

February 2023

# The Lighthouse

## CONCERNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

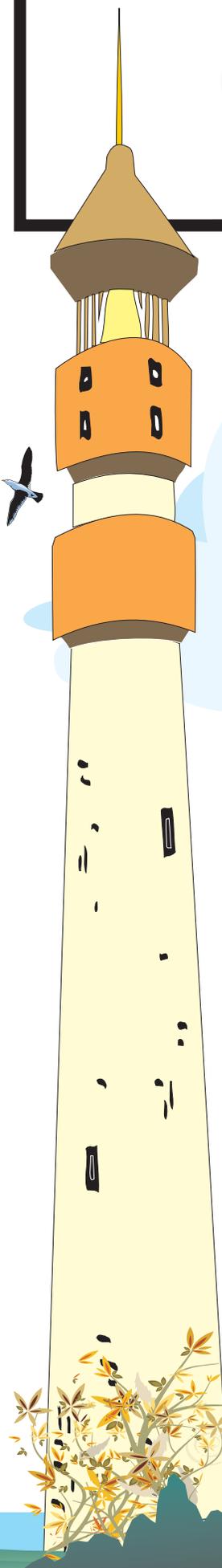
Rev. Tim Horn

Church is not a spectator sport. If we are followers of Jesus, then we have been given a task to accomplish. Indeed, the church as a whole has an overarching purpose and mission. The purpose of the church is to be the body of Christ, to be the presence of Christ on earth and lead the world in worshipping God. The mission of the church is to make disciples of all nations wherever we go. These things do not occur when the sum total of our Christianity is that we occupy a pew for an hour on Sunday morning! We are not sitting in the stands at a sporting event.

As individual Christians within the body of Christ, the Scriptures make it clear in several places (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4) that every believer has been given a spiritual gift, the ability to render a service, and a work they have the ability to perform. These gifts, services and works we have serve 1) to make the body of Christ healthy so that it might be a faithful representative of Christ on earth, and 2) to render worship to God with our lives, and 3) to serve others by encouraging them in discipleship.

Paul states in 1 Corinthians 12:4–7, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

So, what is your spiritual gift? What manifestation of the spirit has been given to you for the common good? These questions can be daunting ones. I felt like some help in this area might be helpful to some of you and I was not able to address this concern in the aforementioned sermon.



## Participation

When we look at the several texts (listed above, especially Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12) that mention specific examples of spiritual gifts, one of the first things that we must notice is that the lists are not identical. In fact, there is little overlap when you compare them all. I believe the reason for this is that these lists were not meant to be exhaustive. The writers have given us numerous examples of gifts and services, but there are many others which could have also been listed. I am not sure an exhaustive list of spiritual gifts and services can be written out. When you vary in different circumstances and needs across the entire body of Christ throughout all time, there must be individuals who fill many niches in the church throughout the world throughout history.

Instead of asking yourself, "What is my spiritual gift?" A better question might be, "How can I serve?" There are two aspects to the answer to that question which should be considered. First, "What do I have the ability to do?" God does not call you to do something that you have no capacity to do, or for which you have no aptitude. If he wants you to do something he will equip you to do it. Of course, gifts must be developed and the preacher or teacher, for example, will improve with practice. But there has to be an assessment of ability. The Second aspect to consider is, "What do I have the availability to do?" This is not so cut and dried as the first because availability can change with time and seasons of life. Availability is also something we control to a certain degree. What we make ourselves available to do is often a matter of choice, but sometimes it is not. These matters need to be taken into consideration when deciding how one can serve in the church.

My human advice is to get involved where you can. If there is something you have the ability to do and you can make yourself available to do it; then by all means "get off the sideline and get into the game." Once you start to participate, you will begin to have a clearer idea of how you are gifted. No one ever discovered their spiritual gift by sitting on a pew waiting for a sign from heaven! It may be wise to start small. Whatever you do, start somewhere.

## Love

One other quick point I wanted to make concerning gifts is that they all must be exercised in love. If you look at each of the texts mentioned above, you do not have to look far before you see that Peter and Paul mention the necessity of loving one another in the context of exercising spiritual gifts. Using our gifts is a way that we can love one another, and our gifts must be used in a loving manner. Paul says it best in 1 Corinthians 13:1–3, "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing." Without love, gifts cannot serve God's purposes.

Grace & Peace,

Tim

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# WORDS FROM THE WILDERNESS

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Establishing a Prayer Team To Share God's Heart to Reach the Lost

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## “Well, It’s Been a Quiet Week In Lake Wobegon”

With those words, Garrison Keillor would announce the beginning of the most famous and anticipated portion of his weekly Saturday night radio show, *The Prairie Home Companion*, and anyone who was familiar with the show knew that it was time to stop whatever you were doing, lean in real close to the radio, and prepare to be transported away to a wonderful place and a simpler time. For Keillor was and still is a masterful storyteller. He paints masterpieces with his words, describing narratives in such detail that the listener can naturally see in his or her own mind whatever Keillor is talking about, and weaving tales and stories with such expert craftsmanship and word-smithing that the hearer can, within the same story, find himself laughing at one moment, and then moved to tears in the next as Keillor speaks of far away times, familiar places, and realities that are so universal they connect with and tug at the heart strings of longing that lie within us all.

