



DO WHAT JESUS DID

**a real-life field guide
to healing the sick,
routing demons and
changing lives forever**

ROBBY DAWKINS



Chosen

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Robby Dawkins, *Do What Jesus Did*
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This book is dedicated to the memory of the loving life and ministry of my mother, Rose Marie Douglas Dawkins. Her love for Jesus and her selfless sacrifice for me and many others whom she pastored and led have shaped my life forever. Time and again, I saw her reach out and serve people, including the homeless and mentally ill in our home. In the early seventies, many runaways and homeless teens found a mother's loving arms in her embrace. We took so many people in whom she would love, cook for and share Jesus' life-changing message with. Her faith and relationship with Jesus were unshakable. Even in her final days of battling painful colon cancer, she turned to me one night and said, "Jesus' loving-kindness is better than life."

The story of my birth illustrates my mom's faithfulness to God. Satan appeared to her and told her that if she allowed my birth to take place, he would kill both of us when I was born. My mom's response was, "The Lord clearly has a plan for this child's life that you want to stop, and I will not put my hand against God's plan—even if it means the loss of my own life." From that day on, she battled regular visitations and torment from Satan as he tried to get her to terminate the pregnancy. Her answer was always firm; she would not do it. I was born on Easter Sunday morning. Though there had never been any complications during her pregnancy with me, as the doctor departed the delivery room he turned to my father and said,

“I just left a war zone. Both mother and child are fine, but it wasn’t without a fight.” I believe that occurred because of what is contained for you within the pages of this book.

Special Thanks

I also want to thank my wonderful wife, Angie, and six sons, Judah, Micah, Isaiah, Elijah, Canah and Caspian, for their undying support and patience in this process. You seven are all my inspiration.

I want to especially thank Nicole Voelkel, without whom this project would have never happened. Her research, writing and passion for the message in this book were so significant. I am forever appreciative of her faithful dedication.

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Foreword

One of my favorite Bible stories is about the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus. Jesus had just died, and to say they were disappointed would be the understatement of the century. Jesus had brought hope to every area of life, and now that hope was dead.

A stranger joined them as they walked along the road. He began to share his insights about the Messiah and His need to suffer on behalf of humanity. The disciples were so moved that they persuaded him to stay with them at their destination. When they sat down to eat, the man took bread and broke it. In that moment their eyes were opened. It had been Jesus the whole time. He was resurrected! And as quickly as He was revealed, He disappeared.

Their discussion following His departure is what moves me most. When referring to His conversation with them, they said, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us?”

My heart began to burn while reading Robby Dawkins’ *Do What Jesus Did*. I know of no other way to explain it. My heart burns with passion, hope and the wonder of what could become of my life with this book in hand. His miracle stories carry the

DNA of the resurrected Christ. What moves me most is Jesus performing supernatural works through very natural people.

I had an interesting experience while reading this book. On one page my heart would leap over the story of a miracle—because of both the redemptive work of Jesus and the courage of the author. On the next page my heart would leap over Robby’s wisdom and insights as seen in his approach to a situation or to the Scriptures themselves. This book is filled with wisdom and testimonies—both of which are great treasures to believing believers.

While pondering this, I remembered Psalm 19:7: “The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (NASB). That powerful combination of testimonies and wisdom adds stability to every follower of Jesus. Many look at the pursuit of a life of miracles as random, careless and suspect. Biblically, however, the testimony of the miraculous is *sure*—meaning stable and supportive. Stories of miracles bring the stability of wisdom into the life of the believer. And this book presents this reality beautifully.

I have the feeling spiritual giants will emerge at the reading of *Do What Jesus Did*, because something gets awakened in the hearts of believers that has been either bruised by disappointments or buried by lies. Robby does a marvelous job of letting the reader know that if he can walk in a miracle lifestyle, anyone can. He acknowledges the reality of the dead not always getting raised, the bills sometimes barely getting paid and healing not always manifesting as we think it should. It is honest and without hype.

Then there is the fact that miracles sometimes happen in spite of faithless prayers. It was this experience that sent Robby on a dive into a Gospel that does what it says it will do. *Do What Jesus Did* is the product. And we are all better for it.

Bill Johnson, senior leader, Bethel Church, Redding, California;
author, *When Heaven Invades Earth* and *Hosting the Presence*

1 // **Gangsters in the Doorway**

Father, make of me a crisis man. Bring those I contact to decision. Let me not be a milepost on a single road; make me a fork, that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me.

