



The Chronicle

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Rapture Ready, Perfection Required

Philip C. Bennett

The word 'Rapture' is not found in the Bible, but the principle is clearly taught in the Scriptures: *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)

Perfection: The act of perfecting or the state or quality of being perfect; the highest degree of a quality - from the Latin *perfectio* - a completing, to finish.

Ephesians 4:11-15: *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to*

and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

A while back, I heard someone commenting: *"What is wrong and why is nothing happening amongst us?"* It is easy to point the finger at where we feel the blame lies, but one song puts it this way: *'O Holy Ghost revival comes from Thee. Send a revival, start the work in me.'* Not in someone else, but start the work in me. We all need to take a good look at ourselves. At times we see the faults in others, but not in ourselves. Sometimes it is not the big sins that are tripping us up, but the *little foxes that spoil the vine*. These 'little foxes' are preventing us from being perfect and will cause us to miss the Rapture.

Little foxes like **impatience** which caused King Saul to disobey God and be rejected as king (1 Samuel 13:6-14).

Little foxes like **pride** which caused Lucifer's downfall (Isaiah 14:12-15) and the sins of Sodom (Ezekiel 16:49).

Little foxes like **stubbornness** which the Bible compares to iniquity and idolatry. This contributed to King Saul's downfall (1 Samuel 15:23).

Little foxes like **self-will** which again was displayed in the life of King Saul, who did things his own way (1 Samuel 13:12 and 1 Samuel 15:20).

Little foxes like being **short tempered** and quick to fly off the handle (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

Little foxes like **poor time keeping** and being early only for our own events, but not for others (St. Matthew 7:12, Philippians 2:4).

There are no 'big people' in God's House. We must be childlike and easy to be entreated. There are some members that are not easy to approach and as a Minister one has to brace themselves when approaching them about anything. The Ministers are given for our perfection. If they do not point out to us when we go wrong, we will never be perfected. We should not be puffed up when someone approaches us, to show us our shortcomings.

One of the reasons why we are not moving is because we have too many 'big men and women' in God's House. We need to be small enough to go through God's sieve - otherwise we are going to be discarded. In the secular world a lot is said about being assertive. There are even training courses to teach assertiveness. However, as Christians sometimes we have to give up our rights because we want to make it to Heaven.

If we are going to make it in the Rapture, we must be honest. Sometimes as a Minister it can be seen that something is wrong with a member, but when one approaches them, they state all is well.

If we are not honest, we cannot be helped. If we are going to make it in the Rapture, we cannot be like those who tell little **white** lies to get social security or other benefits. Today, there are a lot of organisations telephoning people and encouraging them to tell lies and claim compensation following an accident, even when no damage was done to them or their vehicles. Lying lips are still an abomination to the Lord. We need to tell the truth at all times and trust God to work things out for us. Anything we get must be lawful and obtained justly, not violating our consciences.

Some of God's people have become too worldly and are in everything that the world is into. We would not listen to worldly music on the radio, but feel it is ok to listen to it on 'The X Factor', 'The Voice' or 'Britain's Got Talent.' (1 John 2:15-17): *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."*

None of our sisters would go out on the street wearing just their underwear, but the world tells us it is ok to put on a bikini at the seaside. What's the difference? As children of God, we need to know how to dress at all times. If we would not wear it to Church, we should not wear it to work. We need to follow '**The Advice to Members**' which was given to us to help us reach to perfection and teaches against the wearing of rouge, lipstick and nail polish etc, which are used to satisfy the pride of life. God promised that: *"he will beautify the meek with salvation"* (Psalm 149:4).

A part of the perfection programme is the preaching of the **One Fold message**.

Sometime we are reluctant to preach it for fear of offending people. But it is not our Church, it is God's Church and God has revealed it to us by divine revelation.

Joseph was a type of Christ and exemplified divine revelation. He was beloved of his father but hated by his brethren. He was hated even more when he received divine revelation from God. A recent Sunday School lesson said that Joseph was unwise to reveal his dreams to his brothers but when God gives us divine revelation in our hearts, it has to come out of our mouths. Jesus said if we hold our peace, the rocks and the stones will cry out. We have to let the world know that Jesus organised one Church and that He is coming back for one church - whether they are offended or not.

