

Works of Grace

GRACE COVENANT INTERNATIONAL

December 2021



Touching Lives for Jesus



“Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, “From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise?” MT 21:16



Each December leading up to Christmas, Pastors Amalia and Pedro Urcia with their team, lead an outreach to children who live in villages along the river tributaries of the Amazon Rain Forest around Iquitos, Peru. This year the effort extends from December 8 through December 23. They will reach nearly 5,000 children not including their parents. Amalia and Pedro are our point GCI-Peru leaders. This outreach produces significant Kingdom fruit through the declaration of the Gospel. Our GCI Family gets behind this effort with contributions through VisionVestors. We help with the purchase of gifts and supplies to bless these children. We want to sincerely thank all who prayed and contributed toward this effort. Please read Pastor Amalia’s message to you. 

To the GCI Family:

“We started the Christmas Day celebration, thanks to your support. We are able to reach many children. We offer them toys and chocolate and above all, we share God’s Word to the children and parents. As a result they accept Jesus. He fills you with great joy and satisfaction to see the Glory of God. Each day, (until December 23) we will continue to win children and parents to Christ. Thank you for your helpful finances.”
Pastor Amalia Urcia-Grandma

Ghana Ministry House Update



The purchase of this property in Ghana is to serve to as our West African ministry base has been an incredible step of faith for GCI Missionaries Lori and Rob Mangus. We give Glory to God and big thanks to donors across our Ministry Family that enable this purchase to be completed. As you can see, it is sizable property.



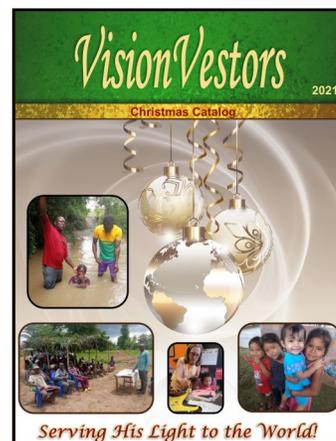
The center structure will house the GCI-West Africa office. To the left of that, there is a 3 bedroom / 2 bath missionary residence. To the right, with the separate entrance, are four efficiency apartments. There will be room for mission teams, training events and much more. Thanks again to all of you who made this possible.



I'm a believer in Divine Appointments. I've seen God orchestrate them all of my life. My (Dallas Elder) recent trip to Ghana was a great example. On the overnight flight from New York to Accra, I sat in a row with Kenneth (center-left picture). He is originally from Ghana, lives in Virginia and is leading church planting in his home area in Ghana. He and this pastor came to our GCI-Ghana conference.



Then there was Pastor Ayite (center-right picture) from another part of Ghana. He found our website a few months ago. I connected him with Rob and Lori, and communicated with him that we would be having our conference in October. He and his wife Mary chose to come. When they arrived, they saw our small group. They expected something much larger. They decided to stay. God powerfully ministered to them. Pastor Ayite told me this story. His father was a voodoo (witchcraft) priest. When Ayite was around 20, he became a Christian which infuriated his father. He went to college which his dad paid for. Upon graduation, Ayite was called of God to be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. At that point, his father totally rejected him. I had the honor of praying a father's blessing upon him. Prophecy and affirmation flowed. Mary was also powerfully blessed by God for her ministry. They intend to become part of our GCI ministry family.



Our VisionVestors Christmas Catalog 2021 is now available. Learn ways that you can be a blessing this Christmas season. View projects that are touching lives and changing the world.

www.visionvestors.org

*Declaring
the Whole
Counsel of God*

Grace Covenant International Ministry Conference 2022

Our GCI Ministry conference 2022 will be March 15-18 in Platte City, MO. Make your plans now to attend this Kingdom event. It will underscore our 2022 theme: "Declaring the Whole Counsel of God." Our theme is from the words of the Apostle Paul. ***"For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. (Acts 20:27-28)*** This is a time for you to join with ministry and church leaders, to be refreshed in your spirits, strengthened in your faith and encouraged to accomplish your specific Kingdom purpose. Do your advanced planning and make your plans now to attend.



Join Us!

**Our next MSI
Ministry Training
Course is
Feb. 5,12,19, 2022
through Zoom.**

Register now!

"The Ministry of the Holy Spirit" Start the new year investing in your spiritual growth and equipping to minister to others. You will learn about the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, His fruit, His gifts and anointing for ministry. This course taught by Dallas Elder, extends over three consecutive Saturdays. Register by email or online at www.MSIgc.com.

