

A vibrant field of bluebonnets stretches towards a sunset sky. The flowers are in full bloom, with some showing white and yellow centers. The background features a line of trees under a golden, hazy sky.

GOD STORIES

Book 1

And More

**EXPECT to
Hear From GOD!**

Dr. Gayle & Myrna Brogdon

GOD STORIES

*“I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.*

*Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all
who delight in them.” Psalm 111:1-2 ESV*



This booklet, **GOD STORIES And More... Expect to Hear from God**, are true stories that tell what God has done through ordinary people’s lives so that all who read these stories may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty and may reverence the Lord forever. Also, interspersed in this booklet are biblical principles and encouraging messages on how to daily live out our walk with Jesus Christ.

The Bible is full of God stories from God speaking to Moses through a burning bush, directing Peter to cast his fish net on the other side for a great catch, making Himself real to Saul on the road to Damascus (conversion story), and so many more. And the Lord is still creating God stories today through ordinary people who believe in and

know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Jesus is our Friend, and we love Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and love others, including you, as we love ourselves.

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

Our prayer is that everyone who reads **GOD STORIES And More** will draw closer to the Lord Jesus Christ and EXPECT to hear from God! For those who don’t know Jesus Christ as Savior, we pray you will.

Walking with Jesus,

Gayle & Myrna

Dr. Gayle & Myrna Brogdon

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DAY 1: A “PENNY PICKER-UPPER”?

Growing up, my mother, a widow, took my sister and me (Myrna) to church every Sunday. One Sunday when the minister asked if anyone wanted to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, to come down front and he'd pray with them. When my friends went down to receive Christ, I noticed they also got a Bible. I wanted a Bible, too; so, I went down to get one. I had no conversion experience even though my mother thought I had and as a result, told me all my growing up years that I was a Christian. Therefore, I thought I was. But God knew I wasn't.



However, in 1977 my world began falling apart due to marriage problems, sickly babies (Kristi & Jack), and almost drowning financially. Angry and hurting inside, I was difficult to be around. I was a heavy smoker. I had tried to quit smoking, but I couldn't. I had heard that someone had eaten cigarettes and got so sick that they never smoked again. So, I tried it; it didn't work. I was still addicted. I felt like a grubby penny at the school where I taught. Yes, I was that grimy penny on the school hallways that educators sometimes noticed but passed on by. I felt worthless and of no value.

But [Betty](#) Thompson, a third grade teacher and an authentic Christian who reached out to her colleagues with the love of Jesus Christ, noticed me. Seeing the glint of a grubby penny (my hurting heart), she stopped and picked me up, befriending me. She and my teacher's aide, without me knowing it, prayed daily for God to touch my life. Daily she reached out to me with kindness...a smile, encouraging and caring words and acts of kindness.



One day I told Betty that our 9-month-old son, Jack, was to go to the hospital. Betty replied, "Have faith in God." Those four words felt like a sword piercing directly into my heart and I left quickly, because I felt like I would cry.

Since I had recently been given a Christian autobiography, [Shout It From the Housetops](#), by Pat Robertson that I thought was fiction, I took it with me to the hospital. The person in the book was a Christian who was on fire for the Lord, zealously living out his real, personal relationship daily with Jesus Christ. I thought to myself, "I wish this was true, because all the Christians I know are hypocrites. They go to church on Sunday and live like the devil the rest of the week."

At that moment Jack began crying; therefore, I called the nurse. After she gave Jack some meds, she saw my book and remarked excitedly, "That book is a true story!" That caught my attention. She then began witnessing to me about all the things that Jesus Christ had done in her life that sounded very much like what I'd read in the book. She said, "As a nurse I never have shared like this to anyone

here at work.” After sharing the Gospel (death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ), I realized that even though I’m sinful, Jesus is the payment for the penalty of my sin, and I need to trust Christ as the payment for the penalty of my sins to have a personal relationship with God. Therefore, when the nurse left, I pondered what she’d said, and it stirred a hunger in me to finish the book & to strongly desire what she and the author of the book had – Jesus Christ as Savior.

At home four days later, I called out, “If You, God, are really real, I want to know You and deliver me from these cigarettes.” Immediately the peace of God completely flooded me giving me a peace I’d never experienced before, and I was instantly delivered from cigarettes.

God used my educator friend’s kindness, the Christian man’s story in the book, and the nurse’s testimony to draw me to Him that led me to repentance. (Romans 2:4). And I became born again--a bright, shiny, new penny, receiving Jesus Christ as my Savior. I was filled with such gratitude for what the Lord had done for me, that I became so zealous and passionate to know Him and desired others to know Jesus Christ, also.

After I received Christ, God changed me drastically. Betty took me under her “wing” and mentored me helping me grow in my walk with the Lord. I repented of my sins, forgave those I had unforgiveness towards and was baptized. I was radically saved and hungered to know the Lord more; so, I devoured His Word for hours and hours. I loved Him (and still do) with ALL my heart, mind, soul, and strength. *“Whoever has been forgiven much loves much.” Luke 7:47*



Maybe you feel like that grubby penny and want Christ as your Savior. Don’t hesitate any longer. RUN to Him. His arms are wide open waiting for you to come.

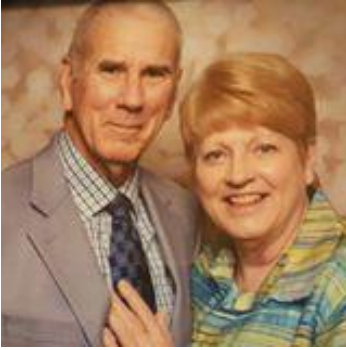
YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY:

Personal testimonies are one of the most influential tools the Holy Spirit uses to stir spiritual interest and point people toward Christ. There’s no more poignant and powerful way to communicate the Gospel than by sharing our story—not because we’re so great, but because Jesus is so great.

Consider writing your story about receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior:

(1) keep it short (2) have a before, how, and after (3) clearly present the Gospel (4) avoid Christian jargon.

DAY 2: GAYLE'S STORY



We moved to South Texas in 1969 as I had accepted a teaching position at a small junior college. Once there one of the “perks” that I was given was a membership to the Country Club. Several of my friends at the college were golfers and of course I was invited to play. I was such a competitive person that the challenge of the game was so much that not only was I playing on the weekends I also would take off at noon and run out and play 9 holes as I had purchased a golf cart, so it was easy to complete a round in an hour and a half and get back in time to

teach my classes. Golf became my God. I was asked to serve as the tournament director for the club and therefore required more of my time to organize and play in various golf tournaments.

In the meantime, while this was happening, I began to drink alcohol to the extent that it became normal to me rather than a sporadic drinker. I was drinking quite a bit when I played golf but also, we lived in school housing and the district coaches were our neighbors and the drinking continued as we would go hunting, fishing, or attending cook outs. Many times, I walked into the house drunk. I look back now and see that I was moving towards becoming an alcoholic.

At that time Myrna and I lived in the same house but basically were living separate lives. When we got married, I decided that I was not going to church as I had had enough when I was made to go by my parents. So, for about 10 years I don't believe we ever set foot in a church service. I had accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior when I was about 10 years old and I remember that very vividly, but unfortunately, I later turned my back and started doing what the world was doing.

When Myrna received Christ as Savior, the transformation was unbelievable. I noticed the change immediately, but I thought that it was just a temporary change and that I would give it more time to see if she maintained her zeal for the Lord. She constantly was reading the Bible and listening to Christian TV channels and of course she would make sure that the volume was turned up high enough that I could also hear what was going on. I was still playing golf and drinking during this time.

She asked me if I would take her to church and of course, I said no but that she was free to go if she wanted. This went on for quite a while until I could see that the changes had not faded but gotten stronger with her. She was radically changed just like Paul on the road to Damascus. After a period of time, she kept asking me if I would like to go to church and one day, I decided that I would.

This was a nondenominational church, and the church service was very different from what I was used to.