As God's children, we must love one another with a perfect love - without hypocrisy. By this shall all men know that we are His disciples (1 Corinthians 13:1-7, 13): *"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."*

We need to break up our fallow (unploughed) ground if we are going to make it in the Rapture. These are the things that are hindering our progress. Jeremiah 4:3 says *"For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."*

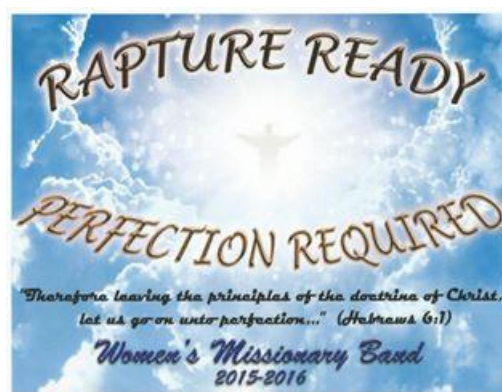
I love gardening and growing my own vegetables, but for the last few years I have not ploughed the ground. This has resulted in it becoming overgrown and hard.

Every time I look at the plot and think about the beautiful vegetables I could be growing, I am put off by the hard work it is going to take to prepare the soil. Consequently, I put it off a little longer. I could just dig some holes and plant the vegetables anyway, but do you know what will happen? The weeds and the thorns will choke the vegetables so they will not mature.

Sometimes, it is like that in our spiritual lives. We see and know what we have to do to attain perfection, but are put off by the effort that it will take.

The time for talking about being perfect is over. It is time to stop talking and to get ourselves ready for the Rapture. 📖

(Part of National Overseer's address during National Convention 2016)

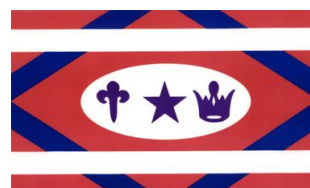


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Brenda Prince	National Reporter
Karen Richards	Assistant Editor of <i>The Chronicle</i>



From the Overseer's Desk

We thank God for a wonderful National Convention in July 2016.

Sometimes the thought of perfection can be scary, but during our National Convention God helped us to more fully understand the perfection He is expecting of us. This is to fully follow His leading and to do that all He demands of us.

In August 2016, Sister Victoria, myself and fifteen others from England were able to attend the General Assembly of The Church of God in North Carolina, USA. This was a glorious event where God met with His children. Let us continue to pray for our General Overseer, Bishop Pimentel and his family, who did a great job in moderating the Assembly.

As you may already be aware, there were a number of changes in appointments including our own Brother Jason Prince who been appointed as the National Overseer of Spain. Again, please remember Brother Jason and his family in prayer.

With the new Assembly year before us, let us do all we can for Christ and His Church. May this verse and chorus from a song by Fanny J. Crosby be an encouragement to us:

*To the work! To the work! We are servants of God,
Let us follow the path that our Master has trod;
With the balm of His counsel our strength to renew,
Let us do with our might what our hands find to do.*

*Toiling on, toiling on,
Toiling on, toiling on,
Let us hope, let us watch and pray,
And labour till the Master comes.*

Upcoming Event:

