

EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...ONE PERSON AT A TIME

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# ONE-TO-ONE

© Autumn 2014

# I SAID, "YES!"



IN STEP WITH **Pastor Bill Wilson**  
Leader of the Modern-Day Sidewalk Sunday School Movement



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# From the Editor

# Sharing Your Story

A major key to strengthening relationships

Hurricane Frederic blew into Mobile, Alabama, on September 12, 1979, leaving behind millions of felled trees and billions of dollars' worth of damage in its wake. One of those trees was an ancient oak that toppled over at the height of the storm and split my Great-Uncle Thompson's house in half, from the roof down through the floor. The beautiful little wooden cottage was reduced to splinters.

A few days later, we worked together to clean up the yard around the ruins of his house. The day was hot, and, after awhile, Uncle Thompson invited me to sit down and sip some ice water with him. He was very fatigued, and I noticed tears in his eyes. Thinking he was sad about losing his house, I said, "It's going to be OK, Uncle Thompson, we'll get this place fixed up again in no time." His eyes were haunted and far away. He sighed deeply.

"It's not the house," he said. "The way the house looks now reminded me of something that happened to me back in World War I, and I was just a kid about your age. I had gotten separated from my unit, and we were behind German lines. Night was falling, and I was alone and scared and cold. I saw a bombed out farmhouse nearby and decided to take shelter in it. Just a few walls and part of the roof were still standing."

I leaned in. I had never heard him speak of this. He continued, "It was very dangerous to be in there, but it was the best thing around, so I laid down on the muddy floor with my back against the wall and dozed off. I awoke to the

sound of somebody slowly moving on the other side of the wall. I could hardly breathe. I pulled out my gun. I realized that whoever it was, they were moving toward an open door in the wall just a few feet from me."



Now the tears were rolling down Uncle Thompson's cheeks. "I jumped out into the door just as a German soldier jumped out from the other side. We were literally face to face and eye to eye. He was just a boy my age. He started drawing his weapon and so I shot him dead." Uncle Thompson sobbed, "And there's not a day that goes by that I don't think about that boy and his mama and daddy."

Suddenly, his eyes were wide and his voice desperate. He looked at me and whispered, "Did I do the right thing?" I didn't know what to say, so we were both quiet for a minute. Then, I said, "Uncle Thompson, you only did what you had to do." He dried

his eyes and said, "That's what I tell myself every day."

We were 60 years and 5000 miles removed from that incident, yet as he spoke, he was right there in the middle of it. The memory was as fresh and vivid as it had been when it happened, perhaps, even more so. And now, another 35 years later, the memory of the story remains with me. Uncle Thompson is with the Lord now, but my love, gratitude, and respect for him remains.

One of the great concerns in my lifetime has been the tragic breakdown between generations, and the subsequent loss of wisdom, heritage, and love. I thank God for what I have received, and am determined to pass it on.

We have an amazing heritage in the Gospel and in the effect that it has had in our lives. Are we willing to share our story? Are we able to hear someone else's? If we can, the respect and appreciation between us as people will grow, and our wisdom will increase.

Stories have happy moments and sad moments; scary moments and funny moments. In Christ, all of it is redemptive. Tell someone what Jesus has done in your life, especially someone in a generation or culture that is different than your own. And then ... listen. **121**

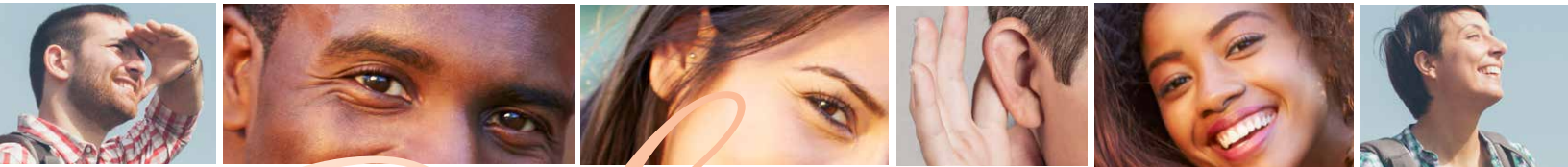
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Keynote

# SEEING & HEARING

Gaining a fresh  
perspective on Jesus  
and each other



IN THE

*Spirit*

**I** like to be comfortable, don't you? And familiar people, places, and things make me comfortable. The unfamiliar can make me uncomfortable. But I've learned this: if I get too familiar, I can lose my appreciation for people, places, and things. There is an old saying: "familiarity breeds contempt."