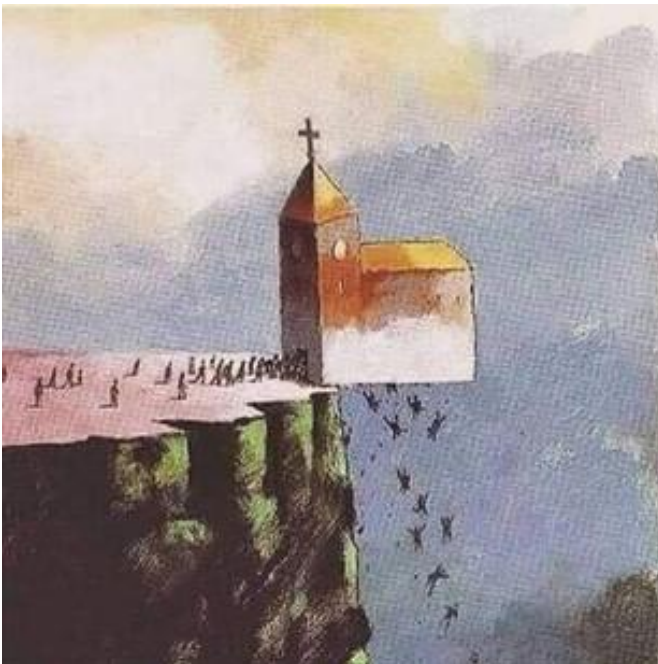
After that I began to attend more and could see that the road, I was going down was leading to destruction. Shortly after she prayed that I would quit drinking and did not even tell me, but I was ready and able to quit and did so. It was God's timing. Since that time when I rededicated my life to Jesus Christ, I have never had the desire to drink alcohol. Then I accepted a job at UTB (University of Texas at Brownsville) in 1978 and we moved to Brownsville and have been in South Texas ever since. My Christian walk has been in place for more than 40 years, and I am glad that the Lord had mercy on me and my family.

ARE YOU BORN AGAIN?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

A person may have been born in church, baptized in church, served in church, could have married in church, and still end up in hell, because he/she was only in the church and not in Christ.

It is necessary to be born again, take up our cross and follow Jesus. Many have religion but have no relationship with the living God! Many know who Jesus is (just like I know who the President is), but don't know Christ personally as being real in their lives. Therefore, do you know Him personally or **OF** Him?



DAY 3: LET THE HEALING BEGIN

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3



I (Myrna) didn't understand why throughout my growing up years and even as a 33 yr. old adult I cried hard at the mention of my father, Grady Lee Casey, when I didn't even remember him. I was five when he died of his third heart attack at 39 yrs. old. Even as an adult I was still brokenhearted.

"Lord, why? This makes no sense. Help me understand. Heal my heart."

Immediately the Lord showed me a replay of what happened that fatal morning. My father told me to bring my tricycle from the front yard to the back. I didn't. He pedaled it back. Later that morning he died at home. Instantly the Holy Spirit opened my eyes as to why I had a crying broken heart. As a child, I had blamed myself for my father's death, even though his death was caused by other factors unknown to me as a child. I cried for that "little girl" who silently bore all the blame and pain all those years and I asked the Lord to heal me. At that moment the Lord's peace flooded me and healed that "child's" broken heart.

Are you brokenhearted? Maybe you know why or maybe you don't. Ask the Lord to heal you. For *"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" Ps. 147:3. LET THE HEALING BEGIN!*

GOD ANSWERED MY FIRST PRAYER

"So, if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed." John 8:36

A week after I (Myrna) became born again in 1977, I asked my teacher's aide (who had received Christ as Savior the year before) to pray and agree with me for God to deliver Gayle from drinking. Gayle would drink almost every day and many times would come home inebriated, acting silly. Those times he'd open the back door and throw his cap into the kitchen to see if I was going to throw it back out.

We prayed. God answered. Gayle stopped drinking the next week and didn't know why. But I knew. As a baby Christian I was ecstatic that **GOD ANSWERED MY FIRST PRAYER** by setting my husband free.



DAY 4: LORD, TEACH ME TO PRAY

When I (Myrna) repented and received Christ as my Savior in 1977 at 33 years old, I was so hungry to read God's Word and spent hours daily in it. One day after hearing other Christians pray, I realized I didn't know how to pray. I cried out to the Lord, "LORD, TEACH ME TO PRAY for others. I don't know how or what to say." About a month later as I was reading the Bible, I opened to Philippians and right there I saw God's answer of how to pray for others using God's Word.

Paul wrote a letter to the Christians at Philippi and in it he wrote his prayer for them (Philippians 1:3-11). The Holy Spirit prompted me to make Paul's prayer my own prayer and for others (my family, friends, and co-workers, etc.). I put blanks next to the word "you" in the first paragraph as an example of how to pray God's Word. Continue by replacing "you" with your and others' names in the last two paragraphs.

"This I Pray"

Philippians 1:3-11

"I thank my God every time I remember you _____ (their names). In all my prayers for all of you _____ (their names), I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you _____ (their names) will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God." Phil. 1:3-11

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS: Consider turning the following scriptural passages into your prayers for yourself and others.

- Ephesians 1:17-19
- Ephesians 3:14-21
- Colossians 1:9-12
- Philemon 1:4-7

DAY 5: I CAN'T AFFORD TO TITHE! I CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO!

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Malachi 3:10

"Dan, I heard we are supposed to tithe, but we can't. We barely make it to the end of the month, especially with our two sickly babies (Kristi and Jack) going to the doctor so much. Our finances are almost depleted. I can't afford to tithe, giving 10% off the top of our income. We just won't make it."

"Gayle, I can't afford NOT to tithe. Tithing is found in 3 primary areas of scripture: Abram gave a tenth in Genesis 14; Malachi 3:10 talks about how God validates the tithe and says to test Him in giving and that we'll never 'out give' God; Jesus in Matt. 23:23 corrects the Pharisees for how they were tithing and redirects them for what they should do with the tithe instead. Jesus validates tithing and makes sure the heart of generosity is present when tithing. Gayle, read Malachi 3:7-12."



I (Gayle) told Myrna, "We're going to do what God says and test Him by tithing this month by giving 10% of our income off the top before we pay any bills. But our bills are way more than what will be left." On the day before the end of the month there was not enough money to cover the outstanding bills, but that last day, an unexpected check came in the mail that was more than enough. We had tested the Lord and He opened the windows of heaven and covered everything. As a result, we have faithfully tithed ever since 1977.

EXPECT TO HEAR FROM GOD

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



Isn't it amazing how something said years ago can make an awesome difference in our lives and how God uses people to guide us spiritually?

Forty-five years ago, after I (Myrna) became born-again, Janice Hale, an older Christian, shared with me the scripture John 10:27 and a profound life-changing statement that impacted my prayer life and walk with the Lord from then till now, **"EXPECT TO HEAR FROM GOD!"**

DAY 6: I TAUGHT MYSELF WHILE TEACHING

“Set a guard, O Lord over mouth. Keep watch over the door of my lips.” Psalm 141:3

One Sunday in 1977 after being born-again for about four months and attending a denominational church on Sundays, a deacon asked me if I (Myrna) could go ahead and teach the High School Sunday School Class that morning, even though they had previously asked me to begin teaching in two weeks. I was totally unprepared; I hadn't read the lesson. I think I gasped and heard myself saying, “Sure.” Inwardly, I quickly shot up a prayer, “Lord, help. Please teach through me. I don't know what to say.”

I quickly skimmed the lesson on “Gossiping” and went in the classroom. I began teaching about gossip; what it is, how harmful it is and then began giving examples (without names) of a person I knew who gossiped and I talked on and on how terrible it was that she gossiped, talking about her.

Suddenly, it felt like in my mind's eye that I was standing there (outside my body) in the classroom watching and listening to myself teach. I never experienced this before or since. Then out of my mouth came, “Oh, no! What have I been saying? I've gossiped about the gossip!” It was a rhema word/a revelation that God gave me that day. I knew God spoke through me to ME...

