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STAND STRONG AGAINST DISCOURAGEMENT

Dear Friends,

One of the greatest battles a Christian will fight is against discouragement. In both the Old and New Testaments we read about precious saints who committed their lives to the Lord, yet faced times when they wondered if they were making an impact for God as they desired.

This same battle faces Christians today. Both lay people and those in ministry will face the temptation to give in to discouragement, feeling as though they're running the race set before them but making no progress whatsoever. Evangelists wonder if pastors will want them to come and preach. Pastors wonder why their church isn't growing any faster. Faithful church members sit in their seats wondering if God is going to use them for His Kingdom. For some, these seasons of despair can last a long time. It is one of the reasons many quit the ministry and go back into secular employment.

But I want you to know that God has never called anyone to a place of failure. You see, success in the eyes of God is when a person obeys His will. In 1 Corinthians chapter twelve, the Apostle Paul compared the Body of Christ to the human body. The human body has many parts, but not all of them seem to play a vital role in the body's function.

I clearly remember when the medical profession believed the human appendix was of no real value to our health. If surgery was performed on another internal organ, it was common for the doctor to automatically removed the appendix as well. I believed what the medical profession was telling people about the "needless appendix" until I realized that if God designed the appendix and put it in us, then it has to have an important function. Well, take a look at what the medical profession has discovered:

"For years, the appendix was credited with very little physiological function. We now know, however, that the appendix serves an important role in the fetus and in young adults. Endocrine cells appear in the appendix of the human fetus at around the 11th week of development. These endocrine cells of the fetal appendix have been shown to produce various biogenic amines and peptide hormones, compounds that assist with various biological control (homeostatic) mechanisms. There had been little prior evidence of this or any other role of the appendix in animal research, because the appendix does not exist in domestic mammals.

"Among adult humans, the appendix is now thought to be involved primarily in immune functions. Lymphoid tissue begins to accumulate in the appendix shortly after birth and reaches a peak between the second and third decades of life, decreasing rapidly thereafter and practically disappearing after the age of 60. During the early years of development, however, the appendix has

been shown to function as a lymphoid organ, assisting with the maturation of B lymphocytes (one variety of white blood cell) and in the production of the class of antibodies known as immunoglobulin A (IgA) antibodies. Researchers have also shown that the appendix is involved in the production of molecules that help to direct the movement of lymphocytes to various other locations in the body.

"In this context, the function of the appendix appears to be to expose white blood cells to the wide variety of antigens, or foreign substances, present in the gastrointestinal tract. Thus, the appendix probably helps to suppress potentially destructive humoral (blood- and lymph-borne) antibody responses while promoting local immunity." [Loren G. Martin, professor of physiology at Oklahoma State University,

[http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=what-is-the-function-of-t\]](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=what-is-the-function-of-t)

Just like there is no inconsequential organ in the human body, there are no Christians of inconsequential value in the Body of Christ. Our value was revealed at the cross as Jesus died for every human. Those who have accepted Jesus as Savior are citizens of God's Kingdom and members of His family. We all have a unique and divine purpose.

Traveling ministers can begin to feel despondent if they are never asked to minister in large churches or conferences held in arenas that seat thousands. But God needs preachers who are willing to go into the small churches, the newly established churches and the churches which are located in sparsely populated rural areas; the members of those churches mean as much to God as the members of churches running hundreds and thousands. If God wants a traveling minister to go to a church that cannot cover his expenses or guarantee a huge offering he should go. The key is being obedient to what He tells you to do. After all, God has promised to meet our needs, not the extravagant budgets developed by man.

Along this same line, there are pastors of small churches who battle despair because their church isn't growing as they think it should. They can begin to see themselves as failures, especially if they begin comparing their church to other churches. I remember one time in prayer the Holy Spirit warned me against measuring the success of our church against what I see happening in other churches. He said, "Comparing your church to other churches can lead to a gross sense of false security and exaltation. Compare your church to God's standards for a church as recorded in the New Testament."

You see, a pastor can begin to think that if he can get his church to grow to hundreds or thousands, he will finally attain to a true level of ministry success. But that is so misleading. Ministry success is measured by a pastor obeying what God says, not by how many people attend, how large the budget or how many books he has on the market. Many years ago God told me, "I didn't call you to build a church. I called you to build people, My Kingdom, and to teach those who will listen."

The truth that many pastors may not want to accept is this: Not all churches are going to grow to the point of running hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands. This doesn't mean a pastor should throw up his hands and quit. What it means is that a pastor is to focus on doing what God wants him to do as the shepherd of one of God's sheepfolds. A

person should never agree to pastor a church without God's approval. Likewise, a pastor should never leave a church without God's approval.

Not long ago I was praying about the church I pastor. If someone who has never been here walked in on a Sunday and counted the number of people currently attending, he may think, "Gee, there must not be much happening at this church." But God told me that our congregation is much larger than I realize.

For one thing, during prayer He said He is trying to get more people locally to attend our church, but they aren't obeying Him. I have seen this happen right before my eyes, for there are people who have actually shared with me that God clearly told them in no uncertain terms they are to attend our church. Yet, I'm still waiting to see them here.

But He further explained that because we broadcast all our services live from our web site, and then archive the broadcasted services for future viewing, there are many, many people who are "members" of our church even though I have never directly communicated with them. They have tried so hard to find a church where they live that stays true to the doctrine God established in His word, but their efforts have been fruitless. Therefore, they faithfully "attend" our church by logging on and watching our services. Due to time zone differences, some have to watch the services after they are archived, but they are very much a part of our church family.

