

## Intimacy with God

Throughout January I decided to again speak into the holistic approach that we are endeavouring to build in and outwork through our church.

*“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* 1Thessalonians 5:23

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Intimacy with God – Kev

1 God created you spirit soul and body and wants to build in and make whole all three parts of your being.

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2 He created you spirit, so you can spiritually relate to God and his kingdom. He created you soul, so you can emotionally and mentally relate to yourself and others. He made you body, so you can physically relate to earth and everything in it. We all have an understanding about growing physically. Some have an idea of what it is to develop and renew your soul, but very few understand spiritual growth.

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### Growing Spiritually

For you and I to walk and live in the spirit and for our lives and churches to have spiritual impact in our communities and world we are going to have to grow spiritually. This year as we are thinking and preparing our plans for our ministries and churches, let us make a decision to grow in God and increase our spiritual potency in what we do.

Read 1Corinthians 2:1-16

*“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* 1Corinthians 2:14

Imagine if there was such a thing as a spiritual doctor that could diagnose our spirits and spiritual life. How would we go and what would our spirits look like. Some may look limp, senseless and anaemic beings or some might be a strong spiritual, alert and healthy being.

### Our Spirit

Our spirit has all the functions, facilities and senses that our body has. Our spirit can taste and see that the Lord is good. Our spirits can see (Ephesians 1:18), they can hear (John 10:4), they can feel (Luke 8:46). Our spirit came alive when we were born again (Ephesians 2:1-5), we were made alive together with Christ. Even though we are alive, if we don't grow in Christ (Ephesians 4:13-15) our spirit remains dull, deaf and senseless.

It is up to us to feed our spirits. God has given us everything we need for our spirit to grow in God.

### He has given us His spirit

*“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being”* Ephesians 3:16.

Not just the baptism of the spirit but his ongoing infilling (Acts 4:31). His workings (John 16:5-10) His gifts (1Corinthians 14:3-4) and praying in the spirit (Jude 1:20) are all part of God's plan to help you grow spiritually.

### He has given us his word

Paul commends us to the word *“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified”* Acts 20:32.

The word of God will build you up more than anything. It will deliver to you inheritance from God as you meditate upon these promises. Let us not just read the bible - that will increase our knowledge and understanding but meditate upon it (pondering by talking to yourself) it will literally build those promises into your spirit to a place where it changes the way you think and feel which in turn changes the way you speak and live. These things in turn will determine your destiny. As you think about your life right now, think about what: “Am I meditating on?”. Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 1:13

### He gave us his body

The church is not a natural organization we just attend but it is

spiritual community that we are a part of.

As leaders we need to be aware that we are apart of it too and not just leading it but receiving from it both publically and relationally. That is why Paul said to Timothy not to neglect the public reading of scripture as well as the preaching and teaching. Timothy was the minister at Ephesus but if you want to deliver you have got to receive and if you want to give out you have to take in. If you want to teach you have to be taught.

People always giving out and never taking in are dry wells. I am not only talking about the ministry from the front it is the fellowship within that can make us spiritually rich. (Hebrews 10:24-25).

### He gave us gifts and talent

Serving the Lord with our God given gifts and talent is a major thing in our spiritual growth. *“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.”* Romans 12:11. It says in Philemon 1:6 that when we are active in sharing or working out our faith we receive a greater revelation of what we have and who we are in Christ. I would say this is one that has really propelled me forward. This is also what Paul said to Timothy to make him grow. *“Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.”* 1Timothy 4:14-15.

### God Spaces

Our development and discipline in these God Spaces will be a life time pursuit and challenge to us, but for you and I to grow there are no shortcuts and our spiritual life doesn't run on neutral we have to work at it until it is a part of our lives.

Grow spiritually

**Kevin**

Team Leader of Life & OzReach

**Philippines**

Happening Now

Contact Ken Gibson 4951 7445

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**Argentina**

15-24 April 2008

Contact Kevin Wilcock

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**Cambodia**

July 2008 TBC

Contact Kevin Wilcock

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**Bali**

2008 TBC

Contact Elly Webb

cafe@nelsonbay.com.au

**India**

2008 October

Contact: Colin Hedges

Colinhedges@optusnet.com.au

**Indonesia**

October 2008

Contact Kevin Wilcock

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## Philippines Mission Trip

Hey to all our friends and family,

Great to hear from you, we have just this minute arrived home from Manila. Ken and Linden are at the airport picking up Ken Robinson and his son-in-law. We had an awesome time in Tupda I always get emotional when we are there and see the growth of the people and how our early sponsor kids are in youth church and on fire for God. Linden preached in Tupda, five people were saved and a lot of there was a lot of ministry. Ken preached in Decca Life church in the AM service and

