



RESURRECTION LIFE OF JESUS

July 15, 2010

A letter to the congregation of Resurrection Life of Jesus Church and all of my Christian friends.

King Jehoshaphat became very troubled when he was given the bad news that several armies were marching toward Judah and its capital of Jerusalem. He knew that the armed forces of his nation could not defeat such a vast army coming against him so he decided to notify the people and proclaim prayer and fasting as the people rallied around him:

*“It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazontamar, which is Engedi. **And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.**” (2 Chronicles 20:1-4)*

I am a pastor not a king with a kingdom but God has set me over a ministry that dates back to 1972. In that year a group of seven believers in Christ gathered to form a mission organization that was called “European-American Evangelistic Crusades.” My brother Peter and his wife Monica were part of this group and so were Aina and I. The goal of the ministry was to preach the Gospel, write Bible study material and bring as many people to Christ as possible. During the years 1973-1974, I traveled as an evangelist to Sweden, Germany and in some states of the U.S.A. During these years, my wife and I did not have a home, but traveled from place to place and lived in people’s homes.

In 1975, I received a call to become a pastor in the city of Lodi, California which I accepted after much prayer. We stayed in Lodi for two years and pastored at Lodi Christian Life Center. During my stay in Lodi God called me to start a radio ministry for which I had no training. To my surprise I found out that there was a local Christian radio station in Lodi and God miraculously supplied us with \$10,000 which was enough to purchase recording equipment and pay for one year on the radio station. Over the years I moved to other more powerful stations and the radio ministry lasted for more than 30 years.



In 1976 God moved very powerfully in my life and told me to go north to Sacramento. From a Bible study initiated by the radio programs, Christian Life Ministries was formed and we rented space in a warehouse in the suburb of Carmichael. I was the pastor for this church for the next eight years and the congregation grew to some 300 members at its peak. During these eight years we made trips to Sweden and Finland almost every summer and had great meetings in tents and church buildings. Christian Dynamics was born and God had told me to establish our own printing ministry and that we were not going to outsource it. The Lord told me that our writings would not be accepted in the future, and unless we had our own print shop, this part of the ministry would come to an end. Courses 1,2,3,4 and the book, "The Rise of the Antichrist," were written and printed by the thousands, including a translation of Course 1 into Swedish. Our income during these early years came first from the church and the rest from radio listeners. The leadership in the church set the goal that radio listeners were to send in enough money that the station would pay for itself. This goal was met and the money that was left over was used in the church.

But the great ministry at Christian Life Ministries came to an end in 1984 when the church was attacked on three fronts. First, a man named Steve whom we trusted and had put over the young couples group decided to go his own way and took a number of people with him. No sooner was this over when the church was infiltrated by three female witches who spread a lot of fear and confusion. More people left as we tried to root out this problem. The final blow came when my assistant pastor and I found out that the wife of the chairman of the deacons was a homosexual and that she had secretly formed a "lesbian club" in the church with slumber parties for ladies.

My assistant pastor resigned from the church and went to seminary and I was left alone to handle this mess. Some of the elders and deacons did not believe what they were told. My wife and I took a week off and went up into the mountains to fast and pray. God told me the remaining people in the church were too far gone in their sins and that I was to resign. The church lasted six weeks after we left and then broke up. We were able to keep the radio ministry going with a remnant from the church that included the strongest of the leadership. Our printing equipment was spread out in several garages and we were able to continue producing *The Dove* magazine. A series of Bible studies were conducted in different cities and I didn't know what lay ahead of me.

Our main Bible study in Sacramento had grown to some 60 persons but I was too wounded to form another church. During a trip to Oklahoma in 1985, the Lord spoke to me in the airplane as we were coming back and told me He wanted me to start another church. I argued with Him that it was too painful to start another church. The call came over and over as I sat and looked out over Texas and I finally said to the Lord, "*If I am going to start another church, you will have to name it.*" In no time at all the answer came back "Resurrection Life of Jesus Church."

When I next met with the Bible study group, I left a paper on a table and told the people to sign it if they wanted to join me and become charter members of a new church. All the people signed and Resurrection Life of Jesus Church was born. At this time we were meeting in the home of Bob and Rita Jackson, but in a short time God led us to a wealthy Christian contractor

named Danny Benvenuti, and he helped us to develop facilities in a vacant shopping center building of Citrus Heights. The church took off like a grassfire and more and more people came to us. But the Devil was not going to leave us alone as a family joined us who had come from a United Pentecostal church. The woman from this family established herself as a "prophetess," and after some time, enticed my married assistant pastor to join her. It ended up with a church split and time to start over again.

Prayer and fasting moved the hand of God and again the church started to grow. Steve, the young man from Christian Life Ministries showed up and wanted to repent. I was warned not to take him back but I loved him and his wife and they rejoined the church. The church grew greatly and I thought to myself, "*Praise the Lord, troubles are over and now we are into victory.*" But Steve had not repented and two years later he took some 60 people with him and we faced yet another church split. Despite these attacks we continued with the radio programs, the printed material and the church. But we were never able to financially recover from this blow and on June 25, 1995, we held our last meeting at our beloved facility. God opened a new door and we moved into a 4,000 square foot space where we had church and the print shop.

