



January 15, 2010

Dear Friends:

BELIEVE IT

I walked in the house and found Linda engaged in a phone conversation. She gave me a quick smile and greeting wave but she was really focused on the business at hand. As I started to work on something else in the next room, I could hear disjointed bits and pieces of the conversation and I soon realized that the person on the other end was in great need. The discouragement and despair was real as our friend poured her heart out to Linda.



After periodic silences, Linda would respond with loving, practical thoughts but before long, things moved to a different level when I heard a big gear change in her voice. She began to speak faith and direction into our down hearted friend, here is the gist, "I want to speak faith to you. You will come out victorious. I want you to know that God is faithful in all things. (Name), the real key is in the Word, the real key is in your Worship...get into it. Your priority, while doing the natural things you know to do, is to earnestly seek God's face like never before for His will and His wisdom in this thing".

Listening to her talk, I smiled to myself and mumbled, "She really believes this, doesn't she." She really does. Here is what I know about her, she doesn't believe it out of tradition or superstition, she believes it because she has actually had to walk out and live out the advice she was wielding.

Jesus said, "The Words I give are Spirit and Life" and in the good times and the bad, we've decided to walk this truth. It has proven to be the nurture and nourishment to keep us alive. Literally.

Yeah, we actually believe it, even when the roar comes after us.

Just a few weeks ago, I had another similar response regarding our beliefs in the face of our challenges.

For over ten years, I have been blessed to participate in TBN's Praise and Worship Program, "Unfolding Majesty", that is seen around the world. Not long ago, a man from Singapore walked up to me, smiled and said, "I see you sing on TV!"

My friends Dean and Mary Brown have the tough job of leading, coaching and "herding" as a bunch of Gospel Singers and Worship Leaders spend three days together rehearsing and taping the programs.

Although quite hard working in nature, but with a collection of characters, the tapings are fun times that always turn into gratifying, special moments as we sing our Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs. In the process of the work and laughter, we are always cognizant of the fact that we are sending ministry, encouragement and anointing to those who will watch and be ministered to. That ministry motive is the priority. And according to the mail, thousands are being touched as God inhabits the praises as our voices go through the Heavens to declare the Glory of God.

One day after a lunch break, we were all back on the set, waiting for the red light and the sound of the theme music but we were delayed. While waiting, I found myself looking at some of the people seated around me. All was well;

they were smiling, freshly scrubbed, ready to rip when the cue came. But things are not always as they seem. Truth is, I know some of those people and I know a few things that the folks in TV Land are not privy to.

We love to laugh and sing but things can change on a dime when a tough phone call comes. Seated real close, with an infectious smile and masterful music gift, was a gracious lady who, just moments before, had received a difficult phone call regarding a diagnosis of her precious 13 year old granddaughter. Immediately, we all stopped and focused our intercessions, lifted her name to Heaven and began to speak faith and deliverance. Not long after, the tape started rolling and during the program, I would see her praising and plying her ministry gift with joy and confident anointing. I thought to myself, the viewers may not know about the load she was carrying but I know that Holy God was lovingly mindful of the "Praiser". She keenly knew, this was the path to deliverance.

She wasn't the only one.

Many of the other singing folks had walked in deep pain, disappointment, tragedy and loss but their songs continued. Some who were fervently singing, "Fill This Place with Praise", "Mercy There Was Great and Grace Was Free" and "Rise and Be Healed" had faced financial setbacks, addictions and tough ministry disappointments. Others had lost spouses and children, yet they joyfully sang because they held to those truths that had preserved them and saved their lives.

Some of my other singing mates had been in the vicious battle trenches combating cancer and other sickness attacks. But on this day, they stood healthy and well as vivid testimonies of God's faithfulness. But pretend I didn't tell you any of this.

The playback, on a few million television screens, will show some joyful people who are enjoying their praise experience. The smiles aren't fake; they are quite genuine because many of them have had to walk these songs. And although they may still face some rough times, they know that His Word had sustained them in floods, emotional storms, loss or lying on a cold doctors table. Just like Linda's counseling words that were based on her own experiences, they actually believe it! That's why we sing...we really believe it.

A few minutes into the show, as the track came through the speakers, I began to sing Bill and Gloria's lyrics, "I believe that the Christ, who was slain on the cross, has the power to change lives today . . . I believe in a Hill called Mt Calvary". I remember thinking to myself, "Yeah, I believe it".

I'll keep saying it, God is faithful. Lift your voice and watch what happens!

I really believe it.

Michael

The
LifeGate