Sometimes we can get familiar with a biblical passage and fail to see its deeper truth. Or, we can become overly familiar with a person and fail to appreciate their

gifts or contribution to our lives. We can start to focus more on their human frailties more than their worth and usefulness to God.

There is another old saying: "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country." That saying is as old as Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and even Jesus. It was true of most of the prophets recorded in the Scriptures.

**BY CHARLES SIMPSON**

## JESUS GOES HOME

Luke tells an amazing story about Jesus, found in Luke chapter 4:16-30. Jesus grew up in Nazareth, which was a small town with a poor reputation. He was known there as Joseph and Mary's son who played with the other children in town and worked with His father in the carpentry shop. The people of Nazareth were familiar with Jesus (see Mark 6:3). They "knew" Jesus, or thought they did.

But, He had been away for years and a lot had happened. He had been baptized by John the Baptist, anointed with the Holy Spirit, and He had performed miracles. Yes, they had heard about what He was now doing, but to them, He was still just a "hometown boy."

When Jesus came into town, He went to the synagogue, where the faithful went to worship and hear the Holy Scriptures. Jesus had gone there many times as He grew up. The locals were excited with expectation that He might do miracles there as He had elsewhere. He was met with smiles and pride in that he was "one of them".

The leader of the synagogue requested that Jesus read the Scriptures and so He stepped forward, took the Book, and stood to read. He searched for a specific chapter and verses and arrived at Isaiah 61:1-2. Every eye was on Him and every ear attuned to His Words. Then He began....

**"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the**

**brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord"** (Luke 4:18-19).

Then He closed the Book, gave it to the attendant and sat down. Following His sitting down, He said something amazing, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Jesus actually declared that He was the fulfillment of Isaiah's Messianic prophecy. That prophecy had been long-awaited in Israel. But



that is not what they heard. What they actually thought was, *isn't He eloquent! What wonderful words!*

Then they spoke the tell-tale words, "Is this not Joseph's son?" They were too familiar with Jesus to see who He actually was: their Messiah.

## HE WAS NOT FINISHED

Jesus had already diagnosed their familiarity and dullness; those two conditions go together. So, He continued, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'" And then He

said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country" (see Luke 4:23-24). Jesus went on to cite Elijah and Elisha as examples.

When the folks in the synagogue heard this, they did not marvel, nor were they merely disappointed. They were enraged! So much so that they threw Him out of the synagogue and tried to push Him off a cliff at the edge of town. The Apostle John later put it mildly when he said, "He came to His own and they received Him not." They wanted to "own" their prophets (see John 1:11). Their actions were prophetic.

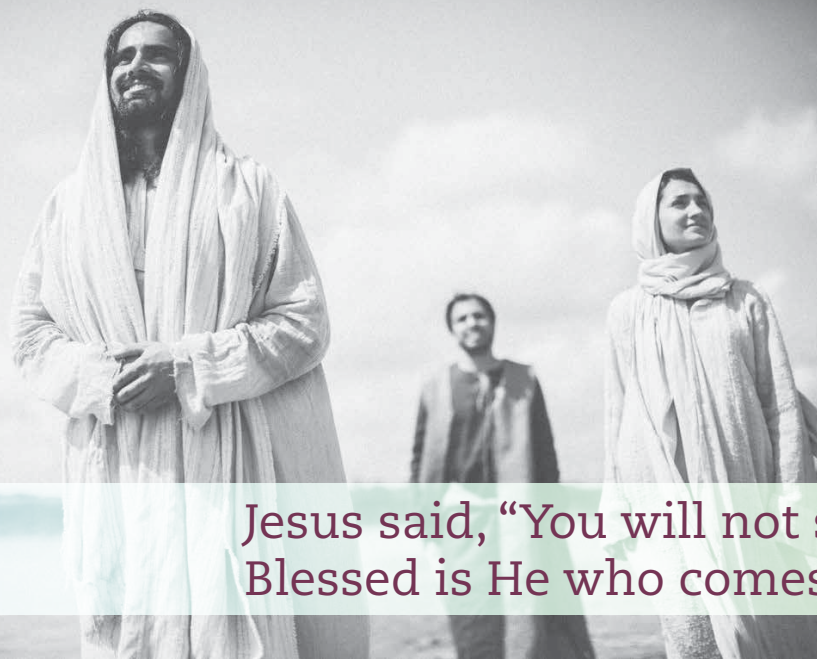
They did not kill Jesus that day; His time had not yet come. He passed on His way to other villages where indeed He performed miracles, but not in Nazareth. They were too familiar with "Joseph's Son." Ironically, He was still known as "Jesus of Nazareth." And to this day, in some quarters, He is only known as a Jewish teacher.

