



THANK YOU !!!

That's a big thank you to those who joined us for the healing conference. We had a blessed time, and the Lord did some excellent work right on the spot, and He began some good works that He will be faithful to complete—as promised in His Word.

Thank you again for your support.

Running the race to win

One of the most difficult things in the prayer ministry is when we lose someone we've been praying for. This year we lost several of our friends, and with each death comes the inevitable question: Why did we come up short?

While there is always room for improvement as we pray our prayers of entreaty or command, a new revelation to "run in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Cor. 9:24b) has taken root in my life, and I wanted to share it with you.

My friend Mac had been in intensive care for many weeks after a series of heart attacks and quadruple bypass surgery. I'd gone to see him early on, and he was improving. After that visit, an infection and more complications led him back to surgery. The next time I could see him, he never woke up, so I sat in the room and prayed. A few weeks later I went back, only to find him sleeping again. As I prayed, a nurse came in to empty the trash can.

There was such a clang that it stirred Mac. I was disappointed that his rest had been interrupted, but I

took that time to walk over to the bed and touch him on the arm.

Mac turned his head slowly toward me, and his eyes and face had a clarity I'd never seen before. Mac was a luthier who built guitars and smoked hand-rolled cigarettes; he drank coffee all day long and grew agitated on Sunday because he'd rather be working than resting. He was a real man in my eyes—one who'd beaten addictions and spent his spare time making rosaries for special friends.

When he turned to face me, a faint smile came across his lips, and he said, "I was just thinking about you this morning." He tried to say more, but he was too exhausted to speak. I was able to tell him that I couldn't wait to hear his testimony when he beat this thing. He nodded in agreement. I prayed for him again and told him I loved him. Five days later, I got news that Mac had died.

So there I was, faced with that question again. Mac's death, despite his being in ICU for so long, came as a shock to me. I had been

By Brian Hite

praying life into him, and I fully expected him to recover. I needed him to recover, because he had offered unconditional friendship that we all desperately desire.

But the revelation came, just as it came in other deaths these past few years: We're called to run for the prize. I knew that I hadn't come up short in that race. My prize wasn't Mac's life, but it was that Mac was saved; it was also that he'd spoken such special words to me. They couldn't have been more precious had anyone else delivered them.

I'm grateful to God for allowing Mac to come into my life. I still don't know why he wasn't healed, but it wasn't because people hadn't prayed for it.

That's the way we must pursue prayer, as if it's a race that we must press through until its finished. And when we don't know something, we should admit we don't know and not make assumptions about the will of God. His Word endures forever, and so we race even if we don't yet know the prize.

Learning from the Big Dog

By Kim Sheek

This article was supposed to be on the Biblical Stewardship aspects of wealth transfer, but that changed when we had to have our faithful basset hound of 13 ½ years, Deacon, put to sleep the day after Christmas. So, rather than talking about wealth transfer, this time I

want to share some of our reflections on our life with Deacon.

We got Deacon while I was still in law school. As a puppy, his ears were so big he had trouble walking without tripping on them. We would carry him up and down the steps of our third

floor apartment because our vet insisted that navigating the many steps would be terrible for his back later on. Once outside, a highlight would be taking a long walk in a neighborhood where dogs would bark at Deacon as we passed. I would always assure

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Learning from the Big Dog, continued

Isn't Jesus pursuing us and inviting us in so He can fill what is otherwise an unfillable void in our hearts with His love?



him that he, too, was a “big dog” (one of many nicknames that stuck over the years).

Once we had children, Deacon had to transition into being a dog, but I’m not sure he ever realized that he was not a person. Never mind a beautiful, 70-degree day, he always wanted to be where the people were. If he was outside and we were inside, he would sit at the back door and whine. As he got older and more stubborn, the whines turned into slightly annoying barks, as if to say, “Just let me in, would you?!” and, “Feed me now!” He would be at our fence in the afternoons waiting on me to get home. He would be either upside down and asleep in the sun or baying when I drove up. I would often bay back at him, and we could get quite a melody going—probably much to the chagrin of our neighbors!

Deacon drove us (and the neighbors) crazy at times with his idiosyncrasies, but he was always there to love and to be loved. And, he was really good at forgiving us. Deacon really didn’t care what kind of day I had. He wasn’t impressed with how “successful” I was at work, the number of friends we had, the cars we drove, or the clothes we wore. Whether he was saying *feed me, walk me, take me for a ride, spend time with me, or let me in*, he was really just saying, *Love me*.

