

IT'S NOT OVER

John 11:1-44

One would have thought that after Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, Jesus would drop everything and go to him. The bible says that Jesus loved this family, He loved them. They were His friends. People who love you rush to your aid when you are in need but with Jesus it doesn't matter the time he sets foot on the scene, because he will change any situation at any time. Our confidence is in Christ! We have Christ in us and we are created in the image of our father that means we always have to speak life into our situations. The currency of your miracle is on the tip of your tongue. So always guard your tongue. In Genesis, God spoke the light into existence and everything that was needed to create light came together. God speaks in whole and the pieces have to come together.

Lazarus must have had so much confidence in Jesus. See, Jesus had a reputation of performing miracles; healing the sick. I don't know about you but if I had such a friend and I was sick, it would be a no brainer! I would be bragging to my friends about how Jesus would come through for me. When you have relationship, you have confidence. However the situation with Lazarus went from bad to worse. I can imagine Lazarus pacing back and forth telling his sisters, "don't worry guys he will be here anytime soon. You sent word to him right? And they told you that he had received it. So let us wait. I know Him. He will not let me down!" But Lazarus waited and hoped each day until he died. How do you function in God's silence? We often think that God's silence is a punishment, but for us his children, it is the way He builds us up. God trains us in silence. He trains us with his voice and his word. Learn to rely on God's word. Have his word hidden in your heart for those times of silence.

Jesus waited two more days. He already knew what would happen. It must have hurt Mary and Martha that Jesus did not show up. It must have been painful to realize that the person they thought was a friend, turned his back on them when they needed him the most. May I pause here and say to you that; your pain is a setup; your tears are a setup. You are the only one in your family that God could trust to get through that pain. God does not sentence you to pain, he trusts you with it. It is easy to function when all you hear is; yes. Can you function in your ministry when you hear No? Can you Worship with the same passion in your 'no' as you do in your 'yes'?

Irene Kiarie

THE MYSTERY OF MENTORSHIP

Mentorship involves at least 2 or more persons. Mentorship is thus rooted in relationships. Relationships are the primary thing God established for learning about and preserving His commandments. However, these close relationships are often lacking in today's society. Mentoring is a great way of raising up mature Christian disciples within the Body of Christ- the church. Proverbs 27:17; as iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Let's examine the definition of a mentor both in the secular world and the Christian circles. In the secular world, a mentor is defined as a person or a friend who guides a less experienced person by building trust and positive behavior. In the Christian circle, it refers to someone who facilitates growth and development spiritually by sharing experience and insight that has been gained through the years.

Jesus Christ being both God and human was the greatest mentor. He taught his disciples to follow and emulate Him by living with them (John 1:38-39). He asked His disciples to put away their current occupations to walk alongsid Him and learn from Him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ knew his assignment here on earth and in order to fulfill this assignment it would involve his own death. Christ's followers believe that Jesus is God, who came to earth and lived a perfect human life—which makes him the ultimate mentor. According to the Bible, Jesus invited twelve ordinary, working men to follow him. They learned from his teachings, his interactions with others, and ongoing conversations with him. He imparted knowledge and values through His words and actions. He showed the disciples that values of the kingdom of God were different from values of the world.

After his death Jesus appeared to his disciples and sent them out to do ministry after they had spent time with him. He wanted them to practice doing what He had shown them, (Luke 9:1-2, When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.)

Mentorship allows the mentee to gain knowledge and an advantage devoid of the pain of personal experience. The mentee avoids reinventing the wheel and simply grows into his own role and confidence on the wings of the mentor's accomplishments. Everyone seeking to gain new heights and aspiring for more must seek a mentor.

Julius Kangethe

FAITH FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL



THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Volume Twelve



THE FFMI-MA PHONE APP

By Eugene Kwakye

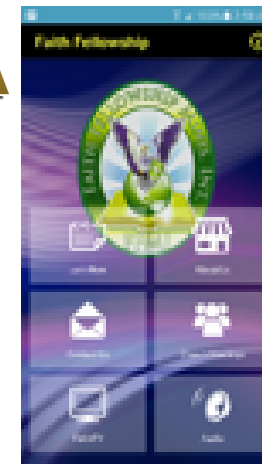
It was a cold winter night during one of my prayer times when the idea of a phone app just dropped into my mind. I grabbed pen and paper and quickly started to design something. I only knew something of that kind could be done but never knew the form and features it was going to carry. I quickly made a photocopy of the design and took it to church the next day. I showed the design to Pastor and told him we can consider building a phone app for the church. He said, "Oh yes this idea came to me some few years back but never had the support". He then encouraged me, if I could to go ahead and work on it. I accepted the challenge and contacted the New Ideas Committee, discussed the idea with them and got it on to the New Ideas Board. I just did not bother starting any work on it until after a couple of weeks, I heard Pastor comment on it during our Bible Studies service at church. After that night I came back and started working on the phone App. I frankly did not know the details and what actually goes into building an app until I started. Getting the right App builder was key so I spent time looking for the best with the highest ratings. When I found the builder I started studying the builder and how it works. Work on this app begun in February and was fully completed in early April. The whole of April was used to improve on the features and testing of the App.

