

Watch Healing Miracles Manifest When You Choose This Christlike Action

Each week, people come to experience God in the baptismal waters at Christ Fellowship Church in Dawsonville, Georgia—a small community 50 miles northeast of Atlanta.

In January 2018, during a 21-day fast, I had an open vision while praying alone in the sanctuary. While slowly walking across the platform, I looked up and saw our baptistery. In the natural, the baptismal tank was empty, but in my 10-second vision, it was full of water, and fire burned on top of the water, similar to the way gasoline burns on water. Immediately, the Lord spoke to my spirit, “Todd, I am going to baptize people with Holy Spirit fire.”

People from all over the world have traveled to our church to experience Christ in the water, and miracles of all sorts have taken place. I have seen stage 4 cancers healed, scars from self-harm disappear, mental illnesses cured, skin conditions eradicated, deaf ears opened and people set free from lifelong addictions when they encounter Jesus in the water. Over 14,000 people have been immersed in the baptismal pools since February 2018.

But more than the miracles, perhaps the greatest and most beautiful result of this move of God is how people are rediscovering forgiveness. They are finding the strength to let go of lifetime grievances and hurts. For some, that means releasing the bitterness and unforgiveness they have carried for decades. When they choose to let go and forgive, tremendous miracles have taken place.

I know this truth firsthand, because before God did it in the lives of people at my church, He had to do it in me.

Make It Right

Have you ever made a declaration to God in the form of a promise, and then later wished you hadn't? I have.

It was a sincere declaration, and I meant it with all my heart. But I didn't know He was going to cash in on that promise just three seconds later.

At the time, the revival was 2 months old. There is a wooden altar bench about 3 feet wide in front of our altar. I remember kneeling at it one afternoon. The sanctuary was dark, and I was alone, spending time with God. Overwhelmed and astounded by His presence at our church, I boldly told Him, "God, I love you so much, and I will do whatever You ask and pay whatever price You want me to pay to have You here."

This sounds good, right? I thought it was very noble and inspiring. But then God replied, and I wasn't prepared for what He said: "Todd, you have hurt some people in your past—your previous elders. I need you to go make that right with them."

"Excuse me, God," I said. "What did You say?"

I was not expecting that at all. I quickly responded back to the Lord as if He didn't have all the information necessary to make such a request: "God, they hurt me. They need to come to me and ask me to forgive them."

As soon as those words left my mouth, I literally felt the Lord step away from me. He didn't leave me, but He simply pulled back. I felt it and knew He had distanced Himself from me.

Despite my lofty declaration just a minute earlier, He and I both discovered at that moment the level of glory I could handle and carry. If I wasn't willing to obey Him, then I was at my limit. He wasn't going to send more glory than we had

already received.

After feeling the Lord withdraw, I promptly and brokenly agreed that I would ask for forgiveness from the ones He would show me. It had been many years since I had seen some of my previous elders. However, the moment I committed to making things right between us, they started appearing everywhere.

Going to these men and asking them to forgive me was one of the hardest things I ever had to do. Every time I saw one, the Lord would say, "There is one." My stomach would immediately get knotted up. I would begin to make excuses or say, "God, can I do it next time?"

One night while enjoying dinner with my family, an elder walked into the restaurant. He had placed a to-go order, picked it up and then made his way straight to our table. I couldn't believe it.

The Lord said, "There he is. I brought him to you."

I tried to avoid eye contact with this man. Occasionally, I looked up, hoping he would leave. The whole time he was talking, I was talking to myself and the Lord. I told the Lord, "God, I am eating dinner with my family, and you know how important family is. I can't do this now in front of everybody."

After a few minutes, he said goodbye and headed out the door. I heard the Lord say, "There he goes."

"I know," I responded. "I know, but God—?"

Deep down, I knew God had brought him to me—not just to my vicinity, but exactly to my table. He was making it easy on me.

