



February 1999

Well, Happy New Year to everyone. If you're wondering what happened to your Torch Calendar for January, there wasn't one. After all the holiday bustle, TORCH took some time off. So here we are, back and better than ever. One hopes. One certainly do.

I am reminded of one of my favorite Christian wall plaques. It shows a worried hen watching a nest full of eggs begin to hatch. The caption reads *Lord, give me patience to endure my blessings*. As the Lord continues to bless us, we need to face up to another truth.

### **Prosperity is a test.**

There's something buried in our mindset that makes us long for the easy chair, the day off, the gratification of any and all desires. We need to really learn that this is not the rest promised in Matthew 11:28 when our Lord entreated us to *yoke up* with Him. It's important to face up to this, because right now God is blessing us! The heavens are opening, and the fulfillment of many hopes and dreams is upon us.

The reason we need to find the true rest is because we can miss everything God has for us. Many people missed it in Christ's day. He was not what they'd pictured and come to expect. Rather than adjust their expectation they rejected Him who was God in the flesh. Lord, help us, for we are really no different than those people, save only for how we yield and respond to your Spirit.

There's something rare and quite wonderful about the church we belong to. Our pastor is walking in the vision

he preaches to a degree seldom seen anywhere, and it's a vision that has room for every one of us. I mean, when he preaches pie in the sky I can smell it cooking and sometimes nab a little sample out of the mixing bowl just to help with the wait. But there is very little waiting right now, there's truth to be taken hold of and made personal.

Riches of many kinds are being poured out. One of the greatest things I've experienced since the renewal has been freedom from anger and bitterness. Just that one point has been like recovering from a dread disease—which it really is. The training in intercession and spiritual warfare has been priceless for there are few affirmations greater than knowing that God hears and answers my prayers.

Health has been springing forth for me. This has been a multi-fronted battle and I've come a long way. Diet has played a part in this as has the emotional restoration of the renewal. Faith continues to rise not only for myself but for others.

Finance has been another field of victory. Pastor Jack's teaching on progressive prosperity has been demonstrated in my life too and what a blessing that's been. While my income would not make very many people jealous (not in this country, anyway) the bills are paid and I've been able to give a bit here and there. To me that's real riches.

Yet, the main thing I feel right now is stretched. Time wise, things just keep coming one right after the other requiring scheduling, planning, sacrifices, and some creative solutions to stay on track. I tried just waiting things out, but more kept coming. I could start saying no more often, but

these are all things I want to see happen and be part of. They're part of my prosperity.

### **So what tests us about prosperity?**

Everything! Prosperity is connected to work, and the prosperous man will be doing lots of it. Promotion carries responsibility with it, meaning more work. The reward of responsibility means we have a little more stuff to take care of. Now we own a home (which needs painted) with a nice yard (which needs mowed) in a nice neighborhood, whose representatives will come around and have a talk with us if we don't take care of that painting and yard work.

It seems that I never have a chance to preach or otherwise minister in a church when it is convenient. Back in years when that seldom if ever happened (and I wanted to with all my heart), I had lots of time to prepare. Now, unless my lifestyle makes preparation a continual project, it won't happen.

Guard the dreams of youth- they are worth pursuing, We need those dreams for in the day of their fulfillment there will be lots of other things clamoring for our time. Some parts of the dream will need to be discarded, for it wasn't really practical. But at the bottom of most dreams there is something God spoke to us. Guard it well.

### **Events-**

Looks like we're getting back on track with a few minor corrections here. The most obvious thing is that we are only planning two SNAC events per month now, giving people a chance to do a little more private scheduling, eating at home, and other fun things. They still seem to represent one of the best

ways for people of our age group to get together and spend time regularly, so come on out once in a while.

Last year's friendship party at M-'s was enough fun we wanted to do it again. Bring a wrapped 'friendship' gift that we can exchange and have fun with. I think I brought a fruitcake last year but got invited back anyway.

This will be a busy weekend for the ladies, as the Outrageous Joy women's conference will be held at the Memorial Coliseum Friday and Saturday. We expect that it will end in time for the ladies to make the party too but it will be a full day.

For those of you who are not going to the conference (pay attention, guys) S- will be beginning construction demolition on her house on the 13th. Her contractor tells her she can save a few thousand dollars in cleanup related expense by having some friends over at that strategic day--and we were wondering what friends are for, huh?

Naturally with such a financial picture, S- would love to feed whoever shows up to help and in fact she says a kitchen helper or two wouldn't hurt either. So let's show up that Saturday and put our faith into action. -Get out of that bed!!!- Around 9 or 10 would be a good arrival time.

That brings us to a small change in plans, however. We've been having our monthly meetings at S-'s but since we just tore the house apart on the 13th (and if you missed the food and fellowship, you really missed it) that's not a workable location this month. In addition, our last Friday time slot conflicts with the Intercessor's Conference. So, here's the deal-

Monthly Group meeting for the month of February will be at Gary's place on Friday the 19th. We'll have our normal worship, Word, and snackin's, but will also consider putting on a movie when that is done. So, come for the meeting, and stay till the wee hours if you care to. Bring a heart for the Lord and a few Snacks.

While the Intercessor's Conference is a whole church event, let me make a special plea for TORCH members to attend. In Pastor Frank's book, *Season's of Intercession* he makes the point that although intercession is a ministry and function of the church, the Bible designates no one as having the ministry of intercession. The reason no one is so singled out and designated is because *every believer* is an intercessor.

It's to be noted there are some day sessions involved. Most of us can get that time off from work with the month's notice we have here. It is well worth that kind of sacrifice! The spirit that grabs hold of an opportunity like this is exactly the kind of passion we secretly admire and feel slighted we don't have. But we've really got it, we just need to stir it up and use it! It's your choice, so wake up and live!

Looks like that's about it. Let's remember to keep one another lifted up in prayer.

Have a great month!

GAH

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