

The Life-Changing Power of God's Holy Anointing

How does the anointing help us accomplish the task God has called us to? A coaching client asked me that question recently. My first response was that without us understanding that we are weak and we need His Spirit to empower us, we can't accomplish any task we know He's called us to do. Of course, the task we were talking about at the time was weight loss.

When we are losing weight and think *I've got this*, we are standing on shaky ground. We have to always realize it is only by His grace and His power that we can continue. That's where the anointing comes in.

Just a Church Thing?

"The anointing" is sort of a catch-all Christian phrase I heard used when I was growing up. The adults in my church would say things like, "Pastor was so anointed today. The anointing is sure falling in our church." As a child, I just accepted the word "anointing" as one of those words for what happens within the four walls of the church.

The anointing, though, is far from a church thing. It is how God helps us in our everyday lives to complete the assignments He has given us. For instance, there is a difference between being anointed to be a mother and just becoming a mother. Mary was definitely anointed to be a mother of a specific and indeed very special baby. In Luke 1:30, the angel tells her she has found favor with God

You Got This

The angel told her this to encourage her. Or to put it in today's terms, "Hey girl, you got this!" He was raising her

expectations of herself, and it worked. Up to this point, she had thought of herself as humble. She felt she was lower or lesser than everyone else. "Humble" to her was the dictionary definition of "having a low estimate of her importance." But the angel's announcement of her assignment and her anointing to carry out the assignment changed all that.

We know this because of what she says in Luke 1:46-48 (AMP). "My soul magnifies *and* exalts the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has looked [with loving care] on the humble state of His maidservant; For behold, from now on all generations will count me blessed *and* happy and favored by God!"

She knew her significance in God's plan and she also knew she couldn't complete the assignment without God being with her. That's why the first thing God told her through the angel was "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28b, AMP).

How could she have raised the Son of God unless God was with her and anointed this young teenager to carry out this the greatest of tasks any mother has been privileged to carry out? It was because of the anointing and favor of God.

God Will Assign the Task

God gives each of His children specific tasks. Many times, we feel like we aren't up to our task. We need more training. We need more experience. We just aren't enough. As I've heard often, whom God calls, He equips. When I have those days when I feel as though I am just not up to the task, I remember when a mentor was telling me I had everything I needed to write my next book. Her words were: "Sufficient to the task is His anointing." I've found that to be more than true.

We are anointed for a task, and His power will enable us to complete it. To be anointed means we are given a divine appointment from God Himself for the task, no matter how small

or big it seems. It is an increased level of responsibility when we are set aside for task of leadership.

In addition, God tells us we are all anointed to be His representatives and to go forward to do our specific assignments (2 Cor. 1:20-22) Assignments vary, but each person must complete his or her specific task in order for kingdom purposes to be fulfilled. We can be anointed to accomplish any task such as stepping into a lifestyle change in order to carry out an even greater task God has for us.

I was anointed and empowered to lose the 250 pounds I've lost to date. Why? God knew the next assignment of writing books and coaching people would never happen if I didn't complete the first assignment. I had to have the Master teach me how to reach a level of mastery in losing weight so I could then share with others how to do the same thing in order for them to reach their next assignment. It's how the kingdom of God functions.

God Will Empower Us

We don't have to be afraid of whatever task God is calling us to do because He will empower us to accomplish them. God knew the task I had in my future so He empowered this weak vessel with His strength. It happened when I admitted I was weak and I could not do it on my own.

This reminds me of Paul's situation. God told him, "'My grace is sufficient for you. [My lovingkindness and My mercy are more than enough—always available—regardless of the situation]; for [My] power is being perfected [and is completed and shows itself most effectively] in [your] weakness.' Therefore, I will all the more gladly boast in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may completely enfold me and may dwell in me ... When I am weak [in human strength], then I am strong [truly able, truly powerful, truly drawing from God's strength]" (2 Cor. 12:9-10 AMP)

God Will Protect Us

When we are anointed to carry out God's assignment He will protect us. He commands that no one do us harm in the completion of our tasks. (Ps 105:11-15, 2 Sam. 26:17-24)

I see this point as a warning to me. It means I must be ever watchful and always in prayer because Satan will rally people to try to stop me. I need not be afraid. He can try, but He will not win.

