

WORLD MAP

DIGEST

WORLD MISSIONARY ASSISTANCE PLAN • WINTER 2011



*Prophetic Word...
...Profound Response*



Editor's Note: In this year's installments of DIGEST we will feature excerpts from the ACTS issue on "The Anointing of the Holy Spirit." There is a profound need for balanced, biblically sound teaching on this subject that is greatly sought after in the church of developing nations. Therefore, we devoted an expanded issue of ACTS to this subject. Below is the special Author's Note (from the original ACTS issue) to encourage readers to take time to study the scriptures being discussed, not just read the author's text. (Please note: The entire text of this teaching can be accessed on our website at www.world-map.com. Please follow the Publications link to ACTS.)



The Anointing of the Holy Spirit

by Rev. Frank R. Parrish

AUTHOR'S NOTE – IMPORTANT!

Dear Fellow Church Leader:

This issue of ACTS Magazine on "Anointing" is designed to be an in-depth, biblical study on this subject. It will require of you some serious thought, study and effort in order to gain a better understanding of this critical topic.

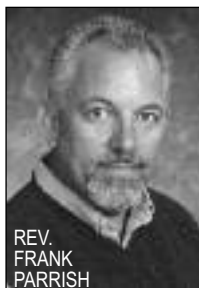
It may require some extensive time to get through this study. You may study through only two or three pages each day. But I strongly urge you to apply yourself both in prayer and in diligent study. If you do, your life and ministry will be changed!

I was in ministry many years before I understood God's desire for His Spirit's anointing in my life and ministry. When I opened my heart and allowed God to "open the eyes of my understanding", I was changed! My ministry was changed! The Holy Spirit's presence and power were far more active and visible in and through my life and ministry.

Much more fruit became evident in my ministry. I experienced the presence of God in a more profound way than ever before. My life did not become easier; but there was a greater ability to live as more than a conqueror through Christ who loves me (see Romans 8:37).

I strongly encourage you to apply yourself as a diligent and steadfast workman in your study of this material. Here are some practical suggestions that will help you to do this:

First, I have given many Bible references throughout this teaching. Please take the time to *look up each and every Scripture reference*. This will serve several very important purposes: 1) As a church leader, you should never simply accept every teaching you read or hear, no matter the source. Always search the Scriptures for yourself (Acts 17:11); 2) As a church leader, it is important for you to advance in your knowledge, familiarity and understanding of the Scriptures (2Tim 2:15-18). This will protect you and those you lead from error, as well as cause you to be a skilled workman with the Word of God; 3) Only the Word of God is backed up by the power of God



REV.
FRANK
PARRISH

(2Tim 3:16,17; Heb 4:12,13; 2Pet 1:20,21). It is only the combined action of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that can transform the human heart.

Second, keep a notebook or paper handy and write down notes, questions or scriptures for further study. God will speak to you and reveal truth to you as you study His Word. Let this study be a journey of *personal growth* for you, which will help you far beyond just receiving good teaching material.

Finally, my dear fellow-worker, I would strongly encourage you to accompany your study time with much prayer and waiting upon the Lord. For it is the Holy Spirit who reveals truth and the nature and character of Christ (John 14:17,26). Do not let this study involve only your mind, for you will then be limited in what you can receive. Our minds *are* a gift from God, but they are still limited (see 1 Corinthians Chapters 3 and 4). Open your heart, and allow the Holy Spirit to teach *you* and to shape *you*. **You can lead others only where you, yourself, have been.** So pray, study and enjoy this teaching – and may you grow in God's anointing power even as you read!

Also, please take note of the new feature we have added to this issue of ACTS Magazine. Throughout the teaching, there will be special notes from me to you. They are designed for you as a church leader to receive a more in-depth look at an important principle from the Bible regarding ministry or personal growth. These special notes are identified as "**Pastor To Pastor**" and are set in a gray background in order that you might readily identify them.

Pastor, I love you in Christ and I believe in the purposes of God for you. You are God's chosen instrument, whom He desires to use for His Kingdom's sake and glory, and to bless His Church. I bless you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now may God bless you, strengthen you and enlarge you, as you study and receive from His Word and His Spirit!

Your brother, Rev. Frank R. Parrish
Director, World MAP

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World MAP (Missionary Assistance Plan) is a trans-denominational, nonprofit ministry dedicated to fulfilling the Great Commission – making disciples of all nations – by:

- Equipping indigenous church leaders in Third-World nations through biblically-based, Spirit-filled teaching resources and practical ministry training so that they can be more effective, and in turn raise up and equip still more leaders (2Tim 2:2).
- Sharing the triumphs and trials of these front-line ministers with believers in Western nations, to inspire the Body of Christ to fervently pray and sacrificially give, so that *"this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world"* (Matt 24:14).

The Third-World church stands poised and ready to reach the nations with the Gospel, if they could just be equipped to do so. Thank you for partnering with World MAP to supply this urgent need!

PRIVACY POLICY

Your privacy is our priority. We do not sell, lease, rent or share personal information obtained from anyone via postal or online services.

