

Inner Healing Pioneer John Loren Sandford Dies

Pastor and best-selling author John Loren Sandford died March 30, 2018. He was 88.

In 1975, Sandford founded Elijah House with Paula, his first wife, who died in 2012. The ministry posted on Facebook the day of his passing: "It is with sadness, but great rejoicing that we at Elijah House say goodbye to our beloved founder, John Loren Sandford. He passed into glory this morning at 4:49 a.m. PDT. His wife, Marte, and all of his family would appreciate your prayers."

Sandford graduated from seminary with a Master of Divinity in Religion and Personality. He pastored churches in Illinois, Kansas and Idaho for 21 years before founding Elijah House. The ministry, based in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, offers prayer ministry and training in prayer and the prophetic.

The Elijah House site observes that the Sanfords "traveled extensively, teaching the biblical principles of repentance and forgiveness behind inner healing, highlighting the transforming power of Jesus' death and resurrection. They are considered pioneers in the prophetic and inner healing movements. Their vision was to reveal that which keeps believers bound in repetitive sin, by, as John—and Elijah House—still says today, 'evangelizing the unbelieving areas of the believer's heart.'"

The Sandfords both experienced the infilling of the Holy Spirit in 1958, which "enriched their ministry," the Elijah House website says. They were married in 1951 and had six children, numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. Four years after Paula's passing, Sandford married Marte Pierson.

Sandford was also known for his many books, including

Transforming the Inner Man, Letting Go of Your Past, The Elijah Task, Deliverance and Inner Healing and Why Good People Mess Up.

Elijah House invites words of encouragement or letters “to let the family know how John had impacted your life, through his books or ministry.” These can be sent to jlsandford723@.

Influential Pastor Kirbyjon Caldwell Denies Defrauding Investors

A prominent Houston megachurch pastor who counseled presidents and top executives was charged on Friday with selling investors more than \$1 million in worthless Chinese bonds and using proceeds for his own benefit, federal authorities said.

Kirbyjon Caldwell, 64, senior pastor at the Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, one of the nation’s largest Protestant churches with about 17,000 members, faces wire fraud and money laundering charges in connection with the sale of historical bonds to mostly elderly investors.

The bonds were issued by the former Republic of China before 1949—when the communists won that country’s civil war and took power—are not recognized by the current Chinese government and have no investment value, said U.S. Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Caldwell’s attorney said his client, an adviser to former presidents and executives, including George W. Bush and the late Enron Corp Chief Executive Kenneth Lay, was unaware the

bonds were worthless and had invested his own money.

“He’s 100 percent, absolutely not guilty of these charges,” Caldwell’s attorney, Dan Cogdell, said in a broadcast interview. “He was the biggest investor in these bonds; he completely believed these bonds were legitimate.”

Caldwell and Gregory Alan Smith, 55, operator and manager of Smith Financial Group in Shreveport were charged by a federal grand jury in a 13-count indictment, prosecutors said.

Smith, who worked as a financial planner, had been barred from the broker-dealer business since 2010 by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission said.

Calls to the Windsor Village United Methodist Church were not answered on Friday, and Smith could not be reached at his office. Caldwell has led the church since 1982, according to its website.

The two men face separate charges of defrauding investors by the SEC in connection with the bond sales. The regulatory agency described the bonds as “collectible memorabilia.”

Caldwell and Smith in 2013 and 2014 raised at least \$3.4 million from 29 mostly elderly investors, including Windsor Village parishioners, by promising them high returns, and used about \$1.8 million of the proceeds for personal expenses, the SEC alleged.

“Caldwell took advantage of his victims, encouraging them to remain faithful even as he and Smith broke that faith, stealing from elderly investors in an outright fraud,” said Eric Bustillo, director of the SEC’s Miami Regional Office. {eoa}

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Widow of Pulse Gunman Cleared of All Charges in Deadly Mass Shooting

An Orlando jury on Friday cleared the widow of the Pulse nightclub gunman of all charges in the massacre that killed 49 people, finding her not guilty of misleading investigators and aiding her husband in the attack.

Noor Salman, 31, could have faced up to life in prison had she been convicted of federal charges of obstruction of justice and aiding Mateen in providing support to the Islamic State militant group.

Instead the U.S. District Court jury acquitted Salman after roughly 12 hours of deliberation that began on Wednesday.

Mateen died in an exchange of gunfire with police at Pulse, a gay nightspot. At the time, Salman was home with the couple's then 3-year-old son.

"We knew from day one she was innocent," Salman's aunt, Susan Adieh, told reporters just after the verdict.