Rejection does not prevent God's plan. In fact, it is part of His plan, and it occurs when people get too familiar with the messenger and the message. Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and most of the prophets could all say, "Amen."

The fact that human beings can honor the dishonorable while dishonoring the honorable is a testimony to the human condition. Such was Nazareth and such are many who get too familiar with God. It seems so incomprehensible that one's own friends and family could become so enraged and dangerous.

This problem isn't limited to those times, is it? Even if people bound by familiar mindsets do not become physically violent, they seek to destroy reputation





Jesus said, “You will not see me again until you say, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”

and callings by malicious words toward a servant of God. They have their “reasons”.

Doctor R.G. Lee was a great preacher, one of the greatest. After one Sunday morning sermon, a lady said to him, “I didn’t like your sermon!” He replied, “The devil didn’t either. Classify yourself.”

Why do people respond that way to one who is trying to speak truth in love?

- They have forgotten history.
- They don’t love the Truth.
- They don’t love the messenger.
- They see the servant after the flesh rather than seeing the truth of the Holy Spirit.
- They are attuned to the culture, not The Holy Spirit.
- They are looking for entertainment, not God’s Word.
- They may not truly love God, only religion.

Jesus said, “You will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’” (see Matthew 23:39). Those who honor God’s servants hear God’s Word.

I have been blessed to speak in many different kinds of churches, and my experience is that it is much easier to do where people honor God’s servants. There is often the “Spirit of Revelation” that is released, whereas when people fail to honor God’s servant, speaking becomes a chore.

## RESULTS

The wrong kind of familiarity brings tragic results. Israel was exhibit “A”. Because they often rejected the prophets, they paid a terrible price. They “slammed the door” on God’s voice. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because they had stoned the prophets and refused to be gathered unto God (see Matthew 23:37).

Many servants of God are not the victims of violence, merely discouragement. Discourage means “to take out the heart.” They look around and see their options are few: pander, entertain, grind it out, or quit. Some fall. Of course, there are also failures in the ministry. But the culture contributes to discouragement and that produces sad results. In this season, thousands of ministers are simply quitting and seeking other means to support their families. The

damage to their families is another serious topic.

These problems were also true in the 1960s before God began again to pour out His Spirit in a time of great spiritual renewal. I pray that He will again. Churches and our nation desperately need another awakening.

## WHAT TO DO

Of course there are many servants of God who are faithful and enjoying success. And there are many faithful followers who hold up the hands of their leaders. Those models should be emulated.

My counsel to God’s servants would be to be faithful in all seasons (see 2 Timothy 4:2). The Apostle Paul gave that counsel to Timothy. There are “seasons.” The Lord is with us, even in the valley. In such times, seek to grow and serve God and His people more effectively. Another model is mentioned in Revelation 12:11, “Love not your life even unto death.”

Having said that to God’s servants, what should all of us as believers on their behalf?

- Be an armor bearer (see First Samuel 14:13).



- Be a prayer warrior.
- Be an encourager.
- Be on mission in the world... be fruitful (see John 15:16).
- Don't receive accusations and gossip.
- Pray for the pastor and other leaders' families.
- If you have an insight, tell it to the leader in humility and love.

## EXPERIENCE

I am a preacher's kid, as are my children and my son's child. I have been both a leader and member. My father pastored for 60 years, and I am drawing close to that. I know the faults of leaders and especially my own. I never wanted that role, given what I knew about myself and other leaders. I also knew how people could treat leaders. It hasn't gotten better in the recent years as culture has become more secular and post-modern.

My thoughts are not a complaint; I have been blessed beyond measure with loyal friends, armor bearers, intercessors, and supporters. Many of you reading this are among those.