I TAUGHT MYSELF WHILE TEACHING and I needed to ask the Lord, *“Set a guard, O Lord over mouth. Keep watch over the door of my lips.” Psalm 141:3*

GOD HAD HEARD US AND ANSWERED

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find” Matthew 7:7



We owned 20 apartments (that my parents had built and sold to us) located in a prime location adjacent to the Texas A&M University's Field House in Commerce, Texas while we lived in Skidmore, Texas – approximately a 7-hour drive away. In 1978 Gayle accepted a job at University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) which would move us three hours further south from Commerce. Not knowing whether to keep or sell the apartments, we prayed and told no one. One week later a realtor from Commerce called and asked would we sell our apartments? “Yes.” **GOD HAD HEARD US AND ANSWERED.**

WHAT PRAYER DID GOD ANSWER? Write down a prayer(s) that God answered. _____

DAY 7: GOD CONFIRMED!

“The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.” Psalm 37:23

Since my job with University of Texas at Brownsville was to begin June 1, 1978, we drove to Brownsville, Texas the end of February 1978 to look for a house. We sought the Lord’s guidance. I (Gayle) kiddingly told Myrna that we’d probably buy a house directly across the street from my new boss house, Dr. Arnulfo Olivera, the president of UTB. We looked at 20 homes and none of them appealed to us.



Then we saw a sign that said something like, “Gloor Lumber, Builder of Residential Homes.” We went inside the office and a salesman, Bob Griffin, took us to Land of Lakes subdivision to look at a home being built. There was only a slab. We walked around on the slab and the lot which was on a man-made resaca. It was to be a 4 bedroom/2 bath home.

We asked when would it be ready? The salesman replied, “June 1st.” We looked at each other and told the man, “That’s the exact day we need it. We’ll take it.” Later we found out that directly across the street from our new home was Dr. Olivera’s house. **GOD CONFIRMED!**

GOD ANSWERED OUR PRAYER

“I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.” Matthew 18:19

Our boxer puppy was missing from our backyard. Not knowing where he was, I (Gayle) gathered our family together and asked the Lord for a safe return of the dog. A short time later our doorbell rang. A little neighborhood boy stood at the door holding our boxer puppy. I asked, “Where did you find him?”



“He was swimming in the resaca,” he replied. Once again, **GOD ANSWERED OUR PRAYER.**

DAY 8: OUR STOLEN CAR WAS RETURNED

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." 1 John 5:14

Having lived nine years (1969-1978) in a small rural community with a population of 925, we were used to leaving our house unlocked and the keys in the car's ignition. When we moved in 1978 to Brownsville, TX (198,900 pop. in 1978), we did the same.



Two months later, I (Myrna) was asked to become the director of a private Christian school. Each day I would park my new 1978 Impala with the keys in the ignition in the church parking lot. One day the pastor cautioned me saying, "Myrna, leaving those keys in your car will get it stolen." I listened, but I forgot. And sure enough, my car was stolen.

Gayle came immediately to the school, and we prayed a simple prayer, "Lord, return our car." We filed a stolen car report with the police department, contacted our insurance, and left it in God's hands.

About a month later Gayle had been instructed by the insurance company to seek a replacement for our stolen car. He found one on a Friday and was supposed to pick it up on Monday. After Sunday church Myrna said, "Take me to see the car we're getting." The car dealership was a block away. As we drove around the block, Myrna exclaimed, "There's our stolen car in the storage lot of the dealership." We immediately checked with the police department and found that the car had been found the same day it was stolen and when we prayed. **OUR STOLEN CAR WAS RETURNED! God answered our prayer!**

FACED THE FEAR OF MAN

"The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe" Proverbs 29:25

After serving as the director of a private Christian school for two years, I resigned May 1980 to stay home with our two younger children.

Gayle worked at UTB and one day in July he came home saying, "Dr. Coronado asked if you'd teach a reading class this fall as an adjunct professor and I said yes."

PANIC and FEAR gripped my heart! I had never taught adults, only elementary students. I ran from the kitchen to the side of my bed and on my knees cried out to the Lord. Immediately I saw in my mind's eye His outstretched hand and heard, "You can choose to do it or not, but if you do, I'll help you." Through the Lord's help, I **FACED**



THE FEAR OF MAN plus a college student came to my home sharing her problems and received Christ as her Savior.

DAY 9: HYPOCRITE!

After receiving Christ at 33 yrs. old, one of the first things the Lord began teaching me (Myrna) was how to live out my role as a wife according to the Bible since our marriage was desperately needing help and not Bible-based. I devoured scriptures on marriage and read many Christian marriage books trying to learn how to live out my role. I didn't preach or try to share with Gayle about the husband's biblical role, because Betty Thompson, my mentor, taught me in 1977 to implement 1 Peter 3:1-2 in my life: *"Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct."*

Then God brought His example into our lives of what a Bible-based marriage looked like. A precious Christian couple (Gene and Janice Hale) moved to Brownsville, TX in 1979 where they both taught at the private Christian school where I was the director.



Each Friday night we attended a Bible Study in their home. Their lives were an example of a godly marriage with both fulfilling their biblical roles. Whenever we were around them, I watched what the wife said and did regarding her husband and desired to emulate her. One night I noticed her getting her husband coffee while he was getting ready to start the Bible study. I hopped up to do likewise for Gayle and brought him a cup. His eyes almost popped out of his head from the shock since I never did this. But Gayle was loving it.



When we arrived home, Gayle having loved my "honoring and showing respect attitude" at the Hale's home, asked if I'd get him a cup of coffee.

"WHAT? ARE YOUR FEET TIED?"

was my hurtful, sarcastic reply.

Immediately, the Lord said, "Hypocrite!" I knew exactly what He meant. I was living one way in public and another way in private. I repented of being a **HYPOCRITE**.

WHAT ABOUT YOU? Do you remember a time(s) you treated a family member(s) differently in private than you did in public? _____

DAY 10: “HE MADE A COMMITMENT TO ME TODAY”

“And may your hearts be fully committed to the LORD our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands.” 1 Kings 8:61

One morning before Gayle left for work a scripture came to my mind (Myrna) that would apply to something Gayle and I had been discussing. I started to share it with him, but instead, I thought, “I’m not going to try to be God in his life. The Lord can speak to him just like He speaks to me.” Immediately I was flooded with the Lord’s peace. Gayle had received Jesus Christ as a child but had backslidden as an adult and still had not recommitted his life back to Jesus Christ.

After Gayle returned home from work that day, we ate dinner and then relaxed. I was resting on the couch and Gayle was pouring himself a cup of coffee when the Lord softly spoke to me, “He made a commitment to me today.”

Shocked, I asked, “Gayle, did you make a commitment to the Lord today?”

He almost dropped his coffee cup and replied, “Yes.” The Lord was letting Gayle know that He had heard.



“I ASKED JESUS INTO MY HEART”

“Therefore, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, established in the faith as you were taught.” Col. 2:6

At one Wednesday night church service in 1980, we (including our three children – Daniel, Kristi, and Jack) were on our knees silently praying as our pastor was verbally praying for the lost worldwide. Upon returning to our seats, Jack who was only four years old, whispered without anyone prompting him, “**I asked Jesus into my heart.**” After the service, Jack went to the pastor and told him what he had done. Then he continued, “I’m ready to preach now.”



In the car on the way home, Jack began preaching to his 5 yr. old sister saying, “Kristi, you’re going to hell if you don’t ask Jesus into your heart.” When he was in the second grade in public school, he took his Bible to school and on the playground, Jack preached at his friend George. When he was older in elementary school, Jack was baptized.

DAY 11: OUR LORD ANSWERS ONCE AGAIN!

"With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26

"Lord, help me be debt free," I (Gayle) prayed and said nothing to Myrna. I was teaching full-time at University of Texas at Brownsville and Myrna was working part-time to stay at home with Kristi and Jack who attended a Christian school half a day. With our oldest son, Daniel, also attending high school at that same private school, we were financially struggling to make it each month.