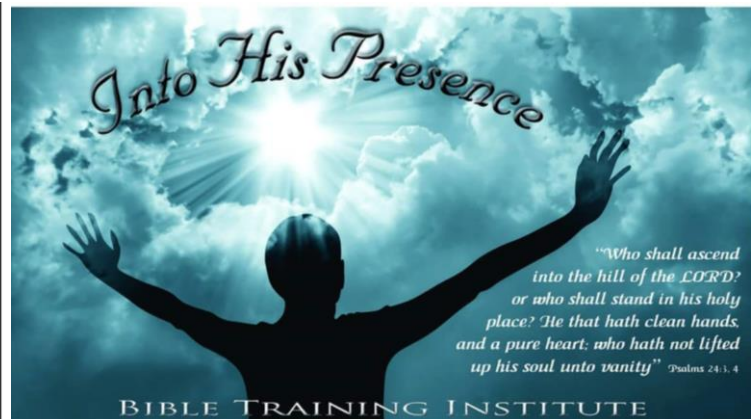
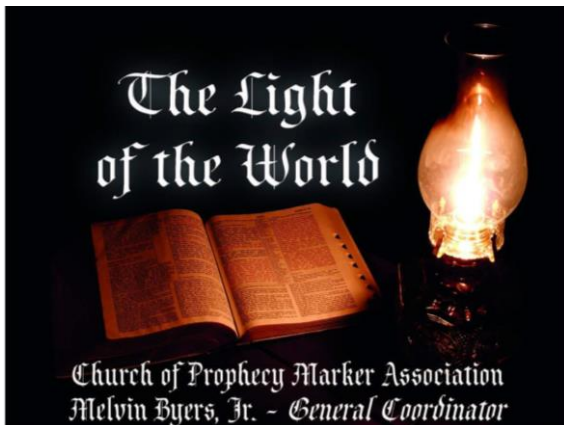
National Ministers' Convention – **Saturday 12th November 2016**



CPMA/BTI BOOST

Stuart Brown - National CPMA/BTI Co-ordinator

The general Church of Prophecy Marker Association theme for the assembly year 2016-2017 is:
'The Light of the World'



The new general Bible Training Institute theme for the assembly year 2016-2017 is:
'Into His Presence'
 (Psalm 24:3-4)

Greetings in the name of Jesus. I thank the Lord for His mercy and goodness to us. I wanted to encourage us from part of the message I had from National Convention. I believe it will help us as we seek unity with God, as we have been encouraged in our General Assembly of 2016.

Partake of the Divine Nature

'Partake' means to take a share or portion of, or to take part in activity. The 'divine' is a characteristic unique only to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is God's blessing and gift to us, that we can be made partakers of this unique virtue. The only nature the Church should have and display is the divine one. We will soon reach perfection if our nature is right and as a result, our works will be right.

Our nature governs all that we do! All our actions/works are a reflection of what our nature is. If our nature is carnal, our perspective on spiritual things will be carnal, corrupt, and lead to conflict and schism! A person will drift into conflict with the Bible, conflict with the Church; devalue of doctrine, sound advice and eventually resistance to the Holy Ghost.

Yet if our nature is that of the divine, we break free and clear from all influences that will mar our perfection. The divine, where God resides, is free from all earthly, human reasoning and standards. It frees the partaker from all barriers that prevent the Christian from walking with God and experiencing the beauty of holiness! The divine nature is not influenced by political views! It is not built on roots and culture or race! It is not built on man versus woman or old versus new! The divine nature is not born out of tradition and trends! The divine nature from God is above all of that!

The divine is far above the competition of the religious world! We can rest in confidence in the truth as Christians in The Church of God. God is not in competition with the Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists etc. My Bible teaches me in Acts 11:26 that the Church was already functioning and they were only labelled as Christians first in Antioch. Also, that Jesus said in St. John 8:58 **"...before Abraham was, I am."** We should not be intimidated by this world of religion as the divine is above that melting pot! (Our mind set/way of thinking is to be renewed).

Big one! The divine nature is not determined or governed by personal convictions! I want to encourage us to be careful about not allowing the area of personal conviction, to become a replacement for the divine nature. God has a perfect way, a perfect format. Lean not unto thine own understanding (personal thoughts /feelings) in all the ways acknowledge Him (the divine) and He (the divine) will direct your paths. (Cited from Proverbs 3:5-6)

I know we have touched on different topics in the Church. Some sensitive, some hard to hear, some just misunderstood - our adornment, relationships, work, entertainment, personal convictions to name a few. I encourage us to partake of the divine nature, and let that govern our actions and the outcomes of these areas.

