. Always remember you have the KEY!

You have access to this gift from Heaven!

March

GOD IS TURNING IT AROUND FOR ME

Genesis 22:1-8, Hebrew 11:1

Jakalyn Carr sings: "*Greater is Coming*"
Jason Nelson sings: "*Shifting the Atmosphere*"
Byron Cage sings: "*Broken but Healed*"
Preshea Hilliard (penned by J White) sings: "*Lift Up Your Head*"
Jonathan Nelson sings: "*My Name is Victory*"
Paul Morton sings: "*I'm Still Standing*"
Maurette Clark Brown sings: "*I Hear the Sound of Victory*"

If you believe that *Greater is Coming*, that there is a *Shift in your Atmosphere*, that you were once *Broken but now Healed*, If you will only lift up your Head and Praise God – I promise you the King of Glory will come in because your *Name is Victory*. You are Still Standing. By Faith you can Hear the Sound of Victory because God felt that *You were Worth Saving!*

Summation: God Is Turning It Around For You. My assignment tonight is to revive your belief and trust in the Almighty God who has promised to take care of you. God said that He will never leave you nor forsake you. Christ came that He may give you LIFE and Life more abundantly. His Blessings are rich and they add no sorrow to them. He will turn things around for you, but you must have faith in Him.

Hebrews 11:1 – "Now FAITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It was by FAITH that the elders obtained a good report. By FAITH the world was framed. By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice. By FAITH Enoch was translated and never saw death. By FAITH Noah built an ark and it had never rained on the earth. By FAITH Abraham obeyed God and was blessed to be the Father of many nations. By FAITH I am who and what I am, I have what I have and I will become what God wants me to become.

Our Faith pleases God because the scripture says without FAITH it is impossible to please God. Pleasing God should be number one on our daily agenda. My pleasing God takes precedence over pleasing you. I would rather please God than man.

For many years I did everything I knew how to make people like me. I spent countless hours devising ways to make everybody happy with me. I did things that I didn't like so that I could be with the popular crowd. I wanted to be with the 'IN' crowd. I wanted to be accepted.

It was when I found out that the very one that is in your face can be the very one talking about you behind your back; when I found out that so called '*good friends*' will leave you high and dry and when I found out everyone is replaceable, it was then that I allowed the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords to become my concentration. When I please Him He will fight my battles, He will hang in there with me and always have my back.

April

HOPE: AN ANCHOR FOR MY SOUL

Hebrews 6:13-19

Assignment: To Offer Hope to someone who is feeling a little less confident in their present situation. To Offer Optimism to someone who is feeling that it is almost over. I decree that tonight you will be revived, relieved and rejuvenated.

Declaration: If you ever run out of Hope you will run out of life. It is Hope that sustains us. Hope is vital to our very existence. Without Hope we have no vision. We must believe that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Now faith is the substance of things Hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. I see you now as is, but Hope declares the evidence will be seen of what God is actually doing in your life. Hope must be in Him. Without Hope there is no faith. Without FAITH there is no Hope.

As children we hoped for toys and sweet treats. We received promises that if we would do GOOD we would be rewarded. My parents promised me every year a swimming pool for my birthday. I wished, hoped and prayed for that swimming pool. What I failed to realize was that my birthday was in December. Who buys a swimming pool in December? But, I never gave up Hope. I believed I would get that swimming pool. God saw fit to allow me to purchase a house with a swimming pool. I had HOPE.

As teen agers we HOPED to complete high school to get from under our parent's thumb. We went to college; trade school in hope of getting a good job. As young adults we hoped that the right person would come along to marry and have a family with children, a picket fence and a dog. We had HOPE.

On our jobs we HOPED for a promotion which would render a raise which would lead to more money and a better way of life. We had Hope. At Middle aged we hope for job security until time to retire. We HOPED that our children would grow to be productive independent adults and leave our households! We had HOPE! As Senior Citizens we hoped for the 3 scores and 10 years God has promised. We Hope that our health would not fail as we prepare to meet Our Father which Art in Heaven! We have Hope.

Without a vision the people perish. You would not be where you are today if you did not have HOPE. Your belief in God would diminish if you did not believe what God has said in His Word. Why go to work if you don't believe you will be paid. Why marry if you don't believe you are loved. Why go to school if you don't believe in the benefits of an education. Why see a Specialist

if you don't believe he can help you. The moment we stop believing and lose HOPE we die. We must keep HOPE alive.