A few weeks after my prayer, a stranger knocked on our door asking, "Would you like to sell your house?" I replied, "No." One week passed, and a realtor called asking the same question, "Would you like to sell your house?" and once again, we replied, "No." We both knew this was no coincidence. Therefore, we asked God whether we should sell our home that He had given us in 1978. Another week passed and a different realtor knocked at our door asking that same question. Knowing this was God, immediately, I replied, "Yes, come on in and let's talk."



A few weeks later we learned that the private school's high school section was closing which meant Daniel would have to attend a public school the next school year. The local public high schools had several thousand students in each one which wasn't a desirable setting for Daniel. After prayer, our hearts turned towards moving to the neighboring small town, Los Fresnos. We met with the LFCISD Superintendent, Dr. Nick Vallado, and he said, "Daniel can attend the first six weeks by you driving him back and forth to school, but by Oct. 3rd, you must have a contract on your Brownsville home, or he can't attend any longer."

Months went by with person after person looking at our home. The Oct. 3rd deadline came. It looked hopeless...like it wasn't happening. Depression tried to overtake. "NO," we yelled! Immediately, the thought came, "Praise Him! The Lord inhabits the praises of His people." *"But thou art holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of Israel"* Ps. 22:3.

So, we grabbed one another's hands and sang loudly to the Lord...praising Him. Our faith in God rose to the highest level we had ever experienced. We knew the Lord was going to answer. Therefore, we went on to a weekly Bible study, still believing and proclaiming the Lord will make a way. And when we came home late that Oct. 3rd night, the long-awaited phone call came, "Contract signed." Oct. 3rd is my birthday. What a God-given present! The house sold for double for what we paid for it. God had made a way for us to build our Los Fresnos home without going to the bank -- a debt-free home. **OUR LORD ANSWERS ONCE AGAIN!**



DAY 12: GOD PAID HIS TAXES

"Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law." Romans 13:8,

When the Brownsville house sold in 1981 for double what we paid for it, we built a home in Los Fresnos and didn't borrow from the bank to be debt free. Since the Los Fresnos home was an answer to prayer, our friends gave us a "Housewarming" where we dedicated our home to the Lord for His glory.

Therefore, prior to when the taxes were due in 1982, three appliances broke down causing a financial stretch. We tried selling some of our antique clocks to no avail to pay for the repairs. In addition, the taxes were very high due to the capital gains from the sale of the Brownsville house. We knew the enemy was trying to steal our joy, so we rejoiced in the Lord and praised Him for providing this home.

We then prayed, "Lord, this is your house, therefore, You need to pay Your taxes." A few days before April 15th deadline, we received an unexpected check in the mail that more than covered the appliance repairs and the taxes. **GOD PAID HIS TAXES.**

SOMEONE'S EAVESDROPPING

"Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard." Mal.3:16

In 1984 a friend and I (Myrna) were eating lunch at a restaurant while sharing and encouraging one another with passages from the Bible and the great things the Lord has done. Little did we know that the man from the next table had been eavesdropping. As we were sharing, the man came to our table and not saying a word he quickly placed a paper napkin on our table and rapidly left the restaurant before we could say anything.

Puzzled by what had just happened, we looked down at the napkin and noticed he had written, "I overheard your conversation. I used to be a pastor and what you shared with one another deeply moved and touched my heart."

After being somewhat stunned by what had just occurred, we remembered that not only do others sometimes listen in on our conversations, but so does the Lord. For Malachi 3:16 says, *"Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard."*



Even though this happened almost 40 years ago, it still reminds me to be mindful of my conversations because **SOMEONE'S EAVESDROPPING** . . . possibly others, but the Lord always is listening.

DAY 13: GOD BROKE FEAR OF MAN

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7

In the spring of 1985, I felt I was to start an educator prayer group before school (beyond my contractual time) and was excited to begin. One day the Lord said, "Go to the teacher's lounge and invite everyone to your educator prayer group. "WHAT? Fear gripped my heart and I thought, 'Invite unbelievers?'" Silence. God said nothing more. With great fear and trembling I stood at the lounge doorway in case I needed to have a fast get away depending on their reaction.

At that moment God sent my Christian friend, Maria Ellwood, down the hall and she stood beside me at the doorway (which brought great comfort) while I invited everyone in the lounge to the next day's 7:45am educator prayer group. The expressions on their faces looked like I had just thrown a huge bucket of ice water all over them. One educator's jaw was hanging with his mouth wide open, a lit cigarette dangling from the corner. No one showed up, but God's purpose happened. God completely broke the fear of man off me that day. Yes, He did.

WHEN YOU REACH TEACHERS, YOU REACH MANY!

*"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields;
for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35*

There was a stirring in my heart that He wanted me to serve Him in a new way for the 1985-86 school year. I had worked as a 5th grade teacher and saw God do great things in 1984-85 and loved being a Christian teacher in the public schools. When this stirring came, I prayed. Along with the phrase, "**When You Reach Teachers, You Reach Many!**" the scripture "*Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*" (John 4:35) kept rolling over and over in me. The impression on my heart was if teachers receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, then their changed lives could impact the lives of many—more than I could personally impact as one classroom teacher.



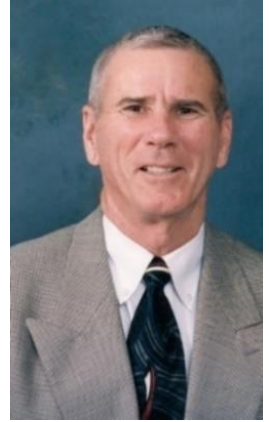
I had been trained to work with students, not reach out to my colleagues. But God saw beyond what I could see. He was calling me to reach out to my co-workers with the love of Jesus Christ. Not only that, but I found out that it was legal

to share our faith adult to adult in the workplace from Kelly Shackelford, President, CEO & Chief Counsel of First Liberty Institute in Plano, Texas (www.firstliberty.org). Then a confirmation came. A week later our pastor asked us to help start an educators' ministry. Thus LIFE (*Laborers In Fields of Education*) ministry began—Christian educators reaching out to their colleagues with the love of Jesus Christ! From 1985-2023 more than 2000 educators received Christ as Savior through LIFE ministry (www.life4educators.org).

DAY 14: GOD CONFIRMED!

"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known." Jeremiah 33:3

In 1986-87 Gayle was asked to preach several Wednesday nights at our church in Brownsville, Texas where he preached these sermons: "Sure Word," "Be of Good Cheer," "Who Am I?" and "Set an Ambush". For the first sermon Gayle prayerfully sought and sought the Lord's guidance on what to share and was needing to hear from God.



The day before he was to preach, I felt I needed to call and encourage Gayle by saying, "Gayle, God will give you a 'Sure Word.'" I didn't know that the Lord had just spoken a few minutes earlier to Gayle, "Preach a 'Sure Word'". **GOD CONFIRMED!**

GOD ANSWERED!

"I tell you: ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find;" Luke 11:9

In 1987 it was strong within us that the Lord was moving us from our local church in Brownsville, Texas to another church, but we didn't know where He was sending us. We prayed, "Lord, we don't want to go from church to church to see where you want us. How are we to know which church? Are you going to send a pastor or someone to invite us?"

About one hour later an elder from a church in Harlingen, Texas who had not been to our house in almost a year, stopped by unannounced to visit us. Without him knowing what we had just prayed earlier seeking the Lord's guidance, he invited us to come to his church in Harlingen. **GOD ANSWERED!**

PRAY & SEE DEEPER

"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation." Matt. 26:41

I've Opened Your

EYES TO SEE
deeper

"Lord, I don't want to see the negatives in people, but only the good. Help me."