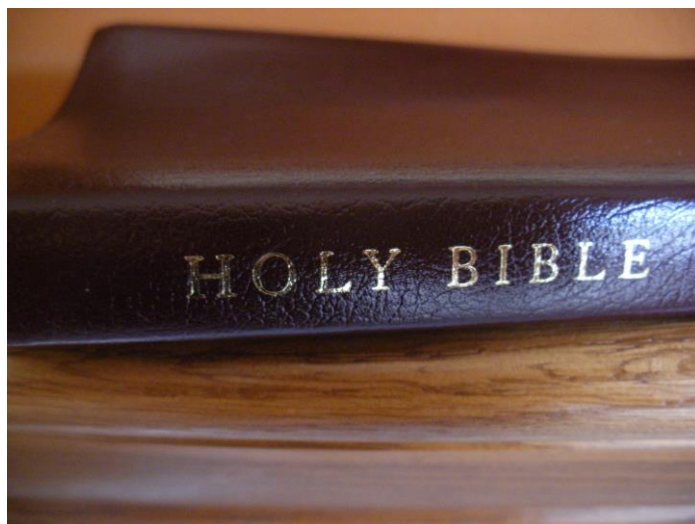
When we obey and do that which the divine nature has revealed, then that is perfection.

Notices:

Bible Training Institute (BTI) First Term

Thanks to all who registered their interest for the first term. I will be contacting the group over emails and text so please check them to keep up to date.

Not yet registered? There's still time! Contact me: stup0p001@gmail.com or
Mobile: 07951 024603.



Sunday School Department



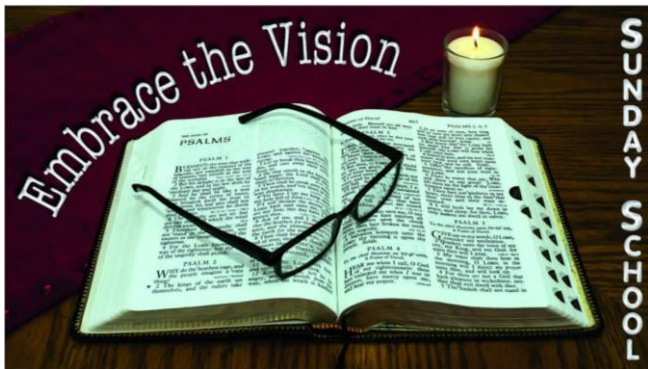
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SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Jennifer Thompson - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The new general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2016-2017 is:

‘Embrace the Vision’



Isaiah 54:13: *“And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.”*

To God be the glory. The Lord blessed us with two glorious weeks of VBS (Vacation Bible School). The theme *“The Fruit of the Spirit”* was a continuation from last year’s theme. We also had teachings on Communion and Feet Washing. There were 25-31 in attendance over the two week period and six new

students.

On Tuesday 9th August 2016, the children were able to go to Sandwell Valley. It was a beautiful day; the children had fun and enjoyed their day out. Wednesday 10th August was our Presentation Day. The parents were invited to come and see their children’s work.

One thing that was a blessing and which worked really well was that the students were not allowed to have their mobile phones during VBS. This enabled them to interact better with one another and to enjoy the sessions without distraction.

Thank God for all of the faithful staff who made the sacrifice and commitment to the work; without them, VBS would not have been a success.

I have already been approached by one of the students who introduced me to his friend, asked if he can come to VBS next year and whether it can be on for three weeks! ☺

I would also like to say a special thank you to all the ladies for the tasty food which they cooked for us.

Please pray for VBS. Thank You Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Thank you all.



VICTORY LEADERS BAND BOOST

Claudine Brown - National Victory Leaders Band Co-ordinator

The new general Victory Leaders Band theme for the assembly year 2016-2017 is:

'All as One'

(Ezekiel 22:30)



Victory Leader's Band 2016 - 2017

Greetings in the name of our King, Saviour and Deliverer.

Here we are at the start of another convention/assembly year – what is a year nowadays?! Time is surely winding up; there is still work for us to do and God is still looking for willing workers in His field. Youth – this is a GOOD TIME to be serving God. We are in the last few moments of time and may be witnesses to God finally closing the book on this present world.

Our General VLB theme for 2016-17 is **'All as One'** and we have a new General VLB Co-ordinator; Brother Joshua Farthing.