Hope gives us a will to live. One year my husband's grandmother, Mama Bessie, lost a son in August. Her husband sat on the side of the bed in November, same year, and died. Two of her daughters and granddaughter were in a car accident in December, same year, and one was killed. In January her brother died. I remember at one of the funerals she cried out, "Joe, what us gone do?" Mama Bessie became ill and shortly thereafter she passed. She begged us to let her go home. We told her that she was home; did she mean back to Carlton? She said, "No, home with Jesus." I believe Mama Bessie after so much tragedy lost her will to live. She lost HOPE!

HOPE assures us that there is a better day ahead. If we hang in there God will see us through. Our present may not be an indication of our future. Hope shines a light on a dark road and is like a dose of medicine on a wounded soul.

Our FAITH should be solid. Our Hope is the vehicle that keeps you operating in that faith. Faith says God can. Hope says God will. Our household money is direct deposited. When I check on Monday and there is \$3.16 in the account. My faith is the \$3.16 which assures me that I still have an open account at the bank. My HOPE keeps me unafraid of what could happen with no money because I know that the money will be in there soon. I can actually use my card the day prior because the money is pending. All I have to do is hold on to the HOPE that is anchored in my soul. My dreams are not denied they are just PENDING.

There is a mechanism on your car that tells you that you have '0' miles before you are out of gas. Your faith is in the fact that this information is correct. Some vehicles have a reserve tank. You believe that you can ride on a little further because of that reserve tank when you know you are riding on fumes until you make to the gas station. Your HOPE level says that God has already made the promise to take care of you, it's just PENDING!

May

I HAVE A CONTRACT

Matthew 18:18, 19

"Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

This is my Bible. I am what it says I am. This is my Bible. I can be what it says I can be. This is my Bible. I can have what it says I can have. This is my Bible. It is my legal tender/my money in the bank. This is my Bible. It is my spiritual Contract. This is my Bible. It is the Word of God. This is my Bible. It is my way in and my way out. This is my Bible. It is my manual for life; it tells me what is right and what is wrong. This is my Bible. It tells me when I am indulging in sin or walking in Righteousness. It is my mutual promise from God – If I will He will. This is my Bible. It is the Covenant between me and My Savior. This is my Bible. It is my Direction- my when, where and how. This is my Bible. It is my Exhorter – It tells me that I am the Head not the tail, above and not beneath. This is my Bible. It is the most important Book that I have ever read. This is my Bible. This is My CONTRACT!

Several years ago my husband's family had a Reunion in Cleveland, Ohio. My husband is not one to procrastinate. As soon as we were given the when, the where and the how much, he made reservations at the Sheraton Hotel. He received a contract number. After 16 hours of riding in a van with 3 non drivers (two older ladies and what was then my 10 year old) my husband had to help another family member in another vehicle which left 2 drivers in our vehicle. The other driver drove 2 hours and was sleepy. Guess who had to drive the 14 hours. We left Mobile on one day and got to Cleveland the next day. Needless to say, I was tired and desperately needed a bath.

We arrived shortly before check-in time. So, I found a comfortable seat in the lobby until I could request our room. Three o'clock came and I went to the Reservation Counter. Most of the family had already been placed in the new tower. The clerk behind the counter commenced to tell me that there were no more rooms in the tower and that she had no more double bed rooms. No, this is not right. There are three of us and we made reservations. We can give you a cot in a single room. We did not reserve a cot. Sorry, we don't have any more rooms. Well, I know this is not true because if the President came you would have a room for him. I was exhausted. I settled for the single room with a cot.

When I got to the room, before I opened the door, the Holy Ghost reminded me of who and whose I was. I returned to the front desk and gave the desk clerk one more chance to deal with me. No go. I called the man who made the reservation and who had the Contract Number. When James white politely finished with her, not only did we have a double room in the tower, we had free room service, breakfast every morning FREE until we left. All because we had a Contract with the Sheraton Hotel.

In 1966 Miranda vs Arizona Supreme Court decision concept was preserved into U.S. law. Ernesto Arturo Miranda had been indicted for robbery, kidnapping and rape. But, because of the 5th & 6th amendment it was noted that his rights had been violated. His confessions were basically thrown out. All of the information that the investigators had received from Ernesto could not be used in court because they failed to tell him his rights. His conviction was overturned. Thus, we have the *Miranda Rights*.

