

Christ in Prophecy **Special 12: Trusting God, Part 2**

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Is the God of the Bible a personal one, or is He aloof and impersonal like the god of Islam? Does the God of the Bible still hear prayers and answer them? Does He still speak to people as He did in Bible times? Does He still perform miracles? For the answers to these questions, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. This year we are celebrating the 35th anniversary of this ministry, and we are praising God for His faithfulness to us during all those years.

As part of our celebration, I decided last December to prepare a 3rd edition of the first book that I wrote in 1987. It was titled "Trusting God: Learning to Walk by Faith." The book tells the story of how God called me into the ministry when I was 20 years old and how I ran from that call for 20 years until 1980 when I established this ministry.

During those years that I was running, I discovered a lot of wonderful things about God. Last week I began sharing them with you; with our viewers. If you did not see that program, you can find it on our website at lamblion.com.

Let me just summarize by saying that in a foolish attempt to get God off my back, I finally decided to meet Him half-way, and I was to quickly discover that God is not interested in anyone meeting Him halfway. He wants a full surrender. My supposedly ingenious idea was to open a Christian store in Dallas that provided books, recordings, Bibles, and church supplies. But the business did not succeed, and I ended up owing a bank \$100,000, which in today's terms would be about \$300,000. I began to wallow in self-pity and think about suicide, when the Lord performed a remarkable miracle in my life that got my eyes off me and onto Him. I described that miracle last week, and it was not some sort of miraculous pay-off of the debt. Oh no, no, no I still owed the debt, but now my eyes were on Jesus and I had hope.

Let's pick up the story there as I described it a year ago in my home church, the Brookhaven Church in McKinney, Texas.

Part 2: Dave's Presentation at Brookhaven Church, McKinney, Texas

Dr. Reagan: There were some hard years ahead because what I did was to negotiate a settlement with the bank. I still owed them after I sold everything off; I still owed them over \$60,000. And I negotiated a settlement, I had to pay them \$1,000 a month for 7 years. We had to cut our lifestyle more than in half. We moved into a tiny duplex. We had an old broken down car that we were driving. We lived off my wife's income as a first grade teacher, while I worked

to pay off that debt. And that was even good because the Lord delivered us from the American lifestyle of materialism; of no matter how much you have you've got to have more. No matter how many cars you've got to have more. No matter how big a house you've got to have a bigger one. And we learned that we could live very simply and be very, very happy. It wasn't easy but we did it.

In the mean time I had to find a new job. And I was called one day and offered the job of Vice President of a university in Oklahoma to be their director of finance and fund raising. I had a lot of misgivings about this particular job because that school was a Christian school that was affiliated with a very, very liberal denomination. And I was a conservative. I confronted the president of the school with this and he said, "David, you don't understand." He said, "We are the most conservative school in this entire denomination." Well I found out later on that views of liberal and conservative depends on where you are on the spectrum. It may have been the most conservative school but for me it was a wild liberal school once I got there. The very first thing I did the first day I was there I went over to--they had a seminary. I went over to the seminary and I meet with the seminary president and I said, "You know I'm new and I'm getting acquainted with everybody tell me I have a question for you." And he said, "What's that?" I said, "What is the goal of the first year of seminary here?" And without hesitation, without any pause he said, "The goal of the first year of seminary is to erase from the student's minds all the garbage they've learned at church." I knew I was in the wrong place.

I had told me wife to stay behind in Dallas and our kids. I said, "I am going to go up there for six months and kind of test the waters." I was so glad I left them behind. But I tell you, you talk about miserable there I was stuck there for I figured I had to stay at least six months. I was in a tiny little apartment. My wife and family down in Dallas. I was lonely. It was a wilderness experience. But God had orchestrated that. He wanted me to have a wilderness experience because He wanted me to get focused on Him and stay focused on Him. And I began to pray as I have never prayed before. Over and over, "God what do you want me to do? Tell me. I am tired of running from you, I want to get in the center of your will." And one day as I was praying the Lord spoke to me again, I just got this strong message. The message was very, very precise, resign your job. Step out in faith. Preach Jesus' coming soon. Preach flee from the wrath that is to come. I heard it over, and over again. Resign your job. Step out in faith. Preach the soon coming of Jesus. Preach flee from the wrath that is to come.