I’m not sure that my children, or even my wife for that matter, had ever *really* seen me cry, but once our kind vet put Deacon to sleep, I could not *stop* crying. I could not suppress the tears and grief. Even though I have tried to convince myself numerous times that he was, after all, just a dog, something deep seemed to be going on. Over the last ten years or so, the Lord has slowly been melting—maybe break-

ing is a better word—my heart. Jesus has been teaching me how to love, and thereby allowing me to grieve. I guess there were more walls built up around my heart than I realized.

I am beginning to see Jesus in Deacon’s life and in his death. Speaking to the rich young man, Jesus “*looked at him and loved him*” (Mark 10:21). When Jesus first saw Simon and Peter fishing by the lake, he said to them, “*Come, follow me*” (Matthew 4:19). When asked by the Pharisees about the greatest commandment of all, Jesus responded, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind*” (Matthew 22:37). John writes about how God sets “our hearts at *rest* in his presence” (1 John 1:19). Furthermore, John reminds us that, “*we love because he first loved us*” (1 John 4:19). King David notes simply that the Lord makes us “*glad with the joy of [His] presence*” (Psalm 21:6). We can trust God because he is “*compassionate and gracious... slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness*” (Psalm 86:15). Proverbs states it a little more bluntly: “*What a man desires is unfailing love*” (Proverbs 19:22).

I see Jesus in Deacon’s life and in his death because, over the years, I have slowly and unknowingly walled my heart off as I have hurt and been hurt by others in our fallen world. Yet, over these same years, I think that I very subtly allowed my heart to pour out unconditional love, vulnerable and unguarded, to Deacon because I was never worried about him hurting me; he was always just there, loving me with devoted trust and joy. I didn’t realize that I’d let my guard down in my heart so much with that dog. In a similar way,

Jesus looks upon us, loves us, and invites us to “follow him.” Isn’t Jesus pursuing us and inviting us in so He can fill what is otherwise an unfillable void in our hearts with His love? Jesus wants us to love Him with all we’ve got—heart, soul, and mind—because He first loved us with His unfailing love (right where we are, and no matter what we’ve done). Our natural response, then, should be to sell out for Jesus, letting our heart guards down because He can be trusted. Jesus is the one who gives joy and rest to our hearts, souls, and minds.

I picked Deacon’s frail body up the morning after Christmas and covered him with towels because he was shaking so much. I asked him if he wanted to go for a ride. He sat there in the passenger’s seat of my truck, trying to keep his head up and look out the window as he liked to do, but it was hard because he was losing his strength and having trouble breathing. I turned the heat way up because he seemed so cold. In the waiting room, I was holding him in my arms, trying to make him comfortable, but with every move Deacon winced in pain. I had already started to cry as we waited, because I knew deep down what the vet would say. I assured Deacon again and comforted him the best I could, telling him over and over what a good dog he was. When my fears were confirmed, I stayed with Deacon until he took his last breath, whispering in his ear that it was okay to go. I honestly never really cried like that before, I’m embarrassed to admit. I couldn’t speak, and it felt like I was fighting for my next breath.

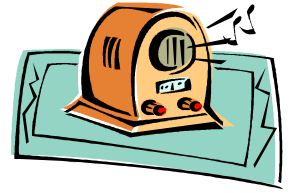
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Learning from the Big Dog, continued

On the way home, a new *Mercy Me* song was playing called, “*Finally Home*.” It goes something like this, “*When I finally make it home . . . the sweetest sound my ears have yet to hear . . . voices of the angels*.” Do dogs make it to heaven? I don’t know, but I know that God loved the animals enough to put them on the ark (Genesis 6:19). If dogs make it to heaven, I can imagine the Lord’s words to Deacon, “Well done,

good and faithful servant! . . . come and share your master’s happiness” (Matthew 25:21). I can also almost hear Deacon baying in the background as the voices of the angels sing. I’m inspired to continue to learn how to sell out for Jesus, following this path that Jesus used in Deacon’s life and death to open up my walled-off heart. I want to continue to be free to love and be loved like that.

Can you handle The Truth?



103.7 FM

We’re sure you can, because The Truth is a new Christian radio station that will soon be broadcasting a powerful signal (literally and Spiritually) across Columbus and the Valley.