But I also know that there are "seasons" and

there are painful failures and losses. When a leader loses a member or a friend, it is often like a surgery that takes something away. What I am saying is that we desperately need to hear from God, whether from a leader, prophetic voice, or simply from a friend and fellow believer.

To be able to hear from God, we must guard against over-familiarity and honor God's servants who give us the Truth. The Apostle Paul said it this way, "Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh" (2 Corinthians 5:16). That was Nazareth's problem and later, Israel's problem. Let it not be our problem. We have an opportunity to see and hear one another in Christ and in the Spirit. When we do, miracles can happen! 121

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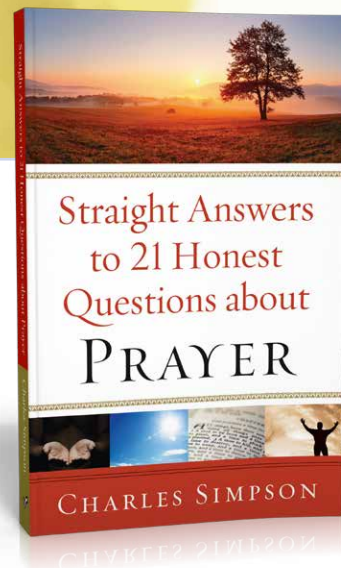
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## Familygram Interview

# I SAID, “YES!”

An interview with  
**Pastor Bill Wilson,**  
the leader of the modern-day Sidewalk Sunday School movement



Imagine being a 12-year-old boy, and your father is deceased. Your mother is an alcoholic. One day, you are walking with her and she says, “I can’t take it any more.” She tells you to sit on a sidewalk bench and says, “I’ll be back.” So you wait for her, and wait, and wait. You wait for three days. She never returns. You are scared, hungry, and alone. Can you picture it?

This is what happened to Bill Wilson. After three days, a man approached him. It could have been a bad man; it could have been a dangerous man. But, instead, it was a kind man, sent by God. The man said, “Are you OK?” Bill said, “I’m hungry.” Soon, Bill was being fed and getting the care he needed. Within days, he was on his way to church camp, where he learned about Jesus and had a life-saving encounter with God. History was changed forever.

By the time Bill was 19, he was driving a church bus, and picking up kids for Sunday School. Today at 65, he still does. And, he oversees a global ministry based in Brooklyn, New York, that reaches more than 100,000 kids each week with the love and Good News of Jesus. That ministry, Metro World Child, provides much-needed care for at-risk children on every continent.

Pastor Bill has paid a high price for his willingness to go to hard places. He has been shot in the face, had his face smashed in with a brick, been mugged and beaten, and has endured many other hardships. Watching him and hearing him speak reminds me of what it must have been like to be around the Apostle Paul. He is the author of numerous must-read books, including his autobiography, *Whose Child Is This?*

Recently, Pastor Bill was the special guest speaker at our annual CSM Gatlinburg Leadership Conference. He shared the most gripping stories about the lives of children they are reaching and he actively engaged us in ways that we can disciple the next generation. Here are some excerpts from our conversation with him there.

—Stephen Simpson, Editor



**121: One of the things about you that grabs people's hearts right away is that as you reach out to kids who have been hurt and abandoned, you're a person who was once hurt and abandoned. Can you tell us a little about your childhood and how God saved you?**

**BW:** My mother left me in St. Petersburg, Florida. I was born in Boston, and then my parents moved to San Francisco when I was 10. Then that marriage fell apart and we moved to Florida. My father died immediately after that. My sister left, and it was just me and my mom, but they had already been into the whole alcohol scene. That was part of the drama.

And one day, we were sitting on the street corner and she looked at me and said, "I can't do this anymore...you wait here." And, she never came back.

But I still go back to that street corner every year. To me that is a very critical time. It keeps it in perspective for me. Maybe that's not for everybody ... that's just ... that's me. And I also go back so I can visit with and take care of the man who found me there.

**121: What happened after you met Jesus?**

I was raised in a very unique church before there were many big churches in this country. I was very fortunate that it was my home church. When that week of camp was over, I had nowhere to live. Literally. So they let me stay in a broom closet at the church where the man that had found me went to; it was First Assembly of God in St. Petersburg. So they cleaned up the closet, put a little piece of foam rubber in there, and that was my mattress. I lived there for three years.

