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UNFEIGNED FAITH

Walking with God

Part 3

By Rayola Kelley

As Christians, we must understand faith. There are many false presentations of faith. Last month I talked about the type of faith that simply believes what God has promised and the witness that it leaves, even if it must be declared from the grave. In fact, we are told that there is a great cloud of witness when it comes to faith (*Hebrews 12:1*). By following the examples of faith in other saints' lives we can see how it works.

Genuine faith is not just a matter of believing something. Granted, such belief possesses expectation. Expectation declares that since it believes a matter to be true, it expects what has been promised to come true. The challenge with faith is even though it expects a promise to be fulfilled a person may never see it occur in his or her lifetime. For example, both Abraham and King David never witnessed the fulfillment of the promise God gave them, but they continued to live in expectation that it would happen (*Hebrews 11:13*). They rested in complete assurance that it was already done because the Lord said so.

The expectation in faith brings us to the next aspect of true faith, and that is that it is active. Sadly, faith has been demoted to an intellectual acknowledgement, a method or a practice. However, faith is active regardless of what it sees or does not see. It ensures advancement, not a stalemate when it comes to our Christian life. In a sense, it is living as it discerns, interrelates, interacts, and responds with what is going on around an individual.

The Bible tells us that God counts or reckons acts originating from faith as being righteous. Keep in mind that Abraham's faith was ac-

tive. He was ready to offer up his son, Isaac, out of obedience to God. We are told that due to God's promise to Abraham regarding his son that he had the assurance that God would raise him from the dead (*Hebrews 11:17-19*). The Lord counted Abraham's act as righteousness. The problem with some believers is that they perceive that faith will in some miraculous or supernatural way carry them through challenging situations. This is a wrong perception of faith. Faith actually enables a person to walk through challenges with confidence that God is in the circumstances. We can see this in Abraham. He is the one who walked to the mount to offer his son.

Faith enables us to take steps of obedience towards what we know is true and right before the Lord. For this reason faith is active. It is always advancing a person in a matter. It does not sit back while clinging to wishful thinking that all will turn out well. It does not live in denial of what is going on; rather, it faces the reality of a matter in order to walk through it in the strength and power of God.

The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to walk by faith and not by sight (*2 Corinthians 5:7*). Sight in this case not only points to walking according to what we see, but what we also understand about a matter. Genuine faith does not walk according to events taking place in the physical world. Rather, it walks according to the character and righteous ways of an unseen God. It does not walk according to a worldly perception, but an inner knowing and witness of the Spirit of God that God is who He says He is. Because of who He is, God will never lie and He will always keep His promises. Regardless of what the world presents or declares that is contrary to God, He will ultimately prove to be faithful and powerful enough to bring about all that He has declared and promised.

Faith on our part is a matter of

showing good faith by believing that God will do as He says. Based on our assurance of His faithfulness, we walk according to what has been established and verified as being true. Such a response usually translates into obedience towards God and His Word. For this reason we are told that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (*Romans 10:17*).

As believers, we are to walk according to the Word of God. This means obeying and applying the instructions, commandments, examples, and exhortations to our way of living. Each time we apply the Word of God by faith, we will grow spiritually. Through the years I have been aware of the different stages of the faith walk. In the initial stage of my faith walk, it was as though the Lord took my hand until I learned to somewhat walk on my own as my spiritual legs gained the necessary strength to take steps of obedience to what I knew was right.

Due to my spiritual immaturity in those initial years, I did find myself taking various detours. Granted, I was running what I thought was the race, only to find out I was not even in the race. I had veered off course due to disobedience and unbelief, and ended up spent out and exhausted in what seemed to be one dead end after another.

Thanks to the faithfulness of the Lord, He got me back on track. The detours of my life taught me some valuable lessons about running the race. First, I had to be prepared. I had spent a lot of unnecessary energy on activities that proved to be vain and empty. After learning valuable lessons in relationship to my faith, I waited for instructions from my Master. I allowed Him to equip me to properly run the race before me, restrain me along the path when discipline



was required, compel me with inspiration when the terrain became challenging, and lead the way when darkness and uncertainty was upon me.

