



Spirit of Grace Herald

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Spirit of Grace Ministries

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Overcoming Disappointment

When I was very, very young in Christ, at the tender age of 19, I was, as most new believers are, in a very fragile state. I didn't know much about God or the Bible, and to make matters worse, I was not involved in any kind of meaningful Christian fellowship.

In those days I had no girlfriend, but I wanted one. In fact, I wanted a girlfriend who would someday become my wife. I noticed a girl in a psychology course I was taking. She was pretty, with jet black hair, and seemed to have a charismatic personality. I was quickly smitten, and began plotting how I might get to know her and ask her for a date. But she didn't sit near me, and it was difficult to figure out a way for us to get to know each other. Being a new believer, I did what believers do when experiencing a strong desire – I started praying.

Finally, I decided to ask God for a sign to demonstrate His will in this matter. I had

a class which required me to make a long walk to get from class to my dorm, and I asked God that if this girl was the right girl for me, He would cause me to see her on a particular day as I made that walk. I rarely, if ever, saw her when I was walking about campus, so I figured that if I saw her on this particular day, it would be a sure sign that God was approving her as my girlfriend / eventual wife. As I walked back from class that day, I kept my eyes open, and sure enough, there she was walking the other way. She didn't seem to notice me, but I sure noticed her, and my heart leaped for joy. God had answered my prayers and seeing her was positive proof that we were meant for each other.

When we had a class project which involved laboratory research, I boldly asked her if she would meet with me after class and complete a questionnaire in connection with this project. She agreed, and at the end of my questions, I asked her the burning question which was really on my mind: would she go out on a date with me? Even though I felt that God had definitively told me she was the one for me, it was still scary, but my emotions went from fear to depression when she turned me down flat. She made it clear that she had no interest in going out with me.



And so I went back to my dorm room miserable and feeling my world had come to an end. I had a two-fold source of misery. First, I had lost the woman of my dreams before I ever gained her, and second, it felt like God had let me down. Being rejected romantically is not that big of a deal, especially in your youth. Most of us have had that happen. But being let down by God *was* a big deal, especially to me in those early days of my walk with Jesus. I even began to wonder, "Is this whole God thing just my imagination? Have I been deceiving myself?" Briefly I contemplated forgetting it all, giving up on the Bible and prayer, and God and Christ, and going back to my former ways and agnostic beliefs.

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But as I thought about it, I realized that I could never do this. Although I had only know the Lord a few months, spending time with God in His word, feeling the warm and loving presence of the Holy Spirit, reading the beautiful stories of Jesus in the four gospels, having the assurance that I was loved by God and possessed the gift of eternal life... All of this was much too sweet and precious to me to give it up for a young lady who had never belonged to me in the first place. Perhaps creating a sign for God to fulfill and then banking all my hopes and dreams on it when that sign appeared to come to pass, well, maybe that wasn't the best way to discover the will of God.

This experience was in 1973, over fifty-one years ago. And I am so, so glad I didn't allow that disappointment to turn me away from my Savior, Jesus Christ. I have been walking with Him in all those years since then. And you know what? That wasn't the only disappointment I have experienced and that wasn't the only time I misinterpreted the will of God for my life. But whatever the disappointments, whatever the pains and struggles, there is no way I could ever turn back. The LORD and I have had too many wonderful experiences together. I have tasted and I have seen that the LORD is good, and I know full well that blessed is the man or the woman or the youth or the child who trusts in Him.

A Blessed African Mission Last Month!

We have had outstanding reports of our latest African mission in Kitale, Kenya. Last year we launched a new mission outreach centered around a "Jesus Conference." This was a video presentation, featuring Benedicta and me teaching about Jesus: Who He is, what He taught, and the paramount importance of abiding in Him and including Him in every sermon and teaching. The conference consisted of 4 days with 5 videos being shown each day. We provided meals and snacks in between the videos, and also organized discussions and testimonies. This format turned out to be a great hit, and was loved by the pastors, evangelists, and teachers, for whom it was targeted.

One particular message has proven so popular, especially among the evangelists, that they have begged that it be replayed at the end of the day, sometimes for several days straight. I created a video teaching called "The Components of Evangelism," and the African evangelists just cannot get enough of it. In this video I share the fundamental components that must be included in every evangelistic presentation, and even though it seems pretty basic and simple, many of these men and women find it compelling and want to hear it again. In our last conference in Kitale, some of the attendees from one church went out to evangelize after the meeting was over. They were determined to put some of these insights into practice and were so effective that on Sunday at their church ten new people came to the service as a result. **Many said that nobody had ever trained them in these important aspects of winning souls to Christ.**



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