And that was in the 1960s, so it was a different time in this country and I was fine, but during

that time because of the size of the church, we had all of these folks, extraordinary missionaries, as examples. And that inspired me. It seems like we don't hear those kind of mission stories enough any more.

**121: Why not?**

Have you read *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*? You just don't hear a lot of stories like that anymore, because not many people we know are willing to lay it down. Missionaries used to put all their personal possessions in a casket and sent it out to the mission field. That's how it went, because they knew they were going to die on the field.

How many people do you know today that have that kind of commitment? Not many. But, that's how I was trained in ministry. And that's why people look at me now like I am from another planet. Yet my level of commitment at one time would have been considered very normal. What I do would not have been considered abnormal 75 years ago. But now I am a weirdo. I am unusual. Technically, what I do should be normal Christianity, but because it is not normal, I am looked at as abnormal. But that was the mindset of men and women that went in those days. George Mueller, David Brainerd, Adoniram Judson, Hudson Taylor, David Livingstone, and the list goes on and on and on, but you don't hear stories like that anymore.

You know the Moravians? There were two Moravian boys who sold themselves as slaves to this island down by Madagascar because the islanders wouldn't let missionaries in there. There were just all slaves. So these Moravian boys said, "Okay, we will sell ourselves as slaves." And that's how they got in so they could minister the Gospel. I mean, who does that? Who thinks like that today?

Nobody thinks like that today. We don't preach it. We do not have a level of expectation at that point because it doesn't fit in with our little culture. It doesn't fit.

Well, we all have choices that we have to make. That's why, in our own way, I am trying to keep that spirit of old time Pentecostal missionaries alive and that's why people bring me in. That's why I do missions. That's why I do conferences, because people want to know about it, they want to hear it, and they are struggling with it. I make it a little more doable. Because I am not an extremely talented person, I am not an overly gifted person. I am just very committed to what I do. And anybody can be committed.

When I started out in ministry, it wasn't fancy; there were no cameras and lights. All I had was my testimony. My home pastor asked me if I would drive the Volkswagen van to pick up kids for Sunday School. I was 19 and I said "yes". That was it. That's what I've been doing now for almost 50 years. Just more of it all over the world.

**121: What was it that eventually brought you to Brooklyn?**

**BW:** It was the worst place in the country. If you're going to spend your life, spend it where it is going to make a difference. You know, anybody can go to most places now, but not everybody chooses to go to those kind of spots.

**121: And you've stayed in Brooklyn?**

**BW:** I live there in a warehouse. Right there on site. I still drive the bus about twice per month, and I am there most of the times on Saturday. If I have to travel, I leave town on Saturday night. We have Sidewalk Sunday school six days of the week, and my day is on

Saturday. I do the three sessions on Saturday, and then I am out. And then on Sundays, I am somewhere for adults.

It has really just evolved strongly in the last couple of years. We have the learning, earning, and then the returning stages of life. I am at that place now where people realize that I am actually pretty serious about the returning ... the giving back. It took 50 years to be the "overnight success"! But I think that governments, denominations, churches, ministries, and other groups are bringing my team and I into their situation and saying, "Look, we need this kind of ministry in our

they choose not to. But if you can get them in an environment that is so forcibly in their face, then they can't un-know it, and then they have to answer some more questions. Some will get it and some won't. But it just makes it easier then for people to really hear their pastor when he ministers or challenges them, because now they've been close enough to these issues. If people are close enough to the urgency of life, the urgency demands a response. And that's why most folks don't get around the urgency for an extended period of time, because it demands something from you... you can't un-see something once you've seen it.

This is why we have groups that come to New York every year for a week. Some of them come as boot campers. We have an internship program that is a four-month deal. I think it is the only

fact. So many people just want to have their best day ever, and they don't want to be confronted and they don't want to be pressed.

### **121: How did the American Church come to this place?**

We have allowed it. There has been a gradual shift in our culture. It has become more of a spectator mentality, even with all the machines, and social media...I mean it is what it is. It is much easier to become a spectator and piddle than it is to become hands on, to get dirty, to get out there and mix it up. Our culture has changed. We are in the midst of that. We are in the midst of an entitlement mentality. It is not about sacrifice.