With flexible formatting and a focus on the Good News, The Truth, which will broadcast on 103.7 FM, will be a believer’s place to be and a seeker’s place to find. We are very excited that our area will soon give voice to The Truth, and we hope you are as well. We’ll tell you more as we near the launch!

Great Expectations

By Alison Dowe

A few nights ago, I had a chance to pray with a family for physical healing in one of their children. For a day or so before that, I had been thinking about the scripture below from Luke 8:42-48 a good bit.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you." But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

Previously, I had focused on this woman, who went expecting from Jesus, and, as a result, received her healing. I shared this story with this family that night, stressing how the woman had pressed through the crowds because she knew if she could just touch this man, He could do for her what no one else had been able to do. My focus was the woman and her faith.

When I got home that night, I went back to this scripture and suddenly had a simple but fresh look at this same passage I had read over and over. It was one of those times you just *know* is an encounter with God.

This time, as I read the verses, my focus was on the crowd more than the woman. Here’s what God impressed upon me: The crowd represents the church today, made up of folks who, for one reason or another (social connections, curiosity, tradition, legalism, a desire to please people, a desire to fit in, etc.) are okay with the concept of being in church, hearing about God and Jesus—there is nothing wrong with that. But, sadly, there is little or no *expectation* that this Jesus they hear about can and will bring life and healing to their lives.

This kind of thinking—bondage really—is a hard layer to peel back, as I

have learned through my own walk to true freedom in Christ. For most of my life, I have been a part of that pressing crowd, a bit curious or conforming but not expecting. But that woman who was bleeding, her touch was so different that day that out of all of those people pressing against Jesus, the very heart of God was moved; Jesus’ power was released into her, and she was instantly healed. Her touch was different because her *expectation* was different. What she had heard about Jesus, she must have *believed* was true. She knew if she could just get to Him, even just to touch His cloak, she would have everything she needed. GLORY!

As we mingle in the crowds around us, can we dare to be different, more bold and expectant in our faith? It’s challenging for each of us, but look at this woman’s example; she didn’t let the pressing crowds around her stop her. If she hadn’t been persistent, *determined and expecting*, things would have turned out differently for her. This woman had great faith, and, as a result, her life changed dramatically in an instant. Doesn’t that sound better than conformity?

It’s both my prayer and my challenge that we go to Jesus expecting more than we can imagine for every situation, every issue, every *anything* we request of Him—whether for ourselves or others. Though the Bible does not give any details about the reaction of the crowd who saw this healing that day, one can only imagine how the witnesses were changed by what they saw!

When obedience to and faith in Jesus are our motivators, it should be our desire, our goal in life, to stand out in the crowd. That way, when others see us, when they see how God works supernaturally when we go expectantly before His throne, they do see something truly different—something they have never seen in all their lives, whether they are church-ed or un-church-ed, Christians or not. Imagine how many will cry out for more of HIM!

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BETHSAIDA HOUSE OF COLUMBUS, INC.

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Confess Your Sins to Each Other

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.
James 5:16

James clearly instructs us that confession, specifically to one another, plays an important role in healing. Yet issues of fear, pride, and self-condemnation keep us from practicing the very thing that, along with prayer and anointing with oil, can make us whole.

At the leading of the Holy Spirit, Bethsaida House is available for confession through private, confidential appointments. It is important to note that we are not suggesting one forego the counsel offered by his or her pastor or elders of the church. However, if you are not currently in a church which practices confession and need the forgiveness that comes with it, please give us a call. We will do what the Word calls us to do so you no longer have to carry a heavy burden.

It's crucial to remember that Jesus' reaction toward sin was to ask the sinner to stop ("Go and sin no more," for example) before forgiving his or her indiscretion. There was never an endorse-

ment of the sin or a rationalized agreement with the sinner, such as, "Oh, everyone does that." So, likewise, confession to one another should be an act of repentance and reformation, an important cleansing that allows us to move forward with our lives in Christ.

The woman at the well (Luke 4:17-18) learned an important lesson that we would be wise to remember: Jesus already knows what we've done. With confession, we have the opportunity to live, accountable to one another, and practice that which Jesus commanded us to do by the power of His Holy Spirit: forgive. So important is this act that we are told in John 20:23 that we have this priestly responsibility to one another. Forgive and it will be forgiven; do not forgive, and it will not be forgiven. So let's be obedient to help one another in this next step of breaking free by the authority given in Jesus Christ.



Confessing our sins to another is not an easy thing, but it's an important part of growing in Christ, who gave us the power to forgive in His name.