—Jim Elliot

The door of our church swung open, and in sauntered two of the “princes” from the Latin Kings, the dominant gang in our city. Our church is located in the hub of East Aurora, Illinois, a Latin King hot spot. As they walked in, they simply squared up to me in greeting, hardly twitching a muscle. With a nod to the door, they began pointing out different bullet holes in the building and other scars recalling their past battles. This was a typical “Don’t mess with us” threat. When they walked into my church that afternoon, it was because our city was on a brink of an all-out gang war, and they were making it clear that I was definitely in their territory.

Aurora has a long history of violence, from its Al Capone days in the 1930s and '40s to the ever-increasing gang violence of the '80s and '90s, when the gentrifying of Chicago's urban slums squeezed whole neighborhoods of lower-income tenants into our western suburb. The resulting pressure between warring gangs that were being channeled into smaller and smaller overlapping territories often boosted our homicide rate higher than Chicago's. Thanks to exhaustive efforts by community leaders, churches and the police, the situation had finally begun to stabilize. Then the threats began. Outraged by an increasing sense of marginalization and a "lack of respect" from the police, the Latin Kings began issuing warnings that blood would soon flow in the streets. Several drive-by shootings occurred, and a repeat of history seemed imminent.

Alarmed, police began calling me. As a police chaplain I had mediated several high-profile situations in the past and had seen God radically work in the gang community. I currently had several major ex-gang leaders attending my church who had confirmed that a war was on the horizon. After talking with some insiders, I connected with an Aurora businessman committed to community-gang relations. He had grown up in school with one of the major Latin King leaders, and through this connection he often was able to serve as a liaison. He agreed to set up a meeting for me with two of the main leaders. They had street names like Diablo. I had seen their faces on the police station walls for years, and now seeing them framed in the church doorway with nothing but thin air between us sent a quick jolt down my spine.

One gang leader, Shotgun, was in his forties, a fiercely grim-faced man who seemed possessed by an obsession with death. (Shotgun is a nickname I gave him; I've changed some names in my stories to protect people's privacy.) His second man, Diablo,

was mainly silent but kept his eyes locked on me the whole time, watching my every move. A woman with them, Diana, had also come. She looked rough when she walked in and was a fiery talker. She had no problem letting me know who she was and what she was about.

I had two of my dear friends with me. Todd White was one, and Darren Wilson was the other. Darren was working on a documentary about the power of God.

Shotgun wasn't too interested in introductions. He was doing most of the talking. In candid detail, he described for us a shoot-out that had occurred on the front property of the church and the killing that took place at the corner of our building. He was letting us know just who it was I was dealing with. Without being too specific, he let us know that "they" were about to do some damage in town. He told me that "some people" in the gangs weren't happy, and if that kept happening, there would be blood in the streets. He said a lot of people were going to get "really jacked up," and added, "If people aren't careful, things are going to get really crazy around here."

I had watched Shotgun before, in the park across the street. One afternoon he and a friend got out of a car and strolled into the crowded park. Within a few minutes, the other men in the park stopped what they were doing, walked over to shake his hand and his friend's, then backed away carefully. The men took their families and left. Women pushed their strollers quickly out of the park, and twenty minutes later there wasn't a sign of life on the block. This was a man who wielded fear in our community.

I looked at Shotgun now and thought about how much God actually loved this person standing before me. I told him squarely, "I know there's the threat of a war, and that can't happen."

The two men looked at each other. “Yeah, is that why you invited us here? To try and stop the war?” Diablo asked.

“No,” I said. “Actually, I asked you to come here so that I could introduce you to God.”

That was obviously the last thing they expected to come out of my mouth. Diablo looked at me with the strangest expression, then clutched his crucifix and said, “What do you mean? We know who God is!”

I studied him. “Yes, that might be true, but you’ve never met Him the way you’re about to. If you’ll let us, we’ll pray for you, and you’ll meet God.” I glanced over at the businessman and asked, “Could we start with you?”

This businessman attends our church now, but at the time I didn’t know him well at all. He’s a tall, well-built businessman who heads up the Latino business network in the area. He may have been from a mildly Catholic background; I wasn’t sure. But whatever his beliefs, clearly the last thing he had expected us to do right then was to pray. He seemed especially surprised to suddenly find himself at the center of it. Thankfully, he agreed to go along with it, though I realized that if this didn’t go well, he would probably never meet with me again. I intentionally wanted to start with him because he was the leader of our meeting and the gang leaders trusted him. What he experienced would help legitimize it for the others as he encountered the reality of God and what He was about to do.