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The Anointing of the Holy Spirit

*"Not by might nor by power, but
by My Spirit," says the Lord of
hosts" (Zech 4:6).*

by Rev. Frank R. Parrish

Unlimited Ministry

The subject of ANOINTING is of great importance to **any** and **every** believer in Jesus Christ. However, understanding ANOINTING – what it is, how it functions, and how we can walk and grow in it – is **critical**. This is especially true for those who are called to full-time ministry.

Unfortunately, ANOINTING is often poorly understood or is a subject perhaps even avoided by some leaders. Though it is something that God desires to give us, many leaders do not know what it is or how to receive it. Thus, they try to replace the anointing of the Holy Spirit with other things.

Some leaders may become skilled in administration or organization. Perhaps they pursue education, adding degrees and titles before and after their names. They might attend many conferences and be inspired by great speakers. They might even develop their own speaking or singing skills in order to lead or motivate people more effectively.

These things mentioned above are not necessarily wrong, and may or may not prove helpful in ministry. BUT THEY ARE NOT THE ANOINTING! Nor can they replace the genuine anointing of the Holy Spirit in the minister's life.

Education and administrative skills can be good and helpful. However, they are limited in what they can help the leader to accomplish. When we rely upon our education, the best result we can hope for is the limit of our education. When we rely upon our eloquent speaking or other skills, we are limited to what those skills can accomplish.

However, **when we rely upon the Holy Spirit, we are limited only by what the Holy Spirit can do!**

Whatever we choose to rely upon, or place our trust in, in order to accomplish the call to ministry – that is what will set the limits of what we are able to do. How much limitation do you want on your ministry?

With God, there are no limits! (See Luke 18:27.) Therefore, if I put my trust and reliance upon God and His power and ability, my only limitations in ministry are God's will and His desires for me (Phil 4:13).

It is God's will for every born-again believer to show the evidence of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:16-26) in their behavior and actions. The fruit of the Spirit is the character of Christ. This same type of character is required especially of those who are called to lead others in the Body of Christ. It is the leader's role to model godly behavior for those whom they lead (1Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17; 1Tim 4:12). There are no gifts, administrative skills or preaching or teaching abilities that can replace having Christ-like character and integrity.

It is also God's will – especially for those called to lead – that we have the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told His disciples, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain"* (John 15:16).

From this passage we see that it is the desire of Jesus that the
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Prophetic Word...



We believe that the King of all kingdoms, nations, tribes and tongues might very well have something strategic and profound to say to His chosen leaders when they gather, amen? Thus, we wait upon the Lord to hear from Him and be directed by His Spirit before every ministry opportunity He gives to us.

By Dr. Frank Parrish

The day was warm and the large tented “sanctuary” was filled to capacity. We had already enjoyed several days of strong ministry and Bible teaching. In my final session, I was exhorting the Mexican pastors about what God desired to do in their nation, and their value and importance to God’s Kingdom work. The pastors truly received the word into their hearts, and spontaneously began to shout, “Viva la Mexico” (Mexico lives)!

But the atmosphere became even more electric when I shouted back, “Viva Jesus [pronounced *bay-soos*]” (Jesus lives!). The Mexican

church leaders jumped to their feet and began to shout with me, “Viva Jesus”, raising their hands and voices in praise to the Living Lord!

You’ll read more about what prompted this joyous and open-hearted response in just a moment. But I relay this story to illustrate just one of the many reasons it was such a joy for Wendy and me to again participate in church leaders’ seminars in Mexico! What a blessing for us to return to this land, and to worship the Lord and fellowship with our Mexican brothers and sisters.

Mexico is much in the news due to the violence stemming from the unchecked activities of organized crime and drug cartels. But what you do not see in the media is the ongoing and powerful work of



...Profound Response

the Holy Spirit bringing salvation and hope to the people of Mexico. Let me take a few minutes to share with you the noteworthy *Kingdom* news that we were able to witness firsthand.

Strategic And Profound

Prior to every ministry trip, Wendy and I set aside times for fasting and prayer. We pray for the events and for those who will attend. We also wait upon the Lord, tuning our hearts to what the Holy Spirit would desire to do and say.

Accurately teaching and ministering to pastors from God's eternal Word is always a priority for us. We know that teaching the Bible will impart life, wisdom and transformation to those with hearts that are open to both receive and do what is pleasing to God.

But decades of following Christ and ministering have also taught us *the necessity of a current, vital prophetic word* that speaks to the heart of what God's present desire and direction would be for a people or nation. We cannot demand that from God – but we always take time to open our hearts and ask for Him to reveal to us His desires.

As you know, the ministry focus of World MAP is on the leaders of the Body of Christ. Thus, we are charged with the responsibility and privilege of teaching and ministering to **the leaders of nations!** No, they are not necessarily the political or economic leaders; they are even more influential than that. They hold a higher position, one of *spiritual leadership* in a given nation.

Therefore, we believe that the King of all kingdoms, nations, tribes and tongues might very well have something strategic and profound to say to His chosen leaders when they gather, amen?

Thus, we wait upon the Lord to hear from Him and be directed by His Spirit before every ministry opportunity He gives to us.

A Watershed Moment

One morning, as Wendy and I were praying together about Mexico, the Lord began to stir our hearts and reveal a glimpse of His heart toward Mexico in this hour.