And I wrestled with that and wrestled with it, and wrestled it was good news because ever since the Six Day War in 1967 I had been focused on the studying of Bible prophecy and it had become the passion of my life. But the bad news was: do it by faith. I was a guy that always wanted that paycheck, knew it was coming. And living by faith doesn't mean there is a paycheck coming. I just--it was good news and bad news. And while I was wrestling with that one day I went out to the mailbox, our mail came very early, we were the first stop on his mail delivery and he always came before I went to work. I went out and I opened the mailbox and there was a package from a friend of mine in Houston. I opened the package and in it was a tape. I thought, "Well I listen to this." He said, "I was listening to this tape and God spoke to me and said to send it to you." So, I went in and I put it in the cassette player and it was a tape a part of a ten tape series about how to walk with God and make decisions. And this one was particularly on decision making. And it said in that tape, it said if you are ever wrestling with a major decision in your life try the Old Testament principle of seeking the confirmation of two or more witnesses. And I thought, wow, that's a good idea. So I thought, who is the most godly person I know? And I thought, well it is Bob Yarborough, a man I know in Dallas Texas who has gone on to be with the Lord now. And I thought I'll call him. So I called Bob and I told Bob, I said, "Bob I believe that God is calling me into the ministry, into a full-time ministry in Bible prophecy." And I explained it

all to him. I said, "I am seeking the confirmation of two or more witnesses, would you call me-- pray about this and call me back." He said, "Ok." Two days pass and boy was I wringing my hands and then the phone rang and it was Bob. Bob said, "Are you sitting down?" I said, "No." He said, "You better sit down because you are not going to believe what's happened." He said, "David, the next day after you talked to me I went to a prayer breakfast and I shared with those men what you had told me." And he said, "You know what happened?" He said, "It was spontaneous, I didn't even ask for any money it was just spontaneous. They began to hand me pieces of paper and on the paper were pledges for a year." And he said, "The pledges added up to \$800 a month for a year." I didn't know these people. He said, "Man, it's no doubt God wants you to do this. When are you going to do it?" I said, "Well I'm running an experiment." It scared me to death. It scared me literally to death.

So then I sat down and thought who will be the second witness? You know I went through all these names. Looking back on it now I know I was searching for somebody who was going to say no. I searched, and I searched and I searched and finally I thought of Bernice Gammon who lived over in South Dallas. Oh, man what a character, gold plated. She was about 75 years old, she drove me nuts. We'd been friends for many years. I don't even remember how we met. But she would find out almost supernaturally every place I was going to preach or teach she would find out and she would get an audio and then she would send me a five-page typed written letter about all the things that I did wrong in the sermon. You shouldn't have used this verse. You misused that verse. You should have given this, on and on and on, she was a burr under my saddle. And she was very gruff, very gruff. You would call her and she would say, [inaudible] and I never knew what she said. And finally one day I said, "Bernice what do you say when you answer the phone?" She said, "I'll answer the phone by saying, Rejoice in the Lord always. And you are supposed to say, then again I say rejoice. And you never say it, you make me mad." She would never say goodbye, she would just hang up. When she got tired of talking she would just hang up and that's it.

So I thought Bernice is the one. So I called Bernice and sure enough she said something and I said, "Then again I say rejoice." And she said, "Great." Then I told her what I wanted. She said, "Ok, I'll call you back when I get a chance." And she hung up and that was it, no goodbyes or anything. I thought, "Well that is the end of that." Two days later she called said, "You'd better be sitting down." She said, "David, about 10 minutes after you called I opened a letter, and in the letter was a check for \$3,000 from an estate that I didn't even know I was a beneficiary of. And if you'll do this, if you'll step out in faith I will give you \$1,000 of my \$3,000 inheritance." And this lady lived in a little shack over in South Dallas. And she said, "I'll tell you what else I'll do," she said, "if you'll take this step I will give you my automobile because I know you are going to need one." Well I was just stunned. Then she started laughing. I didn't even know that Bernice could laugh. She was laughing. I said, "What's so funny?" She said, "Don't get too excited about the car," she said, "it's a holy car." I said, "What does that mean?" She said, "It has been prayed over on the side of the road many, many times." And it was, it was an old junker. She said, "When are you going to do this? I'm excited." I said, "Well I'm running an experiment, I'll let you know."

I shared this was an Episcopal priest friend of mine one time and he said, "I know what you did next." I said, "How do you know?" He said, "I've been there." I said, "Ok, wise guy what did I do next?" He said, "You asked for a third witness." I said, "Well I'm ashamed to say so, but I did." I said, "I was scared to death." So I prayed, "Lord, if you'll just send a third one I'll do this."

