

Dear Friend,

My parents did a good job of raising me up to know the Lord. I don't ever remember not being in church on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. Mom would teach Sunday school often during those formative years of my childhood. My dad had a wonderful bass voice, and he would often sing in the choir.

Even though we moved to a new city about every six months because my dad's career was in construction, my parents always found a church to attend in every new town. Those churches were faithful to preach Christ, and Him crucified. They preached the basic gospel message very well, and I have seen many a hardened sinner be convicted of sin, come at the invitation, kneel at the altar, and be gloriously saved in those churches. Thank God for each and every church who preaches Christ and him crucified.

They preached many other messages besides the basic message of the cross. If I were to boil the essence of those messages down to simple statements, they would say things like ... Gary, you need to have more faith. Gary, you need to walk in more love. They were absolutely correct. I did need to have more faith. I did need to walk in more love. The question that none of them answered however was ... HOW do I have more faith? HOW do I walk in more love? Those pastors were great men of God. They did their best to help their people. But they simply did not know the answer as to HOW do we grow in faith and love.

God has always been so good to me, even during periods of my life when I was not faithful to Him. He has always been the Good Shepherd to come looking for this sheep whenever I would stray from the path. He would do this through godly men who would correct my wandering and bring me back to God. The first one he sent was a young man named Michael Muccio. The love of Christ so emanated from him that I was drawn back to the cross through his teachings. I have never left God again.

Michael himself taught me many foundational truths, and he was the one through whom my wife and I received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. What a difference that made in our lives! The Holy Spirit is the HELPER that Jesus has sent us from the Father. I thank God for the help of the Holy Spirit every day.

Michael also connected me to the teachings of Kenneth E. Hagin, Sr.. It was through him that I learned the answer to one of those early questions; HOW do I have more faith. I believe "Dad" Hagin was commissioned by the Lord Jesus Himself to relay the foundational truths concerning FAITH back into the church again. He wasn't teaching anything strange or "new." All of these truths were already in the Bible. But somehow, they had been lost to the churches over the centuries.

How important were those teachings to me? In my early forties I developed melanoma cancer. The doctors only gave me six months to live. Had it not been for the fundamental teachings on faith I had learned from Kenneth Hagin, I have no doubt that cancer would have killed me. Thank God for learning about faith, and for men who accurately teach it today ... no matter the persecution they receive from organized religion.

When I was forty five years old, I walked for the first time through the doors of the Family Prayer Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The pastor was Dave Roberson. There was a “presence” of God in the service that was different from anything I had experienced before in my lifetime. His teachings were so advanced that ninety percent of it was way over my head. But I understood enough of it that I was hooked for life. I have been a good student for about a quarter century.

I believe pastor Dave was assigned by Jesus to relay the foundational truth concerning the benefits of praying in tongues, meditation of the Word, fasting and worship ... in the same way that Kenneth Hagin had been assigned to relay the foundational truth concerning faith. Dave Roberson was the first pastor I had ever heard who really emphasized this passage:

**Jud 1:20-21 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, (21) Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.**

“Building yourselves up” ... how? ... praying in the Holy Ghost. I learned that meant praying in other tongues. And not only building up myself, the real me, the spiritual man on the inside of me, but at the same time ... it would keep me in the love of God. Dave would often say, *“Trying to walk in more love is useless. That is just human effort, and you will quickly come to the end of your own effort. But it is not hard to walk in love when love is what you are.”*

The assignment of the Holy Spirit is to conform you to the image of Christ. Dave would often bring us back to this verse:

**2Co 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**

I could go on and on, but then this letter would become a book. Thank God for connecting me with true shepherds that would feed me truth from the Word of God. Kenneth Hagin Sr. went home to be with the Lord quite a few years ago. Last month, our beloved pastor Dave Roberson went to be with Jesus also. What a celebration in heaven there must have been when he entered there.

All of us, around the world, whom Dave has touched with the love of Christ will miss him dearly. But we also thank God for the faithful labor he did for Christ by mentoring all of us.

Yes, we mourn, but if we truly want to honor Dave Roberson, let us take what he taught us and use it to win the world for Christ. Many times we have heard Dave say, "Show me your dust." Let us do exactly that.

Your fellow servant,

GARY