



Words of Blessing

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Junior High Weekly Words Pentecost Week 23: October 28, 2007

Living the Word

Acts 1:1-8 Dear Theophilus: In my first book I wrote about all the things that Jesus did and taught from the time he began his work until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before he was taken up, he gave instructions by the power of the Holy Spirit to the men he had chosen as his apostles. For forty days after his death he appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive. They saw him, and he talked with them about the Kingdom of God. And when they came together, he gave them this order: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift I told you about, the gift my Father promised. John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

The Journey and the Call

My apostles continue to show the world what the Christian journey is all about. You can read stories in scripture to understand the power of my call to the disciples and their mission in the world. Today that call is to you. And your journey—like the journeys of Paul, Priscilla, Barnabas, and Lydia—is real and important today.

My call to you is now. Your mission is now. Are you ready to go out? Your call, like Paul’s, is to bring people into the light of my love and to share my words and reality. You will free people from the power of Satan and evil in the world, and you will tell people that they are forgiven through my death and resurrection. Then you will bring them into the church.

I ask you to accept your call and mission now. Your mission will take you into the entire world, yes, the entire world. Be determined. Take a companion if you can, but set out on your missionary journey to the world that I call you to bless, heal, pray for, and save. Now.

Your journey and call will last your whole life. Each day I will ask you this: How far are you willing to travel to meet me? How far are you willing to go to help me? Will you go out? Will you go anywhere? Will you go where needed? What gifts will you be willing to offer to me and others?

My disciples and followers were willing to take long journeys to answer their call, use their gifts, and share my love, words, and reality. They followed the examples of kings who traveled from far away and through deserts on their journey to see me, to meet and follow the newborn king. They knew their hope and salvation were found in me, in Jesus. I ask you this day to lay down your life for me; to worship, love, and follow me; and to answer your call to share my love in the world.

You accepted your call and are working hard to use your gifts and to support ministries, outreach, and your church. It is not easy in these times you live in. My church is hurting and struggling. My church needs people of humble faith to renew it. You need to be anchored in daily prayer and scripture, and you need to be active in your church and in using your gifts for others. The journey and call need support, wisdom, and humility. The journey and call need time with me each day so you will know my still, small voice and meet me face to face. You will be aware of my presence as I guide and help you in the weeks ahead.

Will the journey be easy in the years to come? Probably not. But I say to you, “Stay watchful. Stay awake.” I ask you to follow your call and serve me despite the difficulties, strife, or temptations to give up. It will not be easy. There is a battle out there, but I know you can do this. The journey may become hard, and you may become tired. The call may use up a lot of your time, and you may want others to take over, especially when you think things have not turned out the way you wanted or are just too difficult. My child, keep on. Please, keep on. Keep on. Keep going forward. Continue to follow my mission in the world and your mission. Despite what happens in the world or how my church struggles, I am counting on your faith.

I have given you a set of gifts, special gifts, just for you to use in this work, in your call, on your journey, and for the world and my church. But it is up to you to decide how, where, or if you will use them. My child, I have called you to a special, unique call and way of life. Be my light. Look for opportunities to serve and use your gifts very single day and wherever you may go. Live each day as if it were your last day and you will be meeting me the next day. Through your call and journey you can do greater things than you can imagine. You are not ordinary. You are extraordinary, and so is your call and journey.

Words for the week: The call

Prayer question: What was the most important turning point on your journey? Share that with others this week. Pray about what you want your journey to look like next month.

Action for the week: Think of a mission or call that you would want to do in your journey to help my church and its people. Meet with a group of people to share your answers and support each other.

Witness my love and reality: How can you get more people to come to your church? What could you do to invite people to talk about the Christian journey, about how each one is called, and about how you can support each other in the year to come?

Daily prayer for this week: Lord, you have a special call for me to do in this world. I know it is important. You have given me the gifts, time, and community to help me to do this. I give you my life each day and know that you are counting on me to do greater things. I am ready today.

The following words are for you. You will know which ones speak to you and answer your questions or prayers. These personal words are guidance for you in your journey today.

- I need your gifts of evangelism and faith to build up your church and my church. It struggles so much. Pray about what you can do to bring people. How can you invite people? How can you get former members to come back? How can you do more to make this happen? Maybe you can meet with other people, young and old, to share ideas and enthusiasm. Give your group a name and meet at least three times before the end of the year. You will be building up people—that is the church.

- You are ready for the next step. It is a new time to grow as a Christian. In the year ahead your

journey is going to take you to places you never thought you would go. You will encounter blessings, miracles, angels, new friends, and witnessing. I will be there with you and will cheer you on. Look for me in the crowd, by the water, or alongside the road. I may be in a truck or in a gas station, but I will be there. I love surprises!