By considering my past walk, I can see how I could have avoided many detours if I had walked in belief towards what the Word of God stated about certain subjects or matters. The problem is I wanted life on my terms. Each time I insisted on my right to have it my way, it would end in disaster. It was not until I chose to believe the Bible that I found the means to make strides in my spiritual walk.

This brings each of us as believers to what it means to walk by faith. There are two men that give us incredible insight into the faith walk. They are Enoch and Noah. These two men understood how faith was to operate. Their faith walk actually put them in step with their God. We know this is true because it is recorded that they actually walked with God. Let us now consider their examples in order to understand what active faith entails and will ultimately produce.

When I study these men's lives, I realize that their faith brought them in step with God's will and purpose. Sadly, most Christians perceive faith as a means to arrive at some spiritual level of enlightenment, greatness, or accomplishment. However, genuine faith simply brings you into step with a great God. Such a walk points to communion. Saints who walk in communion or agreement with God develop an incredible familiarity with Him. Abraham reveals the level of familiarity when the Bible refers to him as a friend of God.

Jesus pointed to this same familiarity. He stated to His disciples on the night He was betrayed that He no longer wanted to call them servants, but friends. He stated that servants do not know the intimate matters of their Lord. He wanted intimacy with them so that He could make known to them the matters of heaven. However, such a relationship would hinge on them obeying His commands (*John 15:13-15*).

What did Enoch and Noah discover in their walk with the Lord? The first characteristic in regards to walking by faith is that it brought a clear distinction in their lives. It caused God to take note of Enoch and caused Noah to stand distinct in the midst of a wicked world. Clearly,

the faith walk identifies believers to the One who they must put their trust and confidence in.

For Enoch, this identification caused him to cease to be. We are told that he "was not" for God took him. His faith actually brought him to a place in God where he was translated to heaven without seeing physical death (*Genesis 4:22-24*). We are told that before his translation he had a testimony that he pleased God (*Hebrews 11:5*). We know we cannot please God without faith in Him (*Hebrews 11:6*). Was Enoch's walk with God so precious that the wicked world was not worthy to witness his life (*Hebrews 11:38*)? Once again, we are reminded that faith is an active walk that will bring us into step with God.

The book of Jude gives us some more insight into Enoch: "*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*" (*Jude 14-15*). Enoch saw into the future. Genuine faith is what gives God's people the vision to see into the world to come.

We can see how Abraham's faith produced the ability to see into the world to come. Abraham's faith would never allow him to settle for this present world. As a result, he developed a vision that allowed him to see beyond his age. Therefore, he was not caught up with seeing the promises fulfilled in light of the present world, but to see the essence of his real hope in relationship to the next. We are told: "*For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" (*Hebrews 11:10*).

Faith begins where personal understanding ceases. What most people do not understand about faith is that when it expresses itself through obedience, light penetrates the darkness in order to light up the path that His people must walk. The light not only allows His followers to see where they are walking, but sometimes it reveals what will happen in the future.

Some Christians are groping in the darkness of the world because of

unbelief towards the Word of God. I must state at this time that unbelief is expressed through failure to obey God's Word. Such darkness is not caused because understanding is eluding a person, but because a he or she is failing to do what is right. It is known as the sin of omission.

This brings us to Noah. Enoch pleased God by how he faithfully walked in regard to Him. However, when it came to Noah, He found grace in the midst of great wickedness. In other words, his life stood out in the darkness of wickedness and God was able to show him favor at a time when He was repenting that He had even created man. God was about to destroy mankind, but He considered Noah's life, and counted his faith as a point of righteousness.

The Apostle Paul tells us in *Romans 5:21* that grace reigns through righteousness. Because of Noah's faith, God's grace was able to flow down to him and through him. We are told that Noah's response to God's instruction concerning the impending judgment condemned the world and made him an heir of salvation.