I mean, I am very old school. I grew up around the old Pentecostal church. Whatever it takes, pay the price. Those are the words I grew up on. You don't hear that preached anymore. You don't. Now, it is all about me, it's all about a show, it's all about making me happy. That's **NOT** what this is about! But that's what we've turned it into. And it's a

conscious decision that people are making: either they don't go to church at all or when they go to church, it is for them. They come with their flip flops and their big gulps and it's entertainment for them with the lights and smoke machines and all that stuff.

### **121: How has your neighborhood changed since 1980 and how has your ministry changed?**

**BW:** It has changed in some respects because we have kept a strong presence there, which is why I was invited to work with President George H.W. Bush (41) on the National Commission on America's Urban Families. They saw what had happened in the neighborhood, and after they did research, our name kept coming up. In time, we have been featured



city, in our country, and we want you to come in and set it up here."

### **121: How can you get people to see a vision for reaching the children in their communities?**

**BW:** I think this is why I stay so busy. I think the key is the "sight". Are people seeing it? That's why people come to Brooklyn. They spend a week with us. They are out in it, to be exposed to it. I have people go with me on the international trips and they just drop their jaws. You know...just to get them to see it.

A lot of times, people won't see it where they are because



free intern program of its kind in the country. It is there, and it forces them to deal with it.

By and large, American Christians are very complacent. They've allowed themselves to just get into this lethargic mentality. And most pastors...quite honestly...are held captive, because if you push people too hard...you know...the pastors are held hostage by the big givers in the church. That is a



on national TV news programs such as *Nightline* and *20/20*. I'm more interested in that than just being on Christian TV, because when you have the secular community that recognizes "This is where change came from," then that's what really testifies about God, not just a bunch of insider Christian goofy stuff, you know.

As would any major city, our neighborhood has changed and improved somewhat; and there are other parts nearby that are technically worse than they were before. And you're not really going to catch that unless you live there. When you are out in it every day, you watch it evolve.

**121: What does it take to do what you do?**

**BW:** You can do whatever you want, but you are not going to do high intensity, high level, high risk mission work without serious commitment and focus. You will only influence other people in direct proportion to what you are willing to sacrifice yourself.

That's how this works. Everything is a tradeoff. How much do you want to trade? Do you want that? OK. What do you want to trade it for? Because you can't have it both ways. Can't do it. It's like the lady that goes window shopping, sees the dress, wants it, goes in the dress store, goes to the dress rack, goes to the dress...what is the first thing she looks at? Price tag!

And there becomes your defining moment. You want it. You now don't want it less. But the question is, are you willing to pay the price that it takes to get it? And that becomes the breakdown in our Christian culture in America. Because if you ask somebody if they want to make a difference, they will look at you face to face and tell you "yes". But when it comes down to it and they see the price tag, they may not want to pay the price. That's what all this conversation comes down to. And it is so simple, but we've made it

complicated. Because we want complicated. If it is complicated, that means we don't have to do it.

The truth is, anybody can do what I have done, but most don't want it bad enough. You want to travel every week for 34 years? I don't want to do that. But it doesn't matter what we want to do. That's the tradeoff. That's what it takes. You work through being sick, getting shot, going through all this. Nobody wants to do this, but that's what it takes. There is always a way to do something, I don't care what it is. They said you can't go to Indonesia. Okay. Alright. But now, we are reaching 10,000 kids in a week. Don't tell me I can't do something! But too many just don't want to do it badly enough. Put that in your interview. It's true. It's a tradeoff. Everything is a tradeoff.

**121: So what do you say to parents who are grappling with whether or not to send their kids into this kind of intense mission, or seriously into harm's way? It is almost like going to war.**

**BW:** It's the same thing...it is like self-defense. Okay, you have to know ahead of time what you are going to do. If you are thinking about what you are going to do when you get into a fight, you've already lost. You better know what you are going to do when the enemy comes up.

You have to know if your kid goes somewhere and something happens, you better have had that figured out. Or else you're gonna flip out. You won't make it.

It's the same way with fighting ...you've got to be ready. That's why I walk on the street side of the sidewalk rather than the building side of the sidewalk. And that's just natural to me. From all my years in New York, I never walk next to a building. I always walk by the street. If someone is trying to jump you, then you have about a second or second-and-a-half to turn and face them. A regular person

doesn't think like that....making decisions, knowing when to hold them, know when to fold them, know when to walk away, and know when to run! It's assessing quick. You've got to be quick, or you don't stay there.