He showed me a picture of a plumb line being lifted over the nation. My thoughts went to related Old Testament passages

concerning judgment (Amos and Zechariah); yet I did not sense that this was an issue of God's judgment.

Instead, I had an overwhelming sense that God desired to bring an *adjustment* or *realignment* in the spiritual realm that would begin a restoration of God's eternal purposes for Mexico. These purposes had been opposed for millennia by the presence of an oft-welcomed demonic principality – the spirit of death.

Mexico has a long cultural and religious history involving death and rituals related to death. For example, the Mayans and Aztecs practiced human sacrifice for centuries. The presence of other religions introduced over



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"Don't Stop Sending!"

Church Leaders Treasure World MAP Literature as Rich Provision from God

"Both ACTS Magazine and *The Shepherd's Staff* are of great help for my equipping

ACTS and *The Shepherd's Staff* are of great help for my equipping...

and as my guide/reference as well in preparing teachings for the Life/Cell Group Bible Studies and likewise training materials for me and the group, especially the new converts, for us all to grow in Christ and in our service to Him. My congratulations and heartfelt thanksgiving to God for the lives of the people whom He has used for the continuous provision of the ACTS Magazine and *The Shepherd's Staff* (for those who have none yet)."

– Feliciana Anosa, Philippines

"I'm a new ACTS Magazine reader living in Zambia, Africa. My personal relationship with the Living Lord has been transformed and reshaped when I read the ACTS Magazine on the study of 'Adoption'."

– Deacon Aston Somba, Zambia

My personal relationship with the Living Lord has been transformed and reshaped...

"Having come to know that you have such a good ministry there to distribute the books for the needy, I really praise God and thank God for providing a good group of such dedicated ones for the ministry of God whereby I may get helpful material for my personal study and which will be helpful material for my future ministry too." – David Sang Ve, India

"I take this opportunity to appeal to you people for my own copy of the book *The Shepherd's*

Staff. I happened to pass my eyes on a copy owned by a brother who is far away from me. I discovered that the book is so rich, and again so easy to understand, also to teach others. I love the book."

– Brother Sylvanus in Cameroon

"My first ACTS Magazine issue was immediately after the Lord Jesus had delivered me from witchcraft. The Holy Spirit had just given me power to start a Gospel ministry. Praise Jesus! We took Bible study with ACTS. ACTS is soaked in the power of the Holy Spirit."

– Pastor John Apalu, Uganda

ACTS is soaked in the power of the Holy Spirit.

"When I saw your publications, I knew what it was that God wanted me to do! And so I'm working on a sort of questionnaire based on ACTS vol. 33, 'God Shapes His Leaders'."

– Willie Botha, South Africa

"Thanks for your kindness and continuous sending of your ACTS Magazine. I am really a new creation in my leadership ability."

– Mrs. Gladys Wanjiru, Kenya

"I would like to thank you for the book titled *The Shepherd's Staff* that you've offered me. You have accomplished so many wonderful things through your mission."

– Pasteur Francois Kpade, Benin

"The ACTS Volume 37 ['Heirs of God: Your Spiritual Adoption & Heavenly Citizenship'] is wonderful. In fact, all your issues in ACTS Magazine are a source of edification to my spiritual life. I wish to thank God for all human instruments that are contributing to the production of ACTS Magazine."

– Evangelist Paul Nkwo Onwe, Nigeria

"The Spirit of God is highly working via this magazine. It is the spiritual school for those who read it regularly. Don't stop sending!"

– Samuel Uba, Ethiopia

It is the spiritual school for those who read it regularly.

"I'm most happy to be part of those who receive your ACTS Magazine and I must confess with all sincerity of heart that the ACTS Magazine on 'The Anointing of the Holy Spirit' was marvelous and splendid – even to the point that somebody who saw me using it in a public transport

wanted to take it and photocopy it for himself just after glancing through. My lips or words alone cannot explain how I have been enlightened by your magazine with step-to-step insight on topics and issues being discussed. May the God Lord, Jehovah Jireh ['The LORD Will Provide'], continue to support this worthy initiative till eternity."

– Pastor Methuselah Ashigbee, Ghana

My lips or words alone cannot explain how I have been enlightened by your magazine...



Prophetic prayer reveals ancient doors opening; pastors awaken to God's *kairos* moment for Mexico.

From page 5

time in Mexico also emphasized and exalted death over life in Christ.

Yet, in spite of its history, I had a profound sense that a watershed moment was at hand, that this was a significant hour for Mexico.

Our English word for “time” takes two forms in New Testament Greek: *chronos*, meaning any period or duration of time; and *kairos*, which is a significant moment in time. The word *kairos* in the New Testament denotes a moment of sovereign visitation or the fulfillment of divine purpose.

I felt strongly that a “*kairos*” moment of visitation is at hand for the Body of Christ in Mexico. This is to be a time of *restoration* as opposed to judgment. But I also had a clear sense that those who would not willingly come to the Lord for restoration would remain subject to the oppression of the spirit of death.

A New Awareness

As the Lord impressed this word upon my heart, I was also remembering the current turmoil taking place throughout much of Mexico: the ongoing execution-style murders by drug cartels; daily kidnappings and thievery; rampant graft and corruption of the police, military, governmental and judicial arenas. In the natural, the nation appears out of control and the situation seems hopeless.