What can we learn from Noah's example? We are given insight into the aspects of his faith as recorded by *Hebrews 11:7*. The first response of Noah's faith finds its origins in a right attitude. We are told that in fear he moved to do what he was instructed to do even though he did not understand the implications of the judgment coming upon the world. Most people do not respond to God because they want to understand how spiritual matters are going to fare for them. In reality, they do not dread facing Him in judgment. They are not concerned as to whether their attitudes or actions would bring a reproach to their testimony and to the kingdom of God.

Noah's next response was that he took action, and built an ark. In other words, he obeyed the voice of the Lord. There was no indication that he argued with the Lord or asked Him to explain His instructions. Noah simply believed what was being said and responded accordingly.

His actions served as a living witness to those who observed his activities of faith. Because of Noah's witness, he condemned the whole world.

THE LOFTY AND THE LOWLY

By Jeannette Haley

When I think of celebrating the birth of our Savior and Lord, so many things come to mind. I try to picture the awesomeness of the angel of the Lord coming upon the shepherds at night, and the glory of the Lord shining round about them. I can imagine how terrified they were at this unexpected sight as the angel told them, *"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger"* Matthew 2:10b,11. What an indescribable, electrifying sight it must have been as *"... suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."* (Verses 13, 14.)

There never has been, nor will there ever be, such a glorious announcement of the birth of a baby, for this was no ordinary baby, but God's gift of his Son. The "glory of the Lord" that "shone around about them" which made them "sore afraid" is in reference to the *Shekinah* glory of God. To quote Kevin Howard, (Zion's Fire, March-April 2010) "In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word "glory" (*kavod*) conveys the basic meaning of weight or heaviness....So in relation to God, God's glory is His weight. It is everything about Him which impresses His creatures, and gives Him influence and honor with them....Throughout history, one way God manifested His glory was in the form of fire. Eyewitnesses described this glory-fire as a column of both *fire* and *smoke*." He explains that the "*Shekinah* (dwelling) glory" indicated the *dwelling* of God's presence in their midst.

We can read of God's glory from Genesis to Revelation. A few examples are as follows: God manifested His glory to the nation of Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 13:20-22). Moses entered the *Shekinah* cloud where God revealed the Law to him (Exodus 24:16-18). The Lord went before Israel in the glory-fire (Exodus 13:21). The Lord came down in the glory-fire (Exodus 19:18; 34:5; Numbers 11:25;

12:5. See also Exodus 40 and 14; Deuteronomy 5:24; Psalm 99:7). The glory-fire covered the Tabernacle with a protective cloud of shade by day and an illuminating pillar of fire by night (Psalm 105:39; Numbers 9:15; 10:34). The *Shekinah* also was present in Leviticus 9:23-24; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3; Isaiah 6:4).

Howard explains, "The rabbis recognized that the *Shekinah* was deity and expressly bore God's name (Exodus 23:21)" and that the "*Shekinah* glory and the Messiah are inseparably linked." It is exciting to read his explanation of the star that the wise men from the east followed in search of the King of kings. Howard writes, "The wisemen also saw the *Shekinah* glory. The inspired text explains that they saw 'his star in the east' (Matthew 2:2). These were not astrologers who saw a natural star or an alignment of planets by which they mystically deduced the birth of the Messiah. They saw the *Shekinah* glory (His 'star') in their homeland in the east. This brightness led them west and disappeared before they met with Herod in Jerusalem. Afterward, the brightness reappeared and led them five miles south to Bethlehem where it stood over the exact house of the Messiah (Matthew 2:9-10). This was no natural star. God led the wisemen with His *Shekinah* glory just as He led the Israelites in the wilderness....The Hebrew prophets predicted the return of the *Shekinah* glory over Israel (Isaiah 60:1-3). The *Shekinah* glory would attract Gentiles to Israel, bringing gifts of gold and incense (Isaiah 60:6). The wisemen properly understood that the *Shekinah* glory signified the Messiah's coming, even as it will again at His return (Isaiah 66:18-19)."