But it is the real thing, and Americans are not up for that. By and large they are not up for that because it is not taught from the pulpit. This kind of conversation—where could we have this kind of conversation? People look at us go and say, "What the heck? What are they talking about?" There is a very limited audience to have this kind of conversation.

Either we believe what we say we believe or we don't. It is amazing to me how Muslims will die for their bogus faith and we can't even get to church on time. They spend three years learning how to fly a plane knowing that they are not going to land. OK. But, you can't even get a lot of Christian people to give to missions.

I think we must choose to see with our hearts; too many times, we don't. It's all pragmatic it's all spectators, it's all about me, and it's all translated into our culture now. But, I still believe the old prayer, "Break my heart with the things that break Your heart." To go out effectively, it takes somebody willing to be poured out. I've seen it happen; I know that it can. **121**

For more information on Pastor Bill Wilson and Metro World Child, visit:  
[www.metroworldchild.org](http://www.metroworldchild.org)

To hear Pastor Bill's messages from the 2014 CSM Gatlinburg Leadership Conference, please see information on page 16.



# Marketplace Exchange

## Go For The Gold

Weak and Hungry? You're in good company!

by Jonathan Simpson

Endurance, persistence, and overcoming are biblical themes lived out by real people with real weaknesses, who hungered for much more than sustaining a lifestyle. Our work is intended to be part of God's unfolding plan, yet we are weak and quit easily. There is good news though...

James 1:17 tells us that *"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows"* (NIV).

But, we also read this, from the Apostle Paul: *"We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us"* (see Romans 5:3-5).

Nowhere is this better illustrated today than in the areas of the world where the Christian Church suffers under persecution, places such as Iraq, Iran, Nigeria, China, North Korea, or Vietnam. Yet, in those places, the Gospel is advancing. Generally speaking, many of those Christians today have a stronger hunger and desire for the Lord than Christians in the West.

People once asked, could anything good come from Nazareth? Could they ever have imagined the goodness from the Cross? Matthew 16 says that after Jesus told the disciples of the suffering He would endure, "Peter took Jesus aside and began to

rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.' But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'"

God defines what is "good", not us, and not the devil.

### Weakness Makes You Stronger

In his recent book *David and Goliath*, Malcolm Gladwell opens a section of the book with this quote from the Apostle Paul:

*"Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong"* (see 2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Gladwell, who says that writing the book brought him back to the Christian faith, illustrates over and over how our perceived weaknesses, limitations, and setbacks can often play to our advantage. In fact, they may be the very tools for our innovation and success. It's difficult to escape the evidence that God permits some of the hardships our lives; hardships that we sometimes pray for Him to take away. From His vantage point, He sees the end of the matter and He knows what it will produce.

### "Stickability" is Gold

The classic book *Think and Grow Rich!* by Napoleon Hill recounts the story of a man named Mr. Darby who set out to dig his fortune in the days of the gold rush. Darby established his gold mine with the backing of friends and family, but after minimal discovery, he became disheartened and decided to quit and sold the mine to a junk man.

The junk man consulted with a mining engineer that calculated gold to likely be three feet away. Sure enough it was. The junk man only dug three feet further and made millions. In Hill's words, "Failure is a trickster with a keen sense of irony and cunning. It takes great delight in tripping one when success is almost within reach."

So what happened to Mr. Darby after he quit the gold mine? In Hill's words:

"Long afterward, Mr. Darby recouped his loss many times over, when he made the discovery that DESIRE can be transmuted into gold. The discovery came after he went into the business of selling life insurance. Remembering that he lost a huge fortune, because he STOPPED three feet from gold, Darby profited by the experience in his chosen work, by the simple method of saying to himself, 'I stopped three feet from gold, but I will never stop because men say 'no' when I ask them to buy insurance.'"

Darby became one of a small group of fewer than fifty men who sell more than a million dollars in life insurance



annually; he owes his 'stickability' to the lesson he learned from his 'quitability' in the gold mining business.

Before success comes in any man's life, he is sure to meet with much temporary defeat, and, perhaps, some failure. When defeat overtakes a man, the easiest and most logical thing to do is to QUIT. That is exactly what the majority of men do."