- I loved to go out on the roads to meet people and share my love. I told stories that inspired people. There would be miracles, blessings, and a witness by one of the disciples. I ask you to find ways to go out and share my love, words, and reality. I promise I will be with you. People will experience healing, blessings, miracles, and a renewed spirit. Bring a few people with you.

- The past year has been a time of learning and growing in many ways. You experienced some ups and downs with friends, and you learned about faith and trust in me. I was there guiding you. Some friends became closer to you, and so you found comfort. The journey is always filled with testing and faith. You stood firm and trusted in me. Your courage and confidence in who you are grew.

- I want to give you a basket that will provide all you need in the months ahead. It is called a basket of giving. I will keep it filled with miracles, healing, special friendships, words, scripture, and love. It will never be empty, no matter how much you use these things. So give them away in abundance. I will be right at your side. Begin with those who are in need of healing, miracles, welcome, and peace of mind and heart. Next move on to those who need to come back to me and my word.

- What do you say? Do you accept your call to go out and bring people to me, to build up a church, to heal and pray for people, to lead and teach, and to start groups to share my gift of these words each week? Begin by being in my church each week, the one where you are needed. You are not too young or too old. You are just what I need. I will bless all that you do.

- I have given you a set of special gifts to do my work in the world and to answer your call. The journey has begun, and you are already on the road. I need you in schools, with your friends, with new people who want to know me, in prayer and healing ministries, in my church, and in gatherings to share my words. You cannot stay home and leave it to someone older, someone younger, or someone less busy. I need you. If you don't help, I don't have another plan.

- You make a difference every time you help someone. I see what you do each day. I see the smile, the note of encouragement, and the invitation to be with a friend. I see you using your gifts of hospitality and joy. I want you to know that you brought smiles to Becca and Luke, two wonderful angels, because you spoke up to give encouragement to someone who was very difficult. They blessed you!

- The journey is filled with difficulties, but there is much to give thanks for. I want you to focus on the wonderful joy in my gifts and love for you and others. Help me to fill hearts with a renewed spirit. You have some wonderful friends in your life—whether at home, school, jobs, church, and the community. You are blessed. Like Barnabas and Paul had each other, you need to find at least one special friend and go out once each week to bring joy and my love to another person. See miracles happen.

- I was there when you were out. I was sitting there praying for you. I want you to know that you are at a turning point in your journey, a new time with new adventures just ahead. You have the gifts and witness needed to bring hope to others, to make people believe I am real, and to encourage people to come to church or be more involved in a ministry. Choose me and your call, and you will be blessed more than you know. Don't hold back. Look around! Reach out.

- Building up the body, which is the church and its members, is important. My own disciples spent time together with me, and they continued to spend time together after I was gone. We encouraged one another, listened to ideas and thoughts, and valued the gifts each one brought. Do something this year to build up the body, the people in my church. And get two to five people

to plan a way to build up your clergy and teachers.

- I have put some special people in your life this year. And they are there to journey with you and to show you how your gifts can be used, just like Priscilla and Paul used their gifts. Do not think that your gifts are not what are needed in the church, for I need all gifts. I need healers, but I also need artists. I need prayers, but I also need teachers, plumbers, handymen, coffee servers, and caretakers for the church grounds and building. I think you would be a great missionary.

- Step out into the road. Go out each day—bike, drive, walk, or run. Your journey this year will be amazing and filled with blessings and miracles. You will meet angels, you will see me, and you will be part of a healing. I will be waiting for you. Use your gift of encouragement.

- Your mission right now is to be the encourager, just as my disciples were to others. You can do that every day with all you know and see. Be supportive of those who risk their lives each day and pray for them. Be supportive of those who struggle, who need healing, or who need help. You have the gifts of prayer, serving, and faith. I bless you with hope.

- You have the gifts of encouragement, kindness, faith, and joy. I ask you to use these gifts each day with the people in your life and with those you meet. Your path during the past two months has not been what you expected. You have met new people and have tried to support old friends and family. There are two friends who especially need your prayers. Send a note of encouragement.

- I ask you to think of ways you can use your gifts to answer the needs of many people in the world who are lonely, sick, or hurting. It may be offering prayers, practical help, healing, a note, or a visit. You can send cards to someone who is sick or phone a friend or family member who needs encouragement. This is your call right now in this time in your life. You will bless many people.

- School is important, and there are many needs to be met. Teachers have much to do, and they can have difficult classes or troubled young people to help. Students may feel left out or overwhelmed with homework that is difficult. I ask you to use your gifts of prayer and encouragement to reach out in this area. It will not be difficult to find or see the needs, but it may be hard to say yes. Be encouraged. You are doing much good now, and I will help you to do the rest.