We began to pray, “Lord, we bless my friend.” I knew he had had an accident years earlier and had suffered back trauma ever since. As we prayed, I recalled this and felt led to pray for healing. The suffering from his back injury was something he struggled with on a daily basis, and his attempts to find ways to numb the pain had negatively affected his life. I asked him if

his back still hurt, and he confirmed that he was in pain at the moment from both his back and his shoulder.

I told this man in front of the others, “God is about to make Himself real to you and completely heal your back and take away the pain.” We prayed, commanding his back to come into alignment and be fully healed. After a few minutes we asked him to check his back. I could feel God’s presence in the room.

He started to move and twist, his eyes widening in disbelief as he realized that not a single twinge of pain or discomfort remained. He said out loud, “It’s gone! I can’t believe it. It’s been years since I’ve been without any pain.” He sat there perplexed. “I don’t understand where it went.”

His childhood friend, Shotgun, looked at him. “Are you for reals, man?” (Yes, for reals, not for real. For reals is a very typical phrase in poor urban areas; I hear it in my church every week.)

The rest of the meeting the businessman was silent, his face half hidden behind his hands as he seemed in deep thought, considering what had just happened. He told me later that he felt heat and electricity come over his whole body when we prayed for him. During the rest of the meeting, he didn’t try to stop us or intervene in anything else we did, although later he told me it was way outside what he felt comfortable with.

Diablo had been leaning forward and staring at me the entire time, rocking back and forth a little in his chair. From experience, I could tell already from a few things that had happened that he actually was demonized, but I could also see a look of great hunger on his face. It seemed as though what had just happened with the businessman had peeled a layer off Diablo’s defensive mask. He seemed a little softer and I saw desperation in his eyes, almost like, “I don’t know what this is. It scares the hell out of me, but I just have to have it. . . .” His desperation

was reaching past the barrier wall—past the dark stronghold of fear and destruction that had defined his life.

We turned to Shotgun and I asked, “Can we pray for you next?” I also asked him if he had a daughter. I sensed the Lord telling me that He wanted to heal Shotgun’s relationship with his daughter.

Shotgun answered, “Yeah, I have two daughters. Neither of them will even speak to me anymore.”

Then I asked him if something was also going on in his back. I sensed the Lord wanted to heal that, too.

He confirmed, “Yeah, I was shot in the back a while ago; it’s still always in pain. One of the disks was permanently messed up.”

My friend Todd White, who was sitting next to me, also asked Shotgun if one of his legs was shorter than the other.

“Yeah, that’s right.” He nodded slowly, as if a bit mystified by what was happening around him.

Todd asked if he could take Shotgun’s shorter leg in his hands, and he spoke to it: “Leg, get out here! Bones, muscles, skin, grow right now.”

The leg shot out as we watched. Diablo’s eyes popped open, and he stood up to check it. Everyone was stunned.

“Yeah, it’s straight now,” Shotgun confirmed. His back pain was also completely gone.

I looked at him with so much love. “You know, what God just did with your back, He wants to do with your entire life.”

The guys looked at each other, and it was as if something had broken in the room. Diablo was next. I sensed God prompting us with a word of healing for his torso area, and Todd said he felt God highlighting Diablo’s stomach in particular. Diablo lifted up his shirt and showed us scars where he had been shot in the stomach. A huge chunk was missing where the wound had

been. We prayed for the pain to leave and for complete healing to occur in his stomach.

Diablo's eyes widened, and he grabbed his stomach. He said he felt heat and electricity there, and that he had felt it all over him since the moment he first walked in the door.

We explained that what he felt was often a manifestation of God's presence that comes bringing healing. Todd then began praying for Diablo's scarring to disappear. Honestly, we couldn't tell much of a difference afterward, but the two gang leaders swore it had changed and said it was about 50 percent gone. Shocked, they were stunned into silence. Their posture was completely different from when they had come in; the hardened arrogance, cursing and threats that had surrounded their entrance were gone.

When I looked at Diana, the Lord showed me some of the spiritual weight she had been under. I told her, "You've been having demonic visitation at night, hearing voices and having terrible nightmares."