Again the church was growing and it looked like this time, we were going to make it. We were praising God once we passed the 100 members mark but the Devil was not far behind. My assistant pastor was receiving a salary from the church and he had promised to close down his business and go full time as soon as we could pay him a descent salary. But when that happened and he refused to quit his business, people in the church were upset, and there was another split as he left and took some people with him. We had a large black group in our church of some 40 persons and they had come in as a group under a self-appointed minister. When the assistant pastor left, this man came to me and demanded to be named assistant pastor and that he would jointly run the church with me. When the church refused to accept his offer, he took all his people with him. The remnant that was left could not pay the rent of some \$4,000 per month, and in January of 2000, we negotiated and end to the lease and moved out. The church ended up in the house of Rita Jackson, who husband was now dead, and we were back were we started in 1985.

All these events were no surprise to God, and in the spring of 1999, He spoke to me and gave me a vision of building on our property where we have lived since 1990. By refinancing our home, we were able to raise \$100,000 and build a 4,000 square foot building. Thus, the production center was born and the printing of The Dove, preparing radio programs and now making cassettes of our services was done in the production center.

The ministry never stopped during all these troubles as radio programs, counseling, people coming to Christ, water baptism and a never ending stream of people seeking help from demons still continued. On April 29, 2001, we broke out again from Rita's home and rented a small portion of a building in the Antelope area. Maximum seating capacity in the sanctuary was 60. But all of us were happy and we had a church home once again.

Our stay at the Antelope facility lasted five years; then on February 26, 2006, we moved into our new facility because there was steady increase in people and it became clear that we needed a larger facility. We are now back in Carmichael, only four miles from the place we had started in

1976. We are currently renting 3,000 square feet of the upper part of a commercial building and we are happy. We have had no more church splits, the people love one another and we have been able to keep trouble makers out of our church.

It became clear that our radio ministry was over during our last year at Antelope. The radio stations had raised their rates year after year and the income from radio listeners did not keep up with the cost of airtime. It was with a heavy heart that I had to give up preaching on the radio. What I did not know was that God was moving me into a new outreach, the Internet. In 2008, God gave me a vision of a large revival that would be broadcast live via the Internet. In my mind I thought that the revival would come first and then the broadcasting but God moved upon me to start video recording the services in our church and I shared this vision with the congregation. God moved upon people during the next six months and some \$35,000 was raised so that we were able to purchase the necessary equipment and have it installed. We started our first live webcast of our morning worship in December of 2008.

TRANSITION

I now realize that we have moved from a radio/church ministry to a webcast/internet/church ministry. Our faithful radio listeners who have stayed with us are dwindling in numbers as some have died and others do not give any more. Some of them have lost their jobs and some are in nursing homes. It takes time to build a financial base and this is what is causing great trouble for us.

We had to build another building in 2003 to give us more office space since our outreach ministry was growing more and more every day. This was paid for by me and my wife and my brother and his wife. This second building gives us a further 1,500 square feet of space. In addition, we had to build a storage building in 2008 to house our different inventories. The electrical cost of running our production center exceeded \$2,500 per month, so we installed a solar panel system to reduce this financial burden and this is the reason we carry two mortgages on our property.

My wife and I realized many years ago that we are not going to take anything with us to heaven and we opened up our property for the production center, giving the ministry 3,500 square feet of space. For this we charge \$400 in rent per month plus \$150 to help with the electrical bills. From the production center we are servicing our Internet bookstore, all video and audio production, counseling via the telephone, and we have six persons working here during the week. Only one of them is paid, the rest donate their time.

Giving has decreased with the financial downturn. Even though our church membership has grown, it has not helped our finances since many of the newcomers do not have a job at this time. Our rent at the church building is \$3,000 per month; that translates to one dollar per square foot which is below the market value in Sacramento. Some 20 years ago I split my salary and gave 35% to my wife so that she would have Social Security because for many years she worked hard in the church with no salary. We are currently several months behind on our salary and the financial situation is very grave. The income is not there to cover rent, salaries and other ongoing costs for the ministry. We are falling behind every month and it is impossible to juggle

it much longer. We are seeing states, counties and cities having budget crises and laying off people and cutting back on services. We have no fat to trim; we are down to the barebones.

IS THERE A SOLUTION

Yes, there is and I want to take you back to the beginning of my letter. Prayer and fasting moves the hand of God. We have viewers today of our services in the United States and different nations. Some of these are new believers and they have not yet decided to back us financially. This letter is being sent out to all the people currently backing us and to all people on our mailing list who receive our newsletters. To those of you who are not regularly giving, it would greatly alleviate the situation if only fifty of you decided to send something every month. Some of you might be able to give a special one-time gift that would help us to pay off some of the debts we are carrying. Even greater would be if everyone on our mailing list began to pray and fast for us.

I am like King Jehoshaphat but this time the enemy from Satan is a financial drought. I cannot do anything more than what has been done. The enemy will take us out unless God's people rally to our side. I do not believe for a minute that God has brought us this far to abandon us. It is important to note that God uses people, but if God's people are not there, money will not come from the Devil and his crowd. I do not feel sorry for myself; I have been in combat for the Lord since I surrendered to preach in 1967 and I have seen many miracles from God, healings, salvations, deliverances and financial miracles. As I call for your help, I believe God for a miracle just like He did for Jehoshaphat. May God richly bless you and may we together rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,



Pastor John S. Torell

“Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation; And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, ***Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.*** Tomorrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. ***Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.*** And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high. And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. ***And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir,*** which were come against Judah; and they were smitten. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.” (2 Chronicles 20:14-24)