And I learned something about God when you are seeking Him He can speak to you through His Word, which is the way He usually speaks. Or He can speak to you to you through a friend.

He can speak to you through a child. He can speak to you through a worship song. He can speak to you in many, many different ways so you'd better be listening.

The next morning, the very next morning I walked up, opened the mailbox and there was the latest issues of "Christianity Today," and on the cover was a man I admired all my life, Martin Lloyd Jones who was the greatest expository preacher of the 20th Century; had a church in London, England. And I thought, well, I wonder what this is all about? So I went back in, opened it up, it was an interview of him on his 80th birthday. They said, "Where did you go to school?" He said, "I went to medical school." They said, "Did you become a medical doctor?" He said, "Yes." They said, "How did you get into the ministry?" "God called me I put a sign on my door, it said, practice closed, gone to save men's souls." He said, "What seminary did you go to?" He said, "I never went to seminary?" "Well, what did you do?" He said, "I just stood up. I read a verse, commented, read a verse, commented, read a verse, commented." He said, "That's all I've ever done." This man wrote one of the most profound commentaries on the book of Romans that has ever been written. I went on through the interview and I got down the very end of the interview and he said, "Have you learned anything new in the last five years since you retired as pastor?" He said, "Oh, yes, for the last five years I have concentrated on Bible prophecy and I'm absolutely convinced we are living in the season of the Lord's return." Last question, "If you were a new minister just starting out today what would be your message?" And he said, "My message would be flee from the wrath that is to come." The exact message God had laid on my heart.

I closed the magazine. I went to the university. I went into the President's office and I said, "I am resigning." It was the middle of April. I said, "I am going to give you two weeks' notice, April the 1st I'm leaving." He said, "Well, would you like a new automobile?" I said, "No." He said, "Do you want a membership in the country club?" I said, "No." I said, "You don't understand I am called to preach." And he was a former preacher, and he said, "Well if you've got the call I know you've got the call that is no reason for me to try to argue with you. Two weeks notice, ok. Where are you going to preach?" I said, "No place I don't have a church. I'm just going to step out in faith and I am just going to preach the coming of the Lord." And he shook his head and he looked down at his desk, and then he looked up at me and he said, "Well, all I can say to you is this, you have selected a very appropriate date to start your ministry."

And so on April the 1st, April Fool's day in 1980 we started the ministry. And a year later I brought my first group back from Israel on that very day and my wife handed me a package wrapped up like a birthday present. I said, "Hey, this is not my birthday. This is not our anniversary." She said, "This is the anniversary of the ministry." I opened it up and she had gone to a calligrapher and the calligrapher had put our logo at the top and it said to my husband in memory of the first anniversary of our ministry. And at the bottom it had that quotation from Paul, "We are fools for Christ's sake."

Well I learned a lot of things during these years of running from the Lord. And I want to close by just sharing two or three of them with you. One of them is that I learned that God has not retired. That God is alive. That God is well. God is sitting on the throne. God still hears prayers. God still answers prayers. And God still performs miracles. That was one of the major things I learned. In Malachi 3:6 it says God does not change. In Hebrews 13:8 it says Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The God of the Bible is the God of today. The Jesus of the Bible is the Jesus of today. And let me tell you something folks, it is important to believe that because if you don't believe that the Bible is irrelevant. You know why? Because the Bible tells you story, after story, after story, after story of people who get into trouble and who turn in faith to God and reach out to God, and God intervenes. And if you don't believe God does that today, the Bible is

irrelevant. God is still on the throne. He still hears prayers. He still answers prayers. He still performs miracles.

Second thing I learned God is personal. He is personal. He is concerned about every aspect of your life, every worry that you have right now He is concerned about. Every concern, every need He is concerned about it. One of the things--many things that differentiate Christianity from all the other religions of the world is that we are the only one that has a personal God. There is no personal God in Judaism; the Jews consider God to be the God of a nation, not of an individual. There is no personal God in Islam, Mohammed even said I don't know if I'm saved or not, he is arbitrary, he's aloof, he's distant. There is no personal God in Hinduism or Buddhism. Only in Christianity is there a personal God. And one of the verses that I discovered while I was in the wilderness seeking for God and one that has become a cornerstone of my life is in 1 Peter chapter 5, verse 6 listen to this carefully. 1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt you at the proper time. Cast all your anxieties on Him," Why? "because He cares for you." Wow. He is concerned about your illness. He's concerned about your financial problems. He's concerned about everything that is bringing a lack of peace into your life.

