

Church Triumphant

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Spring 2008

"TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON" Eccles. 3:1

Spring is traditionally a season of new beginnings. The snow melts, the weather warms, the flowers bloom, and new life comes forth. This year spring has been anything but traditional. Killer tornadoes, massive flooding, blizzards in April – the weather seems to be totally out of control. We have come through one of the coldest winters and springs in recent memory while the "experts" warn of global warming. But they are not in control. God is in control and He is trying to get our attention.

A Season of Change

For us, this spring has been a season of major changes. After much prayer and seeking the leading of the Lord, we have given up our home in California and moved to Tyler, Texas as you can see by the new return address. We know that God has brought us here for a reason. We believe He is wanting us to be involved in training and equipping the next generation to reach their world with the Gospel. We also believe that God is wanting to use us as a catalyst to bring greater unity to the Body of Christ in this area. The people in this area are wonderful, friendly people but the churches are more focused on caring for their own little flock than working together to reach out to the lost and dying all around them.

God is definitely up to something in this city and there are many open doors but nothing significant is going to happen until the Body of Christ comes together in humility and unity based on salvation through the blood of Jesus instead of racial, economical, and denominational distinctives. There is only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Jesus is coming back for a Bride, not for a harem. (A Baptist bride, a Lutheran bride, a Pentecostal bride, a white bride, a black bride, an Hispanic bride, etc., etc., etc.)

In addition to ministering to and encouraging God's people here and blessing the pastors and encouraging them in their efforts for the Kingdom, we will continue to travel and minister to the Body of Christ across America. We will also continue to share about the good things God is doing around the world, especially in the Philippines and Romania.

A Season of Challenge

Whenever there is change, there is also challenge. This has been a season of challenge for God's people worldwide. In February, we asked you to be praying for our dear friends at Mana Ministries in Timisoara, Romania who have an outreach to the street children of that city. The local government was threatening to close down their Home for Girls that has been a place of refuge and restoration for many young girls who had no place to go and were living on the streets. You prayed. God intervened and gave Mana great favor with the national government in Bucharest. The order to close was overturned and Mana has been given permission to remain open and to continue their important ministry. The challenge was met and overcome in response to the prayers of God's people.

Great things are happening in Romania as they face the challenge of being a part of the European Union and trying to pay Western European prices on Eastern European salaries. In the midst of the challenge, God is raising up a prayer ministry among the young people. Romanian young people are discovering the power of prayer to overcome every challenge they face.

In the Philippines, the work we started there just celebrated their seventh anniversary. The anniversary was overshadowed by a seemingly impossible challenge. We were behind on the mortgage payments on the headquarters building in Tagum City that also houses a church and Bible school. The bank was demanding \$2,500 by the end of April or they

were going to foreclose. The Believers there knew that we could not help them as we had in the past so they began to fast and to pray and to call on God to supply the need in the face of this great challenge. We sent out a prayer request to everyone on our email mailing list.

As they were praying, the Holy Spirit prompted Pastor Allan Asang, our Filipino Director, to send out an email sharing the need and asking for help. We forwarded his letter to all the email contacts we had. As people prayed, God touched hearts according to His perfect plan. \$1,000 came in the first week. Piece by piece, the need was met. Encouraged by your faithful giving, the Believers there on Mindanao gave sacrificially as well from their meager supply. Working together in partnership with God, the need was met and the foreclosure proceedings have been halted. We now are trusting God to supply the \$425 that is needed to bring the mortgage payment current for the month of May. We also believe that God wants to see this mortgage paid in full so that this will no longer be a burden on the ministry from month to month. Will you agree with us in prayer that God will speak to hearts to give the \$5,875 that is currently needed to pay off the mortgage in full? God's faithfulness to bring in the \$2,500 in two month's time has been such a faith building experience for the Believers there on Mindanao as they see what can be accomplished when they cry out to God in prayer and trust in Him to meet their needs.

Challenges here in America

This has been a season of challenges right here in America. God's people here at home have been struggling with weather disasters, earthquakes in unexpected places, soaring gas prices, rising unemployment, rising food prices, sickness, the credit crunch. The list of challenges goes on and on. But the same God who has enabled the young people of Romania to overcome, the same God who has enabled the tribal people of Mindanao to overcome, is the same God who stands ready to help you overcome every challenge that is facing you today. Come to Jesus. He is waiting to welcome you into His divine presence. He wants to speak new life into your tired and weary soul. He is the One who overcame death, hell, and the grave. He wants to make you an overcomer in this new season of your life. You don't have to face your challenges alone. In Him, we are more than conquerors.