Gently He said, "Myrna, I've opened your eyes to see specific things so you will turn them into prayers without judging, criticizing or gossiping. Pray and you will see deeper as I lead you to pray. **WATCH AND PRAY!!**"

DAY 15: A ROOT OF BITTERNESS

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;" Hebrews 12:14-15

It always greatly bothered me when someone would judge or be critical of others and/or gossip. One day, I realized I was talking inside myself about the gossipers,



etc. and what they were doing. Wasn't I doing the same thing even though I wasn't saying it to someone else, but only to me? (Matt. 7:1-5)

I asked the Lord what He was showing me. The words "a root of bitterness" came to mind and a picture of a person from my childhood. I knew then I had a hurt that was planted deep in me as a child when that person said many awful things, such as "I hate you, etc." That old wound had not been dealt with. I thanked the Lord, prayed, and forgave. Peace came.

LAUGHTER DOES GOOD!

"a merry heart does good like medicine" Proverbs 17:22

At one time or other, we all have had someone (who acts as a friend to our face) be two-faced and talk negatively about us to someone behind our back. Three biblical things that help keep hurt feelings at bay and from taking root in the heart are forgiveness, prayer, and laughter.

In addition to the first two, the latter has greatly helped me. Since "a merry heart does good like medicine" (Prov. 17:22), finding something humorous to laugh about may be medicinal for a hurting heart. In fact, just recently I let laughter do her good work as I read, "If you're going to be two-faced at least make one of them pretty." **LAUGHTER DOES GOOD!**

ME, PRAY?

Me, PRAY? "I'm too busy..." Selah! Let's pause and really think about that comment which translates to really mean . . . Prayer seems unproductive and human busyness can get more accomplished.

Really? Jesus, who was very busy and doing the Father's will, got away from it all to be in the Father's presence (*Mark 1:35-36*). If someone says, "I'm too busy to pray", may our "walk the talk" response be, "I'm too busy not to".

DAY 16: GOD SPARED MY LIFE!

“Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he’s the one who will keep you on track”. Proverbs 3:6 MSG

Driving home from school to my home is approximately 1 mile and is on a busy highway. After driving slowly from school in the pelting rain so hard that I (Myrna) could barely see, I surveyed my surroundings as I approached my house and stopped in the middle of the highway to turn left because an 18-wheeler was approaching my way on the opposite side of the road. I looked into my rearview mirror and saw with horror a truck barreling down on me oblivious that I was stopped. Gayle was inside the open garage watching everything unfold and thought I was getting ready to be killed in a wreck. Suddenly I heard softly, but firmly, “Move forward slowly!” I did. The truck coming up behind me suddenly slammed his brakes spinning 360 degrees and off the road barely missing me by inches. If I hadn’t obeyed the Lord, I would have been rear ended and possibly slammed right in front of the on-coming 18-wheeler. **GOD SPARED MY LIFE!**

GOD MADE A WAY!

“For nothing will be impossible with God.” Luke 1:37

We along with our children had waited as long as we could until we had to evacuate due to the hurricane heading our direction. Bumper to bumper cars lined the highway from our home to Corpus Christi and on the other side north of Corpus Christi the cars were moving less than 5 miles an hour.

We were driving north to San Antonio, Texas to find a place to stay. We had asked the Lord to provide a motel room, but soon learned there were no rooms available. Therefore, we decided to continue following the long line of cars towards Kerrville. At every motel many cars would stop and so would we to see if there were any rooms. The answer was always “No”.

Throughout the trip we were very positive that a room was waiting on us and kept thanking God saying, “Lord, we asked You to provide a room and we thank You there’s one ready for us. We know You are making a way where there seems to be no way.” Peace. We had great peace the entire time.

Upon arriving in Kerrville, Texas at 4am, we stopped at a motel and the manager told me (Gayle) there were no rooms available. Since I had been driving most of the day, I decided to visit with him. When the manager found out we were from the Brownsville area, he asked if we knew so and so. We didn’t. He continued, “I’ve been holding a room for them, but they never showed. You can have it. In addition, tomorrow there’s a free antique exhibition in the convention room.” **GOD MADE A WAY!**



DAY 17: YOU CAN'T GO WRONG IN GIVING!

"I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick, and you looked after me, I was in prison, and you came to visit me. Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you? The King will reply, Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matt. 25:35-40

Matt. 25:35-45 was my stepfather's (Frank Jackson) favorite scripture passage and as a result, both he and my mother (Grace Jackson) helped others in quiet but powerful ways. They lived out God's principles of giving and helping the poor, but quickly gave the Lord ALL the glory for providing the opportunities and didn't get puffed up by or brag about their generosity.



One thing that greatly impacted me and I (Myrna) can still vividly remember it 62 years later is: they paid for their housekeeper's entire college expenses so she could graduate with a bachelor's degree and be the first in her family to obtain one.

We (Gayle and I) also taught our children throughout the years to be "givers" and often say, "You can't go wrong in giving." We love to give to the Lord and bless others. Though we may try, we can't out give God. He has more at His disposal than we do. When we give, He multiplies the blessing back to us and onward through us because He is the original giver.

When grandsons Jacob, Samuel, and Nathan Plattner made banana nut bread at our home, we'd drive to Brownsville and leave a loaf along with some food for a homeless man who slept beneath a highway overpass which allowed the grandsons to experience and live out *"The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor."* (Proverbs 22:9) **YOU CAN'T GO WRONG IN GIVING!**

SCRIPTURES ON GIVING:

Proverbs 19:17 says, *"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done."*

Luke 6:38 says, *"Give, and it will be given to you. A Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."*

DAY 18: GOD OPENS AND CLOSES DOORS!

"I know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can close. You have little strength, yet you obeyed my word and did not deny me." Rev. 3:8



No one can close an open door that God has for you. Therefore, have confidence in the Lord. If it's God's will, it will be done. Remember He always has a plan. (Jer. 29:11)

In 1985 God opened a door that seemed impossible! I became an assistant principal with only 4 courses completed towards a Mid-Management Certificate. Everything was great for a few years, until the principal who hired me was replaced in 1991.

I desperately wanted to leave and cried out to God to release me. He showed me a vision of me standing in a room staring at the door waiting for Him to open it to let me leave while behind me was a long worktable covered with piles of unfinished work that I was supposed to do. I knew what God was saying and realized I wasn't being faithful to do what He had called me to do in that position. I repented.

Thereafter, God provided opportunity after opportunity to share about Him with my co-workers. When God saw me doing my part, developing what He had already given me, then He did His part and opened doors that

no man could shut. Yes, **GOD OPENS AND CLOSES DOORS!**

I'LL BE YOUR FRIEND!

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4

It was April 18, 1992, and she was gone. I couldn't believe it. My friend had passed away with her battle of breast cancer over. I was devastated that she had died. Brokenhearted and grieving, I was sobbing at home and gently and softly Jesus whispered, **"I'LL BE YOUR FRIEND!"**

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." John 15:12-15

DAY 19: WHAT A GOD EXIT!

Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him." John 6:44

My first public school principalship was a fifth and sixth grade campus which in 1997 was changed into a middle school campus. The superintendent asked if I wanted to be the middle school principal or be the principal of Los Fresnos Elementary School. I chose the elementary school setting as I always loved elementary students.

Around mid-November I began experiencing some health issues and realized I needed to resign and let the staff know what date my last day would be. At the end of that day, a teacher came into my office to thank me and said that she didn't want me to leave. As we were talking, she shared that she was experiencing marital problems without going into details. I knew God was drawing her to Him and providing an open door of opportunity to share my testimony of how He had turned my marriage around when I received Him as my Savior. Therefore, the last thing God did in my final 30 minutes as a principal was bring that educator to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as her Savior. **WHAT A GOD EXIT!**

WHAT A GOD EXIT!

I HAVE TODAY!