was received so well by the people. The marriage seminars were a big success, more so in Tupda where about 20 to 30 couples attended. Here in Pabahay only a few men but many women attended, totally different people. Toni and I are off to do four bible studies this afternoon and tonight the youth have Valentines dinner here at the school. Toni and Linden are the panel to ask questions but Toni's worried what kind of questions they will ask, should be fun. Ken and I were the panel last year. Have much to tell you when we get home and am so happy how well the four of us work together

and SHOP together. I cant find anywhere in the Bible where it says Thou shall not shop till you drop, so that is what we did yesterday.

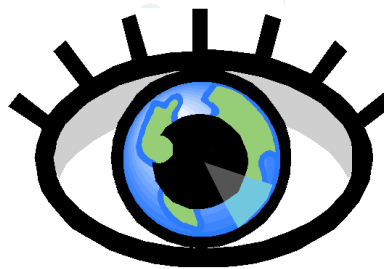
All our love and please give the Church our love and thanks for the prayer.

**Ken & Maisie Gibson**  
Servant Leaders @ Life  
and Overseers of Philippines Mission

## Vision for My World

I was very excited to have the opportunity to be able to write for the Bulletin, and to be able to share on what I think are some keys in having a "Vision for my World" made me even more excited as so many people have such a limited vision and aren't even aware that there is a bigger world out there. What we consider "my world" varies enormously from person to person. Some see it as their own little backyard, their family, town, workplace and friends and barely listen to the National news. Others look a little further to their region, state and nation but don't know much about what's happening internationally. Now there's nothing wrong with having a small focused vision but the thing that saddens me is when people *limit* their vision.

taped for her and her vision was expanded, her heart was captured and she wasn't fearful to try and do something.

**Don't Limit Your Vision**

In the passage John 4:34-38 Jesus says "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for the harvest." We need to open our eyes and look! Be aware of what's happening around the world, open our ears and listen, especially to what Jesus stirs in your heart. I was really encouraged this past month when a lady from church came up to me and asked if I knew of the situation in Darfur? She had watched a documentary that a friend had

**Don't Be Fearful**

In Luke 10 Jesus is again talking about the fields of harvest. In verses 1-16 He instructs His disciples to go into the harvest fields encouraging them (v. 3) by saying "Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves." That's more like a death wish than an encouragement, or so we would think. They went away, probably shaking in their skin (they didn't have sandals) and came back successful and full of joy because they went under Jesus' instruction and authority (v.17-20). The 72 disciples had no need to be fearful about going as Jesus had appointed them. There actually may have been more than 72 sent out, but prior to Jesus sending them there were a few guys, who it seems, weren't quite up to the commitment.

**Don't Make Excuses**

In the passage of Luke 9:57-62, three guys want to follow Jesus, but each one it seems has a "but first ..." which would probably turn into a "but second ..." and "but third ..." They're excuses, reasons not to change or to step out of that comfort zone and maybe even step on a few toes or disappoint a few people, as not everyone has a bigger world vision. Because of these excuses they missed an awesome opportunity.

Don't limit your vision; you never know what you might see.

Don't be fearful; you never know what might capture your heart.

Don't make excuses; you never know what you might accomplish.

Blessings,

**Donna Byham**

Cambodian Missionary for  
Debra & Joshua House  
& Overseer of Burma Homes

## Honoring Church and its Leaders

My wife Annette and I have committed spending each New Year's eve to prayer, discussion and meditation about the upcoming year. Please don't think that I am a wowser, because I have been known to party with the best of them. It's just that New Year's eve seems the perfect time to contemplate the future. Plus, I'm not into fireworks. The reason Annette and I have spent the evening this way is not only because we have felt it necessary to commit ourselves at the outset of a new year, but frankly we have received great messages from God during these times.