The acquittal was likely to be an emotional blow for the survivors and families of those killed. The attack stunned and dismayed lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and Latinos who frequented Pulse.

At the time of the June 12, 2016, massacre, it was the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history. It has since been surpassed by the Las Vegas attack in which a shooter opened fire on an outdoor concert from his hotel room last

year, killing 58 people.

"We're very sorry for the family members and friends of the 49 victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting, and also the survivors of that horrible attack," said Susan Clary, Noor's family's spokeswoman.

A group of victims' relatives and friends, accompanied by Pulse owner Barbara Poma, left the courthouse without responding to reporters' questions.

Brandon Wolf, a survivor of the rampage, wrote on Twitter, "Noor Salman does not define justice for the 49. We do. In our fight to protect other communities from feeling our pain. In our commitment to creating a better, safer world for our children.

"Stay strong, Orlando. We are justice."

When U.S. District Judge Paul Byron announced the not-guilty verdict, Salman broke down in tears and hugged her defense lawyers, according to reporters inside the courtroom.

"I don't know how we're going to make up for the last two years," Salman's uncle, Al Salman, told reporters. "I told you, and I can tell you now, that she's innocent."

Mateen, 29, opened fire shortly after 2 a.m. during the club's popular Latin night, shooting patrons on the dance floor and spraying bullets at others hiding in bathroom stalls. He then held hostages during a standoff with police, claiming allegiance to a leader of the Islamic State militant group before he was shot dead.

Prosecutors said Salman cased possible attack sites with her husband and did nothing to stop his plans. They claimed she initially told investigators her husband acted without her knowledge but later said she knew he was watching Islamic State recruitment videos, had purchased an assault rifle and

examined three possible attack locations.

However, the Federal Bureau of Investigation did not record its interrogation of her, and the defense said she was coerced into making statements.

Defense attorneys said Salman was a “simple woman who loved children” and did not know of her husband’s intentions.

The jury appeared to believe the defense portrayal of Salman as a battered spouse kept in the dark, said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor and now a partner at Coral Gables, Florida-based Hinshaw & Culbertson.

“The lack of a videotaped confession had to have had an impact on the jury’s acceptance of her confession. From their not guilty verdict, it is clear they believed it was coerced,” Weinstein said in a statement. {eoa}

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What’s Holding You Back From God’s Unthinkable Power?

I have experienced so many things in my life that I never would have thought possible or dared to dream. I was raised in a single-parent home on what some would consider the wrong side of town. Yet seemingly against all odds God blessed me to finish college with a degree in biology and chemistry, have a successful career in corporate and nonprofit sectors, marry a wonderful man, and raise children who make us both so proud. Today my husband and I lead a wonderful church, The Fountain of Praise in Houston, Texas, and I travel the world preaching

and teaching God's Word.

At one time the life I now live would have been unimaginable to me. Unthinkable. Too unlikely for me to even desire. But God taught me that He is able to do "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20, NKJV). God did the unthinkable in my life when I decided not to settle for life as I had known it. I wanted more out of life than I had seen growing up, and as I had placed my desire before God, He showed me how to break out of poverty and a self-limiting mind-set. He began to open my eyes to what He had in store for me, and His plans were beyond what I would have dreamed. I still cannot fathom all He wants for me, but I have learned to trust God with the things that seem impossible to me.

You see, when God began to show me His desires for my life, I began to study the godly examples of men and women in the Bible to discover my full potential in God. When I began to apply what I was learning, God began to do "exceedingly abundantly" above all I could ask or think. And I was empowered to be my best!

As I studied these individuals, I noticed that they often did what others dared not do. They stepped out of their comfort zones and took bold steps of faith, at times defying convention and cultural norms, and their choices brought life-changing results. They did the unthinkable and experienced the impossible.

Many times we allow ourselves to live according to others' expectations of us. We let those around us or our circumstances define how far we can go or what we can accomplish. But it's time to rethink the boundaries you've set around your life. It's time to push the margins, press beyond the norm, and join hands with the One whose dreams for you are bigger than you think.

I want to challenge you to raise your level of expectation. My prayer is that this will compel you to take a close look at your life and ask yourself some tough questions: Have I limited myself because someone said I couldn't do something? Am I holding back because someone said I shouldn't try something new? Have I talked myself out of going somewhere I have never been? If you're like me and most of the women I know, your answer to at least one of these questions is a resounding yes. But that can change.

