

Living In the Power of God

In my lifetime, I have seen, learned and experienced so very much. It is my time, as it was for the prophetess Anna, to pour all God has given me into those coming after me. Because of God's emphasis, I have grown to value certain themes as so important in the life of the church, and I want to share these themes plus the precious ministries He has led me to in this season with the next generations. But I didn't always feel that way.

Years ago, I was encircled by a few people in the small dining room of a Brazilian mission house. The leader of our ministry trip, my friend, evangelist Rick Bonfim, was praying as others laid hands on me. He spoke treasured words of blessing, "more strength in her work, fresh anointing." Then he said, "And Lord, let this 'Anna...,'" and it was there that I popped open an eye and thought, *Anna? Do I look that old already?*

I am teasing a bit and laughing at myself, too. As much as I cherished my friend's Spirit-filled prayer, I wasn't ready to be seen as Anna.

As you probably know, Anna, along with Simeon, greeted baby Jesus when His parents brought Him to the temple for dedication (Luke 2:25-38). She was the 84-year-old widow who spent day and night in the temple, worshipping, fasting and praying.

Today, I would be honored to be seen as an Anna. I am a grandmother with five precious grandchildren. But I am also a pastor who sees the world as my parish and continue to minister today—just as my predecessor, John Wesley, did. I have served six churches in various pastoral roles but now minister beyond the local church.

Ministering in the Glory

There's no substitute for the presence of God and for genuine encounter and intimacy. You'll note I say "genuine." I was once at the Brooklyn Tabernacle for a leaders conference, and Pastor Jim Cymbala said, "There's Pentecostal culture, but then there is the true presence of the Holy Spirit."

As Pentecostals and charismatics, we've seen hype. We've seen emotionalism and "courtesy falls"—people trying to work up a reaction and make something happen at a charismatic meeting. But pretense never gets us where we want to go. We need the Holy Spirit—His *true presence*.

Some people are like the "Ladies of Gold" from California, who formed a group called the Golden Candlestick for worship and intercession about seven decades ago. With the single strum of a zither, these women found themselves immediately in the manifest presence of God. James Maloney has written about these remarkable Spirit-filled women (and some men).

For many of us, rising into the presence of God may take a more extended worship time, a process Ruth Ward Heflin describes in her book *Glory: Experiencing the Atmosphere of Heaven*. Ruth modeled, taught and wrote that we should gather and praise the Lord, praise being "an instrument of harvest, of celebration or warfare and ascent."

When we lose ourselves in praise, that praise will give way to deeper worship and adoration, which feeds intimacy and brings in the glory realm. Once in the glory realm, surrounded by the presence of God, so much happens with ease: prophetic words, words of knowledge, healings and other types of ministry. I pursue this significant approach to God and share it as I lead others.

Too many churches seem to have little insight about this. Worship too often consists solely of upbeat praise songs that never graduate into the simple chorus of adoration or spontaneous choruses as people lose themselves in God.

Instead, we see the standard three songs followed by an announcement loop on a screen. But the gathered people may be just on the tip of getting lost in God as this sudden break for announcements occurs. We need to ascend the “holy hill” (Ps. 24) and get lost in God.

I cannot stress this enough. We must spend time reflecting on how we worship. In the glory, we can do much good because God can work with us and through us with ease.

Serving in the Nations

I have been traveling to Cuba since 2012. There, I find myself in the glory as soon as I walk into churches and hear the first notes of worship songs. The Cubans understand this idea of “ascending the hill of God.” They also know how to take people from powerful celebration and warfare praise songs where the whole church is dancing to songs of deep, passionate love for the King.

I first went to Cuba with Bonfim’s ministry. He was born and reared in Brazil but lives in Georgia now and has a powerful ministry in his homeland. He also goes to Israel and Peru. But in 2012 he mentioned that Bishop Paulo Lockmann of Brazil had introduced him to Bishop Ricardo Pereira of Cuba. He was organizing a trip and would bring 30-40 people with him.

Often in our lives with God, when we encounter something God has destined us to do, it is, as one friend put it, like a cord for a powerful yard tool going off in your heart. *Brrrrummm!* That is what I felt. *I must go to Cuba!*

I traveled there with Bonfim’s teams four times. Two trips involved going to Santa Clara and teaching all the Methodist pastors one time and then all the Methodist missionaries another time at their camp, Camp Canaan. I gave seminars, as did other pastors and leaders. We also went out to churches and small mission sites to preach and minister healing to the people.

Through these events I met both a pastor and a missionary from Guantanamo, the easternmost province of Cuba. God then led me to go on my own to Guantanamo, sometimes with teams I organized, at other times alone, with my husband or with a friend. Later, our ministry moved to the city of Camaguey, Cuba, with our primary partner, Pastor Arnaldo Peña Muñoz. He and his family are like family to us. My times of ministry in Cuba have been extraordinarily powerful. Because these beautiful people have so much need, they have so much dependence on God.