Please pray for him, his family and his ministry. We are so very grateful to our former General VLB Co-ordinator Brother Dustin T. Hays who by the grace of God did a wonderful job leading the band. There have also been some changes in our local VLB leader team. I will share these with you at our upcoming National Ministers' Convention.

Our theme is simple – and powerful. In a word, it means unity. Jesus prayed for it in St. John Chapter 17, our unity with each other and also our unity with Him. Why is it so important for us to be unified? St. John 17:21 **"...that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.** Also, unity is necessary for the perfection of the Body of Christ. The perfected Church will be a unified one. I am currently reading BTI material that goes further into this and will share more in our National Ministers' Convention, God willing.

As this theme is explored throughout your VLB services, let it sink deep into your hearts. David asks us in Psalm 133:1 to **"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."** It is the perfect will of God and should therefore be at the forefront of our hearts.

Please continue to pray for my family and I as we work for Christ. We want our labour to be effective and to bring glory to God. If you feel inspired and have any ideas for the promotion and building of the band, please do not hesitate to share them with me. Youth pull youth – be a light in your environment and, I love this encouragement from 1 Peter 3:15 **"...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"** That answer may just help to win a soul. God bless and keep you all.

National Convention 2016

The Church of God in England came together once again for its annual National Convention which took place on the 8th-10th July, 2016. The Moderator was Bishop Philip C. Bennett, National Overseer. The theme was **Rapture Ready, Perfection Required**.

Brother Jason Prince delivered the Evangelism programme and gave his report. An encouragement followed, topic: '*Believe ye that I am able to do this?*' St. Matthew 9:28. He stated "The saying 'no-one's perfect' must come to an end one day. We must reach perfection. If we don't reach perfection, it's not in the leading (the Holy Ghost leads us to perfection) it's in the following. We have to be willing to strip down our attitudes, mind sets and secret sins."

Sister Wilhelmina Brown, National ABM Co-ordinator reminded us about the purpose of the Assembly Band Movement and gave her report for the Assembly year. The Band Leaders were asked to stand whilst the congregation appreciated them by giving them a round of applause.

Brother Stuart Brown, National CPMA and BTI Co-ordinator gave boosts for the CPMA and BTI departments. Brother Stuart spoke of having a joint arise shine next assembly year (all the churches in England having one arise shine). CPMA leaders were encouraged to utilise all of the resources available – media, audio and visuals to engage all in the CPMA services. A boost for BTI was then given. Brother Stuart stated if we want to go to heaven, we have to be rooted and grounded in the Word of God.

Brother Rikki Prince and Brother Jason Prince, National Camp Co-ordinators then followed with their Family Camp boost. Brother Rikki recapped what took place at Family Camp 2016 and Brother Jason gave details about Family Camp 2017. A fund raising initiative is scheduled for 26th November 2016 to aid this event.

Sister Karen Richards then followed with a boost for *The Chronicle*, the Church in England's national newspaper. The function was outlined, with an appeal from the readership to notice the deadlines and provide content for each edition. The Overseer encouraged each church to contribute articles.

Pastor Ray Prince preached a sermon with the topic: '*Be ye therefore perfect...*' taken from St. Matthew 5:48.

Pastor Beverley Anderson initiated the Women's Missionary Band programme with the chorus: '*it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.*' Many began to worship the Lord and cry out as they felt blessed by the words.

The WMB Leaders from the four local churches gave their reports to the Convention. Pastor Anderson gave her report. She visited all four churches in England during this Assembly year. During this programme, Sister Brenda Prince gave a testimony of her experience of National Ladies Retreat 2016.

Brother Justin Clarke gave a boost for the National Men's Retreat. Brother Joshua Anderson gave a personal testimony from the first National Men's Retreat of 2015. The next retreat will be 30th September to 2nd October 2016 and the cost will be £125.00.

Sister Cynthia Opoku preached a message on the topic of: '*Restitution where possible*' from our Advice to Members. Sister Cynthia stated: "Restitution is not done once, but throughout our Christian life. Restitution is making amends with our fellow man."

