



# The Monthly Testimony

## February 2012

Vision: "Teaching, Preaching and Reaching Souls for Christ"

This publication is brought to you by the members of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church

# THE NETWORK



Computer networks have become important systems in today's competitive marketplace. They enable teams of workers in different offices, at regional sites, and even from around the world to join together on tasks that would otherwise be difficult if not impossible.

One way of setting up a network is to use a central computer to handle the main programming, storage, and communication functions, with remote workstations for individual input and retrieval. This is similar to the situation that Jesus described in His image of the vine and the branches in **John 15:1-10**.

**(1) Jesus is the key (15:1).** Like the central processing unit of a computer system, Jesus provides the life, the direction, and the commands for His followers, those of us "on line."

**(2) To be effective, believers must maintain their relationship with Jesus (15:4).** In order to use the features of a network, a user must remain attached to the network. If one "signs off," there is no more access to the central computer or to others in the network. Likewise, if we allow sin to disrupt our walk with Christ,

we lose fellowship with Him and with other believers (**I John 1:6-7**).

**(3) Jesus wants His followers to be productive (15:5-8).** Companies install computer networks so that their employees can get their work done. The systems cost too much to be treated as toys or to be underutilized. Correspondingly, the relationship that believers have with God was purchased through Christ's blood, so we need to take it seriously. Christ wants us to enjoy walking with Him, but He also wants us to accomplish His purposes.

**(4) To love Jesus is to follow His commands (15:9-10).** Occasionally network users receive an "error message" indicating that they have not followed the instructions of the program correctly. By the same token, Jesus has given us commands to follow, and the only way to experience His life and power is to obey those commands. To do so is not only practical, but also an expression of our love for the Lord.

Are you "on line" with Jesus, drawing on His resources and obeying His commands? Is your life productive, accomplishing the tasks and responsibilities that He has assigned to you?

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~ Pastor Troxler

# Fruitful Living

Most believers can recite the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (**Galatians 5:22**). Fewer people realize the *purpose* of the fruit. It is far more than a tool to make us better people.

When God’s power manifests through the Spirit’s fruit, it enables us to be His witnesses by:

1. Attracting nonbelievers to the body of Christ
2. Providing the relational qualities necessary for harmony within the church
3. Protecting believers from the destructive consequences of sin

### An attractive invitation

Nothing makes the kingdom of God more compelling to unbelievers than Christians who demonstrate the Spirit’s life within them. Jesus said it this way:

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (**Matthew 5:16**).

A life characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control is powerful. Unbelievers are not nearly as impressed with what we *say* as they are with how we *act*, especially under pressure. Peter says a godly life “silences” our critics:

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that *by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men*. (**1 Peter 2:13-15**, emphasis added).

A life characterized by the fruit of the Spirit cannot help but be noticed. It stands out like a candle in a dark room. It makes some people uncomfortable and others downright mad. But there will always be a handful who



say, “There’s something different about you. What is it?”

The Holy Spirit’s power was directly associated with the early church’s ability to witness effectively (**Acts 1:8**). Today, our world desperately needs to see men and women whose lives transcend the norm. It needs husbands and wives who really love each other, and Christian businessmen and women who put honesty before profit. This generation needs to see young people who haven’t just said “no” to drugs but who have said “yes” to a life of purity.

In other words, the world needs to see the evident work of the Spirit in our lives. It is the fragrance that invites nonbelievers to become members of the body.

### Working together

The Spirit also provides the relational qualities that enable members of the body to work together successfully. If the church is to accomplish God’s purposes—which includes sharing the gospel—there must be fruit.

Believers can fail to walk in the Spirit and yet still attempt to carry on the work of the church. When that happens, the result is similar to running an engine with no oil. A body of believers may have all the right gifts but without the Spirit’s empowerment, there will eventually be a breakdown.

On the other hand, when a group of Spirit-filled believers get together, there is a supernatural dynamic. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Things happen that have no human explanation. You can walk into such a group and feel the excitement and anticipation.

Continued on page 8



# Handling Change

## When God Alters Your Plans

### Focus Scripture: Proverbs 16:1-3

None of us like having our plans changed by others, especially if the alteration is not what we want. But how should we react when the Lord directs our lives down a path we didn't anticipate?