I once ministered in a church in the town of Imias. My husband and I helped the congregation double the size of their sanctuary, finish off their pastor's house and purchase a house next door for classes and storage, among other things. But one night before all this was completed, we worshipped with half the people in a center courtyard and the other half seated in the church with the shutters open.

Under the stars in the dark of night with the lights shining out from within the sanctuary, the worship team played the wonderful Cuban music so filled with African and Hispanic sounds and rhythms. When you hear it, you cannot sit still. These beautiful Christians love the Holy Spirit, and the atmosphere of the service was so alive.

I remember after preaching, I said to them, "Some of you may have needs. The message may have touched an area of your life, and you long for the Lord to minister to you. Come forward." Like a mighty ocean, most of them rose from their seats and moved toward us. Pastor Arnaldo had invited another pastoral family, friends of ours, to be there, and Pastor Leandro began to minister with me.

Wave upon wave of people engulfed us and as we touched and declared God's goodness and healing over people, many were falling. It was one of the most glorious nights of my life. I could go on forever when the Holy Spirit places these

opportunities to heal before me. Healing has become a central part of my ministry.

Except for the interruption of the coronavirus, I have made many trips to Cuba in the last decade. We continue to help with restoring churches, feeding programs, salary supplementation, crop and animal projects and much more. As someone once said to me, "Cuba is your second home. It is the land of your anointing."

Pastor Arnaldo has been appointed to a church in Niquero, Cuba. This has now become our primary site of ministry, and we hope to visit again as soon as Cuba re-opens to travelers in November 2021.

Moving Into Recovery Ministry

I'm going to backtrack a little in my storytelling. In 2008, I had one of those jarring ministry experiences that call for a drastic change in your life.

As a female Pentecostal Methodist pastor, I found myself coming to the end of a struggle. I had been assigned to a traditional yet socially liberal congregation. They loved formal organ music and politics to the left. We were not a fit for one another.

I left both church and denomination. My husband and I, after a time of healing, planted a church in our home. A sweet group gathered, hopeful to have a family church and raise their children in it. All went well until six women in drug rehab showed up one morning and sat in the back row in the outbuilding we had turned into a church building. (We lived on lots of acreage.)

Their counselor had brought them to worship. Her thought was they would try it and then go find their own church. But they kept coming back, and we went through the ups and downs of their recovery, including some relapses.

It proved too much for some of the families in the church plant, but I discovered I absolutely loved and could relate well with addicts. I had already been going to Leavenworth prison to minister to inmates.

The Lord's intense drawing of my heart to the addicts surprised me, but it also revealed the Spirit's work in my heart. Then living west of Kansas City with our first grandchild due to be born in the city, my husband and I found a home there in 2011.

We encountered some old friends in a grocery store who were involved in ministry in a place called the Healing House. "Take me with you," I said. That began an ongoing relationship with this Christian recovery community for people addicted to drugs and alcohol.

The founder of this community, Bobbi Jo Reed, was an addict who had lived on the street herself. When she found Jesus Christ, she began to help other women, then men, have a place to go where they could stay more than 28 days. The Healing House properties include multiple homes, apartments, storefronts and meeting halls.

I began to teach, preach and do pastoral counseling with this community. I have not been engaged in the counseling ministry for a while, both because of COVID and because of my busy schedule creating podcast episodes for my Charisma podcast, *Rooted by the Stream*, and writing a blog on my website, .

I have loved teaching at the Healing House and continue to do that. They have converted a former bowling alley into a huge meeting hall, classroom and kitchen area. I love standing in the front of that room to teach hundreds of people in recovery.

We have used the Alpha evangelistic program again and again with the community, but in between Alpha sessions I developed many Bible studies about issues that plague people in recovery

such as fear, resentment, guilt, the healing of soul wounds and more.

In 2018, I put these studies together in a book called *Jesus and the Addict: Twelve Bible Studies for People Getting Free from Drugs*. God has given this book so much favor; at one point, it was No. 26 on Amazon in Christian Pastoral Counseling books. Many people contact me to say, “We started a Jesus and the Addict group in our recovery center ... our jail ... our church.”

I am thrilled that these groups are forming—that people are getting back to the notion that Jesus alone is our higher power. He is the Savior of the world, our deliverer. “There is no other name under heaven ... by which we must be saved,” (Acts 4:12b).

I am in the process of writing a companion devotional book, which will be called *Jesus and the Addict: 52 Devotions for People Getting Free from Drugs*, and I hope to have it out by the end of the year. I am also designing a T-shirt for all the newly formed Jesus and the Addict recovery groups. I love to visit recovery centers and speak with the people to give them hope and help them move forward with Jesus.

“Come out of the shadows and sing,” God said in a prophetic dream He gave me on May 24, 2018. This divine dream for helping others through my new “pulpits” of writing and podcasting continues unfolding.

Dr. Pam Morrison is a pastor who has both led churches and also ministered in the inner city and elsewhere with recovering addicts as a pastoral counselor and as part of a healing rooms ministry. She loves ministering overseas and has had a special relationship with people in Cuba for many years. She is the author of *Jesus and the Addict: Twelve Bible Studies for People Getting Free from Drugs*, available in

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