It is my task today to inform or remind you of your Rights. You have a contract with God and it is written in the Holy Bible. Your rights and your privileges are written in this book. Your amour for protection is in this book. Your new profile is in this book. It describes you to a tee. Any man who is in Christ Jesus is a new creature, old things are passed away all behold all things have become new. The evidence of your innocence is in this book. [Colossians 2:13-14](#).

June

I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS

Luke 2:43-49

*Time, time is, time is winding up
Time, time is, time is winding up
There's 'struction in the land
God's gonna move His hand
Oh time is winding up.
Go and tell the sinner, time is winding up
Go and tell the sinner, time is winding up
There's 'struction in the land,
God's gonna move His hand
Oh, Time is winding up!*

The Secret is out: Christ is soon to come. He is on His way. He came first as Savior and He is coming again as Judge. We have polluted, destroyed, desecrated and perverted all that which is Holy and God is not pleased. There is an urgency for the Saints of God to deliver the message to the world that Jesus Saves! We must be about our Father's Business!

There is an URGENCY in the land where little boys think that they are little girls and little girls think that they are really little boys. Parents are accepting and encouraging this behavior.

There is an URGENCY in the land where gender transition is being a part of the curriculum in our elementary school and the Male and Female signs on the Restroom Door are being removed.

There is an URGENCY in the land where the Supreme Court dares to change what God has already established as marriage the union between a man and a woman.

There is an URGENCY in the land where the Gang in Blue who are to uphold the law and protect us from injustices are the ones who are doing the crimes.

There is an URGENCY in the land where parents will spend 10 hours plating braids in a child's head, but not 2 hours on home work.

There is an URGENCY in the land where the divorce rate is higher in the church than in the world.

There is an URGENCY in the land where Prime Time television has become as bad as Late Night. Naked bodies are displayed and sensual acts are exposed all day long. There is an URGENCY in the land where false prophets are persuading people to tattoo themselves with the numbers 666 and follow perverted teachings.

There is an URGENCY in this land where the two places that we thought were safe are now under attack: the Church and the School. The Movie Theater is no longer safe. The White House is not safe. Your own home is not even safe. No place seem to be safe.

There is an URGENCY in this land where 1 million of the 2.3 million incarcerated men are black. Black males ages 30 to 34 have the highest incarceration population.

There is an URGENCY in this land! Time is running out. The enemy knows this and he is trying to bewitch the Saints and keep the sinners. Satan is on his job or we? We must be about our Father's Business. We must reinstitute the true focus of the church which is to win souls for Christ not to raise money, to build grand places of worship or grow congregations, but rather to save the world with the Word of God!

Somebody needs to hear the Word of God. Somebody has not heard the Word. Somebody needs to know that Jesus saves. Somebody needs to believe again, have hope again, and know WHO can change situations. Who needs to hear: your neighbor, your co-worker, Uncle Bubba and Mae Qua Shonda, and Sis Sukie, the prostitute, the drug addict, the elderly whose family has forgotten to visit, the incarcerated who the Muslims got to first, the lonely/downtrodden who are considering suicide!

There is an Urgency in the Land!

July

JOHOSAPHAT

II Chronicles 20:15

Can we go back in time? Remember when you were in Elementary or Middle school and you and the school bully had a disagreement. He talked about your Daddy and you talked about his Mama. So, the both of you made an appointment. You set a time and a place after school to get your fight on and settle the matter. Three o'clock and I will see you on the playground after school. Your friends encouraged you to fight because they had your back. Fear ran down your legs. The closer it got to 3 o'clock the harder your heart would pound.

There were your friends egging you on. Don't worry we got this. Don't be scarred, we got this. I saw them fight last week and there is nothing to them. We got this.

Finally, the 3 o'clock bell rang and the doors opened. School was out. You slowly walked to the playground and found the bully and all of his cohorts waiting for you, but where oh where were your friends? Where was your back up? Where was your Ace-Boon-Coon? Where were those who said "We got this?"

A decision had to be made. Fight or Fight?

Where do I go when there's nobody else to turn to?

Who do I talk to when nobody wants to listen?

Who do I lean on when there's no foundation stable?

I go to the Rock,

I know He's able, I go to the Rock!

Jehoshaphat learned from his father Asa's mistakes and followed his positive actions often, but sometimes he would make negative decisions. He would turn to God to make godly decisions when the odds were stacked against him. When the challenges were obvious, a threat of war against a vast army, Jehoshaphat turned to God for guidance. What he didn't do is turn to God on a daily basis. We need God every day, every hour, every minute and every second of the day!