That is the power of story — When a storyteller is an expert at his craft, he can lift us all up, transport us to exactly where he wants us to be, and impart us with a rich experience that can entertain, and yet educate with profound reality. It is true of all the great storytellers: Keillor, Tolkien, Lewis, Hemingway, Disney, Sean Dietrich...even Jerry Clower! We know them for their stories, we are moved by their words, and we want to join with them in their adventures, for they connect with and draw out longing and laughter that lie within our souls - and truths we yearn to find yet again.

## And above all these, God is the Great Storyteller

That discovery was one of the pivotal moments of my own coming alive to what Christianity is all about - and how to read the Bible to understand it. The Bible is not simply a collection of 66 separate books, connected in one canon, but disconnected in their themes, subjects, and dispensations. Rather, the Bible is the record of God's one, great story: Of a Creator who made a perfect world, but a rebel race that broke it, and yet that Creator, rather than rejecting the rebels - Identifies as a Father, a Lover, a Hero - running toward orphans, redeeming what was lost, and fixing what was broken. The story of God with mankind is the story of the Great Rescue, and of a God who wouldn't let enemies like sin and death come between Him and the Ones He is determined to love. That is what God is doing in the Bible — and it is what He is doing in the world today.



## God is telling His story in Ocean Springs

Stephanie and I moved to Ocean Springs last April, but we really have only been “on the ground” and starting ministry for a little over six months now — and already God has done so much. This past Sunday, a new core group gathered in our home for the first of what we hope will become twice monthly Bible studies - time in the word together toward becoming a community of believers gathered around the gospel and building it into each other. In the meantime, God is adding almost daily to the “parish” of people that I am meeting, building conversations with, and gaining their trust toward “pastoring” these lost people toward the gospel. There is much to celebrate!

Yet, what is happening in Ocean Springs is not our story. It began over ten years ago, when people in local churches here on the coast began to pray for a gospel-centered ministry to the lost in Ocean Springs. And then that took flight when Phillip and Lori Sealy answered the call and moved their family to Ocean Springs to begin building an evangelistic based church plant here. That is an amazing part of the story, for even when Phillip got sick with the cancer that would eventually take his life, when it surely would have been easier for them to pack up and go back home — Phillip and Lori so believed in the story God is telling in Ocean Spring that they doubled down — working faithfully and frantically, giving themselves to see the gospel come to this town. They believed in that so much that Phillip is even buried here, as a way of “claiming this territory” for Jesus Christ. But, in Lori’s own words that she shared with me recently, “Our story isn’t ours, but God’s. And may it be used for His glory and for the gathering in of sinful, suffering sheep in need of a saving, sanctifying Savior!”

**(To see a powerful explanation of the Sealy’s vision and part in this story, click on the photo link at the end of this newsletter!)**

And now, we are here, trying to take up the pen, to write a new verse, all to plant an evangelistic church plant, one that we pray will some day include many people who, at the time you are reading this, do not yet know Jesus Christ as their Savior, but whom God has called and claimed as His own.

For all of this is His Story. It is a story that we are praying will bring the Great Commission in power to the lost of Ocean Springs. That will see us discipling believers in a new church to own and step up into their part in the Great Story. And we are praying that this story will spread far from here — to new church plants up and down the coast, and even echoing and reverberating back to other churches, established churches, churches that are partnering with us in this story and that we pray will in turn be blessed with evangelistic revival, conversions, and blessing in their own midst and to their own parishes.

But, through it all — Make no mistake: While there is much to do, and even much fruit to celebrate already, and more stories that we hope to tell in the years to come — From the beginning, to now, and to eternity itself — This is God’s story, and He is the One telling it here in Ocean Springs!



## So, please pray with us for God's unfolding story

- Praise God with us for the new community of believers that is now meeting in our house twice a month for Bible study. Pray that they will be rooted in and grow in the gospel of grace.
- Pray for my "Fishing Trips" to the lost around town and especially to Government Street. I am seeing some of the people there start to look forward to when we can talk next — That is an encouraging sign for my opportunity to come alongside their lives as a trusted confidant and pastor
- Carnival season (Mardi Gras) is ramping up into full swing. There will be craziness, wildness, and all of the things that come with this "celebration." The enemy does not cede territory easily, and he comes in like a flood. And I plan, like a medic on the battlefield, to be right in the middle of it. Please pray for my opportunity to shine light into darkness!