The most challenging part of the whole project was getting the App to the various App stores; Amazon App Store, Google Play Store and Apple App Store. Every step that was done at this stage was my first time. I do have some knowledge in computers, programming and the IT language but have never had any training in App building. So it took me many hours to figure out many processes and how they work. I did not even know the financial implications of the use of some of the features and services until I realize I was going to need them. Getting the App over to the Apple App Store was the most challenging part of the whole project. It took a period of 4 to 5 weeks to get the app to the Apple App Store. The first submission to the Apple Review Team was rejected because Apple claimed our App was containing a feature that was asking for donations which implied that the app was for sale. We were given the option of taking the

Donation Button out or redirect it to open another browser outside the App which could be directed to our website and not in the Apple Store. We made the change and resubmitted the app. It was then, that our App was approved and sent to the App Store for iPhone users to access it. Since its successful launch on May 22nd, we have 103 users, 45 frequent users and 3,195 page views. To install the app, go to the Apple App Store, Google Play Store or Amazon App Store and search for 'FFMI-MA' and install.

Our phone app is a transformational tool. It will introduce FFMI universally and position us to be a preferred location and church of choice in the local and universal Christian community. It allows us to bring God's word and our church to everyone wherever they are. We take pride and joy in its launch but remain confident that its simplicity, convenience, ease of use, novelty and functionality will prove beneficial. This app is an effective evangelistic, advertising and informative tool bringing FFMI to the world. Many people all over the world have already accessed audio messages from the app and been blessed. With the app members can receive instant push notifications, watch Faith TV on their phones, receive information about upcoming events etc. Let's also promote it and share it with friends and family. I pray that as we share this app with others, may they find solace in Jesus Christ and be established in the faith.

In conclusion I want to appreciate the support and motivation of my Pastor, Pastor Stephen Aryitey, his wife Mrs. Monica Aryitey who worked tirelessly with me many nights to get this app up and running and to all the App Testers who were picked from Ghana, London, Virginia and Massachusetts here in the United States, and all the family of Faith Fellowship Ministries Int. for their prayers and support. To God be all the glory for the grace He supplies to us daily to do exploits.



WHO WE ARE

FFMI is a multiethnic and multicultural church. We exist to disciple Christians and fit them for the master's use irrespective of race, tribe or culture.

"Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy."

Revelation 22:11

OUR VISION

"Spiritual Excellence & Making Disciples of the Nations"

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And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.
Hebrews 11:6

25 High Street, Worcester, 01608 or www.ffmpegichapel.org

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{Great}
is thy
faithfulness.

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with thee; thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not; as thou hast been thou forever will be.

Refrain: Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed thy hand hath provided; great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

- Thomas Chisholm

The words of this great hymn resonates with me and perhaps provides the simplest yet most profound summary of the story of Faith Fellowship Ministries International (FFMI). The FFMI story is replete with challenges, questions, and abundant grace. If we have come this far, three things aptly capture our story; faithfulness, God being a rewarder and grace. God's faithfulness implies that He is strict and thorough in the performance of His duties; steady in allegiance and support and trustworthy (www.dictionnaire.com). Looking back on our journey; He has been our stone of help and proven Himself true via the scriptures. Jesus declared "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it" Matthew 16:20. He has indeed built His church in season and out of season, in great and turbulent times. Faithful is He.

David says in Psalm 24:1-2 "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; 2 for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters..." (NIV). Two words in this scripture standout: "founded" & "established". David boldly asserts an absolute truth that the planet earth belongs to the Lord our God. He is master and ruler over all things in it. In the second verse he informs us that the planet was founded-implying; initially planned, designed and built on seas. It's interesting that the greater part of the earth's surface is covered by water especially waters of the seas. According to researchers, 71% of the earth's surface is covered by the seas and oceans which contain 97% of the earth's water. Waters represent uncertainty, are unstable, and forced by Earth's laws especially gravity into the billowing nature of waves.

(<http://www.oceanicinstitute.org/aboutoceans/aquafacts.html>)

In Genesis 1:1-3 we find that these waters of uncertainty existed before God created order out of chaos. God did not get rid of the waters but he made land which provided sure footedness, and certainty in an uncertain world. God by this scripture indicates that no matter how uncertain the foundations, his purpose alone stands; for indeed, he is a planner, as confirmed in Jeremiah 29:11. Thus only faith presents the stability and

guidance in life's journey (Hebrews 11:6, Romans 1:17); hence our choice of name FFMI.

FFMI is purely a faith journey. Somewhere in the summer of 2008 when we had gone to 70 James Street to rent a room for prayer, the building manager enquired; "is there a name for your group?" I chirped automatically without thinking twice; "Faith Fellowship". Back then all I thought of was that we were moving in prayer and living by faith, that we would share fellowship in His presence as a people motivated by naught but our faith in God. How awesome He has proven himself, every step of the way. Hebrews 11:1 confirms that; God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Our past years have been a lesson in faith. FFMI is a product of grace, fulfillment of prophecy and a manifestation of His faithfulness. May faith see us through, may we have the courage to press in and press on. May Adonai continue to be our all in all.... indeed Charles Wesley's timeless hymn; "Captain of Israel's host" 1762, provides the perfect conclusion to this piece and prophecy of our future ...Our strength, Thy grace; our rule, Thy Word; Our end, the glory of the Lord.