Yet as Wendy and I continued praying, we sensed that the escalating problems were a desperate and frantic manifestation of the principality (Eph 6:12) of death seeking to keep control over the people of Mexico – frantic because the demonic realm was aware that it was God’s desire to move in power and topple that dark throne of death and replace it with His own throne of glory!

Throughout history and now, God in His sovereign wisdom and plan chooses to use His own people to partner with Him to carry out His will on the earth. With this understanding, we began to pray for the leaders of Christ’s Body whom God desired to use in Mexico. The Holy Spirit revealed to us that many church leaders had grown battle-weary. They were beaten down and discouraged. They had developed a lesser view of themselves that was not in line with how God actually saw them.

We sensed that it was God’s desire to awaken His leaders to a new awareness of their significance, and the vital mission He has for them during this critical time in Mexico. In this process of restoring hope, we felt that the Lord wanted to give a “corrected vision” – **His vision** – of the Church in Mexico.

All of this was for the purpose of galvanizing the pastors and preparing them to receive gifts, callings and ministries that would allow them to be effective in serv-

ing His purposes for Mexico in this hour.

“The doors began to crack...”

I had a clear sense of three main focal points regarding what the Lord is about to do:

1. Raising up true Apostolic Ministry. This is obviously not about titles or positions of power. Instead, it is the release of true *ministry function* that will help bring cohesion and unity among churches and leaders, through the servanthood of Spirit-led leadership.

2. A fresh release of the prophetic, which would include both *fore-telling* and *forth-telling*. This involves greater emphases on the accurate and sound declaration of biblical doctrines and teaching, declared with a fresh sense of revelation and anointing. This clearly-declared truth born of both the written Word and the Spirit would be accompanied by signs and wonders to verify the truth. [For more on the prophetic, read the important sidebar “**Balancing the Prophetic**” on page 12].

3. A release of intercessory ministry. As the Lord was giving Wendy and me this portion of the word, I had a mental picture of massive ancient stone doors covered with carvings. A group of people were kneeling at the base of the doors, dwarfed by their sheer size. But as the people prayed in earnest, the doors began to crack and dust



began to fall. As their prayers continued, the doors were crumbling and large pieces began to fall. At that moment, the Lord spoke to my heart, "I am breaking down the ancient doors". I sensed that these "spiritual doors" were in place to attempt to block the influence of godly men and women in Mexico, and to oppose the establishment of righteousness and the purposes of God.

repented of and cast down. It was God's desire to create new, divinely-ordained partnerships. The bondage of generational sins was going to be broken, allowing a fresh release of godly spiritual power and spiritual prosperity.

God desires to see the Church in Mexico released and set free from the things that have bound them, so that they might be anointed for service, rise in boldness, and be unafraid to stand for righteousness and the rulership of the One true King. He desires His people to walk in the supernatural without pride, selfishness or judgment.

All of this is given by God as a divine gift of grace. It is not to be used simply for the Church to be blessed and happy, but rather that God's people would become true agents of the Kingdom – ambassadors for Christ (2Cor 5:20) – to fulfill all God's destiny, purpose and will for the nation of Mexico!

The powerful prayer time that Wendy and I experienced was both exciting and sobering. It was apparent that God has great destiny for Mexico. Yet it was equally apparent that Satan was making every effort in these days to keep Mexico in the clutches of death, fear and hopelessness.

God can easily and sovereignly do whatever He desires without our involvement. But He has ordained that we, the Church of the living God, be His chosen partners in fulfilling His Kingdom will and purpose on earth. He is calling us to rise up! He has already provided for and equipped us with everything we need for victory. But we must choose to repent, respond and receive – then advance with Him into all that He has destined for us! Hallelujah!

Kingdom Feast

It was with great anticipation that Wendy and I, and Don and Lois Richter of Harvest Preparation International Ministries, headed for Mexico.



Partnering in God's Kingdom purpose.

True Agents of the Kingdom

At this point in prayer, there came an overwhelming sense of the Lord calling forth His people in Mexico – calling them to receive all that He had for them to become and to do.

But in order to receive, they need to embrace a new understanding of the Church. The idols that fill the Church (which are more than mere physical statues, and exist in every denomination and group) must be rejected and cast down. Replacing the Spirit of God with the spirit of religion or the works of man was to come to an end; a new place of preeminence must be given to the presence and leading of the Holy Spirit and a heart-obedience to the Word of God.

Barriers between pastors – that include unforgiveness, envy, competition and judgment – were to be



The first conference convened in Juchitan on the southwest coast of Mexico. We had been invited to speak at a unique and wonderful annual event held outside the city on a large ranch property.

The event is called La Gran Fiesta, and is organized by a retired politician and his family to bless the pastors in the region, as well as those who live nearby – all free of charge for those attending.

The annual Fiesta is four days of meetings and workshops, meals, fellowship and recreation. Several thousand people attend during the day, with the crowds swelling to many times that for the evening concerts and celebrations. The event blesses those attending, including providing a dental clinic where four dentists work almost around the clock to give free dental work.