How do I know? Jesus said, "In this world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, MEV).

Later John tells us, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:11).

"They" means us, believers in Christ. We have been given the overcoming power of the Spirit of Christ who is alive in us. We are the overcomers! {eoa}

Teresa Shields Parker is the author of seven books, all available on Amazon. Her latest book, [Sweet Hunger: Developing an Appetite for God](#), is available now, and [Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds](#) is the No. 1 Christian weight-loss memoir. She is also a writing and weight-loss coach, blogger, speaker, wife and mother. Visit her online at TeresaShieldsParker.com to find her books, coaching programs and free gifts.

This article originally appeared at teresashieldsparker.com.

This Powerful Declaration Will Guide Your Faith-Filled Walk

One of my favorite tapes as a kid was [Ants'hillvania](#).

I know, I'm from the Dark Ages, back before digitized music and even CDs. Back then you could only buy cassette tapes and vinyl records. Maybe 8-tracks.

A phrase from the tape has always stuck with me.

"You win or lose by the way you choose."

This phrase has come to my mind many, many times throughout the years because of the profound truth it holds for us as Christians.

It's *my* choice whether or not I live in joy.

It's *my* choice whether or not I will live in obedience to God's Word.

It's *my* choice whether or not I make discipleship a daily priority in my life.

It's *my* choice whether or not I will forgive.

This lesson sudden took on greater clarity as I looked into my son's eyes and spoke a lesson into his life today.

My children both struggle with language delay. For my oldest son, this is partly due to him being bilingual and partly due to his temporary hearing loss, which we resolved earlier this year.

Their language delay means they have to work twice as hard to keep up in school.

Now that they are both in school (kindergarten and first grade), there isn't a lot of time to play. They go to school, they come home and we go over in detail what they studied in school.

On top of that, my oldest is in speech therapy, which also includes detailed homework.

There just isn't a lot of free time during the week, something they are both struggling to get used to. But as I looked into my son's eyes today, I said,

"You will go on to do amazing things. God made you so smart! You have an incredible brain. But it's up to you whether or not you choose to concentrate and learn. You have to choose to use your brain. Mama can't make that choice you for. This is a choice you have to make yourself."

And suddenly those words came back to me again.

You win or lose by the way you choose.

Peter said it this way,

Grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and excellence, by which He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that through these things you might become partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Pet. 1:2-4).

God has already given us everything we need to win. To succeed at this Christian life.

He has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

I don't know about you, but in all my theological studies, I've learned that every word in the Bible is there with intention and purpose.

So when it says all, it means all!

He has already given us all things—all things that pertain to life. That pertain to godliness.

We have them. Already. Right now. We have them through the knowledge of Christ.

How do we know Christ? Through His Word.

He has given us His Word, in which we will find wisdom for every area of our life so that we live godly and holy lives that testify of His goodness and grace.

And now, the choice is up to us.

Will we choose to receive what He has given us? {eoa}

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Peacekeeper or Peacemaker? Your Spirit-Empowered Choice

What's the point of praying for peace when your adversary is dead-set (no pun intended) on war?

As the weeks of December move us toward Christmas, many Christians recognize Advent themes that traditionally include hope, peace, joy and love. Last week, I wrote about hope. Hope is easy to write about. After all, the bleaker things look, the more we need and pursue hope.

But peace? Peace can be difficult to pursue, especially if the other person in the broken relationship wants nothing to do with it—or us.

We see it in the news. Nation against nation. Tribe against tribe. Ethnic cleansings. Arab groups striving to eliminate Israel. Shiites killing Sunnis. Sunnis killing Sufis.

We see it in our personal relationships. Brother against brother. Sister against sister. Children against parents.

Peace is elusive. We hope for it. We pray for it. Isn't that what the Bible tells us to do? Yet we need the other person—or group—to want it, too.

Or do we?