## And finally, I invite you to join us as a supporter of the story God is telling on the coast - and beyond

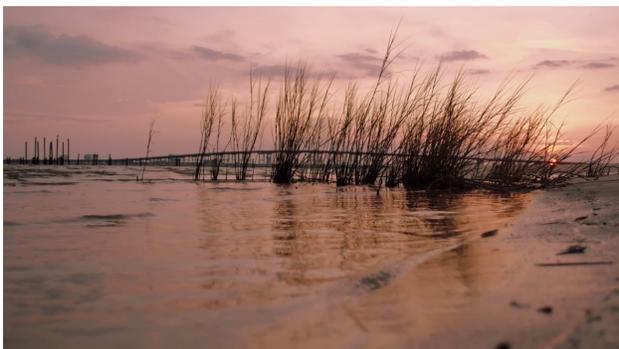
Stephanie and I rejoice and thank God for each of you who have given to this ministry. Thank you so much! Be it a first time gift or as an ongoing supporter, would you consider making a financial investment in the story God is telling of reaching lost people and building His church with the gospel?

Here is how you can give:

- Use the QR code to the right, or visit <http://give.pcamna.org/to/1749>
- Checks can also be sent payable to "Mission to North America"  
PO Box 890233  
Charlotte, NC, 28289-02333.  
(Write "Mark Horn, Ocean Springs Church Plant" on the memo line)
- And finally, more information for all of this and updates on our Ocean Springs journey can be found at our website:  
[www.PlantHopeOS.org](http://www.PlantHopeOS.org)!



Here is the video from Phillip and Lori Sealy:



### A closing encouragement:

"Oh me! Oh life! Of the questions of these recurring. Of the endless trains of the faithless. Of cities filled with the foolish. What good amid these, O me, O life?"

Answer: That you are here. That life exists, and identity. That the powerful play goes on...And you may contribute a verse!"

– Walt Whitman

# Prayer and Praise

Jody Collinge

January 24, 2023



Zihuatanejo--above La Madera beach

## Travels: (Dios mediante--Lord willing)

- March 19-23: To Florida for Child Safety training
- March ? To Texas
- Pending: To Reynosa, Mexico

## Prayers and Praise

1. This is a wonderful time of year to be in Zihuatanejo! I have enjoyed exploring all over, with comfortable weather. Pray for those up north struggling with severe weather, and for those in Africa who are still struggling with drought.

2. After a long wait with many uncertainties, they have finally broken ground on my cabin at the CHSC base near Dallas! Praise God that this is moving ahead. Pray for wisdom in all our decisions..

3. Our Zihuatanejo ministries are going well. Pray for the Lord to raise up new leaders at Talita Cumi, our children's home--Lalo, Eunice, and Barzy are doing a great job, but are tired and struggle with health issues. Pray also for the Lord to raise up new pastors to work alongside our English-speaking churches.

4. .In March, I plan to go to Florida for training with the Child Safety Protection

Network. Child abuse and sexual abuse is a problem around the world, and even missionary kids are at risk. Pray for effective ways to prevent problems and to respond to situations.

5. In March, I hope to also go to the Christian Health Service Corps base in Texas for a board meeting and to check on the cabin's progress! Please be praying for the Lord's wisdom.

6. Some dates are still uncertain. Dayo has invited me to help teach part of a Community Health Evangelism (CHE) Internship in Ghana. But there are conflicts in dates, so I may teach online--but I hope not at 3 am! I hope to also go to Reynosa, Mexico for a Children's CHE training.

7. Thanks for your prayers for our online trainings. I enjoy the weekly Bible study on Elijah with a group of youth. I will also be helping to teach part of our annual Global Health and Tropical Medicine course with CHSC.

8. Pray for the Lord's working through each of these ministries. Pray that we may follow Him and not our own plans. Pray that the training materials that we are developing may be well used and adapted to the local needs of each ministry.

9. My shoulder tendonitis is improving but it still is hard to sleep.. Pray for good sleep (except during sermons!)

And here is my prayer for you (and also for me):

"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ."

(Philippians 1:9-10, NASB)

Thank God al that He is doing! And thanks for your prayers, your encouragement, and your support. Let me know how I can be praying for you.

With love in Christ,

*Jody*

# BIRTHDAYS for FEBRUARY

**Katherine Harrison 6th**

**Jimmie Lynn Spinks 19th**

**Harriet O'Malley 19th**

**Johnny Gonzales 20th**

**Joan Gosnell 22nd**

**Joy Lynn Glidewell 24th**

**Dandre Washington 25th**

## Dates to Remember for February

February 1 Ladies Circle at 9:30am in the church parlor

February 4 Men's Breakfast at 8:00am in the Fellowship Hall

February 5 Communion in the morning worship service

February 5 Baby Bottles due for the Women's Resource Center

February 10 Mid-South Men's Rally in Jackson, MS

February 12 Monthly Luncheon after the worship service. Please bring a dish to share.

February 19 Communion at the evening worship service