
LIFE TOGETHER AT BETHEL UMC

Our Mission: Love Christ, Grow Faith, and Share Hope

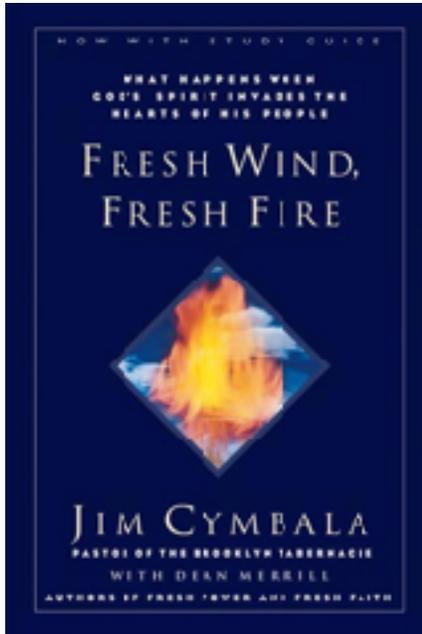
Thank You for Your Prayers

This morning while walking after the early morning prayer service I was struck with the immense gift many of you have given me by praying for me while I am here to learn about prayer. I wept with tears streaming down my cheeks at the thought that what God was speaking to me was a result of your prayers. Who am I that you should pray for me? I don't deserve your prayers yet you are praying for me and God is doing an amazing thing in me while here in South Korea. Thank you so much!

God Spoke to Me

It has been an amazing 24 hours; all day yesterday I was processing everything I was and have experienced at the Bupyeong Methodist Church in Incheon. I was trying to figure out the reason God has done such God-sized things through a small-working class church in a modest neighborhood. What I was hearing from the Senior Pastor and his wife was that it is the result of prayer. Could it be that simple? I wrestled all day in my mind wondering and at the same time wanting to experience the same power of God at work that does God-sized things. The only thing I knew for sure was that I didn't want to do ministry out of my own power and gifts and I wanted to experience great things God could do through our church. So when I went to bed last night I said, "God I don't know what to do for sure. Will you please speak to me in a dream?" I knew God had done it for others and I wanted God to do it for me.

God woke me at 3:00 am this morning and began pouring words and ideas into my head. For about 30 minutes God put ideas on my heart that I felt were from him that gave direction to what I was supposed to do. At the end of that time I wrote everything down so I wouldn't forget it. I wondered to myself, is this really from God or are these things only my thoughts?



Soul Food

This is one of the best books that I have ever read about the power of prayer and how prayer is essential to being filled with the Holy Spirit. This book makes me excited about what God will do through people who pray and has inspired me to pray more. Jim Cymbala has a great witness to what prayer can do in a church and has given me hope for the future of our churches and how God might use us to change lives and impact Shannon and the world around us. This is one of the few books I have ever read more than once.

At the end of the time, I asked God to confirm for me today that what I heard from God in the night was really from him. I didn't want to follow something that wasn't of God's leading.

To my surprise (I don't know why I should be surprised) God answered that prayer within the hour at the Dawn Prayer Service. Yesterday I had been struggling with my having been doing ministry out of my own power and gifts and going to training seminars to get more knowledge to be more effective. I had in my mind that knowledge and doing ministry better was the way to reach people for Christ and grow the church. In the service the pastor spoke from 1 Corinthians 15:10: *10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

I really felt as though God was speaking directly to me in the midst of all the people gathered. God spoke through the pastor telling me that what has been done in ministry and my life was all the result of God's grace and not my abilities; those abilities too came from God and His grace. I knew that this was the confirmation I had asked God for in having me know that what He laid on my heart last night was really from Him. I praise God for answering prayer — to speak to me to let me know what to do and to confirm for me that what was laid on my heart was from Him. I look forward to sharing all of this with you next Sunday, April 30, when I return. I hope that you can be in church that day to hear everything first hand. My heart is so full of joy today for the great God we have and for what God will do through our church. I look forward to seeing you soon.