As Far as It Depends on You

There's an interesting verse in the Bible that speaks of peace...but it doesn't speak of the other person. In Romans 12:18 (NIV) the apostle Paul wrote, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

"As far as it depends on you." The state of my heart is not dependent on the other person. It *is* dependent on intimacy

with the Prince of Peace. Only by His Spirit can I remove bitterness, unforgiveness and resentment toward the one who refuses peace.

So does that mean I become a doormat, begging that individual for a restored relationship? No, living at peace means I do not desire their harm. It means they know I want peace, even if they don't. And it means I pray for it.

But what kind of peace am I praying for? Am I trying to *keep* the peace or *make* peace?

Peacekeeper or Peacemaker?

Peacekeepers avoid conflict at all costs. Their motto is, "Don't rock the boat." *Peacemakers* focus on reconciliation, and they recognize that healthy conflict may be necessary for reconciliation to occur.

Jesus was a peacemaker. He was more concerned with making peace than He was with keeping peace. His earthly life—and His death—centered on making peace between God and humans. Yet some of the things He said did not sound peaceable at all.

Jesus understood that real peace does not ignore conflict. True peace addresses the cause of the problem to remove it permanently. For us to have peace with God, Jesus dealt with the problem of our sin with finality and in the most violent way possible.

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ means we are to say what people *need* to hear rather than what they *want* to hear. Of course, we do so gently and lovingly. Avoiding conflict may be easier, but *Yahweh Shalom* (The Lord is Peace) doesn't call us to take the easy way. He calls us to be peacemakers.

We celebrate Christmas because God sent His Son to make peace with us. He told us what we needed to hear, not what we wanted to hear. He didn't ignore our problem of sin, He dealt with it

once and for all. And before we can hope for peace with other people, we must first accept the peace God offers us.

Then, especially in this season of Advent, continue praying for peace with others. Be ready to make peace when God gives the opportunity. Until then, as far as it depends on you, live at peace. {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at avawrites.com.

Preparing for Christmas—The Matthew 6:6 Way

Only the mother may pass.

Behind the door of Jayme's room (still hers in our hearts, even though she has a man and a mortgage now) lie growing mounds of Christmas treasures. Nondescript paper grocery sacks carry only a name on the outside but hand-picked stocking stuffers on the inside.

On the floor in the closet are a few folded, college-ruled papers that hold my nice list. (Not a naughty in the whole lot.) After my covert ops into town, I slip stealthily into the gift room and disperse the latest gifts.

Cross them off the list.

This is a work I do alone every December—poring over the names and the wish lists, stashing surprises and organizing delightful gifts we only splurge on once a year.

But that is only one of my two secret Christmas rooms.

The other is a place I slip into by myself as well, but in this room, the names are on note cards tucked into a plain paper mache box. So many names, and this Christmas I am poring over each one with secret prayer.

Sick people. Friends making decisions. Lost souls for whom I am fighting. Missionaries. Church family. Impossible requests that I'm just sure God is going to take care of quite nicely. Mental struggles. Emotional turmoil. Brothers in Christ overseas. Children. Parents. Grieving hearts. Empty pocketbooks. Hearts that need growing.

For all the time I spend on my knees in front of paper sacks, doling out sweet treats and wish-list fulfillment, I spend a much longer, more precious time on my knees in front of the Father.

Praying for this one and that one. Attending to the details of so many hearts and lives.

Jesus says:

But you, when you pray, enter your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly (Matt. 6:6).

Go into your room, mothers.

Go into your room during the Christmas season, and do the secret work of tending to names. This is a meaningful, lasting, world-altering gift you give. {eoa}

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The Gift That Brings a Powerful, Life-Enriching Message to Your Children

My memories of Thanksgiving and Christmas with both my mom's side of the family and my dad's are only positive. I'm very grateful.

Presents are certainly among my memories. I will always remember the year I was 12. At some point, as we were opening gifts, I realized my brother, Dave, had more presents left to open than I did. I said something about this and noticed my mom immediately look at my dad. They nodded, indicating they agreed about something. Then my dad suggested I look under my bed. Even though I was surprised, he didn't need to tell me twice!