Knowing God's character and purposes helps us trust His wisdom—even when we don't understand or like what He's doing. Our response is extremely important. While we can't thwart His work by refusing to cooperate, any stubborn resistance or negative attitude will hinder our own fruitfulness, usefulness, and spiritual growth.

## Explore

### Who is the Lord?

**Psalm 135:5-6.** *God is sovereign, and He does whatever He pleases in heaven and in earth.*

**Isaiah 46:9-10.** *He knows the future and will accomplish His good pleasure.*

**Exodus 34:6.** *The Lord is gracious, compassionate, and patient.*

**Romans 8:31.** *God is for us—not against us.*

### What are His purposes?

**Isaiah 25:1.** *The Lord's plans were formed long ago in perfect faithfulness.*

**Psalm 33:10-11.** *He may nullify human strategies, but His own purposes will be accomplished.*



**Jeremiah 29:11.** *God's plans give hope and are for our welfare—not calamity.*

**1 Peter 1:6-7.** *He alone knows when trials are necessary to produce faith in us.*

**2 Corinthians 4:16-17.** *When He allows suffering, His goal for us is "an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison."*

### How should we handle change?

**James 4:13-16.** *Hold your plans loosely and leave room for God to adjust them.*

**Proverbs 16:1-3.** *Commit to the Lord everything you do.*

**Acts 16:6-11.** *When God closes a door of opportunity, remain watchful for another to open somewhere else.*

**2 Corinthians 4:18.** *Always keep an eternal perspective.*

## Reflect

1. What is your first response to an unforeseen change of plans? Does the thought of God's sovereignty over your circumstances scare or comfort you? Why?
2. Have unexpected situations, whether difficult or painful, caused you to distrust the Lord and His plans for your life? How could focusing on His character and good purposes restore your trust?

# Daily Devotional

## The Word For You Today

### STOP TRYING TO CONTROL EVERY-

**“A man of two minds [is]...unstable and unreliable and uncertain about everything.” James 1:8**

Do you have a compulsive need to find a solution to every problem, and to control everything? Do you always have a back-up plan in case things don't go the way you think they should? Have you noticed that the more you try to “fix” things, the more anxiety you experience? The Bible says, “The mind of the flesh [...sense and reason...]is death...But the mind of the ...Spirit is life” (Romans 8:6 AMP). “Fixing” is the opposite of “trusting.” Now God doesn't want you to be mindless or helpless, He just wants you to live by faith and not head knowledge. When you learn to trust God and operate in “the mind of the Spirit,” you experience peace even when you're surrounded by tough circumstances. One of the pitfalls of human reasoning

is that it causes you to become double minded and stuck: “A man of two minds [is] unstable and unreliable and uncertain about everything.” What frame of mind do *you* live in? Instead of always trying to figure everything out, learn to be comfortable not knowing and trust the One who does. Decide that each time you feel anxious you'll stop and pray: “Lord, I'm not going to try to figure this out myself, I'm bringing it to You, trusting You for the answer.” When you stop struggling with the whens, wheres, whys and hows, you start experiencing God's peace in a way you never have before. You also put yourself in a position where God can intervene on your behalf. So stop trying to control everything!



## *Changing Lives*

# Career Expo



**When:** Thursday, March 1

**Time:** 10am - 2pm

**Where:** Macedonia MB Church

Macedonia will be hosting a Changing Lives Career Expo. This event will provide the members of Macedonia as well as those in the community with employment opportunities, education (GED and College) resources, volunteer opportunities as well as workshops. This is a FREE event and all those unemployed, under-employed or just looking for a change are invited to attend. Check the Macedonia website or Facebook page for more details, or contact Sis. Beatrice Orns.



For God so  
loved the world...

John 3:16



HOW CAN YOU MEASURE GOD'S  
LOVE?



*But the Greatest of These Is LOVE!*

God shows love to us every day and in many ways. Fill in the blanks below with the missing letters to see how God loves us perfectly!