First, you must trust God. Believing God is the bedrock of experiencing the life God desires for you. Only through Him are all things possible. Then, have a desire to get closer to God and not seek personal aggrandizement. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your actions, not your ambitions. Focus on seeking and pleasing God first, not your community or certain religious leaders.

If you are tired of being restricted, or if you have ever felt marginalized or been made to feel that your voice isn't powerful or important this word is for you. I want you to consider all the things you have desired to do but have been too afraid to try. Then ask the Holy Spirit to embolden you as He did the biblical figures we study.

God wants to do in our lives what He did in theirs. He wants to heal our wounds, transform our marriages, save our children, bring us out of desperate circumstances, deliver us from bondage, and make us vessels of honor. Our God has no limits, and He wants you to let Him do the unthinkable in and through you!

☒ *Adapted from Unthinkable by Mia K. Wright, copyright 2018, published by Charisma House. This book will help you not settle for the "status quo" in your life, but to trust God to help you accomplish so much more. The author uses the lives of 10 biblical personalities as examples to encourage you and show you how God did the unthinkable and obtained miraculous*

results through them. To order your copy, click on this link.

Prayer Power for the Week of April 1, 2018

This week as we're reminded of the glorious resurrection of Christ, let's continue to focus on the victories ahead and thank God for the outpouring of His Spirit, the spread of revival fires, and His soon return. Pray for our nation and its leaders, the protection of our borders and allies, more laborers for the harvest fields and the next generation. 1 Thes. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:8

Tribute to a Great Servant of the Lord

Cecil Wiggins was a great pastor and fervent proponent of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as well as one of the largest givers to missions in the Assemblies of God. He died quietly in his home last Saturday, as we reported here. He was 87.

Even though you may not have heard of him, he was well-known in Jacksonville, Florida, where he pastored Evangel Temple Assemblies of God for 45 years. In 2010, he turned the church over to his son and longtime associate, Garry Wiggins. It is the largest Assembly of God in that part of Florida, and he was widely known and respected all over the state.

I knew Brother Wiggins, as I called him, for 46 years. He was a good friend of my father-in-law, the late Rev. Harvey Ferrell, who pastored in Jacksonville when I met Brother Wiggins. I remember attending a Good Friday service with my future father-in-law at Evangel Temple in 1972. That was almost exactly 46 years ago—before I married Joy. Over the

years, I've become friends with his son, Garry, and attended church services at Evangel Temple many times. When I visited, Brother Wiggins would always say something to me about how he loved my father-in-law, who passed away 22 years ago.

Wednesday, I attended Wiggins' funeral in Jacksonville, and though I don't often write about funerals, his was one of the nicest I've ever attended. It gave me an opportunity to give tribute to his life and legacy. What impressed me most was what he wanted on his tombstone: "Servant of the Lord."

He was eulogized again and again by prominent ministers such as John Kilpatrick, Wayne Blackburn, Terry Raburn, Paul Zink and Jim Raley—all of whom discussed his spotless integrity and his deep prayer life. They talked about how he had built Evangel Temple from a fairly small church to the megachurch it is today. It seems to me Garry is cut out of the same cloth. Several of Brother Wiggins' grandchildren are on the staff or involved in the church, as are other family members.

His grandson, Pastor Jordan Wiggins, spoke about the last time he talked to his granddad—the day before he died—about having to preach a funeral for a 2-month-old baby. Brother Wiggins said he should preach about how King David grieved when his baby died and then got up and went on. Second Samuel 12:23 quotes David as saying: "But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Am I able to bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." Now Jordan said he can't bring back his granddad, but later we can all go to him, implying heaven.

Missionary and evangelist David Grant shared how he recently talked to Brother Wiggins about missions, his passion.

Approximately 2,500 attended the service. It was respectful and dignified, but there was also rousing charismatic worship and some of Brother Wiggins' favorite songs, such as "I'd Rather Have Jesus."

Garry said it was his dad's wish that he preach his funeral.

He talked about what a good man his dad was, how fun-loving and family-oriented. Then he compared him to great Bible leaders and to Jesus Himself.

Finally, they played a video of the last time Brother Wiggins preached—March 7, two and a half weeks before he died. He looked vibrant, but the family said he was failing. He talked about casting out devils and speaking in new tongues. Then at the end, he gave an altar call and invited people to accept Jesus. What a fitting way to finish a wonderful service. If you want to watch the service, go to the church's website. You can also contribute to the Cecil Wiggins Memorial Fund, as I am doing.

I can't attend a wonderful funeral of a great man of God without wondering what my family and associates will say about me when I've finished my race. I hope I'm remembered as Cecil Wiggins was: a man of prayer, generous in missions and a servant of the Lord.