I know this is true because of the number of computers which log on to our web site. I say computers because we don't know how many people are gathered at each computer to watch services. I have been told by some that they connect their computer to a large-screen television so they and anyone else who comes by can watch. We also have people living in countries with poor internet connections who receive DVD's of our services. Then they, friends and family, gather in living rooms to have church services.

Those of you reading this letter are vitally important to what God is doing through our ministry. Though I am the pastor of Grace Christian Center, you are all a valuable part of this local "body." The offerings you send in - no matter what the amount - are helping so much to reach people globally with God's word. Even more so, your prayers are a continual source of strength and support. It is impossible for me to adequately express the depth of my gratitude to each of you.

Let me share with you some of what has happened just in the past year:

- A Muslim in Pakistan found our web site, began listening to the sermons, and accepted Jesus as Savior. He then shared what he learned with his wife and she, too, accepted Jesus. They are now going into Hindu villages to share the gospel. Their goal is to begin having regular church services in a local building.
- A pastor from Kenya attended our Prayer and Power Conference back in April. He returned home and began sharing the life-changing messages he had heard with other pastors and the people in his church. He also met with a pastor from Uganda and testified about the teaching and powerful services at the conference. The result is that about twenty pastors from Kenya and Uganda are hoping to attend our 2013 Prayer and Power Conference.

- During our Prayer and Power Conference back in April, Pastor Dave Roberson, Gary Carpenter and I were able to minister in the London Correctional Institute near Springfield, Ohio. During the service there were many inmates who accepted Jesus as Savior, along with several healings. But there was one inmate who cried so hard his body was shaking. You see, ten years ago his life was changed after reading Pastor Dave's book, "The Walk of the Spirit; The Walk of Power." He had prayed and asked God for the chance to meet Pastor Dave, but had resigned himself to that never happening because of his long prison sentence. Then, when he walked into the chapel service that day, there was Pastor Dave. That man was overwhelmed with the thought that God had not forgotten him and had answered his prayer in such a miraculous way.
- A man living in China heard about our ministry and had actually obtained several of my sermons. He had a tremendous desire to speak with me because of the impact the sermons had made on his life. Through emails, we arranged to speak via Skype, a free internet video chat service. During our conversation I was able to pray with him and he was gloriously filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues.
- Churches in nations on the African Continent emailed to let me know they are showing services from our web site on a screen for their church services. According to their reports, people are getting saved and filled with the Holy Spirit.

These are but a few of the many testimonies we have received from both here in the United States and other nations. The world would look at us and define what it sees as a small church with very little outreach. But the truth is, we are making an impact for the Kingdom of God that defies common logic...*and you are a critical part of the body that is making this impact!* God has brought us together for such a time as this and together, we are tearing down strongholds of the enemy and proclaiming the gospel to the world! Make no mistake about it, **YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO GOD!** Thank you, thank you, thank you!

May 2013 be the greatest year of growth in the Lord you have ever known!

Jim

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***** SPRING PRAYER AND POWER CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT *****

Our 2013 Spring Prayer and Power Conference will be Sunday, April 21 through Friday, April 26. Sunday services will be 10:30 AM & 6:00 PM; Monday through Friday services, 10:00 AM & 7:00 PM (special pre-service worship 45 minutes before every service). Pastor Dave Roberson, Gary Carpenter and Janet Inman will again be ministering. We have made special arrangements at the following two hotels:

COUNTRY INN AND SUITES

3971 Colonel Glenn Highway, Fairborn, OH, 45324

Direct line: (937) 429-2222 www.countryinns.com/fairbornoh

Special conference rate - \$89 per night

10 minutes from church * all rooms are non-smoking * exercise room * indoor pool * free WiFi * hot breakfast every day * hot dinner Wednesday evening * microwave, refrigerator

and coffee maker in each room * discounts available to area restaurants * very close to many restaurants, stores and a mall.

(Note: regular internet advertised rate is \$111.86 with an early booking discount rate of \$95.08; our conference rate will save you a minimum of \$6 per night)

We have blocked off 20 rooms from Saturday night through Friday night. (Including five Kings Suites with a small living room, sofa that pulls out into a queen bed and a separate bedroom with a king bed and another TV. King Suites are \$99 per night, normally up to \$131). Reservations need to be made no later than March 20, 2013.

RAMADA LIMITED

2540 University Drive, Fairborn, OH 45324

Direct line: (937) 490-2000

Special conference rate - \$79.99 per night

10 minutes from church * mostly non-smoking (only 4 smoking rooms in the hotel, located on the 3rd floor) * exercise room * indoor pool * free WiFi * very close to many restaurants, stores and a mall * breakfast every day * NOTE: As of October 22, there were only 18 rooms left for Saturday, April 20; many more available starting Sunday, April 21.

A list of additional hotels is posted at our web site, www.jmmgrace.com. Several events are taking place in Dayton during April. Hotel rooms will not be as plentiful during that time. The sooner you book your room, the better, even if you need to cancel later.

SPECIAL NOTE TO OUR INTERNATIONAL GUESTS It is extremely important that you begin now finding out the passport and visa requirements for travel from your country to the United States. Do not put this off as it can sometimes take months to obtain a visa. If you have any questions or need a letter of invitation please let us know by sending an email to jmmgmi@gmail.com.

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_____ Please send me a CD of the special, prophetic sermon about the recent elections, "Making It Through What's Next."

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My love gift for this month is: \$ _____
Make checks or money orders payable to "Jim Martin Ministries."

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