SISTER WIVES:

VALUABLE LIFE LESSONS FROM LEAH & RACHEL-Part I

Leah and Rachel were daughters of Rebecca's brother Laban. Both became wives of Jacob. Jacob had been sent by his mother Rebecca to seek refuge with Laban, after Jacob with Rebecca's help deceived his father Isaac and obtained the blessing meant for his brother Esau. The plan was for Jacob to remain there until his brother's anger subsided.

When Jacob met Rachel, his uncle Laban's daughter at a well, he fell in love with her. Laban also had an older daughter, called Leah. The bible states that Leah was "weak-eyed" but Rachel was "beautiful in form and appearance". Some bible commentators believe that meant Leah squinted and was plain looking. In order for Jacob to marry Rachel, he struck a bargain to work for Laban for seven years for her hand. The reasonable bride price at that time would have been covered by just three and a half years of work. Jacob offered twice that for Rachel, clearly as a sign of his great love for her and the evidence of his love is made clearer in Genesis 29:20 "Jacob served seven years for Rachel but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her".

However, when the seven years was up and Jacob asked for his wife, in a move evocative of Rebecca and Jacob's deception of Isaac, Laban switched brides and sent the older Leah to Jacob instead! Leah was veiled and in the darkness of the tent Jacob consummated his marriage without knowing he had been fooled. In the morning, he discovered the deception and raged against Laban, whose excuse was that the older daughter had to be married before the younger, as was the custom. He made another deal with Jacob-he would allow him to wed Rachel too after the customary one week honeymoon, in exchange for another seven years of service. Funny enough, the women's names meant "cow" and "ewe" respectively and Laban traded and treated them as such. The audacity of the man!

Subsequent events show us that Jacob never loved or appreciated Leah and this audacious plan of Laban's fostered an unhealthy competition between the sisters. We will detail these as we draw lessons from these sisters.

1. We should not veil ourselves/hide out true selves in order to gain acceptance, a relationship or love

I cannot for the life of me understand why Leah decided to go along with her father's charade-allow herself to be veiled and pretend to be Rachel so she could be married off to Jacob! I believe she knew all along that Jacob loved Rachel. I believe it was common knowledge in the household, perhaps even among the servants and hired hands that Jacob's seven years toil for no wages was to secure a bride price for Rachel. I guess as sisters she and Rachel must have talked about it, giggled about it, told other friends about it. Lots of arguments have been put out there concerning why Leah condoned her father's dastardly act but they are all mere speculation-some writers wonder whether Leah was a victim or a willing participant in the switcheroo. Some speculate that she could have ended it at any time between entering the tent and allowing Jacob to sleep with her. Some believe that she probably thought that was the only way she could find a husband. Some even think she went along out of jealousy of her sister's beauty and wanted so much to get one over her. I tend to lean towards the thought that perhaps Leah felt that was the only way she could find a husband. This is because of the impression given in the bible that Leah was plain and Rachel beautiful not only in face but also in form. Leah probably felt that the only way she could land one handsome and hardworking man like Jake was to hide under a veil!!!

Let me bring this point home. Many a time we feel that we have to hide who we really are

in order to get that hot young man with huge prospects to look at us and then we feel we have to veil ourselves again to get him to enter into a relationship with us and then veil ourselves even further to sustain the relationship!! Oh boy, just thinking of it is even tedious. We learn to pretend to love their hobbies, interests, enjoy their friends, their pursuits; we totally lose ourselves in them just to gain their affections! In the process, we forget who we are and assume a character we have nothing in common with and lose our self-esteem. I cannot be happy being someone I am not and if you have to veil who you are in order to be in a relationship, then I'm afraid, it's not worth it. The person who claims to love you; the person you are hoping to have a lasting relationship with you should know who you are and accept you as you are-flaws and all. You need not pretend to be a Rachel to gain a ring from Jake, you must be Leah and still trust that God can and will (if you ask) bring your own Jacob

Do not get me wrong: I'm not encouraging you to stop working on changing your flaws-God knows we are all trying each day to be better; neither am I encouraging you not to make compromises, because that too is a part of relationships. BUT if a man expects you to be someone else in order for him to love you or even date you, then reevaluate that relationship before it goes too far.

Be proud of who you are for God loves YOU. If you have been wearing a veil, it is time to cast it off and if you are planning to put one on because you are growing and that guy seems like a good catch and you really do not want him to get away, reconsider the decision. Remember also that like all veils, they cannot stay on forever, as Leah was revealed in the morning, so will you be revealed as some point and the story after the revelation will not be pretty as Leah's story teaches us.

To be continued...

WOMEN

IN ACTION!

LEADING LADY MONICA ARYITEY