Are you beginning to get a picture of the glory, power, and majesty of heaven that was manifested in the *Shekinah* surrounding the birth of Christ? It is so much greater than we could ever comprehend or imagine. And, yet, with all this indescribable glory, the King of kings entered this world in a lowly stable. Shouldn't a king, especially the King of kings, be born in a palace, surrounded by royalty, nobles, and dignitaries instead of poor shepherds who were occupied with tending their flocks? The key is Jesus was also the "*Lamb of God*,

which taketh away the sin of the world" John 1:29b. Thus, what better place for a lamb to be born than in a stable, where He was surrounded and adored by humble shepherds?

The Lord of glory came into the world wrapped in flesh and humility. His earthly mother and hard-working stepfather were ordinary citizens who went about their daily lives unnoticed and unknown by King Herod and his court. They were not influential in politics or government, yet God chose to entrust them with His only begotten Son. Even though Mary was of the legitimate lineage to produce the Messiah, if she had been arrogant, proud, and boastful, she would never have been chosen to bring forth the Christ child, for "*God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble"* James 4:6b. Mary herself said, "*My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever"* Luke 2:46-55.

From righteous Abel to Enoch, who walked with God, to Noah, a preacher of righteousness, to Abraham, the father of our faith, to Job, God's servant, to Joseph who went from slavery to power, and the humble Moses, whom God used to deliver Israel and through whom He gave the Law, every one of them was great because they were humble. Of the humble women of faith, there are too many to list in this short space. But, the point is, God works His will and His ways through the men and women who truly possess a humble and believing heart.

In contrast to the lowliness of the Christ child, King Herod was con-

sumed with pride, jealousy, and hatred. As with all lofty, evil, murdering kings, Herod “had his day” but it cost him his soul. Down through the ages, since the beginning of time, kings and rulers have come and gone. The identity of many has been lost to time, while others are well known. Whether they have been great and good, or tyrants and despots, all rulers are held in certain awe by the populations over which they rule and reign. History confirms that in their lofty position most ancient (and some not so ancient) kings and rulers were worshipped as divine beings, or gods.

Kings (or Presidents) who desire to be exalted and worshipped share the common ground of pride and arrogance. Like their father the devil, their goal is to rule over others with an iron fist of cruel control that breaks all resistance. While the heart of such a dictator may be hard and cold, never underestimate his or her ability to con and charm. Hitler was a “charmer” in his early days. Undoubtedly, this is the ploy used by the wicked King Herod upon his visitors from the east who came to him inquiring about the King of the Jews. We read in *Matthew 2:7, 8*, “Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.”

Fast forward to 2010 in America. It is no secret that Obama lusts after such adoration and exaltation for himself. The problem is there are still people on this earth who firmly believe in, know, and serve only the one true God, Creator of heaven and earth. These are they who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and who are looking for the return of their King, Jesus Christ. Sealed by the Holy Spirit, these people know their God. They are the salt of the earth and the light of the world wherever they are to be found—the meek, who shall inherit the earth.

Consider this: Never before in the history of America has a President, and first lady, lavished as much “pomp and circumstance” upon themselves as has Obama and Michelle.

Living like an arrogant king and his equally haughty queen, the Obama’s regularly throw parties that could rival that of any royal court. The entire world has been taken aback by the entourage that travels with Obama on his overseas visits, while struggling Americans are outraged by the over-the-top wasteful spending for their many outlandish vacations. Considering the devastating economic situation of not only America, but the rest of the world, their insatiable appetite for the best the world has to offer is becoming a stench to people who live in the real world. It’s all rather reminiscent of the French King Louis XVI and his wife, Marie-Antoinette (although it is said that she was falsely accused of being a spendthrift). Her counterpart in the White House, however, is verifiably such.

As is the custom, as this year draws to a close, many are about to set aside a special time to celebrate the birth of Christ. And as we look back at that miraculous event 2,000 years ago, may we also look forward to the fulfillment of this promise, “*And then [‘immediately after the tribulation’] shall appear the sign [Shekinah] of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*” [*Shekinah*] *Matthew 24:29a, 30*. “*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, [Shekinah] and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory [Shekinah]...*” *Matthew 25:31*. Just as the heavens opened up to reveal the heavenly host, and the *Shekinah* of God to the shepherds, so shall the coming of the Lord be.

