

Living
Testimonies 2

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Back with the Lord



Orlando, FL

Living Testimonies 2: Back with the Lord

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I Do! Do You?

On February 12, 2016, my nonprofit (FarMor Entertainment) hosted its 8th annual LIFT EVERY VOICE celebration in the Eight9 Event Center in Orlando.

At the end of this pre-Valentine’s Day showcase (featuring *some of the best* singers, dancers, poets and spoken word artists in town), was a big surprise. I *walked down the aisle* in a white, laced wedding gown with a train-length veil designed by Divinely Adorned.

A few months prior, after dropping Tyler at Saints Academy and waiting for the Washington Park Library to open, I found myself listening *repeatedly* to the song, “Seasons” by Donald Lawrence.²⁴

Yet, this wasn’t the first time I had heard it. In February 2013, two young ladies, Sherry Ponds and Ronalia Roberts, introduced me to the song, which they *boldly* ministered to through dance at LIFT EVERY VOICE (Part V): “Blessed & Highly Favored.”

Then the next year, David Stafford ministered to the same song at FarMor’s 6th annual stage show (“Speak Over Yourself”). Through mime, he brought everyone to their feet at Majestic—the venue I struggled with in Season 3.

So why was this song playing in my head, once again, and why, *this time*, was I envisioning myself *walking into my season*? I did not realize the symbolism of walking down the aisle in February 2016 to renew my vows to Christ until a few days before the show.

Here I was, finalizing the program for Part VIII: “I Do,” when the Holy Spirit reminded me of what my daughter, Elia, told me over a decade ago (before releasing *Living Testimonies* in 2005).

She said, “Mommy, when you write book two, call it “Back with the Lord.”

Now, Lia was about 7 or 8 years old and her brother, Malcolm, was about 4 or 5 when she made this remark.

The interesting part of it all was that, in 2004, I gave birth to my third child from a man who was *not* my husband (and yes, I was still legally married).

Feeling ashamed, I stopped going to church for a while. *How could the Lord use me in the midst of my mess?*

I had written a book declaring “God is good,” but I had fallen deep in sin. That’s when I heard the songwriter say:

“I was sinking deep in sin,
Far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within,
Sinking to rise no more.

But the Master of the sea,
Heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me,
Now safe am I.

Love lifted me! Love lifted me!
When nothing else could help,
Love lifted me....”²⁵

The Lord reminded me of His Word, “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God* (Romans 8:23). He also told me what to do.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9).

He assured me, *though my sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool* (Isaiah 1:18). Then by His grace, He gave me this same Word to preach at New Jerusalem Holiness Church (Women in White) in May 2016.

God is awesome! He looked beyond my faults and saw my needs. Like David, *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings* (Psalm 40:2).

That's why I love the Lord. That's why I praise Him. That's why I serve Him with my whole heart. That's why I *worship Him in spirit and in truth*. That's why I proclaim "the Lord's Mercies" in Psalm 103:1-5 (NKJV):

*Bless the Lord, O my soul;
And all that is within me, bless His holy name!*

² *Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:*

³ *Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,*

⁴ *Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,*

⁵ *Who satisfies your mouth with good things,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

With the release of book 1, the Lord led me to Christian Supplies bookstore, which supports local authors and publishers. It was there that I found the CD, "16 Great Gospel Classics Volume 1."

It featured some of my all-time favorites, including: "Changed" by Tramaine Hawkins; "I Told the Storm" by Greg O'Quin; and "Still I Rise" (my mantra for life) by Yolanda Adams.

There was one song, “Sea of Forgetfulness” by Helen Baylor, that I believe God wanted me to hear. The opening lines described exactly how I was feeling:

“I stand before You guilty and unworthy.
How can I be forgiven and holy...?”

Then the Lord comforted me with the chorus:

“Into the sea of forgetfulness
You’ve placed all of my sins
For I’m the one who keeps reminding You
Over and over again.

Into the sea of forgetfulness
As far as the east from the west
Seventy times seven
You’ve forgiven me....”²⁶

It wasn’t until I started studying the Word *to show myself approved* that I learned the Scripture (Psalm 103:11-12) relating to the song:

¹¹ *For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;*

¹² *As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

Therefore, I renewed my vows on 2/12/16, *presenting my body as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto the Lord which is my reasonable service.* (Romans 12:1)

Saying “I Do,” I promised to:

- Love the Lord, my God, with all my heart, mind and soul.
- Keep Him first and have no other gods before Him.
- Honor, adore, magnify and worship Him for who He is.
- Trust & obey Him and His Word.

Do you?