The brassy, outspoken Diana dropped her head down to her chest and started nodding quietly. We also sensed that the Lord wanted to heal her from the stomach trouble and digestive problems bothering her. She confirmed that she was suffering in those areas, too.

I told her, "Diana, God loves you and wants to heal you. We can pray for you, and all those problems can leave right now."

We started praying and commanding the demonic spirits that had been attacking her to leave in the name of Jesus. As we took authority and bound them in the name of Jesus, Diana began sweating profusely. Suddenly she doubled over in her chair as if pushed, and she gasped and let out a huge sigh of air. With that, a heaviness seemed to lift off her, and her face looked different.

We asked her if she had felt something leave, and she nodded. Then we told her, “This needs to be sealed up so that it can’t return. The only way that can happen is if you want to accept Christ.”

Diana nodded and agreed she would do that.

We looked around the table, and I said, “That goes for all of you. If you want to pray right now and give your life to Christ, He will continue to heal you and set you free in every area of your life.”

They all nodded and said yes. I asked them to repeat a prayer giving over their lives to Jesus and making Him their Lord. Shotgun especially, who was standing behind Diana, was almost shouting the prayer, passionately asking God to forgive him for *every* sin he had committed.

All four of them—the businessman, Shotgun, Diablo and Diana—ended up coming back to join our church on Sunday morning. They’ve also started new relationships with people in the community. Today, Shotgun in particular is a changed man. When I met him before, he was driven by the spirit of death. Whereas before he looked completely angry and hollow eyed, today he glows with laughter and joy. He is the first one to tell jokes and welcome newcomers to our church.

Diana has not missed a Sunday in church since that day and has become an outspoken advocate for Jesus to everyone she knows. She brought her entire family to our church. Shotgun and Diablo brought some other men they met on the street into our church for prayer, and those men also decided to leave their gangs and follow Christ. For weeks afterward, I would get calls from these former Latin King leaders telling me that they kept experiencing the presence of God everywhere they went—when they woke up, in the shower, when they were eating, all the time. One of them told me, “Robby, this is the best stuff in the

world.” Crying, he called to say, “I don’t know why, but when I think about how Jesus has changed me, I can’t stop crying. I want the world to know how much Jesus can change people!”

Needless to say, there never was any gang war after our meeting, but both Shotgun and Diablo are still somewhat haunted by their reputations. Every time they show up on a Sunday morning, cop cars begin circling our church. Yet these men continue to praise God, grow in Christ and bring more and more people into relationship with Him. It’s interesting how God works.

At the end of our meeting when everyone had accepted Christ, I looked at these guys and said, “What just happened here will change this city.” I didn’t realize it at the time, but I was giving a prophetic word. This meeting took place at the end of 2011, it has now made national news that there were no homicides in all of Aurora in 2012. That hasn’t happened since 1946.¹

Another twist to this story is that we started the church fifteen years ago in Diana’s sister’s living room! I remember her sister, Bobbie, asking us back then to pray that Diana would come to Christ and turn away from the life she was leading. Fifteen years later, I had the privilege of leading Diana to Christ when she walked through the door that day. Yet Diana and I did not know our connected history through Bobbie until afterward.

The results of our meeting with the gang leaders became an awesome testimony in our community. It was part of a long series of changes we’ve seen God bring since we moved to Aurora to plant the church. Many times, it has been an uphill battle. Numerous break-ins have occurred at the church building, and I’ve had my car stolen several times—twice by members of our church. At different times over the years we’ve struggled financially, and it has been difficult growing a community of people as committed to the vision as we are. There have been pain and hard times—but in the midst of it all, we’ve seen incredible

breakthroughs time and time again. God has been at work healing, transforming families, restoring marriages, providing jobs and ultimately changing the Aurora community. He has made it a place of hope where people from different parts of the country and even the world come to be trained and equipped.

Interrupted by God

Maybe you, too, have seen incredible breakthrough and transformation right where you are, and like all of us, you long to see such things happen on a more regular basis. Maybe you wonder if it's possible for the "normal" Christian life to look just like Jesus' life did.

Or possibly, you find it hard to relate to the dramatic criminal elements involved in the story I just told. Maybe you wonder why God hasn't answered *your* prayers for healing, yet He does things like healing these gang members instantly. Or you might be asking, "How could this kind of thing apply to the place where I live? To the people I know at my office or at school?"