Our ministry team had the privilege of ministering to the more than 1,000 pastors and church leaders at the Fiesta. Last year, World MAP had shipped down *Shepherd's Staffs* to be handed out to all the pastors. It was an honor to personally be part of that same distribution this year.

Wendy and I had speaking assignments throughout the conference. I spoke daily in a large open-air pavilion, sharing much about the Kingdom of God and our call as pastors and leaders to walk in the power and authority of His eternal, unshakeable Kingdom. I laid a foundation from the Word of God, teaching critical biblical principles and doctrines related to the prophetic word that I would share on the final day with the pastors.

Crying Out to God

It was clear throughout the week that the pastors and others present were hungry for sound teaching and a touch from God's Spirit, and that was still evident at my final session with them. As I began sharing the prophetic word God had given me, a hush fell over the crowd. They were taking in every word.

At the end of the session, time was short, so I simply asked for those who desired to respond to the word to stand to their feet and I would pray with and for them.

Suddenly, hundreds of pastors and leaders began to rush forward. They pressed in at the altar, kneeling on the dirt floor, crying out to God. The Holy Spirit was clearly working among them as their hearts resonated to the word for Mexico and for them as leaders.

What a glorious privilege to wait upon God, receive His word, deliver His word, and then welcome His Spirit to confirm the word and begin a work that He will then bring to fruition (Phil 1:6). Praise the Lord!



A Powerful Time of Healing and Deliverance

Wendy ministered in a separate open-air, thatched-roof arena reserved for the hundreds of ladies who attended the conference, including many pastors and pastors' wives. She reports:

"The women of Juchitan and I enjoyed wonderful times of ministry and fellowship together. God gave me such a love for them. I spoke several times a day on topics that included:

- God's Call for Women
 - The Power of Words: A Matter of the Heart
 - Biblical Forgiveness
 - Spiritual Mentoring: Becoming 'Titus 2' Women
- "Mexico, like many countries of





the world, can be brutal for women, especially in less developed areas like those surrounding Juchitan. Life in such places is hard, and consists of much work, trial and heartache. There exists rampant physical and sexual abuse, and a lack of regard for women in general. Many are treated as slaves and there is little to no encouragement in their calling or vocational potential.

“The response to these conditions can range from hopelessness and despair to a hardened position of defensive control. And neither of these is what God would desire for his precious daughters and handmaidens.

“But I saw in these dear Christian sisters a hunger for the Lord and His Word. Their challenges are great, yet they turn to the Lord for strength and help. They listened intently, and responded open-heartedly. And the Holy Spirit was very present to meet them at their points of need, both powerfully and personally. He has high calling and destiny for each of them, and I trust I was able to communicate that truth to them.

“There is just too much to tell in this short article, but I will encapsulate my time in Juchitan with two stories.

“In one session with the ladies, I had taught from the Scriptures about the power of our words, even to create life or death (Prov 18:21). I talked about spoken words, and the accompanying attitudes, that ultimately spring from issues in our own heart (Prov 4:23).

“There were hundreds of women present, so I concluded the session by asking if I could pray for them as a group. As I quietly began to pray, I could sense the Holy Spirit moving. I led them in prayers of repentance for unfit words they had spoken. But I then felt led to ask the Lord to break the power of harmful words spoken to them and about them.

“Suddenly, there was weeping, wailing, coughing, and many other physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit working. He was breaking the power of curses and lies of limitation, rejection, bondage and more, some of which were *generations* old. I could sense the chains of bondage breaking and falling as these women were being set free from wounding words that they had received and believed. Then I began to quote verses of Scripture, declaring the truth of what the Lord says about His daughters. And the freedom continued to be released! What a powerful time of healing and deliverance. Glory to God!

Divinely Ordained Encounters

“Following the teaching on Biblical Forgiveness, I was approached by two women. One was a believer who had brought to the Fiesta her unsaved cousin. The unsaved woman had an expression so hardened and embittered, her face was almost distorted. Her eyes were dark, angry, empty and sad all at once. She could not look at me as she shared her tremendous struggle with forgiveness. I had no idea what had happened to her, but

it was clear that life had dealt her some very cruel blows indeed.

“I reiterated that forgiveness is not denial, or pretending that bad things that happened were okay. It is not a feeling or a desire. Forgiveness is a *choice of our will* to let go of an event or person and release it to God for Him to deal with. Unforgiveness binds events and people to us; forgiveness frees us from the event and from those who have wronged us. She understood and expressed a willingness to forgive others.

“After more discussion, I asked her if she wanted to receive Jesus Christ and His forgiveness for her. And then the deeper struggle was revealed. She had participated in so many things that she was ashamed of, and that had been so damaging to others, she could not forgive herself. And how could Jesus ever forgive her?

“Suddenly, I realized I was standing on ‘holy ground’. The Spirit of God was there, and we were in His presence. He filled my mouth, and opened her ears, and she began to see and hear and receive the truth. There is so much more I could relay, but suffice it to





say that she is now my beloved sister in Christ!

“The next day, a woman came up to hug me. It took me a moment to realize it was my new sister. She looked *completely* different. Her countenance was alive and joyful, and there was such peace and love in her eyes. She knew firsthand the saving and forgiving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. She was a new creation!