"God inhabits the praises of His people" Ps. 22:3

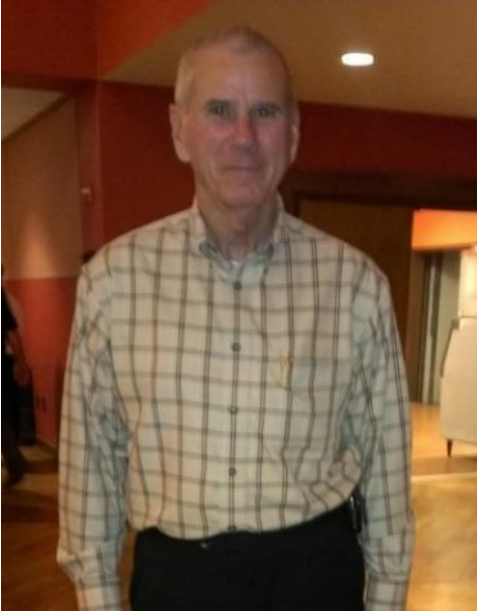
After having a stroke in 1998, the brain CAT scan and MRI came back abnormal "The results show you'll probably have a massive stroke within two months and either die or be a vegetable and demented," stated three different doctors, including a neurologist from Mayo Clinic. We returned home devastated.

Soon after while eating breakfast, I prayed, "I want out of this depression that's trying to set in. Lord, help me." Immediately two scriptures came to mind: "God inhabits the praises of His people" Ps. 22:3 and Ps.43:5 where David encouraged himself in the Lord. I knew exactly what to do! Going to my bathroom, I stood in front of the mirror, looked at the woman in the mirror and spoke to her like David in Psalm 43:5. "Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior, and my God." I continued speaking and thought, "If Gayle sees me right now, he'd think I'm already demented." I began laughing. The depression broke. "A merry heart does good, like medicine." (Proverbs 17:22) I began worshipping the Lord.

A month later I was once again contemplating the negative prognosis and the Lord whispered to me how to live: "Don't focus on what you don't have. Focus on what you do have... **I HAVE TODAY!**" Twenty-four years later, I'm still alive praising my Lord that **"I HAVE TODAY!"**

DAY 20: BE CONTENT

"...for I have learned to **BE CONTENT** in whatever circumstances." *Philippians 4:11*



Paul learned that contentment is developed when we are thankful for what God has provided whether we like it or not. Being thankful doesn't mean that God will eventually remove us from our situation. He may; He may not. Rather, being appreciative sets us free from the intense desire to have it different and allow us to rest in contentment.

I (Gayle) retired in Aug. 2014 after 47 yrs. of loving my job. Even though I knew it was God's timing, I greatly missed the interaction with the people. After a year of dissatisfaction, one day the Lord reminded me of Philippians 4:11 -- that I needed "to learn to **BE CONTENT** in whatever circumstances (retirement)". BAM!!! I thanked the Lord, learned to **BE CONTENT**, and am now loving retirement!

GOD EXCEEDS WHAT WE ASK

"Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energizes you." Ephesians 3:20 TPT



In Sept. 2017, we had our 2 bedroom/2 bath San Marcos condo remodeled by Al Carroll (a God connection). He did a fantastic job and we thoroughly enjoyed going to our beautiful "get away".

Six months later we felt the Lord leading us to sell our condo. We listed it with a Christian realtor and the next morning had a cash offer that **EXCEEDED** our top dollar listing price. We so love how the Lord does "**EXCEEDINGLY** abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." *Ephesians 3:20*



DAY 21: I WILL PRAY

*"Because the Lord bends down to listen, **I WILL PRAY** as long as I have breath!" Ps. 116:2*



"Myrna, pray for her," said the Lord.

"Yes, Lord, **I WILL PRAY**, instead of being critical, judgmental, or gossiping about what she is doing." I can still vividly remember when I realized my friend was no longer cussing like a sailor with every breath and hadn't done so for quite some time. Seeing this drastic, radical change in her, I knew the Lord had heard and answered. Only Jesus could have made that change. And I praise Him for what He did in her life. Maybe you have found yourself in similar situation. Don't judge. Pray for them!

WE WILL

*"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we **WILL** rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24*

This verse is my (Gayle) favorite verse. My favorite saying that goes along with Psalm 118:24 is: "Every day is a good day; some days are just better than others." I love the plaque that our daughter had made, because it reminds me that today is a special day. It is special because God made this day and gave it to us. What **WILL** we do with this day?

There are two things to make sure that we do: "rejoice" and "be glad." It says, "we **WILL** rejoice and be glad." The word "**WILL**" indicates it's a determined decision. In other words, we can rejoice if we want to badly enough, regardless of our feelings, events, etc. Christians certainly have great reasons to rejoice.

Rejoice in the Lord and be glad. To be glad is to be happy. Christians should be the happiest people in the world. We can see from this verse that happiness is a decision...a choice. We can be happy if we decide/choose to be happy. It is that simple. We certainly have all the reasons as Christians to be happy. Therefore, what **WILL** we do with this day? I **WILL** rejoice and be glad. **WILL** you?



DAY 22: KIND WORDS CAN NEVER DIE

*"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32*

Embroidered on this antique paper needlepoint (that we gave to Kristi, our daughter, as a birthday present) is "Kind Words Can Never Die" that hangs in our son-in-law and daughter's home. What a great visual reminder to live out the scripture, "Be kind to one another" as well as the words of the hymn..."Kind words can never die, never die, never die..."



LORD, CHANGE ME!

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew
a right spirit within me." Ps. 51:10*

Sometimes people point their index finger at others, saying or praying, "If only my spouse (or whoever) would change, my marriage (or whatever) would be better. Lord, change so and so." Yes, that was me (Myrna) years ago I was desperately praying, "Lord, CHANGE "so and so" because I saw that person as being my problem. But God knew what I evidently wouldn't acknowledge.

Two of the most
powerful words
I can utter in my
prayer time,
"CHANGE ME."

A few days after my "self-righteous, religious" prayer, I saw the book, LORD, CHANGE ME. The light bulb came on and I knew right then why I needed to buy that book.

The author, Evelyn Christenson, wrote "I have discovered through the years that surprising things happen when I pray, 'Lord, change me--don't change my husband, don't change my children, don't change my pastor, change me! More and more the fact comes into focus that they, and not I, are responsible before God for their actions. But I am responsible for the changes that need to be made in me." If we are pointing the finger, maybe our focus/prayer should be on the 4 fingers pointing back and then our prayerful cry be "**LORD, CHANGE ME!**"

DAY 23: GOD PROTECTS US!

"But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy.

*Spread your protection over them, that those who love
your name may rejoice in you." Psalm 5:11*

Thank you, Lord, for protecting us one Sat. night in 2019 from being in a severe car accident on the highway. A small car next to us ran into the right retaining wall and then sharply veered left across three lanes of traffic directly in our path. It seemed inches from us broadsiding it. Then it crashed head on into the left retaining wall. After we called 911, we saw the man standing by his car unharmed. We were shaken, but so thankful that **GOD PROTECTS US!!** Psalm 121:1-8 (TPT) says that **GOD PROTECTS US.** *"I look up to the mountains and hills, longing for God's help. But then I realize that our true help and protection come only from the Lord, our Creator who made the heavens and the earth. He will guard and guide me, never letting me stumble or fall. God is my keeper; he will never forget nor ignore me. He will never slumber nor sleep; he is the Guardian-God for his people, Israel. Jehovah himself will watch over you; he's always at your side to shelter you safely in his presence. He's protecting you from all danger both day and night. He will keep you from every form of evil or calamity as he continually watches over you. You will be guarded by God himself. You will be safe when you leave your home and safely you will return. He will protect you now, and he'll protect you forevermore!"*

TEAPOT or TEA PITCHER?

"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." Luke 6:45

Suppose a restaurant manager tells you that your new white car in his parking lot was just damaged by a truck rolling into it and the truck's owner was standing beside the manager apologizing profusely, saying he got out of his truck and forgot to put it in park. How would you respond -- like a hot steaming teapot or a tea pitcher filled with sweet tea?



The Bible says the tongue reveals our heart and what currently dominates us -- the righteousness of Christ or the sinfulness of our flesh. *"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Luke 6:45)* Our words pour out of our heart and can tear down or build up (Eph. 4:29). To know what's hidden in our heart, we listen carefully to what we say and how we say it, asking the Holy Spirit to guide us.

