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*Introduction*

# **The Word of Faith**

*Seeing the Dead Raised*

**I**n ministry, I have always sought to know what God intended to do, when He intended to do it, and where He intended to do it, and then I worked to show up at the right time in the right place. That is the secret to success in speaking the word of faith. In my experience, whenever a believer stands in such a place and time, speaking through faith— with boldness— that which God has already revealed as His intention, then the power of God is released in accordance with the spoken word of faith.

We can and should speak according to faith in what God has revealed to us. What God intends, or purposes to do, is unmitigated certainty. It will happen. Yet, even though it is the truth in-waiting (about to happen), the doubting cannot say it in advance, because they are struggling with unbelief. Only the faith-filled can command with boldness that the amazing happen at once, before it comes to pass.

I remember the very first time I witnessed firsthand the miraculous power of God working in accordance with the word of faith....

### **The Dead Raised**

The year was 1955. The place was Ravenswood, West Virginia, USA. In those days of our youth, my wife, Shirley Ann, was expecting our only child, Brenda Jewel. We had not yet heard the call of God to Thailand. The call to the city of Ravenswood was foremost then. We knew of not one Pentecostal person of any type, Oneness or Trinitarian, in that entire county at that time. That summer, around August, we set up a tent that was about forty feet by fifty feet in size, and we held a series of revival services that went every night for a full month. Without any place to stay in Ravenswood, we moved in with my father, J.C. Cole, who lived in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Back in those days the road between Parkersburg and Ravenswood, old Route 2, was entirely of gravel—over forty miles of winding road laid alongside the Ohio River. We drove that long road many times, until we felt we knew its every curve and bump. For my dear wife it was even more arduous, because she was with child.

During the course of that tent revival, I preached every sermon I knew, at least twice or more. The Lord filled three people with the Holy Ghost, and we baptized sixteen people in the name of Jesus. All these people were from an organization called the United Brethren. The three who received the Holy Ghost were ladies, and, in fact, all three were widows. All sixteen of those people were very kind to us, although we were unable to persuade them to leave the United Brethren (except for the three widows). They would feed us, and at times one of the three ladies would take us in and allow us to stay in her home overnight, to save us from the long drive back to, and from, Parkersburg.

Our fledgling church in Ravenswood was off and running, with a grand total of three members, not counting us.

One of the three widows, Sister Barnes, became sick, and unable to attend church. This was one-third of our congregation! I will never forget the day the call came to us, at my father's home in Parkersburg, informing us of her approaching death because of sickness, and pleading for us to come and pray.

As I drove the forty-plus miles of rural road, I prayed, sought God, and spoke with tongues, while I pressed the car as quickly as I dared, spinning the tires often, and spraying gravel in every direction.

I felt like God spoke to me that He was going to raise her up.

I believed God.

When I finally arrived, I found that the house was full of people. Sister Barnes had a large family of about twelve children, and they were all there. Also there were the doctor and the United Brethren pastor, named Zigler, from whose church our new members had come. (Back in those days a doctor would actually come to treat the sick at their house.)

Sister Barnes lay dead in a bedroom. The doctor had already closed her eyes, and had pulled the sheet up over her head. When I entered, the doctor said to me, "You're too late, preacher. She's already gone." He went to the kitchen to get a cup of coffee.

I entered the bedroom, and told the family, "On the way over here, I prayed, and I felt like God spoke to me that He was going to heal her. If you would like me to, I will pray for her."

At that moment, Sister Barnes' daughter, Bonnie – who loved her mother dearly and who had worked her fingers to the bone caring for her mother – collapsed to her knees and screamed at the top of her lungs, "Yes! Please pray for my mother!" There was no opposition.

I walked over to where Sister Barnes was laid, and I carefully pulled the sheet off of her face. I prayed over her. Nothing happened. I prayed over her again, louder this time. Still, nothing happened. I turned my face to the wall, and I prayed in tongues, very loudly. Sister Barnes was still lifeless. I got angry. Suddenly, I shouted very, very loudly, "Sister Barnes, GET UP!"

*And she did.*

Sister Barnes resurrected. She sat up and asked for something to drink. The United Brethren pastor, who had been standing at the time, became as stiff as a board and fell to the floor, like a felled tree, landing face down. Shortly afterwards, the doctor stated (referring to me), "Next time, call him instead of me!" It was T.W. Barnes who later explained to me what I had done, in speaking the word of faith.

At that time, I was young and inexperienced.

I was not yet very well trained or mentored. Had I only known what to do, and how to handle the situation, we could have seen a great harvest as a result of the miracle that was done. But I did not know what to do. However, this experience cemented in my mind an understanding of seeking God, learning of His intentions, and then speaking the word of faith in obedience to His will. Down through the years, this has been a major element in the foundation of my ministry for the Lord Jesus.

We continued to live by faith, both spiritually and with regard to our finances. There were times when we had to pry up the car seats to search for old coins with which to buy used motor oil. In those days the roads were very narrow and crooked. Some of the curves were so sharp that you could almost see your own license plate on the back of your car.

During those days we sang special songs by memory. I loved to hear my wife play her accordion and sing. We had more than a hundred songs that we sang, and many people enjoyed our singing. In fact, we sang at the general conference one year. Our singing was a powerful component of our ministry.