This year I felt very strongly about two things; firstly that God is calling us both to get ready for the plans God has in store for us. Secondly, God told me that I need to stop bagging out His Church and get on with the job of helping to build it; with my spirit, mind, and body. Jesus' loves his Church and it is plainly wrong to disparage it, especially publicly. This year I have made a commitment not to bag, pay out, or put down the Church any more. Whilst the Hillsong-type Church is not for me, I'd have to say that its' influence within our society and amongst people who love Jesus has been amazing, and worth praising, not criticizing. In times past by I have "paid out" churches such as Hillsong "big time". This year I have made a commitment to God not to bag out His Church any more!

Because the Kingdom of God is just that, a Kingdom, like any kingdom there has been placed in charge people responsible for its maintenance and growth. John Bevere\* has written a new book, *Honor's Reward*, in which he addresses some of these issues. Although I am not a big fan of Bevere as a writer, he speaks authoritatively on the subject of Honour and the favour of God that flows from attaining the truth of that principle. I commend you to read it if you are interested in the subject.

"Dear Brothers and sisters, honour those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and warn you against all that is wrong. Think highly of them and give your wholehearted love because of their work" (1. Thessalonians 5:12-13). It has seemed to me that people in our church who are the most happy, contented and fulfilled (and challenged) are those who think highly of their Church leaders. On the other hand those who are restless and discontented, those who are unhappy and quarrel, or are just plain gossipers, seem to be those who actively refute the

God-given authority of their Church leaders. As a matter of the spiritual health of the individual the mindset must be to come first from a point of view of honouring their pastor; even if that person is not the same as they are or come from the same set of traditions or perspectives as they might.

Dishonouring one's pastor can come either in the form of outright hostility or subtle dishonour. I am sure that every pastor has wished that the disaffected would just come right out and state their case. It is much cleaner to work from a position of honesty, even though it might be disrespectful, than from a "behind the scenes" disrespecting type position. The fact of the matter is that most would honour their Church leaders with their lips, but with their hearts they withhold their loyalty.

What if your pastor told you that it was important that you gave up your love of money and possessions; what if he told you that you needed to seek marriage counseling for an issue; what if he asked you to give something up that you regarded as important to you? The reaction to that request made by your Church leader may just determine where you stood not only with your pastor, but with God himself!

The fact of the matter is when we honour our Church leaders we honour Jesus; when we Honour Jesus we honour God (Matthew 10:40-41).

But what about those pastors and Church leaders who have fallen?

And what about the bad stuff I heard about *my* pastor?

There is an essential difference between these two questions. From a legal standpoint, the first question presupposes that person has been found guilty or has admitted their fault.

The second question is based upon very shaky grounds; should we listen to the accusations without proof?

The fact of the matter is that the law (I mean our current law) and biblical principles are very closely aligned on this issue. As is pointed out in 1 Timothy 5:19 "Do not receive accusations against an elder except from two or three witnesses". In other words without good, solid, reliable proof we should not listen to gossip or stories about each other and especially our leaders. In today's criminal trials the judge must warn a jury against convicting a person when there is

only one accuser and no other reliable evidence. Do not give yourself to listening to gossip; the tongue is much mightier than any of the other weapons of the enemy! "The tongue is such a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do". (James 3:3)

This principle shows that we should act not react. In the Bible Hannah kept her heart free from an attitude which allowed her to disrespect Eli (when he wrongly assumed she was drunk), as she realized that judgment was not hers but God's to make. Our leaders are not perfect! So for that reason let God do the judging. Let us as true people of God do the doing that God plans for us. How much time is wasted idly on those other pursuits!

The fact of the matter is that not only speaking ill of our Church leaders but to entertain such by listening to gossip (unless backed by the type of evidence that is talked about in 1 Timothy) is to dishonour our Church leaders and dishonour God.

What really am I on about? Well, at a very basic level it is about my thinking and how it has been changing. I love God, but do I love His Church? Do I respect the Church? Do I respect the choices God has made for its governance?

I am finding myself more and more in love with the Church, and through that love, God himself. I commend you to rethinking your love for God and commit yourself and your family to your Church leaders. Let us then find God's Honour coming to live within our hearts and receive therefore the blessing of his wonderful Church.

"Honour all people" (1 Peter 2:17)

Mark Ramsland

One of the Senior Team Leaders @ Life & runs his own criminal law practice.

\* John Bevere is a well known author and speaker, is the head of Messenger International and you can check him out at [www.MessengerInternational.org](http://www.MessengerInternational.org). Like all Americans he cannot spell "honour" correctly!

# OZREACH - A Relationship of Churches & Ministries

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