What laces our words -- the negative or positive? Anger or kindness? Love or bitterness? Am I a hot steaming **TEAPOT or TEA PITCHER** filled with sweet tea? Since this happened to our one-month-old car, can you guess how Gayle reacted. You're correct. . . **A TEA PITCHER!**

WHICH WERE YOU? Do you remember a time when you were a teapot and wish you had been a tea pitcher instead? _____

DAY 24: GOD GAVE US OUR HEART'S DESIRES

"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalm 37:4

Grandson Jacob Plattner was a high school senior in 2020 and asked us to come to Indiana to watch him play football, saying, "Our team is going to State." (And they did go and lost only by one point, 40 to 41). How could we ever resist that invitation?

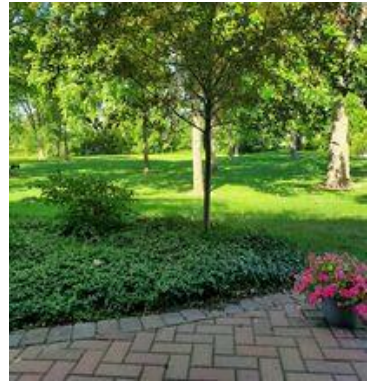


We made plans to arrive in Bluffton the first week of August 2020 and stay in Nathan and LeAnn Gerber's basement apartment. Since Gayle had never stayed more than two weeks away from our Texas home, I wondered how this trip would play out. As we said our good-byes to our youngest son (Jack) and his family,

Jack said laughing, "See y'all in three weeks." We drove to IN.

After two weeks in Indiana Gayle was loving the area and the people. He began talking about possibly buying a place in Bluffton, Indiana. "What happened? Where did my 'two-week' husband go?" Houses at that time were scarce and when one came on the market, it had a contract that same day before we could even look at it. So, we prayed. By the end of October, still no house. I (Myrna) felt in my heart that I wanted a two bedroom/two bath downstairs condo that had an enclosed garage and a BIG back yard with huge, tall trees. Both the Gerbers and the Plattners said there are no condos in Bluffton, but I knew that desire was in my heart.

We found a house that was way overpriced, needed updated and had no contract on it. We didn't really have peace about it, but walked away saying, "We'd pray about it." That Sunday night our daughter Kristi received a text from Rachel Rauch who attended the same church. Rachel said there was a condo for sale in the complex where she lived. Arrangements were made to see the condo Monday night with Gayle and Andy/Kristi agreeing to put earnest money down if all was well with the condo. We



walked into the two bedroom/two bath downstairs condo that not only had an enclosed garage, but outside was a BIG back yard with huge, tall trees. We knew immediately that God wanted us there in that condo in Bluffton, Indiana. **GOD GAVE US THE DESIRES OF OUR HEART!**

DAY 25: GIVE THANKS "IN" EVERYTHING

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thess. 5:18

Throughout scripture we see the command to "give thanks" to the Lord. It says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 we're to give thanks to God "IN" all things. In the good, bad, messy, ugly, painful, joyful, weak, strong, happy, or sad times, we are to continue to praise and give God thanks.

At 4am on Fri., Oct. 29, 2021, Gayle was taken to the ER in severe pain and other symptoms. One day prior I had written and scheduled the WORDS OF LIFE devotional, "Give Thanks 'In' Everything," to be texted that Friday, Oct. 29th morning to over 100+ recipients, not knowing an emergency would occur that very morning it went out. But God knew and showed us what to do. So, we gave thanks to the Lord "IN" that situation.



After Gayle's release he was still in severe pain, not knowing he'd broken several ribs. We shared with one another how several things had recently occurred that must be keeping God's angels very busy. "He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways." (Psalm 91:11) Not knowing what Gayle and I had been discussing, our friend LeAnn Gerber came over with a gift for Gayle: a candle with Psalm 91:11 on it. That was God's confirmation that his angels were taking care of him. We continued to "give thanks 'in' everything as Gayle could only sleep sitting up.

Little did we know that we'd be saying 1 Thess. 5:18 continually for the next three months with incident after incident occurring beginning as we flew back to Texas from Ft. Wayne, Indiana: Two canceled flights that caused us to stay overnight in Dallas with no medicines or change of clothes, lost luggage by the airline, the car air conditioner broken upon our arrival home, two weeks later a kitchen fire that caused the entire house to be renovated and us to live three months in a hotel, and the belt in the car broke. We kept giving thanks to our Lord "in" everything. Then God turned it all around for good (Romans 8:28). The insurance company covered the house restoration expenses and unexpected money came in. **GIVE THANKS "IN" EVERYTHING!**

HOW DO YOU APPLY 1 THESS. 5:18 TO YOUR LIFE?

DAY 26: I AM YOUR PROVIDER!

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

Philippians 4:19 serves as a personal promise we can hold onto when life's journey brings challenges and we find ourselves in a place we don't understand, without provision. Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord, our provider, gives us what we need.

Even though the Lord had so many times provided monetarily for us miraculously, I (Gayle) found myself inwardly troubled and trying to figure it all out by myself as to how we'd have enough money for the upcoming 2022 summer months that would include major expenditures. “There's NOT enough!” I related to Myrna, who replied, “God will provide.” Even though I knew what she said was true, I hadn't sought the Lord and continued in my own efforts to reason it all out.

A few minutes later Myrna, who had been cooking, came in the den showing me a text message on her phone that was for me. As we were chatting, we heard a LOUD “BEEEEPPPP! BEEEEPPPP! BEEEEPPPP! The smoke detector was going off. Flames were shooting to the ceiling and surrounding areas in the kitchen. The oil in the skillet had caught fire after Myrna got distracted by the text message and forgot she had turned the stove on high.

After what seemed like eternity, but it probably was only 15 min., I smothered the fire. As a result, heavy black smoke and soot bellowed throughout the entire house. The immense loss and cost to remodel the house loomed up in front of our eyes. “Help us, Lord!” was our cry.

During the three-month restoration and remodeling process, all expenditures were covered by the insurance company, without any hassles, plus additional unexpected monies came in for us to use however we needed. Those monies exceeded the amount needed for the upcoming summer expenditures. Once again, Jehovah-Jireh (our provider) turned around for good what was meant for evil and said, “There **IS** enough! **I AM YOUR PROVIDER!**”

WHAT'S YOUR STORY? Write how God showed you in a time of need that He is your provider.



DAY 27: KEEP ON ASKING

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Have you been praying a long time for a loved one to surrender to Christ?

During my prayer time one morning, I (Gayle) saw in my mind's eye a picture of a large wall in front of our unsaved loved one(s). As our fervent, persistent prayers have and are going forth on their behalf, parts of the wall began to crumble, loosening the barrier in their life that separates them from the Lord Jesus Christ.



Precious ones, it seems the Lord is encouraging us to keep being persistent in our prayers for them ("**Keep on asking...**") so that the wall (stronghold) that the enemy has erected in their life to keep them from repenting and receiving Christ as Savior will crumble and fall.

Jesus Christ died to demolish the walls that separate them from Him (see Ephesians 2:11-22). Shouldn't we be committed to persistently pray to tear down the walls that keep loved ones apart from Christ? **KEEP ON ASKING...**

ASK THE LORD: Prayerfully ask the Lord who He'd have you pray for to repent of his/her sins and surrender his/her life to Jesus Christ asking Him to be Savior and Lord.

WHERE'S YOUR WORTH?

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith..." Hebrews 12:1-2

How do you react to the praise or criticism of people?

Praise: Puffed up/love & desire it? Criticism: Feel rejected/hurt? When we asked God to be set free of being hindered in our spiritual life by praise and criticism, God showed us how to overcome.

As we run our race in life and keep our eyes on the author and finisher of our faith, along the sidelines are two groups (praise & criticism) that tempt us to turn our heads and focus on them, and not Jesus Christ.