Just like Jehoshaphat, we want to be in charge of our lives and make decisions that seem right to man and leave God out, because like the friends who did not show at the playground we say, "I got this." God wants us to give Him, not only the major decisions, but the daily decisions. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.

Jehoshaphat had found himself in a place that looked impossible. You've been there. That place where the bank gave the wrong answer, school won't take your child's application, the

doctor has a negative report, the mortgage company will not reason with you and the spouse just does not understand; **an** impossible place!

I want speak to your IMPOSSIBLE place this morning. The place where it seems to be no good end. I have good news for you God didn't leave the playground. He is ever present!_ He is Jehovah Shammah, always there. You can always go to the Rock!

August

11 Chronicles 7:14

"If my people, which are called by my name, would humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

1st Thing That We Want To Establish: is that PRAYER is the KEY. It is our communication cable to Our Father Who Art in Heaven. It is essential to our very being. Prayer is a must. Abraham prayed, Jacob prayed, Moses, Daniel, Samuel prayed, Gideon prayed, Hannah prayed, the Syrophenecian Woman prayed, Elijah prayed, David prayed, Solomon prayed, Hezekiah prayed, Jehoshaphat, Ezra and Zacharias prayed, Jesus prayed. Without question, we must pray.

Solomon, in this Book of the Bible, had completed the Temple that his father, *David*, was not permitted to build. Continuing in his selfless character, *Solomon*, in [Chapter 6](#) began to pray for the people. He wanted God to be ready to forgive when the people sinned against Him when they came to the Temple, to the House of God to repent. ...If the people return and confess thy name, and pray then hear thou from heaven and forgive.

When the heavens are shut up and there is no RAIN, because they have sinned against thee, yet *if they pray* toward this place and confess thy name then hear from heaven and forgive.

God answered *Solomon* in [Chapter 7](#)— specifically to his request. God remembers our petitions. He sees our tears and He knows our hearts. When you ask specifically, God answers specifically. God rehearsed *Solomon's* prayer back to him.

2nd Thing We Want To Establish: When there is an **IF** there is a THEN. God will give you the condition of His promise and then He will give you the result. If you will, then I will.

[Deuteronomy 28:1,2](#) - ...it thou shall hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord... I will bless your coming in and going out, your basket and your store. You will be above and not beneath; the head and not the tail, the lender and not the borrower.

[Romans 10:9](#)— "...if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved."

[John 14:14](#) - ...if ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it.

September

WE NEED PEOPLE: TO SUSTAIN HOPE

Hebrews 10:23-25, 6:19

The Secret is out: CHRIST IS SOON TO COME. He is on His way. He came first as Savior and He is coming again as Judge. We have polluted, destroyed, desecrated and perverted all that which is Holy and God is not pleased. **There is an urgency for the Saints of God to deliver the message to the world that Jesus Saves! We MUST offer HOPE to a dying world!**

There is an URGENCY in the land where little boys think that they are little girls and little girls think that they are really little boys. Parents are accepting and encouraging this behavior.

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Somebody needs to hear the Word of God. Somebody has not heard the Word. Somebody needs to know that Jesus saves. Somebody needs to believe again, have hope again, and know WHO can change situations. Who needs to hear: your neighbor, your co-worker, Uncle Bubba and Mae Qua Shonda, and Sis Sukie, the prostitute, the drug addict, the elderly whose family has forgotten to visit, the incarcerated who the Muslims got to first, the lonely/downtrodden who are considering suicide! Someone is waiting on us to offer HOPE!

October

YOUR INNER MAN

I Thessalonians 5:14-24

The enemy is a Scandalous Being. In fact he is a SCANDAL. What do you think Gladiators? The enemy is building an EMPIRE. He has a BLACKLIST filled with the names of the HAVES and the HAVE NOTS. His ANATOMY IS GRAY and for BETTER OR WORSE he does not want you to LOVE YOUR NIEGHBOR. Satan can SLAP you with a STATE OF AFFAIRS like a DESPERATE HOUSE WIFE. On a serious note: you must realize that the enemy has an agenda and it is to pervert the Word of God. He wants you to believe that there is no wrong, no sin, no hell and no God. He wants your total ALLEGIANCE! If you are watching or hearing something that belittles God and His Word stop watching it. The enemy is challenging your *Inner Man!* What you are feeding *Your Inner Man?*

Surely, you are acquainted with your *Inner Man*. It is *Spirit* which makes a bold statement of who you are. Your *Inner Man* is responsible for forming relationships, making decisions and exhibiting spiritual conversations: your talking, your walking and your appearance. Your *Inner Man* is Valuable! SS My *Inner Man* is Valuable!