Who are we going to believe, adore, worship, and follow—world leaders or Christ the King? As it was in the days of the birth of Christ, so it is today. We all have a choice as to which “king” we will serve. Are you prepared to meet Him at His coming, or do you only think of him in a sentimental way as the sweet baby in the manger?

The truth is there have always been “two kings” to choose from that we will worship, honor, and obey. One will be lofty, and the other lowly. We have a choice between Jesus, or the

“god of this world” who works through prideful, ungodly rulers and tyrants. There were two kings in David’s day—the prideful king Saul who was chosen by the people, and the humble David who was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel as king. The Herod’s ruled in Judea when Jesus lived. And, today, there are those in power who desire to be worshipped and adored. However, the real test will soon be on the scene. The anti-christ will be manifested and demand the worship of the entire world.

Will you choose the true King of kings, and remain faithful to Him? Jesus warned, “*Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory [Shekinah] of his Father with the holy angels*” *Mark 8:38*.

Let us draw near to Him in humility and adoration, for He shall keep His promises to be with us “*even unto the end of the world.*” Those who belong to Him can indeed look up, “*for [our] redemption draweth nigh*” knowing that, “*when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*” *1 John 3:2b*. Hallelujah! †

SECOND COMING

“Oh, foolish people! They do not understand what has been proved again and again, that two manifestations of His arrival are prophesied: in the one He suffers, is robbed of glory and honour, and is crucified as was prophesied; in the other He will appear in glory from Heaven.” —Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*

“For all things for the most part, are twofold in our Lord Jesus Christ: a twofold generation; one, of God, before the ages; and one of a Virgin, at the close of the ages: His coming twofold; one, the unobserved, like rain on a fleece; and a second His open coming, which is to be. In His former advent, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger; in His second, He covereth Himself with light as with a garment. In His first coming, He endured the Cross, despising shame; in His second, He comes attended by a host of angels, receiving glory.” —Cyril of Jerusalem, *Lecture*

God always has a witness that will bring some type of clarity or warning. Except for Noah’s family, the people did not take heed and perished in their sins.

The final aspect of faith is that Noah became an heir of righteousness. In essence, he was counted righteous by God. God showed him favor and today he is part of the great cloud of witnesses. We can study the life he had with God and the way he responded to his Lord because he was a man of faith. He believed upon God’s Words, believed Him concerning future judgment, and believed in Him that He would do all things according to His character and will. He moved in respect towards God, and with assurance obeyed Him, and with confidence knew he would receive the fullness of his heavenly inheritance.

As we face the darkness of this world, we need to be walking in step with God. We need to hear His voice in order to prepare ourselves to enter the ark He has prepared for us. We need to recognize that future judgment is pending. The truth is Christians will not make it through the darkness of this present age without faith. They will never please God, and He will not be able to count any of their religious acts as being righteous. †

RAYOLA’S Q & A CORNER

OTHER GOSPELS?

Q: *I have been taught that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. Lately, I have had people encourage me to read other so-called “gospels” that would add to my spiritual enlightenment and walk. What is your understanding of such matters?*

A: As many readers know, I was saved out of a cult. The cult I belonged to downplayed the validity of the Word of God while exalting other religious books and materials as containing greater truths, revelations, or insights. Needless to say, these materials superseded the authority of the Bible, nullifying its claims and credibility.

When I became a Christian, I

had to come to terms as to what kind of attitude and understanding I needed to develop towards the Word of God. It was at that time I reasoned that I either had to accept the Bible as God’s complete revelation or reject it as a complete lie.

In the initial stages of my Christian life, I was given Scriptures that validated the author and validity of the Bible such as *Matthew 5:17-18; 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 1:23-25; and 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

As I weighed this matter, I realized I could only consider the infallibility of the Bible in light of God. If God was and is who the Bible says He is, He is powerful and capable of maintaining the intent and consistency of the purity of His Word, regardless of man’s attempts to constantly meddle in it to adjust it to his way of thinking. In fact, to preserve the purity of His Word is a promise. It was from this premise that I had to make another conclusion. If the Bible is not true, neither is God. If the Bible is a lie, then the God of it is an imposter as well and the faith of many will prove to be vain and useless (*1 Corinthians 15:14-19*).