A pastor shared, "Put any praise or criticism in the palm of your hand and lift it to the Lord saying, 'All the praise is Yours' and for the criticism, 'Show me if there is any validity'". **WHERE'S YOUR WORTH?**

DAY 28: WHAT'S YOUR GOD STORY?

"Great are the works of the Lord." Psalm 111:2



On Sunday morning July 31, 2022 before church, I (Myrna) remarked to Gayle, "I have a strong desire to invite small groups of Christian ladies to our Bluffton, Indiana condo to get to know one another better by having each one share her 'God Story' -- whether it's a conversion experience, answered prayer or a 'work' they know the Lord did, but I want to make sure that is what the Lord wants." So, we prayed.

At church that morning the minister began reading Psalm 111 and verse 2 leaped off the page: *"Great are the works of the Lord."* Quietly I said, "Yes, Lord, I hear You!"

Twenty-three breakfasts later of a total of 130 ladies sharing their powerful "God Story" after "God Story", I reflected on how the women left encouraged in the Lord. Lives were changed. God was praised, glorified, and honored.

WHAT'S YOUR GOD STORY? Write down one of your God Stories and share with someone (family member, friend, and/or unsaved) to provide encouragement.

GOD HEARS & ANSWERS EVEN BEFORE WE CALL

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Isaiah 65:24



On Nov. 10, 2022, I (Myrna) noticed a broken floor tile. It just so happened (more than a coincidence) that our out-of-town guests who were to arrive a few hours later were the ones who had remodeled our home last year after a house fire. Therefore, upon their arrival, my hubby (Gayle) and Al Carroll took the broken tile to Lowes and Home Depot thinking a replacement would be an easy find since our flooring was only a few years old.



They looked and looked but did not locate any. None matched. After one more time through the store, Gayle spotted ONE TILE all alone on the shelf. A perfect match. Both men knew God was showing them that He had heard them talking and answered before they had called. (Is. 65:24) *"Your Father knows the things you need before you ask him." Matthew 6:8*

DAY 29: AN ON-FIRE, LOVING RELATIONSHIP

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33

When I was born-again, I was “on fire” and VERY passionate about Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and praised Him continuously throughout the day. Jesus Christ had baptized me with the Holy Spirit and fire ([Matthew 3:11](#)). His presence engulfed



me. I had a real, loving relationship with Him on a “daily throughout the day” basis...not a “Sunday go to church one” and live however I wanted the rest of the week. Therefore, I would pray throughout the day, constantly talking with and going to Him.

About two months later at a Bible Study I heard an older Christian make a remark about me to another older Christian saying,

“She’ll soon cool down.” That comment was puzzling, and I wondered, “Why she wasn’t ‘on fire’?”

A couple of years later another older Christian said to me, “Myrna, you don’t have to constantly go back and forth praying all day. This is what I do. I pray once in the morning and know that God has my day taken care of.” Since I was a young Christian, I thought I must be doing it all wrong. So, I did what the 2nd person had shared: I prayed and read my Bible only in the morning and basically had stopped “praying without ceasing”. Things were okay at first, but as days, weeks, months, and years went by I became used to the gradual “cooling down” until I realized that there was a sharp difference in my current walk with the Lord from the one I had as a young Christian. Yes, I was still going to church and outwardly “doing” all the things that “good” Christians do but was just going through the motions and was not really acknowledging the Lord much throughout my day. I had left my **“ON-FIRE, LOVING RELATIONSHIP”** somewhere behind.

Then the Lord opened Gayle and my eyes to see how our current walk was with Jesus after reading Revelation 3:15-16. A strong dissatisfaction began growing within us of just going through the motions. We knew the difference and longed to change. We repented and asked the Lord, “Bring back our passionate, loving ‘Friend relationship with You’. Help us!” The Lord answered: “Change your pattern of living: seek Me first instead of other things first walk/talk with Me and be aware of my presence throughout the entire day.”

We did; everything changed. The Lord drastically changed our hearts, our worship, our prayer life, EVERYTHING. Instead of lukewarm, we are HOT. Jesus gave us back our **ON-FIRE, LOVING RELATIONSHIP!**

DAY 30: LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD...



I (Myrna) asked Gayle, "If you had only one thing that you could teach our adult children and grandchildren, what would it be?" Before my hubby answered, immediately the scripture, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*" (Matthew 22:37) popped into my mind. I remained silent waiting for my husband's response.

He then replied, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*" My heart leaped. He had no knowledge that the Lord had just shared that same verse with me. That was a God-inspired moment and a confirmation for us to pray

and believe for that scripture to be fulfilled in our adult children and grandchildren regardless of their current walk with the Lord. As a result, we now include that verse as we pray for the Christ-follower ones to draw even closer to Christ and the unbelievers to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Yes, we believe they will "love the Lord their God with **ALL** their heart and with **ALL** their soul and with **ALL** their mind."

WHICH HAVE YOU CHOSEN?

Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken" is a favorite of many, but especially mine (Gayle). It says:

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."

Like Frost's roads, we choose one of two spiritual paths in life: "*Come to God through the narrow gate, because the wide gate and broad path is the way that leads to destruction—nearly everyone chooses that crowded road! The narrow gate and the difficult way will lead to eternal life—so few even find it!*" Matthew 7:13-14



Which one we choose not only affects our lives in the here and now, but for all eternity. I asked Jesus Christ to be my Savior and Lord thus taking "the narrow gate" and "the one less traveled by, and that has, made all the difference." **WHICH HAVE YOU CHOSEN?**

A THOUGHT TO PONDER: In Matt. 7:13-14, two gates/paths are described. Which one have you chosen and why? _____

DAY 31: SPIRITUAL CHECK-UP . . .
COLD, LUKEWARM, OR HOT FOR GOD?

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Rev. 3:15-16.

To check out my own personal Christian walk with the Lord and see what the thermometer reads, I created "A Spiritual Check-up" and prayerfully asked the Holy Spirit to reveal where I'm **COLD (C)**, **LUKEWARM (L)**, or **HOT (H)**! Maybe you'd like to take your spiritual temperature, too?

1. Am I hungry and passionate to know Jesus Christ more and more (regardless of how long I've been a born-again believer in Jesus Christ)? **(C) (L) (H)**
2. Compared to other things I do fervently, how does my time in God's Word compare? **(C) (L) (H)**
3. Do I fervently seek to talk with and listen to the Lord throughout each day, lingering in His presence? **(C) (L) (H)**
4. Do I seek to renew my mind and align my life to the Word of God by bringing my thoughts and flesh into obedience to the Bible? **(C) (L) (H)**
5. Am I moved with compassion towards others to come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior and look for those God open door opportunities to share Him? **(C) (L) (H)**
6. What good thing have I done lately for anyone? **(C) (L) (H)**
7. Do I expect to hear from God? **(C) (L) (H)**
8. Do I live a Christlike life (thoughts, words, actions)? **(C) (L) (H)**
9. How open am I to the promptings of the Holy Spirit? **(C) (L) (H)**
10. Do I worship the Lord at all times and His praise always in my mouth? **(C) (L) (H)**
11. Do I enjoy the Lord? **(C) (L) (H)**



Do You Want Jesus Christ to be Your Savior & Lord?

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

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe that He died for my sins and that You, God raised Him to life. I repent of my sins and ask forgiveness. I choose now to turn from my sins and every part of my life that does not please You. I give myself to You. I want to trust Jesus Christ as my Savior and follow Him as Lord, from this day forward. Guide my life and help me to do Your will. Come reign in my heart, fill me with Your love and Your life, and help me to become a person who is truly loving—a person like You. Live in me. Love through me. Thank You, God. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

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



THANK YOU!

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

We desire to express our sincere gratitude to all the different spiritual leaders and Christian brothers and sisters who have impacted our lives. The Lord put you in our lives for a reason, some of you for a season, and others lifelong.

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

Thank you for reading **GOD STORIES**. If you have been touched by the Lord through this booklet, please take a few minutes and share with us at life4educators@aol.com.

With Christ’s love,

Gayle & Myrna

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