Courthouse Cafe Owners Face Eviction for Playing Christian Music

Carlo Magno and his wife have been serving hot cups of coffee and warm muffins to judges and attorneys at the court house in Rancho Cucamonga, California, for the past 11 years.

Cafe Justice is a popular gathering spot for plaintiffs, defendants and staffers looking for a respite from the stress of the day. The walls of the cafe are decorated with inspirational Christian messages, and their music playlist

includes several contemporary Christian songs.

Last October, the cafe's religious music and inspirational decor triggered microaggressions among local atheists.

A complaint was filed with the San Bernardino County Department of Real Estate Services, the cafe's landlord. A few weeks later the Magnos were notified that their location was going to be put up for public bid status.

"We were encouraged to include in our proposal for bid that we would not play our religious music or have any religious decorations," Mr. Magno told me.

In January, the county notified the Christian business owners their bid had been denied. The cafe had a stellar record, was beloved by court personnel and had always paid the rent on time.

"We have not broken any laws—federal or state—nor did we breach anything in our contract," Magno said.

It appears they are being punished for believing in God and owning a business.

"Every day we open our cafe, our endeavor is to be able to not just serve the best products that we can, but also encourage people who might be going through a rough time," he told me.

Mr. Magno has hired an attorney to fight back and a number of judges and lawyers have signed a petition urging the county landlord to reconsider its decision.

"We have initiated litigation against the County of San Bernardino Real Estate Service to reveal the unlawful handling of the bidding process along with the religious discrimination against a Christian-owned business," he said.

County officials did not respond to my questions.

As it stands, the Magnos are about to be evicted from the courthouse. Should that happen, it would be a grave injustice for Cafe Justice.

Prophecy: It's Time to Come Out of Survival Mode and Into Success Mode

On my "Mornings With the Holy Spirit" prayer broadcast, I heard the Lord say:

It is not My will for you to walk around with your head hung low. My will for you is to walk around with your head looking up because your redemption draws nigh. It comes from heavenly places. His name is Jesus. He redeemed you. He redeemed you. He redeemed you unto victory.

I've not called you to walk around feeling sorry for yourself and wondering what bad thing might happen next. Evil forebodings are not your portion. So stop thinking about what might happen next to derail you. Stop thinking about all the bad things that could happen and begin to meditate on My goodness. Begin to meditate on My love.

Understand and know that I have a future and a hope for you. And My kindness toward you will never expire. It will pave the way for the many blessings that I have in My heart for you. Begin to shift your thinking and you will begin to shift your speaking. But as long as you're thinking about the evil day, you won't think about My blessings. You'll be worried, and fretting, and concerned and overwrought.

Begin to think about the many blessings I've already promised you. Begin to think about the many blessings I've already poured out upon you. Begin to see your future as bright because I see it as bright. I see it as full of love, says God. I see it as full of life. I see it as full of prosperity and healing.

It's time to come out of survival mode and into success mode, because I've not called you to be merely a survivor. I've called you to be a success. I've called you to succeed in My kingdom. Not in the way that the world succeeds. Not by the world's measure of success, but by the measure of My Spirit.

And by the measure of My Spirit, you are strong. You are an overcomer. You are healed. You are ready to run. You are prosperous. By the measure of My Spirit, you have everything, because I have blessed you with all things pertaining to life and godliness. I have made you, by faith in My Son, a partaker of My divine nature. And My divine nature does not include woe. My divine nature does not include failure. My divine nature does not include stress. My divine nature does not include a tormented soul.

The City of David vs UNESCO: Who's Right About Jerusalem?

In December of 2016, UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) announced that the Western Wall and the Temple Mount, the holiest sites in the Jewish faith, had no connection to the Jewish people. In fact, it called Israel the "occupying power" and condemned it for aggression against Muslim worshippers. The UNESCO document

cites the Muslim sites of the al-Aksa mosque and the Haram al Sharif (the Dome of the Rock) but makes no mention of the Temple Mount or the 4,000 year-old history of Jewish people in Jerusalem.

CBN News has done a number of reports through the years about archaeological discoveries that corroborate 1) the biblical record and 2) place Jewish individuals in Jerusalem for thousands of years. For example, in one report, famed archaeologist Eilat Mazar told us about uncovering the seal of King Hezekiah, who is mentioned in the book of 2 Kings nearly 2,700 years ago.

After its report, UNESCO even asked the city of David to stop its excavations. Now, on the eve of the Jewish Passover, the city of David produced this video that asks UNESCO to examine the striking examples of the Jewish connection to the city of Jerusalem.