“And in the mercy and kindness of God, He orchestrated yet another gift of grace. Earlier that week I had ministered to a local woman pastor who had lost a child and was still struggling. God spoke to me that He had ‘many daughters’ He desired to give her. She was standing next to me when my new sister came over to hug me. I was able to introduce them, and this pastor warmly embraced this new ‘daughter’ whom she would help disciple into maturity in Christ! God is so good, amen?

“Though I was from a different country and a very different culture, the Holy Spirit makes us one in Christ. At the end of the conference, a precious young woman pressed a note into my hand. It was

in Spanish, and I wasn’t able to get it translated until I was home. But it meant more to me than I can say. It said in part:

Sister, we are so grateful to God and you. This is the first time that we have been spoken to with a true and sincere love, just as if you were a Mexican. We love you and will be praying for you and your family... Your Mexican Sisters

“I believe what these dear ladies felt was God’s great love for them somehow being expressed through me. And He knit our hearts together in His love. I am humbled to be the Lord’s handmaiden, and so very thankful for your prayers and support that allow ministry to go out to the nations!”

Mentoring

Our next conference was in Huatulco, sponsored by Harvest Preparation International Ministries. The HPIM Directors, Don and Lois Richter, graciously asked Wendy and me to be part of the ministry team with them.

This venue was smaller and was a conference for only pastors and church leaders and their spouses.

The theme for the conference revolved around one of the essential tasks of biblical leadership, which is mentoring (2Tim 2:2).

As in Juchitan, the pastors in Huatulco were hungry and responsive, and faithfully took notes during the many sessions we all shared together. The Holy Spirit responded to their hunger, and we enjoyed wonderful sessions with the men and women in separate sessions as well as jointly.

At the conclusion of the conference, it was our joy to give a *Shepherd’s Staff* to every pastor present. The next day, the host church for the conference had a graduation ceremony for those who had recently completed their Bible Institute. We were privileged to pray for each of the graduates and to give them a *Shepherd’s Staff*.

Inviting God’s Kingdom Rule

Through a series of circumstances, we were asked to meet with and pray for the newly-elected mayor of Huatulco and his cabinet. The political party that was defeated in the election had been in power for more than 80





While in Mexico, the ministry team was able to pray with and for the newly-elected Mayor of Huatulco and his cabinet, to invite God's Kingdom rule both in them and through them.

Balancing The Prophetic

Widespread misunderstanding of the true nature of the prophetic can quench the full operation of this gift. It is often believed that the prophetic consists *only* of the "fore-telling" of some yet unknown or unheard-of mystery or event. But this is only one part of the operation of the prophetic gift.

This monocular perception of prophecy can ultimately lead to imbalance and abuse. Those prophesying, and those hearing, can begin to exclusively seek some "new revelation" never heard or disclosed as the sole valid expression of the prophetic. This can lead to the potential for deception or fleshly sensationalism (see the warnings given throughout Scripture on this subject, including: 1 Timothy 4:1,2; 2 Peter 2:15-18; 2 Corinthians 11:3,4; 2 Timothy 4:3,4; Matthew 24:11,12,23-28). In addition, this limited view of the prophetic creates missed opportunities for fuller and more balanced expressions of the prophetic, which are important to God's Kingdom purposes being fulfilled.

A balanced understanding of the prophetic *does* include foretelling, a "thus saith the Lord" prophetic word. But also included in healthy prophetic expression is forth-telling: the clear declaration of biblically sound and doctrinally balanced truth.

There is a critical component to forth-telling that extends beyond a simple recitation of correct doctrine or theology. A truly prophetic forth-telling has the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit upon it. It may involve the declaration of a truth written 2,000 years ago by those inspired by the Holy Spirit. Yet when it is quickened afresh by the Holy Spirit – anointed and appointed to be spoken at a Spirit-led point of ministry – this prophetic truth will act as a Spirit-empowered catalyst toward transformation or required action by the hearers. We catch a glimpse of this tandem dynamic of the Word and the Spirit's power as Jesus referenced His teachings (John 6:63).

Prophetic forth-telling and foretelling are *not issues of style*; they are matters of genuine, Spirit-led prophetic declaration of the Word of God. Even a whispered word by the Spirit's anointing can shatter darkness or set captives free!

In Revelation 19:10, we see that the true spirit of prophecy will always testify of Jesus, Who He is and what He has done. The validity of a prophecy or prophetic ministry is always gauged by its alignment with the already-revealed written Word of God. We must keep a balanced view of the prophetic if we are to receive its full impact and blessing.

God's desire for the declaration of the anointed prophetic word is to increase passion for God and for His purposes to be known and fulfilled in and through His people. †

years. So this young mayor had a tremendous challenge in front of him.

We met and talked together, and the Lord used each member of the team to speak encouragement and to share prophetically what the Lord gave us. Then we laid hands on the mayor and his young team, and blessed them in the name of the Lord. We asked for God's protection and favor for them, as they yielded themselves to God and invited His Lordship and Kingdom rule into their city. We prayed that God would often bring to their remembrance that they are servants of His, and that He raised them up to serve the needs of the people in Huatulco. May God's Kingdom come to Huatulco, and His will be done!