### Nuggets

What are other lessons we gain from Hill's book?

- "Great achievement is usually born of great sacrifice, and is never the result of selfishness.
- "Every adversity, every failure, every heartache carries with it the seed of an equal or greater benefit."
- "Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire which transcends everything."
- "Patience, persistence, and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success."
- Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle."

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### JONATHAN SIMPSON

is a frequent contributing writer to CSM's Marketplace Exchange

## Music Review



### "We Are the Broken"

#### SEVENTH DAY SLUMBER

Executive Producers: Joseph Rojas, Dr. Terry Knighten, Jason Anderson, Ken Mary  
Producers: Brent Milligan and Jeremy Holderfield  
(VSR/Capitol 2014)

The lion-hearted gents of Seventh Day Slumber have returned with a sonic roar that will shatter every chain of pain and liberate listeners into God-breathed freedom. Their latest album both hearkens back to the vintage Seventh Day Slumber wall of sound while also pioneering fresh instrumental textures in the midst of often gritty subject matter.

Though *We Are the Broken* is not a concept album per se, it certainly does have a strong thematic cohesiveness about the healing grace and power of God. The struggles of a lost and drowning man shouts through "In Too Deep", while another man comes face to face with reality in the dynamic opener, "Goodbye".



The verses of "Nothing to Lose" brood over a skittering guitar before the song explodes in the chorus, which is both determined and desperate. The glorious title track offers a lifeline of hope with the declaration: "There's a light inside, the darkness can't defeat or destroy!"

We meet a sad young woman in "All She Wants", who is slowly giving herself away to men who don't love her, but she is calling out to Jesus for His mercy... "to find her way back home." The protagonists in "Comatose State" are numbed by disappointment, but are called prophetically to awaken and arise, while "Holding On" is a vivid reminder that we are sustained by a covenant-making, covenant-keeping God, even in our fiercest struggles.

"Trust in Me" is a beautiful and peaceful meditation on the unending Sovereign love of the Lord, directing our vision to Him, rather than the storm raging around us. "Skyscraper" is an inspiring worship offering to God that ends the album on a perfect note.

Once again, lead vocalist Joseph Rojas brings passion and authenticity to every moment, skillfully navigating between moments of full-throated intensity and graceful tenderness. Guitarist Jeremy Holderfield launches a melodic blitzkrieg, with riffs and solos that could (and likely will) make arenas bounce from coast to coast. Ken Reed's bass not only keeps the train running down the track, but leaps into the fray with well-timed interplay with the drums and guitars.

For more information, visit [www.seventhdayslumber.com](http://www.seventhdayslumber.com) or "like" Seventh Day Slumber on Facebook or follow them on Twitter @7thDaySlumber

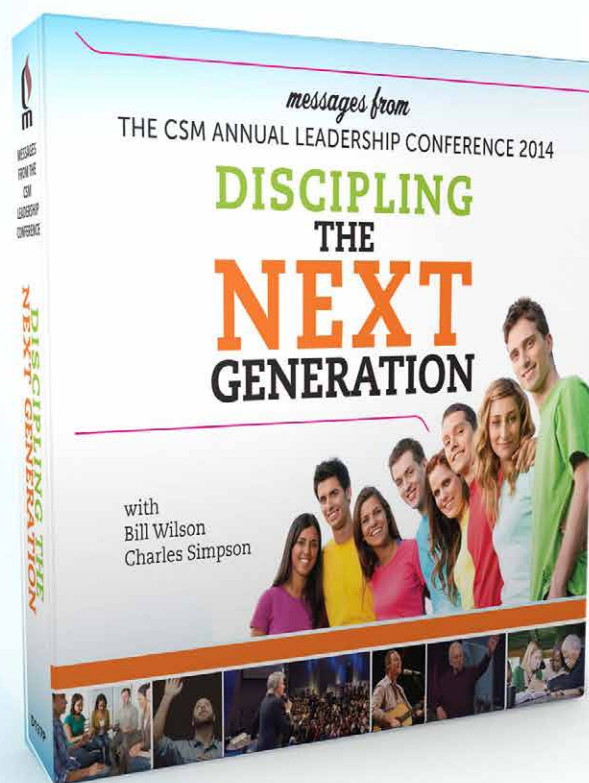


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