“For God so lo \_\_ ed the world,

that he g \_\_ ve

his on \_\_ y

begott \_\_ n

So \_\_,

\_\_ hat whosoever

believeth \_\_ n Him

should \_\_ ot perish,

but have \_\_ verlasting life.

—John 3:16, KJV

\_\_\_\_\_

## Memory Verse

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting Life.

John 3:16 (KJV)

# God's Conversation Hearts



**BE  
MINE**

**God wants us to accept His love.**

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

**John 3:16**

**SWEET  
TALK**

**God's Word is His love letter to us.**

*How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!* **Psalms 119:103**

**LOVE  
ME**

**God wants us to love Him.**

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.*

**Luke 10:27**

**Text  
ME**

**God loves us so much He wants to communicate with us.**

*Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.* **Jeremiah 33:3**

**I'M  
SURE**

**God's sure of His love and wants us to know we have a future with Him.**

*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* **John 14:1-3**

**TRUE  
LOVE**

**God loves us with true love as only He can.**

*I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.* **Jeremiah 31:3**

**BE  
GOOD**

**God tells us how to love Him back.**

*If ye love me, keep my commandments.* **John 14:15**

**CALL  
ME**

**God tells us to call Him when we are in trouble.**

*And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* **Psalms 50:15**

## How's Your Christian Heart?

The month of February isn't just for valentines, chocolates and failed New Year's resolutions. Checking one's Christian heart is important as well.

Macedonia has a new theme for 2012, provided to us by Pastor Troxler; **Fruit Bearing Disciples** Scripture says: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; lean not to your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight"* (Proverbs 3:5-6).

During The Women's Ministry meetings, we reflect on the purpose of this ministry; the future challenges; and goals we've been given for the New Year. It's great to be encouraged by scripture and

the body of Christ to focus on new beginnings and second chances for 2012.

As we press: *"Our mouths are filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy...the Lord have done great things for us, and we are filled with joy"* (Psalms 126:2-3).

### Quick Heart Check-Up for 2012:

Is there any un-forgiveness hidden in your heart? Isn't it a joy to practice daily scriptures with new praises and a renewed heart?

Submitted by Sis. Diane Storey

**References: New King James Version and Hope for a Woman's Soul: Meditations to Energize Your Spirit**

## Fruitful Living ~ continued from page 2

It is the power of God being released as a result of His children's willingness to allow His work in their lives. You see, our God loves to draw attention to fruit-bearing believers. Why? Because when people see our fruit, they glorify our Father in heaven.

### Divine protection

The Holy Spirit produces in us the rare virtues of faithfulness and self-control as protection. Of the nine qualities Paul lists, these are the two we need the most when temptation comes knocking. Consequently, we have a tendency to try to produce them on our own.

Consistent victory in our life is never the result of our trying to become more self-controlled. Think about it. How can *"self"* become more *self-controlled*? Can a wild animal tame itself? Would a puppy ever give itself a bath? Of course not. These things run contrary to natural instinct. In the same way, self will never deny something desirable.

Victory occurs when we turn our attention to the things of the Spirit. As a result, self-control and faithfulness are produced in our life, and we experience

the power necessary to overcome temptation. Only as we rely on the Spirit in this way can you and I testify successfully about God's deliverance from sin.

### Moving into position

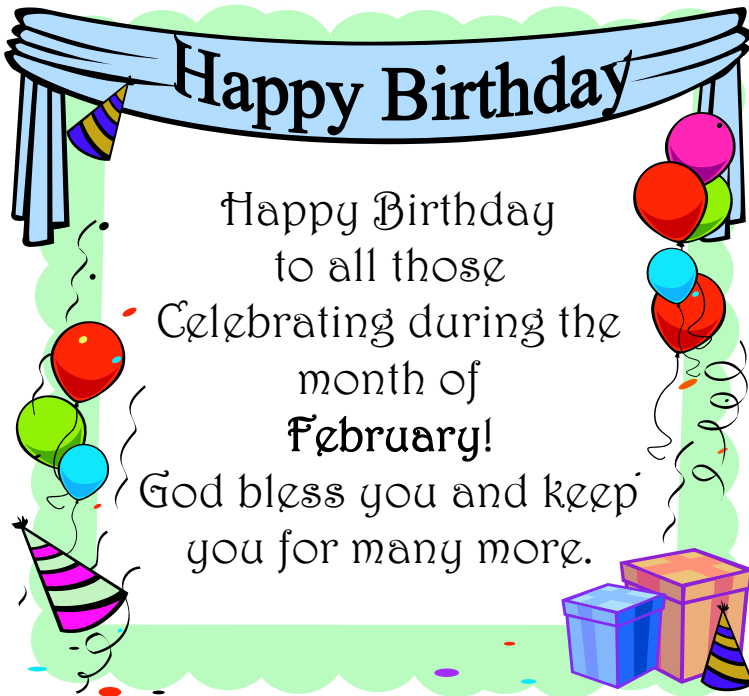
The Holy Spirit wants to make you an effective witness for Christ. He is more than willing to manifest His power through you to accomplish that. But first, two things must be true:

- 1) **you must be available to be used as a witness, and**
- 2) **you must bear fruit**

Once these two elements are in place, you will be surprised and amazed at His power. He will fill you with boldness and give you the inspiration to share the gospel in fresh new ways.

The Holy Spirit is ready: He knows what is needed and He's creative in making it happen. He is simply waiting for us to make ourselves available.





# Equipped to Serve Health Ministry



Equipped to Serve Health Ministry  
Will now meet every Monday  
**6:00p.m. - 7:30p.m**  
At the old church site.



Please  
**WELCOME**  
These New Members!

## January 2012

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Cheyenne Cochensparger | Nevaeh Roberson     |
| Brook-Lyn Glass        | Avair Shuford       |
| Shneda Henderson       | Ariana Shumate      |
| A'Dara Roberson        | Jessica Stephenson  |
| D'Aveon Roberson       | Joycelyn Winchester |
| Jaquorian Roberson     | Ny'Quaya Yore       |
| Jennifer Roberson      |                     |



Matthew 28:19  
*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

## January 2012

- Cheyenne Cochensparger  
Christopher Jones



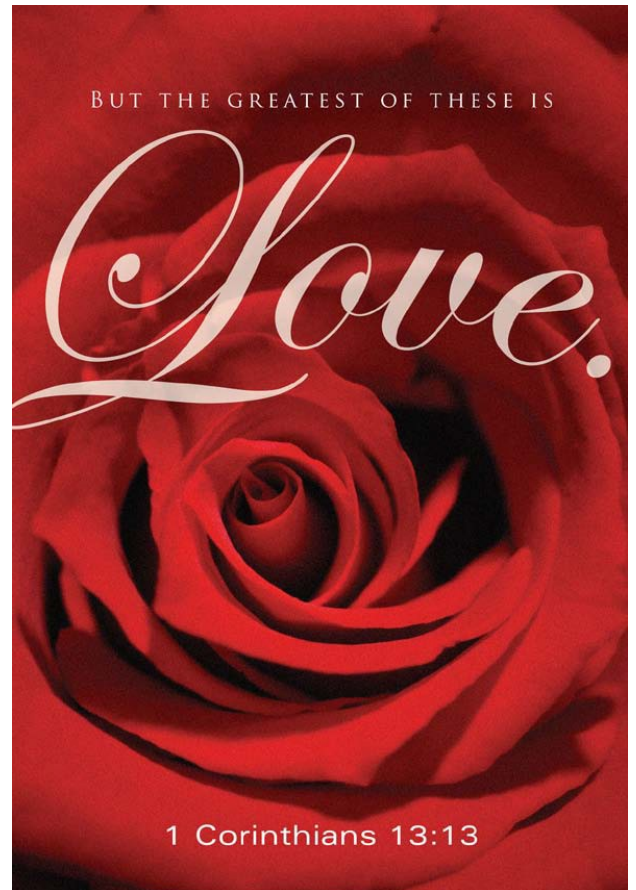
**etc.**

## Ponder this...

✠ “To love another person is to see the face of God.”  
—Lyrics from *Les Misérables*, Claude-Michel Schönberg

✠ “If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.”  
—Anne Bradstreet

✠ “Faith is a knowledge within the heart, beyond the reach of proof.”  
—Kahlil Gibran



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