I'm sure I ran up the stairs. In contrast, a few minutes later, I walked carefully down those same stairs holding my very own viola. If I remember correctly, I was crying by the time I got back to our family room.

I carefully removed the Christmas ribbon, opened the case and stared at the shiniest viola I had ever seen. I lifted it from the velvet-lined case and caressed it. I gingerly placed it under my chin and imagined playing great symphonies.

The gift wasn't special just because it was expensive. It meant a lot to me because having my own viola, rather than renting one which we had been doing, meant my parents believed

in me. They believed in my growing talent. They believed I was mature enough to take good care of my own viola. Their trust inspired me.

What can you give your children this Christmas that communicates, “I believe in you”? {eoa}

[Dr. Kathy Koch](#) is the author of *Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World*.

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Your Power-Packed Plan to Refresh, Reset and Receive From the Lord

The rush of the holidays can leave many in its wake.

From Nov. 1 to Dec. 31, the days seem to fly past, filled with constant activity. The celebrating can be fun, but the after-effects of deliciously heavy meals, non-stop travel, marathon cooking sprees, late-night family visits and parties filled with constant caroling can take their toll.

When Jan. 1 arrives, we're left wondering, “Where did the end of the year go?”

If we're not mindful, that same pace can continue into the new year as we replace all the celebration and activity with work, obligations and our list of responsibilities.

Instead of continuing the hectic pace of life or slowly drifting in the sway of others' demands on our schedules,

January is an opportune time to ready ourselves and prepare for the what the Lord has in store for 2018.

In life, taking the time to refresh, reset and receive doesn't come easily—our lives are just not set up that way.

During an average day there is much to do and accomplish. There rarely seems to be just the right amount of time to do the things we desire.

In the pursuit of focused connection with the Lord, we often have to intentionally set aside the time to seek Him without numerous distractions. Some would see this time of focused pursuit as a luxury, but for many, it can be an investment that yields results in this life and the next.

The Lord is constantly speaking, but many times our ears are attune to the cries of those around us—children, spouses, friends, coworkers, social media. The ones we love and are in relationship with need us. We reason that we're simply being attentive, responsible and engaged, which is understandable, legitimate and can also be dangerous, that is, undermine our progress with the Lord.

There are topics the Lord desires to talk to us about concerning our lives, our families, our colleagues, friends and even our nations. He desires to draw us into greater fellowship with Himself and deeper levels of intimacy, that we would know Him and reflect Him to a hurting world.

“But we all, seeing the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, as in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18).

There are many voices we can listen to, but it's the Lord's words that matter most in our lives—only He has the words of life. Our Father, Provider, Healer, Redeemer, Restorer and

Creator has been intent on drawing His children near to reveal His nature, kindness, love and commitment from before the foundations of this world ([Eph. 1:6–8](#)).

As we draw near to Him, He fulfills His promise and draws near to us. The closer we draw to Him in fellowship, through prayer, praise and worship, the more we begin to look like our Father. Our hearts are open to Him, and we realize we are strategically positioned to receive from Him.

And like children who observe their fathers' habits and look to emulate them, we too can see what the Lord has done and what He has enabled us to do through His sacrifice and His power He has placed within us. As we mature and our love grows, we are able to walk with Him in righteousness in our day to day and realize we are strategically positioned to give the way He gave, love the way He loved and lead the way He led.

In this place, we're able to see that there are things the Lord wants to say not just to us, but *through* us. He has a message of hope, joy, peace and perseverance that He desires to pour into and out of His people, but that message comes through intimacy, fellowship and drawing near.

Whether it's two hours set aside to seek Him on the first day of the new year or a full week, we can never waste our time by pouring it into seeking Him. Everything is secure in His hands; there is no waste, loss or lack in Him. Our God is the life that overcomes in every situation. And that's what He offers to us, the invitation to come close again and receive in order to be His and do what we were made to do—love Him and be loved by Him so we can love others fully. {eoa}

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revealed to families, government leaders and immigrants from non-Christian nations.