A Word From Howard's Heart

I know this may sound strange to some of you but we really feel that God is calling us as missionaries to America. As we said in our last newsletter, I believe that God's heart is breaking as He weeps over America just as Jesus wept over Jerusalem. As we continue to be involved in outreach both to the Philippines and to Romania, we feel like the ministry of restoration will be a major part of our focus for America. God has given us Isaiah 58 as our theme for this phase of our ministry. We feel like God is wanting us to do Restoration seminars, focusing on the priesthood of the Believers – both a holy priesthood and a royal priesthood as described in I Peter 2. We feel He wants us to teach His people about warfare prayer and especially prayer walking and how to go in and take back territory that the rulers of darkness have stolen. We also feel like God wants to empower us to help bring the church in America back to her "first love".

If you missed our last newsletter that went into more detail about the priesthood that God has called each one to exercise or if you want additional copies to share with your pastor or Christian friends, please contact us and we will be happy to send you additional copies.

I think another focus of our ministry will be to establish discipleship training programs across the nation. It is our desire to begin one here in Tyler by this fall. The curriculum is one that we have used very successfully in Romania and the Philippines. This curriculum has been used with great success on many foreign mission fields. In these challenging days, America has become like a foreign mission field where large segments of society know nothing about the God of the Bible. This curriculum is designed to establish and restore local churches on a solid Biblical foundation. Its goal is to challenge the people to become effective soul winners and to equip them with the tools to accomplish the task.

We believe that God is going to do for us here what He has done for us on the foreign mission field. We believe that He is going to enable us to make disciples who are able to make disciples, able to share the Gospel, lay hands on the

sick, and see them made whole. I believe that God will confirm His Word in our meetings with signs following in a greater way than ever before.

If you would like to schedule us to come teach a seminar in your church or if you would be interested in setting up a discipleship training program in your church or community, or if you would like to just have us in for one meeting, please contact us at the email address listed below. God bless you!

Please join us in prayer for these needs

- 1 – Praise God for giving victory to Mana Ministries in Timisoara, Romania. Pray that God will continue to give them favor with those in authority as they minister to the street children of that city.
- 2 – Pray for Nadine and Cerbu as they lead Mana Ministries. Nadine recently lost her Father as a result of a farming accident in her native New Zealand.
- 3 – Praise God for the growing prayer movement among the young people of Romania. Pray that revival will spread through the churches as a result.
- 4 – The Apostle Paul said that he had learned both how to abound and how to suffer need. Right now the Gards are going through a time of financial need. Pray that God will meet every need in their personal lives.
- 5 – Praise God for His provision of a "new" 2001 Ford Windstar van so they can have reliable transportation once again. Pray that they will quickly be able to pay off the remaining balance of \$2,795.
- 6 – Continue to pray for Don Bailey and Jack LaVallie, Howard's brothers-in-law who are battling cancer. God has been moving mightily in Don's behalf and he has given his life to Christ. He was able to go through radiation and chemotherapy without harmful side effects. Jack has pretty much given up hope and stopped his treatments. Both need a mighty healing touch from Jesus, the Great Physician.
- 7 – Praise God for supplying the \$2,500 that was needed to prevent the headquarters building in Tagum City, Mindanao from going into foreclosure. Pray that we will be able to quickly pay off the mortgage in full.
- 8 – Pray for Pastor Allan Asang and the Board of Church Triumphant in the Philippines that God will protect them and their families and give them wisdom as they provide leadership for the ministry there.
- 9 – Praise God that the political situation in the Philippines has stabilized so that the Gospel can go forward into the tribal areas unhindered.
- 10 – Pray for America. The upcoming elections are perhaps the most crucial this nation has ever faced. Pray for the winning candidates that God will transform their hearts to do His will when in office.
- 11 – Praise God for the many young people in America who have made a commitment to invest their summer in short term mission trips. Pray that many souls will be added to the Kingdom of God as a result.
- 12 – Pray for the Church in America that godliness and righteousness will once again be proclaimed from the pulpits across this nation. It is time for the Church to wake up from her slumber and arise from dead self-centered religion.

GOD LOVES YOU!!!

Rev. Howard & Barbara Gard

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