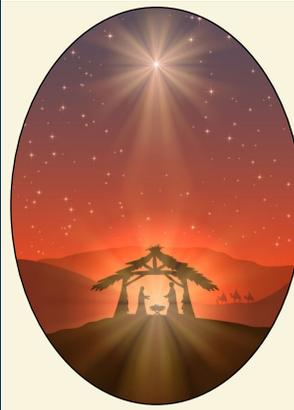
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Christmas: God in the Details

By Dallas Elder

You've probably heard the statement: "The devil is in the details." Let me say this: "God is in the details." It was never more apparent than in the Christmas Truth. I hesitate to say Christmas Story as if it is "make believe." It isn't! There is a lot of "make believe" surrounding Christmas. The Christmas Truth is meant to lead you to believe in the incredible love of God and His miraculous sending of the Savior. It's an invitation for you to know Jesus and to receive His forgiveness for your sins, to experience His Peace and Presence in your heart and receive of His gift of eternal life. Amazing and miraculous as the Christmas event seems, it truly happened. There are a number of sacred threads that God wove together and presented to the world in one magnificent tapestry. 800 years before the angel spoke to a young teenage girl, the prophet Isaiah said, ***"The Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel (God with us)."*** (IS 7:14) The prophet gave further details, ***"And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*** (IS 9:6) To Mary, the young virgin, the angel said, ***"You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you shall call him Jesus."*** (LK 1:31) You have to totally admire her humility and faith. She simply asks, "How will this be since I am a virgin?" The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." There was the detail that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived in her old age, a confirming miracle. Elizabeth testified and prophesied to Mary about the Savior in her womb.

When Joseph heard of Mary's pregnancy, he resigned to end their betrothal quietly. But an angel appears to him and says, ***"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*** (MT 1:20-21) It would appear that Joseph had heard this unbelievable story from Mary. Now God brought him into the loop. You, Joseph, have the assignment of being the earthly father to the heaven-sent Son of God. You are to give him the name Jesus! Ding, ding, ding! Confirmation!

Then there was this fascinating detail. About the time, Mary was to give birth, a decree was issued that everyone had to go to their home town to register in the Roman census. Well, Joseph and Mary got to Bethlehem, the City of David, which was Joseph's home town. It was there that Mary gave birth to Jesus, in a manger because there was no hotel room available. Micah (5:2) prophesied 700 hundred years prior that the "ruler of Israel" would from of Bethlehem. The Son of David is born in the town of David. Note God's orchestration!

Then there was the angelic birth announcement to the shepherds. An angel says; ***"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has***

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been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (LK 2:10-14) They went into Bethlehem and found Joseph, Mary and the baby lying in the manger as the angel said. Interestingly, the shepherds came to the town of David, who was a shepherd, to view the Good Shepherd. God, as a grand conductor, orchestrated these fantastic events together as if directing a crescendo of a symphony. ***"But when the time of fulfillment had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman."*** (Gal 4:4) The Messiah is manifested on earth for the salvation of the world and Heaven explodes with praise. God is in the details! Hear this story.

"I know of a mother who can attest to this. She decided to end her life. The twists and turns had taken their toll, and she was out of cope. She planned her exit down to the last detail. One of those details was a trip to the bookstore to purchase a children's book for her kids. It would be a parting gift. She asked the store owner to make a recommendation. He took her to the shelf that contained a book called *Tell Me the Story* by Max Lucado. The mother made the purchase. I know what happened next because she wrote me a letter on the back of the bookstore sack."

"This is just a short note to say, "Thank you" for your wonderful book, *Tell Me the Story*. I went to the bookstore today to purchase gifts for several people. For several weeks I have been playing with the idea of killing myself. I have been struggling for years to really "believe and feel" that God is real. I bought this as a "good-bye present" for one of my children. I had no idea what the book said, but it was supposedly Christian and had a pretty cover.

For the next several hours I drove around, crying. I was waiting until my children would be asleep so that I could go home, leave their presents, and disappear

forever. God led me on a little detour, though. My car ran out of oil, and the engine started making that "clicking" sound. I tried to find an open Express Oil or something, but everything was closed. I was frustrated because I needed my car to stay in one piece long enough for me to go home and then go back to some nearby railroad tracks.

I pulled into a nearby parking lot and was sorting through the presents and writing little notes of encouragement on each. For some reason I decided to "waste time" by reading *Tell Me the Story*. I was really touched....I felt as if I was really able to "know" Jesus in a different way. Instead of killing myself tonight, I'm going to go home and keep rereading the book. I want a relationship with God....I'm going to turn my car around, mail this letter and go home and read a story to my kids." (From *You Were Made for This Moment* by Max Lucado.)

The Christmas Truth reminds us that God is in the details. He simultaneously orchestrates promises, people, timing and events for His glorious purpose and our best welfare. He will do so for you. I encourage you this Christmas season to reflect back and consider scenes in your life history, where you can trace His hand. As you see His faithfulness, be assured that He is present and at work in the here and now. Furthermore, take confidence that He will be active in the seasons of your life that await you.

On the other hand, if you do not have Jesus as reference point in your life. To date, He hasn't seemed real or believable, I encourage you to do this. Know that He came into the world to be your Savior. Regardless of where you are in your life, He is near and present. He desires a relationship with you. He will show you, HE IS REAL. He is waiting for your invitation. Invite Him into your world. Ask Him to show Himself to you. He is just an ask, a prayer away. Please contact me if you would like to talk about it.

Christmas Blessings!

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