It was obvious that I could not disbelieve the Bible and claim that God existed. It was clear that the Bible confirmed the existence of God and that the very attributes of God validated the authority of the Bible. It was from this understanding that I had to choose to believe that everything I needed to know and must know is contained within the pages of this incredible book. In other words, it is complete as to the truth I must receive, the revelation I must embrace, and the promises of life that are available to those who believe. As I chose to believe by faith that the Bible was true, I could also believe that what it said about God was true as well (*Romans 10:17*). In fact, I was banking my eternal well-being on such conclusions.

When people express the concept that God’s Word is not complete, absolute, and applicable for today, they are in danger of undermining the only source that could ensure their eternal destiny. It is clear that such individuals do not realize that they are walking in unbelief towards God and His Word, and they do not know the history of how the Bible was brought about. For instance, the first and foremost respon-

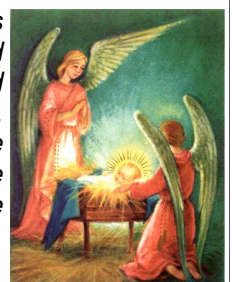
sibility of the leaders of the New Church was to ensure the validity of what we now know as the New Testament.

These misguided individuals are also doing away with the only immovable center in which they can test whether a matter is truth or a falsehood. When you consider the warnings of the curses, wrath, and damnation that are associated with those who mishandle, twist, or pervert God’s Word in any way, you will realize it is a fearful and foolish thing to downplay, negate, misuse, and disregard it (*Matthew 15:3-14; Romans 1:18; Galatians 1:7-9; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 3:16*)

We also have Scriptures that warn people not to add to what God has already established as truth or take away from the intent of it. To add or take away from something is to pervert it. We see in *Deuteronomy 4:2* that individuals are not to add to His word. God’s word is final! *Deuteronomy 12:32* warns not to add to His commandments. God’s Law was complete! *Proverbs 30:6* states that if anyone adds to his words he will be found to be a liar. God’s Word is not only absolute truth but it is eternal and will never change! In *Revelation 22:18-19* it warns that if anyone adds to, or takes away from, the words of the book of this prophecy, God will add unto him the plagues written in the Book and will take away his part from the book of life that will identify them to their future home and inheritance.

It is dangerous to pervert God’s Word, Law, truths, prophecies, or revelations. If you find people who declare that the Bible is God’s Word, but then begin to offer some other enlightenment or question fundamental beliefs of Christianity, be prepared to either rebuke or flee. Such an individual is considered a heretic. *Titus 3:10-11* instructs us to admonish or warn such an individual twice, but if he or she refuses to be instructed according to God’s Word, you need to reject him or her. †

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
— *John 1:14*



COMMENTS FROM READERS

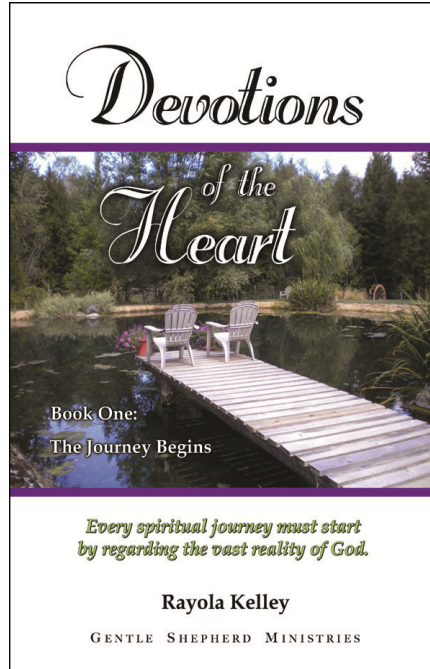
"You know, most people in the church world don't even keep in touch with what's going on in the world. They go for the PARTY AT CHURCH...The FEEL GOODS...It's sad...And the rest of most of the world think things are getting better because the BIG CHEESE IS IN THERE. And then there is the REMNANT...At least that's the way I see it..." - OH