I made eye contact with my wife, Karen, and I knew what I had to do. As the elder exited the restaurant, I got up from my table and chased him down. I stopped him and said that I

needed him to forgive me. He was very gracious, and God blessed our meeting.

But not every encounter went according to plan. I remember one specific meeting. I saw one of the elders in a parking lot while he and his wife were preparing to leave. His car was parked about 200 yards from mine, but those 200 yards felt like 2 miles. Every step of the way, the devil was clowning with me. My own mind was trying to convince me I shouldn't do this—at least not now. But I was determined.

When I finally made it to his car, he was standing outside the driver's door, and his wife was already in the passenger seat. After some small talk, I asked him to forgive me. Instead of saying, "Yes, I forgive you," he made a sarcastic remark and derogatory comment. For a brief moment, I wanted to throat-punch him and got the fighting shakes. But I took a deep breath and overcame my emotion by God's grace.

Now composed, I leaned into the car to speak to his wife and asked her to forgive me as well. She had a different response, and it changed everything. I looked at him again, he softened and the two of us reconciled. It was beautiful.

Over a two-week period of time, I satisfied my promise to the Lord, and with each encounter, I could sense the glory of God increasing in my life. The glory not only increased in my life, but in my church as a whole. Our church services experienced a greater dimension of His presence.

Shortly after I made peace with my former elders, I shared what I had done with my church. I felt they needed to know the journey I was on to walk softly before the Lord.

I will never forget the overwhelming severity of the service. As I spoke about making things right with people we have hurt or offended, the fear and awe of the Lord came upon us. People knew what they had to do. Our desire became to please Him no matter the cost. Because of that, I am now able to share two

incredible testimonies of people who attended our church and experienced the supernatural power of forgiveness.

Healing Through Forgiveness

Kristy became a part of a blended family when she was very young. Her biological mom's addiction to drugs had a devastating effect upon her family. Her parents divorced, and eventually her father married another woman. But because Kristy continued to live with her mom, her childhood was rough.

When she was 15, her house was raided by the police. A policeman threw her to the ground, pointed a gun at her head and commanded her not to move. She was quickly handcuffed and questioned. She did not understand what was happening or why the police were in her home. The police took her mom and her mom's boyfriend into custody. That was when Kristy discovered her mom was a drug dealer, and her world turned upside down.

As a result, Kristy was sent to live with her dad and his new wife. The transition was problematic from the start. She felt neglected, mistreated, unwanted and abandoned. In this new environment, even though she was living with her dad, she felt unprotected, and those feelings had an extreme impact on her relationship with her stepmom.

Kristy ultimately developed so much anger and resentment toward the two of them that at 16, she left home and moved in with a friend. Kristy told me, "I lived most of my life bitter and angry and had not forgiven my stepmom."

One Sunday night while at home, Kristy was watching the North Georgia Revival on Facebook. She saw her stepmother enter the waters to be baptized.

"Something came over me, and I was brought to tears," Kristy says. "God allowed me to see my stepmom as His daughter—a good person who has struggles just like me."

The next week, Kristy went to the North Georgia Revival for herself. God laid it on her heart to reconcile the relationship with her stepmother by asking for her forgiveness. Kristy was taken aback by God's instruction because she felt her stepmom was the one who needed to apologize to her. But God pressed in upon her until she agreed to repent to her stepmom.

Kristy decided to be baptized in the fire water, but she didn't want to be baptized alone. Church leaders found her stepmother and asked if the two could be baptized together. Her stepmom agreed. I watched as Kristy looked at her stepmother and, before the entire church and on a national livestream, she repented for hating her. The presence of God manifested as both women repented to each other, and forgiveness was granted. They were both immersed, and God restored their relationship.

Incredibly, Kristy's story doesn't just end with their reconciliation. A miracle resulted from her obedience. Kristy's daughter was born with an extra bone in her foot, and it caused extreme tightness and significantly restricted her mobility. For 10 years, she was closely monitored by the doctor, and surgery was scheduled to remove the bone.