Maybe you're looking for answers and tools. You're hungry to see the Kingdom of heaven break in to your community. I was just that kind of person when God used me to heal someone for the first time. I was a discouraged youth pastor working in a small, dysfunctional church. I believed God could do miracles in theory, and growing up I had seen things that made me long for more. But the truth was, I was thoroughly turned off by the hype, manipulation and abuse that I had seen in many ministry settings. I knew I wanted to follow God, but I had come to a place of simply hanging in there, resigning myself to a Christian life based primarily on trudging it out and not expecting too much. One of the highest values in the Kingdom of God is

faithfulness, but what good is faithfulness without faith? My life was full of church activities and I was faithful to my tasks, but I still had no clue about the authority that is ours to walk in—not for our own sake, but for the sake of the spiritually hungry and for the broken world we live in.

The day that God chose to interrupt me, I wasn't thinking of anyone but myself. I had been hired as a youth pastor, but my vision of ministry had pretty much been brought to its knees by the reality of answering phones and doing the menial tasks that consumed my days. That particular day, I was in a terrible mood. I felt deeply unappreciated by my senior pastor and his family. I felt far from God and from all of the things He had called me to. I was angry and hurt. This was not in any way my shining moment as a Christ follower.

The phone rang, and I answered it halfheartedly. *Probably another sales call*, I thought, *or maybe a message for me to deliver.*

The woman on the phone introduced herself hesitatingly. “Look, I don't really know what to ask,” she began. “I don't go to church. As a matter of fact, I'm not even a Christian,” she offered apologetically. “I just picked a church from the phone book because my father's going in for heart surgery right now. He's in bad shape, and the doctors say they really don't think he's going to make it. We had to press them to go ahead with the surgery.”

She sounded fragile and worn as she explained that this was her father's third bypass surgery, and it most likely meant the end of his life. She didn't know where else to turn, but it had crossed her mind to call a church. She hoped someone would burn a candle, rub some beads for her father, sing a hymn or say a prayer for him in his final stages.

As she tried to rationalize to herself and to me why she had reached out to us, I could tell she was a little embarrassed. Maybe

she even regretted that she had bothered to call at all. What could I do? I offered to pray for the surgery with her, though I didn't really want to. It sounded as though her father definitely wasn't going to make it.

"Well . . ." I paused reluctantly, "I could pray for him. . . ."

Frankly, I just wanted to end the phone call as quickly as possible. I didn't think much would change because of my prayer. As I began, it sounded as if I were giving his eulogy: "Lord, just be with this man's family in this difficult time. You're close to the brokenhearted. Help them, comfort them and be near to them in their grieving."

I was pretty much burying the man in my prayers. My thinking was, *Why would God want to heal him? He's not even a believer. God barely even heals any of His own kids.*

Then the Lord spoke something to me that I didn't understand. I didn't hear an audible voice, but I had a strong sense that He was urging me to do something. At the time, I could only point to a few other occasions in my life in which I had heard the Lord speak to me. This was another one. However, I was so distracted by my own concerns that I was almost annoyed at the interruption! What I heard God say was, "Get out on a limb."

What could He mean by that? I wondered.

Then He urged me again: "Take a risk."

I thought, *What am I supposed to do? These people aren't even Christians. There's no risk to take.* Immediately the Scripture came to mind that says, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Psalm 81:10 NKJV).

Without really having any idea of what I was about to say next, I told the woman, "I hear God saying He's about to . . ." The words fumbled from my lips, and what I heard coming out was ". . . completely heal your father and give him a brand-new

heart, and as a matter of fact, He's going to give him new lungs to go with it."

This was weird! She hadn't said anything about her father's lungs. Have you ever heard yourself say something, then wished you could reach through the air, grab the words and pull them back into your mouth, destroying any evidence that you spoke something so foolish? Most married men know exactly what I mean. As soon as I realized what I had said, I panicked and stopped myself. I began to backpedal as quickly as possible, saying, "Now, wait a minute! What you need to know is that I've never prayed for anyone and seen them healed before. You should know that most of the time when I pray for people, they get sicker, and some have even died. I know that God *can* do things like what I just prayed, but He's never used me to do them. What I just said probably won't happen. . . ."

I was panic-stricken. What if this woman got her hopes up and wound up horribly disappointed? It would be all my fault.