Bearing Fruit

It was thrilling for Wendy and me to return to Mexico after a number of years away. We were overjoyed to witness the health, strength and growth of the churches there. We spoke with many pastors who have faithfully, over the years, used their *Shepherd's Staffs* for personal study, for discipling others, and as a basis for leadership training for a new generation of upcoming leaders.

We received their thanks and gratitude on your behalf for what you have made possible for them. We take every opportunity to express to pastors that their brothers and sisters in America love them, pray for them, and believe in the purposes of God for them.

You are a vital part of what God is doing around the world. May God continue to abundantly bless you, "*that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack*" (2Cor 8:14). †

You can help World MAP continue reaching the church leaders of Mexico and other developing nations through Spiritual Renewal Seminars, ACTS Equipping Magazine and *The Shepherd's Staff*. Please send your donation along with the coupon on the back cover of this magazine. Thank you.

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP

The DONG of CHINA

Home:

Scattered villages on mountainsides and in river valleys.

Population:

2.9 million

99% Animist • 1% Christian

Possibly 85% have never heard the Gospel.

Gods of confusion: The Dong have a colorful culture but a dark spiritual life. They love music and are renowned for their elaborate song festivals. Living in lush country with abundant rainfall, they construct intricate, pagoda-style “wind and rain bridges” for shelter from the physical elements. In their religious life they seek shelter in a complicated and somewhat confused belief-system consisting of: gods and goddesses to be appeased; ancestor spirits and spirits thought to inhabit animals, places and objects (including rice seedlings); and a baffling catalogue of superstitions – for example, the belief that a recently-deceased person will come to life if a cat jumps over him. Snakes are highly venerated among the Dong.

PRAY FOR:

- Liberation of the Dong people from slavish bondage to spirit-worship and empty ritual.
- God to raise up fervent native evangelists among the Dong, that the Truth will set them free to worship the One Living God!
- Spirit-born strategy and boldness for Christians in China, so that the Gospel will be proclaimed among all of China’s minority groups.



UKRAINE

Ripe for Harvest



Population:

45,415,596

76.6% Ukrainian Orthodox

8% Ukrainian Greek Orthodox

7.2% Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox

2.2% Roman Catholic

2.2% Protestant

0.6% Jewish

3.2% Other



President of Ukraine: Viktor Yanukovich

Prime Minister: Mykola Azarov

First Deputy Prime Minister: Andriy Klyuyev

“Our enemies will vanish, like dew in the morning sun” – from the Ukrainian National Anthem

Praying for the Nations

Brighter skies: The bicolor Ukrainian flag represents grain fields flourishing under a peaceful blue sky. But Ukraine’s history has been anything but peaceful.

The Soviet communists ruthlessly persecuted both Ukrainian nationalists and Ukrainian Christians. Though Ukraine

has been called the “breadbasket of Europe,” in the early 1930s the Stalin regime engineered a famine there that caused, by some estimates, as many as 7 million starvation deaths.

It is far different today. Stalin and Soviet communism are gone, while Ukraine and Ukrainian Christianity live on. There is a vibrant and growing Evangelical movement there, and Ukraine has become known as the “Bible Belt of Eastern Europe,” supplying missionaries to other Eurasian and eastern European countries. The second-largest country in Europe, Ukraine is in a strategic “hub” location, sharing borders with Russia, Belarus, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

PRAY FOR:

- Continued and accelerating growth of Bible-believing churches that embrace the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Open doors for Ukrainian missionaries in other countries.
- Revival in the highly ritualistic Orthodox Church.
- The first-ever World MAP Spiritual Renewal and Equipping Seminars to be held in Ukraine at the end of March, that God would move powerfully and ignite a fresh work of His Spirit in that strategic land.

JOIN THE WORLD MAP PRAYER CORPS AS WE CIRCLE THE GLOBE WITH INTERCESSION FOR THE ADVANCE OF GOD’S KINGDOM.

E-mail us at WMAPPrayercorps@aol.com – and send us your name and address or E-mail address.

UNLOCKING DOORS

By Keith G. Balsler

“...meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word...” (Col 4:3).

Sometimes a door swings open dramatically. This happened when Jonah preached to Nineveh and the entire city repented (Jonah 3). A door may also open quietly, as it did in Lydia's house in Philippi when she and her household came to faith in Christ (Acts 16:11-15).

One of those quiet doors has opened in our day, on the tiny island of Mayotte in the Mozambique Channel between Africa and Madagascar. As a modern-day “Aquila and Priscilla” living there informed us recently, “We opened our house for the announcing of the Gospel.”

The Shepherd's Staff opens the way to a clear understanding of Scripture and is thus a key resource for them. The wife writes:

“First of all, I'd like to thank you for the work you do. I've got ‘*La Houlette du Berger*’ [French *Shepherd's Staff*] and my husband and I are reading it and we're learning a lot.

“We started with three; now the group is growing. We'd like some of your publications in French, especially ‘*La Houlette du Berger*.’

“Next week, a Christian friend opens her house in the south of Mayotte. Please, pray for us. We are free to speak of Jesus; Mayotte is a French territory, but the heart of the people is very hard.”

