



## October 2001

For 1-1/2 years, I have been given the privilege through Christ Life Ministries to grow in sharing Christ in a discipleship ministry in Hendersonville, North Carolina. God has also given me His vision to share Christ and His ministry with my friends and family around Simpsonville, South Carolina, where He has placed me and my wife Joy.

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, I believe I experienced God continuing to unfold His vision. Sixty people came to the Grace Life Celebration in the Simpsonville library to hear eleven testimonies of the miracle of Christ's indwelling life. Then, from October 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, fourteen people attended a Grace Life Conference (a 12-hour study of the gospel message from Romans 5-8) in the library. I am excited to see how God continues to unfold His heart and vision.

On the back of this newsletter are short excerpts from each testimony from the Grace Life Celebration that I hope will encourage you. Also, audio tapes of the entire Celebration are available.

The speakers did not know how each one would testify. Each person was simply asked to testify of the miracle of Christ's life in him or her. Notice the amazing consistency in these testimonies. Each testimony is not about how God blessed each person as a result of his or her obedience. Each testimony is actually about how God lovingly broke each person of their good self-efforts to obey Him, thus allowing God to reveal how blessed they already are because of the finished work of Christ!

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with EVERY spiritual blessing  
in the heavenly places in Christ...by which He made us accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:3, 6).**

There are no good works you could ever do to add to the finished work of the precious Jesus Christ. And there is no way to be more blessed than having the life of Christ now! Certainly, you can experience the truth of this blessing more, which is what growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ is about (2 Peter 3:18). However, the foundation for growing to know Christ more personally is simply taking God at His word (faith) that you already are complete...a brand new righteous person...because of the finished work of Christ through the cross (Colossians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Each speaker testified that, as a result of brokenness, Christ was revealed as his or her very identity and life. Obedience has become a fruit of knowing (resting in) their completed union WITH CHRIST and the miraculous outworking of His indwelling life. Obedience is no longer a result of their good self-efforts (a striving) FOR GOD.

God has used Grace Life Conferences over the past several years to reveal to each speaker and me the miracle of being one with the life of Christ. Christ Life Ministries desires to minister through more Grace Life Conferences and related Bible studies in the Greenville, South Carolina area as God unfolds the opportunities.

I hope you are encouraged to realize Christ's life in you in a fresh way as you read these testimonies of these friends God has given me. And thank you for being a friend to Joy and me.

### GRACE NOTE

**Men throw broken things away. But God really never uses anything until He first breaks it.  
(Adrian Rogers, pastor Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN)**

# *Grace Life Celebration Testimonies*

## **Opening song "His Amazing Love" (Holly)**

### **Opening prayer by the founder of Christ Life Ministries (Joyce)**

Father, we are here to glorify You, honor You, and praise You. You have blessed us exceedingly, abundantly with Your love, your mercies, and your grace. You have forgiven us, cleansed us, and prepared us for eternity with You as well as placed Your Spirit within us for life's journey. We pray our time together here will lift up Jesus, magnify Your Name, and strengthen our desire to be more like Jesus. And in His Name we pray, Amen.

### **Director of Christ Life Ministries (Bob)**

It was a month ago today that our lives changed permanently. Feelings of uncertainty abound. Now is the time to do what we will hear tonight...entrust our whole lives to Christ.

### **Training Director of Christ Life Ministries (Cindy)**

Christ in me, not my performance, is the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). It is the very things Satan would use to drive us away from a desperate dependence on the Lord that actually qualifies us to come to Him. It is here where our resumes of failure become messages of hope. Our helplessness, our failure in self-effort, can drive us to turn to Him alone, and to seek His sufficient grace.

### **Training Director of Grace Ministries Carolina and Pastor (Dale)**

God cares about His relationship with you, not your performance. I was really performing in the ministry...as a pastor of one of the fastest growing churches in North Carolina. God started letting the church decline...and I have learned that people don't need head knowledge to head knowledge, they need Life to Life. By His grace, God is teaching me how to just let Life flow through me as I preach...and that salvation is about a Man named Jesus who did more than just forgive me, but who came to live inside and through me.

### **President of Grace Ministries Hickory (Joye)**

I used to seek to fix the problems of other people - they had problems, not me. Pride and criticism were "rose petals" God had to pull off me. He told me if I leave those to the side, He would use me in a powerful way. I found my acceptance in Him and I now disciple "roses." The beauty of this message of grace, and Christ's life in and through us, is that He takes stepped-on (broken) roses and brings them back to the beautiful roses He sees.

### **Friend of Grace Ministries Hickory (Leannah)**

LAW is about trying to achieve for ourselves. GRACE is simply receiving what has already been accomplished in Christ. What I was having a difficult time receiving was God's boundless love for me. God removed everything that tried to claim His rightful place in my heart (all of our material possessions). When I (ultimately) blurted out, "I love you, Daddy! How is it that I love You?" He smiled in reply, "Because I first loved you."

### **Pastor in Rutherford College, North Carolina (David)**

I tried to perform to be accepted as a pastor. As a pastor, I sat in a crusade and doubted my salvation. I didn't "feel" saved. I attended a Grace Life Conference, and God revealed to me that this life was not all about me...and I've accepted the life of Christ that He wants to live through me.

### **A servant from Asheville (Lynne)**

I was terrified of my father. The incest continued until high school. It was a deep, dark secret...a prison of fear and abandonment. I drove myself to be the best at everything to be accepted. The voices in my head screamed, "You'll never be loved!" I used my body to get acceptance. Through a Grace Life Conference, God revealed that Jesus had taken all my sin, all my hurt, all my guilt and shame - and died just for me! Though the world and my dad had never really wanted me, God did. No more did I have to earn His love...I already had it! And by His grace, He will live His life through me. I am now a trophy of God's grace and the fragrance of Christ!

### **Chaplain of Blue Ridge Prison Ministries (Keith)**

At age of 29, I fell at the foot of the cross, but I went right back to performance-based living. I really loved the Lord, but I was really a good and very disciplined performer. After I had been pastoring and in prison chaplaincy for 1-1/2 years, a very dark hour came...and I couldn't perform any more. I went to a Grace Life Conference ordained by God's timing, and I found freedom in Christ's life behind the prison bars.

### **23-year old former prisoner (Jason)**

Last August, I was spending my energy in an earthly relationship, and ended up going to jail. As I rolled a cigarette in jail using a page from the Gideon Bible, I heard, "You need to know what that says." I then tried to live by the Proverbs. Through my chaplain and the Grace Life seminar, I learned that my most righteous acts are but filthy rags in the eyes of the Lord. What can I do then? I can just surrender myself and let the Lord Jesus work through me and let His Father find glory with His actions through my body. And that gives me the strength to do anything because nothing is impossible for Jesus! The love and joy I now have is a greater miracle than the parting of the Red Sea!

### **Single mother of 8-year old daughter (Joni)**

I was in an abusive marriage for 22 years. I was raised a Jehovah Witness who knew the "truth," and I could not receive this message of Jesus. Through Christ Life Ministries, the Bible came alive to me and I gave my life to the Lord. I have been homeless, and have lived in homes of loving Christians. It has strengthened me and proven to me that God is a faithful God. This message (of Christ's sufficient life) is THE REAL TRUTH that sets people free.

**Holly** closed the Grace Life Celebration by leading us in the song, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." It was indeed a celebration of His life.