The following Tuesday, at a special children's ministry event hosted by our church, her daughter came down for prayer during an altar call. Almost a dozen children gathered around her to pray for her foot. Instantly, the Lord healed her and removed the extra bone. She got up and started running without pain up and down the hallway.

Later that week, this little girl had a doctor's appointment, and she told him what had happened. He instructed her to jump and run in the office. After she did just that, the doctor said, "Well, it doesn't look like we have to do surgery anymore."

Open the Heavens

One night, a woman named Katrina suddenly felt something wasn't right with her pregnancy, so she rushed to the emergency room. When she arrived, the hospital was overly crowded, and the doctors were extremely busy. Still, she got an ultrasound ordered. The ultrasound revealed that her son Isaac's umbilical cord was wrapped around his neck. Due to the high levels of amniotic fluid, Isaac was able to move around quite easily in Katrina's womb; however, on this day, his movement escalated. And as he moved around, the cord around his neck frequently caused his oxygen supply to be cut off, causing stress on Isaac's developing mind and even more frantic movement.

Due to the high volume of patients in the emergency room, a doctor never attended to Katrina and Isaac; only nurses were able to help. They were eventually sent home without ever seeing a doctor and told there was nothing they could do at this time.

Katrina and her husband, Anthony, told me what happened next.

"When Isaac was born, it was immediately noticeable that some things weren't normal. There was an immediate hush over the hospital room. I'll never forget that moment. I knew exactly what had happened, and my 21-year-old self was overwhelmed with fear, anger and guilt for not knowing better.

"There was damage to Isaac's brain. Throughout the years, we have seen the best specialists and developmental pediatricians. There were abnormal MRIs. Five years after his birth, one of Isaac's neurologists found some white spots on his brain. She told us it was most likely due to oxygen loss sometime during utero.

"Isaac, who is now 12, has had significant struggles with learning. His label through the school system has been 'moderate to severe developmental delay.' He loves books and

being read to, and he has always wanted to learn to read. We have tried several programs, tutors and private therapy with no success. We have even heard him cry out in his sleep, 'I can't read.'"

But Anthony says an encounter with John and Carol Arnott—leaders of the Toronto Blessing—at the North Georgia Revival changed his perspective.

"I was helping at the altar," he says. "I watched as Pastor John asked people whose fault their ailments were—and then asked them to forgive those people. Over the next couple of days, the Holy Spirit began to deal with my heart about unforgiveness I'd held onto against the doctors and nurses we saw during Katrina's pregnancy. On Tuesday night of that week, my wife and I prayed together and asked God to help us release the offense.

"On Wednesday, we received a call from Isaac's teacher. She was crying, talking about how Isaac's reading and school work had dramatically improved overnight. He was reading his books at school and adding numbers and even putting together fractions. ... It's a miracle. Since then, even more has improved, including sentence structure, sensory processing and overall academic improvement."

The breakthrough for Isaac came the night his parents, Anthony and Katrina, chose to forgive the negligence of the doctors.

The power of forgiveness is enormous, and the devil knows it. He gives us a plethora of reasons why we shouldn't and cannot forgive others. But God's Word is very specific about this issue. Scripture reveals that unforgiveness is the root cause of all types of ailments and delays in our lives. The enemy has legal access and an open door to our lives when we harbor bitterness and refuse to forgive.

There is no telling what kind of breakthrough is being held back in our lives due to unresolved conflict. The glory of God

went to the next level in each of the lives I have shared.

Investigate your own heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to search you and reveal to you any offense you may have caused others, as well as any bitterness you may harbor toward others.

God is ready to open heaven over your life, but often He cannot due to the grudges and hurts we cling to. If we want breakthrough, we must first obey Jesus' commands from Matthew 5:23-24: "Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go on your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." {eoa}

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE: To read more about forgiveness and its supernatural power, check out .

Todd Smith is the pastor of Christ Fellowship Church in Dawsonville, Georgia.

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