Pastor Winston G. Spencer of Calvary Church of God in Christ greeted the Convention. Pastor Spencer stated "we only have x amount of time to live and no one can determine exactly how long that is. Whatever we have to do today, get it done. Tomorrow is not promised."

The Victory Leaders Band programme was directed by Sister Claudine Brown – National Victory Leaders Band Co-ordinator. There was a VLB march around the church, with banners displayed and the VLBs/Gleaners triumphantly marching, although Satan and his demons (represented by some brothers) were in their way. The local VLB leaders gave their reports to the Convention: Handsworth Church - Brother Joshua Anderson, London Church - Brother Justin Clarke, Long Lane Church - Brother Stuart Brown and Druids Heath Church – Sister Brenda Prince.

Sister Jennifer Thompson, National School Co-ordinator led the Sunday School programme. The Sunday School scholars led a march around the church while dressed in black and white and wearing Sunday School sashes. Beautiful banners were displayed as we marched and sang 'The B-I-B-L-E, yes that's the book for me' and 'W-E-L-C-O-M-E to our Sunday School'.

The National Overseer, Bishop Philip C. Bennett gave his annual address to the Convention. The topic was: "**Rapture Ready, Perfection Required.**" Brother Bennett acknowledged our brethren who have now departed this life - Sister Daisy Ming of Handsworth Church. We stood for a moment's silence.

Brother Bennett spoke of Church events that have taken place this Assembly year in England. All Pastors were acknowledged and received a round of applause. It was stated that Sister Jacqueline Davis has been appointed as Pastor for the Church in Biabou, St. Vincent.

In closing, Brother Bennett stated it is time for us to stop talking about being Rapture ready and BE ready.

Sister Brenda Prince - National Reporter

What's happening in London Church?

On the 1st-3rd and 8th-10th of August 2016, Sisters Lydia, Hannah, Rebekah Wilson and Brother Corey Clarke attended Vacation Bible School. They all enjoyed their time there.



The Wilsons had wonderful fellowship with the Clarke family on 19th August. We had prayer meeting at Sister Duncan's home the next day. We studied the book of Jeremiah. We also had a visitor in our service. She mentioned she was a street preacher, where she evangelises to people in places that Christians do not normally go (e.g. bars, clubs etc.)

Our Pastor, Sister Angela Clarke attended the General Assembly of The Church of God on 23rd-28th August 2016. This was near Asheville, North Carolina, USA.

Sister Rebekah Wilson – Reporter

Testimony Time

On Saturday 20th August 2016, our ABM Band 3 met at church to clean, and have prayer meeting. I moderated and the Scripture used was 1 Timothy 2: 1-8. All members shared something from this passage of Scripture. I was led to share about how my week had been: my struggles with the fear of losing my job, not able to pay my mortgage or provide for my family, etc. I felt like everything around me was falling apart. It was only the Friday of that week when I got my breakthrough, by sharing with a friend. I was reminded to let God lead me. "Lead me O LORD" was the topic for the prayer meeting.

In our service on Sunday 21st August 2016, Brother Stuart who was not present at the prayer meeting preached about all the things I shared in it on the previous day.

At the end of his message, an altar call was given. The Spirit of God manifested Himself and Sister Brown, led of the Holy Ghost, laid hands upon my head.

On Thursday 1st September 2016, I started to feel a twinge in my back. I recognised this as an early warning sign for back pain and decided to rest for the next 2 days. By Sunday morning, the pain worsened, so I asked for prayers. I felt stronger that evening and did not desire to take painkillers. As I reached for something, I heard a click in my back. I screamed out because of the severe pain I experienced.

Monday 5th September saw me in severe pain. A GP was unable to visit me, so after struggling for over two hours, I made my way to the surgery.

The next day, I took the pain killers which were prescribed to me. As they were so strong, I fell asleep and had a dream where I heard the voice of God say to me "the devil wanted to hurt your head and I will not allow that. Hence that is the reason why he hurts your back." I woke from my sleep praising God and giving thanks to Him for His love.

*"O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good:
for his mercy endureth forever."*

(Psalm 107:1)

Sister Violet Hamilton
Long Lane Church

Special Note:

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