This article originally appeared at ihopkc.org.

How Your Blood Type Impacts Your Health

Knowing and working with your blood type is a critical component in many aspects of your physical health. Dr. Joe Cristiano shares the underlying weight-loss and health principles from *Blood Types, Body Types and You* in this clip from *1on1 With Damion Davis*.

Kim Daniels Explains How to Deal With the Demonic

Are you ready to move into the anointing of God? In this powerful clip, Kim Daniels—pastor, author, and Florida state representative—unpacks the concept of demonic jurisdiction and how to deal with the demonic in biblical ways.

The One Thing Every Family Should Make at Christmas

Making memories might be the most important thing to do next month. It's more important than making cookies, making purchases or making money.

When we concentrate on making memories, rather than just going through our Christmas routines, our experiences will be richer. We'll intentionally pay more attention to the people we're with than to the tasks at hand. Therefore, we'll establish stronger emotional ties with the people and make memories that last.

Think about the activities you have scheduled next month and the tasks you want to accomplish. What if you think about them in the context of memory making? You might have already done some of the things I list at the end of this post, but maybe you can now have rich conversations to still broaden the potential for positive memories that last.

What would it take for you to create memories that are thought of fondly next year as you participate in activities and tasks next month? If you think back to past Christmases, what do you remember? Why do you remember those things and those people? Your answer to these questions may help you do things differently to create richer memories for your family this season.

Did humor make your list? I suspect it did because bonds are often deepened during times of joy and laughter. Look for opportunities to enjoy each other.

Did you think of something that involved a surprise? That's

often the case for me as I reflect on strong memories of my childhood and even adult years. For your family, add something surprising that you've never done before. Or you could add a twist to something you have typically done. This will make it more memorable.

Small, Insignificant Things Are Significant

Some of my best memories are those of small and seemingly insignificant things: seeing my sister-in-law putting newly baked Christmas cookies into a tin that belonged to her mom and has been used for maybe 40 years or more. Hearing a song on the radio and remembering who I was with when I heard it performed at a concert. Using wrapping paper my mom would have loved. A recipe that was hers that her grandchildren still love. Dessert plates hand-painted by my grandma when she was about 18 that we still use at my brother's home.

It's the conversation surrounding these things that make the memories—and, therefore, the people involved—come alive. Let's purpose to talk a lot about meaningful things as we're out-and-about and in our own homes. Let's get pods out of ears and eyes off of devices and talk. It can be done! Expect it. Have high expectations. Listen and talk. Talk and listen.

No one in our family would know about the Christmas cookie tins if Debbie wouldn't tell us. My nieces and nephew wouldn't know their great-grandmother painted the dishes their cake is on if we didn't tell them. They wouldn't know that the food they enjoy was first served by their grandmother to her father on Christmas Eve many, many years ago if my brother and I didn't tell them.

Make memories, not just cookies. Make memories, not just a clean house. Make memories, not just purchases. You get the idea.

How might concentrating on making memories influence the way you do tasks like these?

Choosing a tree. Decorating a tree. Shopping for a present for your child's teacher. Choosing presents for friends and loved ones. Wrapping presents. Planning menus for times when family and friends will come over for dinner. Choosing outfits to wear here and there. Watching favorite Christmas movies together. Choosing recipes to make for different events. Making them together in the kitchen. Practicing the piano for an upcoming recital or to play for a visiting relative. Making cookies together. Eating cookies with hot chocolate in candlelight. Driving to see Christmas lights and decorations. Visiting shut-ins. Surprising neighbors with flowers, Christmas cookies, or something you know they would appreciate. Singing Christmas carols. Cleaning the house so it's more ready for relatives to arrive. Attending church. Having meaningful conversations in the car on the way home. Practicing for and then attending church or school Christmas programs. {eoa}

[Dr. Kathy Koch](#) is the author of *Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World*.

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Chuck Pierce: A Shift Is Happening

In this powerful video, Chuck Pierce unpacks the shift he believes is happening and how it relates to a heavenly shift. Watch and learn from this bold prophet.