She interrupted me. "You said God is going to give my dad a brand-new heart?"

I gulped out, "Yes, but—"

She cut me off with a brief "Thank you!" and hung up the phone.

With that click of the phone my heart dropped to my toes. What in the world was I thinking? I felt that I had done everything *but* make this woman's pain easier. What if they sued the church? I mean, I was no healer!

When the woman called again crying hours later, my heart sank. I couldn't make out a word she said at first, and I thought, *Oh no, I killed her dad with my prayer. Why did I pray for him? What was I thinking?* I started to apologize profusely: "I am so sorry this happened! I am so sorry for your loss. . . ."

“What—are—you—talking—about? What—loss?” she stammered.

I could just make out her words through the sobs, and I wasn’t sure that I had understood. “Your dad,” I said, “he’s . . . dead?”

She said, “No—he’s doing great!”

Nobody was more surprised to hear that than me.

“Yes, that’s right. . . .” She pressed out the story through her tears. “When the doctors opened him up, they said my father had a brand-new heart!” She explained how several years ago her father had had a valve replacement. The doctors had implanted a heart valve from a pig to save his life. All of that was gone. All the scar tissue from the previous surgery was gone. The doctor said it was like the heart of a thirty-year-old man.

I was absolutely stunned. *Could this actually be happening?* I wondered.

She kept going: “I didn’t even tell you this, but he had had half his lung removed on that side. You mentioned something about God giving him a new lung. When they looked inside, they also saw that he had a whole lung where they had removed half!”

I kept trying to understand if I was hearing her right. “Are you sure?” I asked. “Now, are you *sure* this happened?” It was hard to wrap my brain around it. God had healed this man, and I could barely believe it. I told her, “I have to see documentation.”

Because of my disbelief, she said, “Are you *sure* you’re a pastor?” That next Sunday, she came to our church with her whole family. She even brought me her father’s medical records from before and after the surgery. Through that experience, her entire family believed God and decided to follow Christ.

For me, it was the breaking in of something I had longed for ever since I was a kid. I saw the reality of God’s power and His desire to work through us, which I had been living in complete ignorance of. I hadn’t been on some forty-day fast or an in-depth

Scripture study. What I had was a really lousy attitude before she called—nothing seemed particularly holy or superspiritual about that day. Quite the opposite, in fact.

As I thought through this experience, I kept wondering, *Lord, why did You use me to do this? I don't have that ability.*

What I sensed the Lord clearly speaking back to me that day was “Robby, I’m just looking for people who are available.”

His Part/Our Part

God’s gift to us is ability; our gift to God is availability. He says to us, “You go first. You be available and step out, and I will empower you in the moment.” God does His part, and we have a part to play as well. All of us are invited to be part of the unfolding of God’s Kingdom reign. It’s a high calling and not necessarily a simple journey, but a step-by-step process of faith that’s available to everyone, whether you’re a brand-new Christian or the pastor of a megachurch.

Do we really believe that the Spirit of the living God lives inside us? What does Galatians 5:16 mean when it says for us to “walk by the Spirit,” anyway? It’s certainly possible to believe in God without living by His Spirit. Jesus spoke that “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). By the Spirit we have been given the grace to walk in a level of authority and love that would truly transform the world. One definition of grace that I appreciate is “the power of God, to do the will of God.” Living like that is what it means to be Jesus’ disciples. It’s by the Spirit that we can know Him today, walking with Him and doing the things He did. There is no set standard or comparison of what this has to look like, but there is great encouragement in knowing that God is able

to do far more through us than we could ask or imagine (see Ephesians 3:20).

Whether through traditionalism or a multitude of distractions, or through pursuing our own political or economic agendas, somehow the Western Church has fallen asleep to the reality of God's power in our lives. Rather than ministering grace with authority and authentic love, which brings real transformation, we get caught up in rules and judgmentalism. Yet our nation is crying out for hope. Cities are in desperate need of a people of God who genuinely know Christ, who live out and reflect His love. What's needed are not more "Christians," but more Christ followers. There's real authority there—and a freedom that will break through the sickness and suffering and despair of the most impossible situations.

Somehow our "religion" has made it too easy for us to forget the radically inclusive, table-turning, paradigm-shifting Christ of the Bible, and instead, subtly buy in to the lie that Christianity is a little bit boring, a little bit old-fashioned and not quite true in the parts that count.

Nothing could be further from the truth.