"In regards to the newsletter, [November] what stuck with me is Eve's unfeigned faith, that is believing in expectation and Abel's unfeigned faith that prompted him to act in righteousness. God will do what He says. It is already done. If you think you are wise you are a fool. God's perspective is not my perspective, which is perverted. He does not think along the lines which I do. To Him, the least shall be first and the first shall be last. The world does not revolve around me. You are what you are when no one is watching. God sees all...He is always with me and sees everything I do or fail to do. What also stood out to me in the was purity of faith. I must re-examine my exalted opinion of myself in light of His Word. Psalm 34:18 & Psalm 51:17. What is there about me that would cause Jesus to call me to follow Him and be His disciple? Unfeigned faith is based on what is true and everlasting. Simply believe and expect.—ID

"Doctrine is man's responsibility towards a matter, but everything associated with the character and work of God is a truth.' [Quote from Rayola]. THIS is SO RICH! Salvation is an ACTION word, not something we sit on our laurels to brag about! My continual prayer is that people will UNDERSTAND the true meaning of repentance and not just go for worldly sorrow!" - FL

"I went to a Calvary Church on Wednesday evening, the men in one room and the women in another. Either legalism or Islamic, or something. How sad. I asked one of the women, what was up with the dividing? She said men and women view the scripture differently. The teaching was the book of James. What a sad state of affairs." - WA

DEVOTIONS OF THE HEART



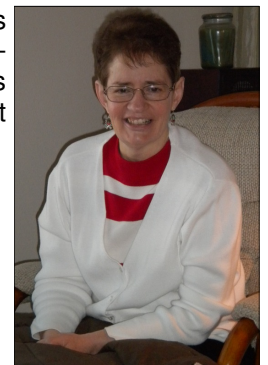
We are pleased to announce that *Devotions of the Heart, Book One: The Journey Begins* by Rayola Kelley is now in print, and available just in time for Christmas!

"The Daily Devotionals are packed with much-neglected truths that will strike a chord in the heart of those who have ears to hear. I'm personally acquainted with all of the team members, and can verify that they have put their life on the line for the sake of the gospel, and walk out the life of a believer on a daily basis. There is no fear on their part to address the 'hard issues' and disciple others according to only the Word of the Lord." — Anna Schwery
Yad b'Yad Ministries
Yadbyad.messengers-of-messiah.org

"Rayola's daily devotional readings have been a real blessing to me. Each one offers hope by focusing on life from an eternal perspective. Each offers a jewel of wisdom that can be applied to the reader's life and provides much food for thought and application. Her straightforward approach and sharing of her own experiences and vulnerabilities makes them even more real. She writes from what she herself has learned in the crucible of life and her message is sprinkled with wisdom and humility. I highly recommend this book for anyone who is serious about moving forward and deeper in their relationship with the Lord. Whether a new Christian or a seasoned one, this book will help them to clarify what is most important in their spiritual journey and draw them closer to the Lord. These devotions have real nutrition, to feed the spirit and soul. They are not fluff, but contain real meat to enable readers to grow in their spiritual walk." — Jo Reaves, Researcher and Editor

"The daily devotional has impacted my heart with faithful service to what is true, upright, and at all times seeking to glorify God. In addition, the devotional has blessed my heart with a sincere call to come higher in Christ Jesus and to know Him as my friend. It has enlarged my vision to wholeheartedly seek and work to obtain the life hidden in Christ Jesus. Lastly, the daily devotional has encouraged me to trust Jesus and open my heart to receive His healing. The word that comes to mind is "refreshing". No matter what your circumstances or where you are at in your walk with God, this devotional provides a refreshing sense of Jesus Christ and the liberating life He has for everyone." — Carrie Seaney, Educator

*Rayola Kelley, Author, Minister,
Spiritual Counselor, Evangelist,
Bible Teacher*



AVAILABLE FROM KETCH PUBLISHING for \$19.95

<http://www.ketchpublishing.com/Devotions%20of%20the%20Heart.htm>