David's plea in *Psalms 51:10* after he had sinned was "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation..." He wanted to start over. He wanted to be righteous before God. *Job 32:8* reads "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." This is your *Inner Man!*

Your spirit/your Inner Man is so very important. It is your decision maker. Life is all about choices. You have to make a choice. We have to live out the consequences of our choices. God help us to make good choices.

What kind of spirit resides in you? Is it a kind spirit, a mean spirit, a good spirit or perhaps an arrogant spirit? Do you possess an humble spirit or a prideful one? *Proverbs 16:18* – "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." The spirit you choose is your choice. What you feed it is your choice!

I John 3:24 – "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." God gave us His spirit and it is up to us to feed it!

In this Book of I Thessalonians, Paul addresses some ethnical issues in a letter to the Church at Thessalonica. Though they were faithful in spreading the gospel, they were having some misconceptions about God's plan for those who died before the coming of Christ and they needed some instructions on how to live as a Christian.

November

SOMETHING SHOULD HAPPEN WHEN YOU PRAY

James 5:16

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

SOMETHING SHOULD HAPPEN WHEN YOU PRAY. Effectual means *Powerful, Useful, Successful, Efficient and/or Capable*. Fervent means *Avid, Enthusiastic, Eager, Passionate and/or Ardent*. So, the capable, efficient, powerful, useful and successful, avid, eager, passionate, enthusiastic and ardent prayer avails much. But, hold up! This scripture says 'of a righteous man' (man being mankind – male or female).

Righteous is Holy. Righteous means in "Right Standing with God". You cannot let just anybody pray for you. Some prayers reach the ceiling and go no further because of the stature of the prayer. They are not in right standing with God. If he or she does not know God, what can he tell God about you? If he or she never talks to God, how do they know the language of God? How can two walk together unless they agree?

The next predicate/verb in this sentence is AVAIL which means *Reward, Benefit, Gain, Profit, Advantage*. God added the 'eth' which lets us know it's on going. So the Capable, Efficient, Powerful, Useful, Successful, Avid, Eager, Passionate, Enthusiastic, Ardent prayer of a Holy Man, who is in right standing with God, rewards, benefits, gains, has an advantage and profits you MUCH!

In *John's* vision on the isle of Patmos he saw the golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints. No prayer of the saints is overlooked by God. No tear drop falls that God does not see. No bended knee or prostrate posture goes unnoticed by God. SOMETHING HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRAY. God saw the car wreck before you were in it. He knew that Mae Qua Shanda was going to get pregnant. He knows when DeShawn is coming from out of the streets and off of the drugs. He heard your prayer. He knows your name. He knows where you live and the condition of your house and your home. God heard you pray this morning and last night in the bedroom, in the bathroom and in the kitchen. SOMETHING HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRAY.

December

TRUST & OBEY

*When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His Word
What a glory He sheds on our way;
While we do his good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will Trust and Obey
Trust and Obey
For there is no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to Trust and Obey
Then in fellowship sweet
We will sit at His feet
Or we'll walk by His side in the way,
What He says we will do;
Where He sends, we will go,
Never fear, only Trust and Obey!*

Let's agree. The Bible is our manual of holiness. It is our instructions to Righteousness. It is our Guide to what is true. We refer to it when we want to know how to live, how to dress, how to treat our neighbors, how to handle adverse situations that crop up in our lives, how to avoid evil, how to separate ourselves from things that are undesirable and just simply how to live. It dictates what books we should read, which radio station we should listen to, what movies we should go to see and what television show to watch. The Bible is the *Christian Reference Book*. It reminds us that God is Holy and He requires that we be the same. "Be thou Holy for I am holy."

We are encouraged by the Word of God with scriptures. From the *Psalms* we read = "*Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*" It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." *Isaiah 50:10* – "*Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him Trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.*"

SIDEBAR: Allow me to talk about that NAME. The NAME of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and are safe. Solomon says thy Name is an ointment that poureth forth. Holy and Reverenced is His Name. Jeremiah declares thou art great and thy name is great. Demons tremble at the sound of that Name. There is power in the Name. O Lord, our Lord how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Something happens when I call on that name.

Trust + Obedience = Faith