OPENING HEARTS

Mayottans have been historically independent. Though geographically part of the Comoros archipelago, Mayotte was the only island in the group that

voted to remain under French rule when the rest broke from France in the mid-1970s.

Despite their strong ties to a Western and at least nominally Christian country, Mayottans remain 99% Muslim.

So while this ministry couple is free to speak of Jesus, the hearts of their hearers need to be freed from spiritual bondage. They are those “*whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them*” (2Cor 4:4).

Equipping native evangelists with resources such as *The Shepherd's Staff* is a powerful way to help shine the light of the Gospel in their nations. So is concerted, informed prayer. Joining the World MAP Prayer Corps will give you access to regular prayer bulletins concerning doors that are opening to the Gospel in many strategic places around the world. Fervent, united prayer was a powerful tool God used in those exciting days recorded in the Book of Acts, when the Gospel made rapid inroads in a pagan empire. It is just as powerful a tool today.

So please pray with us for God to open the doors of these hardened hearts in Mayotte and around the world. Pray for all who come to this Mayottan couple's home – and to many such homes – that God would open their hearts to believe the Gospel, as He did for Lydia when she heard the preaching of the Gospel: “*The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul*” (Acts 16:14). †

Anointing of the Holy Spirit, continued from page 3

fruit of our lives remain. How can that happen? When our ministry is filled with God's anointing power – the power of the Holy Spirit – His power *through us* enables us to influence the lives of people in a way that is fruitful and lasting.

It does not matter how talented or smart a leader is. Without the enablement of the Holy Spirit, a leader cannot fulfill God's will in God's way in ministry. Fortunately for us, God knows what we need far better than we do. And He has already provided for us His power and ability to help us fulfill His high call.

Form Without Power

Today, there are many churches and ministries where God's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit have been limited. These ministries may have large crowds, sophisticated facilities or exciting events. But if the genuine presence and power of the Holy Spirit is not welcomed and evident, these gatherings can be just empty, religious ceremonies.

A large building or stadium can have huge crowds, sophisticated facilities and exciting events *for just a soccer game*. But these outward circumstances have little to do with making disciples who follow diligently after Jesus Christ!

In the history of the Church, there are many places in our world where God did great and miraculous works through yielded human vessels. Many of those churches, and even vast geographic regions, were once known for their dynamic Christian presence. Sadly, today they are spiritually darkened. Where the Church once thrived and had great influence, these places are now empty and without the light of the Gospel.

Of the more well-known in New Testament history are the churches of Asia Minor (now the nation of Turkey). These churches can be read about in the Book of Revelation. They are commonly known as the "Seven Churches of Revelation".

These churches were once heralded as mighty fortresses of Christ's redemptive work in the hearts of men. Many miracles had taken place there (read the Book of Acts). But today, tourists pay money to walk among the ruins where great apostles once held forth the Word of Life. These places are now lifeless and void of the power of the Gospel.

What happened to these once-great churches and ministries? These empty ruins, now occupied only by birds of the air, stand as a warning and a lesson to us all.

Here is what we can learn: *Whenever church leaders begin to rely upon their own abilities, or*

upon traditions, titles, church politics, or even upon education and learning – instead of dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God and the timeless truths of His Word – that is when God's life and power begin to depart from us as leaders, and from the ministries or churches that God has entrusted to us.

True Fruitfulness

Terms used in the New Testament for describing the Church include: "living stones" (1Pet 2:5); "the Body of Christ" (1Cor 12:27); God's "field", "building", or "temple" (1Cor 3:9,16,17). All of these terms have this in common: They all refer to *people* who are true believers in Jesus Christ.

This is critically important to understand. As church leaders, we are called to more than administering the church, overseeing new buildings, or coordinating church functions. We are called to partner with God in discipling and building **people**.

We are called by God to pastor and nurture the living Church of the living God, the believing people – and to help them become growing disciples of Jesus Christ. We cannot adequately fulfill this stewardship role without God's help and power (see Psalm 127:1).

God **will** hold us accountable for how we build upon the One Foundation of salvation through Christ (1Cor 3:12-23). Are we just drawing a crowd through

our own ideas, strength and cleverness? This can appear to succeed for a time, but it will not produce the lasting fruit that God desires (John 15:5,8,16).

Or are we, instead, daily yielding to the Spirit of God and surrendering to His will? Are we being led by Him as true sons of God (Rom 8:14), depending upon Him for every moment of ministry He allows us to have? If so, then by His power and help, we can be truly fruitful, and our fruit will be of an eternal nature (John 15:16).

Please understand that *fruit* and *fruitfulness* are not defined by God in the same way that human wisdom might define them. Men might

say that fruitfulness is having large numbers of people as followers, or becoming rich and influential. Human wisdom may define it as having fame, power or fortune.

But true fruitfulness from God's perspective is defined and measured by one criterion: *the lives of people being transformed into the image and character of Christ as they mature as His disciples.* †

Editor's Note: *In the next issue of DIGEST, we will examine key principles that will help you to grasp the truth of this definition. The entire text of this teaching can be accessed on our website at www.world-map.com.*



Discipling and building people.