- If you have said yes, then my work for you this year is to encourage my people and help my church. You have the faith and gifts needed. It will take time, courage, leadership, and the words to inspire others. You can do this. Friends and people all around you need you. Ready?

- Egg salad. Get three or four people together to share eggs and offer support for one another. Each can offer insights into what can be done or how to begin. Meet as often as you can. Your mission? Be an evangelist, encourager, and friend. I will be there at the first meeting. Watch for me. I will leave a sign that will be very clear. I think you will love it!

- You are going to have an amazing month. So many special things will be happening. Yes, there will be decisions to make and some changes, but it will be a wonderful time in your journey. Your gifts of joy and friendship will bless three people you know in a special way.

- Family is very important. Know that you are important to your family and are very much loved. Each person in your family brings something special that makes you all unique. No two families are alike. My family was small, but we were very close. I had chores to do when I was young, and my parents counted on my help, respect, and love. Your family is special, too, and it is very important that you share special moments, pray together, and express your appreciation and joy for who each person is. Bless your family this week by doing something special for each person.

- Believe. I ask you to believe things will work out. The answers and direction you seek will be there. Believe you have gifts that will be used in wonderful ways to bless others. You can even begin now. Think of your friends and family, the neighbors, and people you share fun times with

or just hang out with. They could be blessed by you this week if you would let them know you care or if you do one simple but caring thing for each one.

- You will be helped in a special way in the weeks ahead. Someone you would not expect will help you and give you a real blessing of peace. This is all part of your healing, and it is part of what your call is in life—to help others find peace through the blessings you can offer.

- Did you see me? I didn't think so! I was there, and you looked my way. I think you were wondering if I was an angel or someone who needed a friendly hello. Maybe I was someone who needed help. You are a caring and generous person who does so much for others. Few people see it, but I see the kind things you are always doing. I was blessed by you, and I blessed you in return.

- Your call, for now, is to share my love, words, and reality where you are. But that means you can share my love, words, and reality in all the places you are each day. What do you share? Your gifts, especially your gift of compassion. You showed understanding and kindness when you helped someone this past week. Know that you made a big difference in this person's life. Bless you for being who you are—a joy.

- Spiritual friends are a witness of grace and hope. You can be a spiritual friend to someone who is younger than you are or someone who is older. You don't have to be alike to be spiritual friends. Paul was different from all the disciples because of his passion, but he still helped and supported them. Having a special spiritual friend who is a bit further along in the journey or who has a different way to use gifts is important. Hmm. Who is your special spiritual friend?

- Decisions? You have some important decisions to make, but you may have to wait. Sometimes decisions are made too quickly and you need to take time to pray and look around at what is seen and unseen. Your decision will be made at the right time. I will show the way forward.

- New beginning time! Fall is a great time to look at the year past and see things in a new way. You learned some wonderful things. Friendships were important, and yet not all were sustained as they could have been. But change is in the air. Your journey in the rest of the year has a lot to do with your friendships. Be a good friend. Be thoughtful. Write three friends this week to say hello.

- Your call is clear. Use your gifts this year to build up my people, to build up the people in your life and those in your school or job, your church, and your family. Your call is to help others as my disciple John did, gently and with love, compassion, forgiveness, and joy. You can bless many people. I count on you.

Read and pray my words to you

Please note that the Bible verses are drawn from the Good News Translation (or Today's English version), so references to a particular stopping place may not match your translation exactly.

Isaiah 61: 1-3

Jeremiah 1:4-8

Ezekiel 3:4-6

Isaiah 2:1-3

Daniel 2:23

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Isaiah 49:1-3

Zechariah 7:8-9

Psalms 119:105-106, 111

Psalms 33:4, 20-22

Psalms 105:1-2

Psalm 16:5-6, 11
Psalm 71:14-16, 18-19
Psalm 145:15-19
Psalm 68:34-35
Luke 5:9-11
Matthew 8:18-20
John 14:12-14
Acts 13:1-3
John 15:12-13, 16-17
Matthew 4:18-22
Luke 12:35-38
Mark 1:17-20
John 13:20, 34-35
Mark 16:19-20
Luke 10:1-2
Ephesians 2:20-22
2 Thessalonians 1:1-5
Hebrews 12:1-3
1 Corinthians 3:9-10, 22-23
Colossians 2:4-7

Note: For suggestions on how to conduct a weekly words sharing group, go to the Words of Blessing website at:

http://www.wordsofblessing.com/pdf_docs_other/word_sharing_instruct_v5.pdf

And for more details about the Words of Blessing EGGS Project, see the website at <http://www.wordsofblessing.com/eggs.html>.

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