The evidence is convincing.

The Night Before Good Friday

If you knew tomorrow was your last day on earth, what would you do?

I imagine most of us would spend every second left with our family and loved ones, probably somewhere quiet and secluded. We would savor every moment, relive every precious memory and make sure nothing is left unsaid.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus had a night not unlike that.

This weekend, hundreds of millions of Christians in America and across the globe will remember Jesus' death on Good Friday

and celebrate his resurrection on Easter Sunday. My church and I will also reflect on the meaning and significance of these holy days.

But before this hallowed weekend arrives, we should pause for a moment and remember that before there was a Good Friday—or even an Easter Sunday—there was a Thursday night.

The night before he died, after the Last Supper, Jesus took his disciples to the Mount of Olives to pray. The Gospel of Luke says his anguish was so great that he sweated blood—a rare condition known as hematidrosis in which the blood vessels that supply the skin's sweat glands rupture when a person is under extreme stress. He knew what was about to come; the clock was running out of time. It would be the last time he had a moment alone by himself and with his disciples before his death. What would he do?

The Gospel of John tells us that right before he was arrested, and subsequently tried and crucified, Jesus prayed a long prayer. In fact, it's the longest prayer recorded in the New Testament. In this "Last Supplication," Jesus—though completely aware of his coming death—focuses more on his disciples and those who will believe through their message than on himself. His chief request to the Father is that he would make them one.

"Holy Father, through Your name keep those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are one," prays Jesus for his disciples (John 17:11). He knew his impending death would be their greatest trial. Their faith would be tested like it had never been tested before, and in that moment the success of the early church would hinge on their unity.

But Jesus was also looking beyond those around him that night, to those who would put their faith in him through the ages.

"I do not pray for these alone," continues Jesus. "but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they

may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You. May they also be one in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me.” (John 17:20-21)

Even then, at that agonizing hour, Jesus wanted his followers to understand that the credibility of the cross and the empty tomb would be contingent on the unity of the church. Without unity, the church loses its ability to effectively communicate the message of the gospel.

Today, as we’re on the verge of Good Friday and Easter Sunday, I believe the church in America needs this message more than ever before.

Division abounds in almost every segment of America. Sadly, it exists even between Christians and in most churches. We’ve allowed politics and even theology to divide and fragment us. We might all be celebrating Good Friday and Easter Sunday this weekend, but we’re certainly not all celebrating together. This isn’t what Jesus intended for his followers.

I firmly believe unity in America begins in the church. It’s in the church where any dividing barrier—whether racial, political or social—should come down. As Billy Graham would say, “The ground is level at the foot of the cross.”

In this time of great division, the church must lead the way in modeling unity. That’s what Jesus asked of us the night before Good Friday. {eoa}

Ronnie Floyd is the senior pastor of Cross Church and president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, which each year mobilizes millions of Americans to unified public prayer for the United States of America. Follow him on Twitter (@ronniefloyd), Instagram (@ronniefloyd) and Facebook.

Did Pope Francis Really Just Deny the Existence of Hell?

The Vatican on Thursday rebuked a well-known Italian journalist who quoted Pope Francis as saying hell does not exist.

The Vatican issued a statement after the comments spread on social media, saying they did not properly reflect what the pope had said.

Eugenio Scalfari, 93, an avowed atheist who has struck up an intellectual friendship with Francis, met the pope recently and wrote up a long story that included a question-and-answer section at the end.

The Vatican said the pope did not grant him an interview and the article “was the fruit of his reconstruction” not a “faithful transcription of the Holy Father’s words.”

Scalfari, the founder of Italy’s La Repubblica newspaper, has prided himself on not taking notes and not using tape recorders during his encounters with leaders and later reconstructing the meetings to create lengthy articles.

According to Scalfari’s article in Thursday’s La Repubblica, he asked the pope where “bad souls” go and where they are punished. Scalfari quoted the pope as saying:

“They are not punished. Those who repent obtain God’s forgiveness and take their place among the ranks of those who contemplate him, but those who do not repent and cannot be forgiven disappear. A Hell doesn’t exist, the disappearance of sinning souls exists.”

The universal catechism of the Catholic Church says “The teaching of the Catholic Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity.” It speaks of “eternal fire” and adds that “the chief punishment of hell is eternal separation from God.”

It was at least the third time the Vatican has issued statements distancing itself from Scalfari’s articles about the pope, including one in 2014 in which the journalist said the pontiff had abolished sin. {eoa}

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