Third thing I discovered, God desires to help us. He desires to help us. There is nothing too trivial for Him. He desires to help us. But we have to reach out to Him. One of the chapters that has become so important to me is James chapter 4, listen to what James writes here. James 4:2, "You do not have because you do not ask." We get into a problem the first thing we think about is well, now, who can help us with this. Well maybe he's got a lot of contacts, and maybe I can use my money, or maybe I can use this influence, or maybe I can use this political connection. And the last thing, the last thing that we begin to think about is God, when He should be first. First. You do not have because you do not ask. Verse 8, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Verse 10, "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord and He will exalt you." God cares. He desires to help. Let me tell you something He is a gentlemen. He's a gentlemen and if you want to do it your way. He'll let you do it your way.

Early in the history of our ministry two years into it that old junker that Bernice gave me just finally died. We got the Board of Trustees together and I said, "You know I've got to have a vehicle." They said, "Right, you go buy one." I said, "Great." And we went onto the next item on the agenda and one of the board members said, "Wait a minute, wait a minute. How are you going to get that car?" I said, "Like you always do. I'll go down and I'll sign a contract and we'll start making monthly payments." He said, "Why do that?" He said, "God knows your need; and God will supply our needs." He said, "We ought to ask God for the money." I said, "Ok." So we joined hands around the table and we prayed that God would supply it. The next week I sent out a little newsletter and the newsletter was just a one line thing said, "We desperately need a van for our ministry, please pray about it." The next day a lady called me I had met one time in Oklahoma City. And she said, "I saw where you need a van. How much is a van?" I said, "About \$15,000." This is back in 1981. I said, "\$15,000." She said, "Does that include tax, title and license?" I said, "I don't know." She said, "I will make the check out for \$17,500 and you'll have it tomorrow." God gave me a choice, I could either turn to Him or I could go to the bank and make payments. He's a gentleman, He doesn't force Himself on anyone. He expects you to reach out in faith, and when you do does He ever respond, it is just unbelievable.

The other day I was reading through the Gospels and I noticed something interesting and that is the most common question that Jesus asked people, the most common question He asked over, and over and over and over, "What can I do for you?" Blind man on the side of the road, "Son of David have mercy on me." He said, "What can I do for you?" He knew He was blind.

Lepers came, "What can I do for you?" He knew they were lepers. They had to ask. And when you ask you'll be astounded at how He responds.

Final thing I learned that God is not interested in anyone meeting Him halfway. He has no interest in that, you will not impress Him in the least. If you say, "Well God I'll tell you what I'll do I'll meet you halfway." He'll teach you a hard lesson if you do that. Listen to what it says in Romans chapter 12 and there in verse 1, "I urge you therefore brethren by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship and do not be conformed to this world." Surrender is what God wants, a complete surrender. And that always reminds me of that remarkable comment in 2 Chronicles chapter 16, verse 9 listen to this, "The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His." He is looking trying to find hearts that have been truly given over to Him that He might do something marvelous through them.

I'll end with an illustration. For many years I was the member of a little country church over in Lucas and its membership dwindled over the years and it finally got down to about 100 people. But they had a Christian school that had over 300 kids in it. And one of the teachers at that school was a young woman who taught music. And one day she wrote a song and it became the number one song in all of Christendom, "The Revelation Song." God was looking for someone who had given their heart to Him. Bang. And today she is a full-time song writer in Nashville, Tennessee writing Christian songs. I've seen that happen, over, and over, and over. God just looks for someone whose heart has been given to Him and it will always be the person that the world least likely expects.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. I hope you have been blessed by what I shared in that sermon. You know folks as I look back over the 35 years of this ministry since 1980, I am just overwhelmed by what can happen as the result of a very small and timid step of faith. We have gone from broadcasting a radio program on one station in Dallas, Texas to airing a television program on 8 national networks that have access to over 100 million homes in the United States alone. When I took that small step of faith in 1980, I was not identified with any denominational group. I had no track record as a minister or evangelist. There was no Internet that I could use to promote the ministry. And I had literally no idea how I would be able to sustain the ministry. I just knew for certain in my heart that God had called me to serve him by proclaiming the soon return of His Son. I simply had to trust that He would supply all my needs. And that is exactly what He did in many different miraculous ways.

Let me give you an example of what I am talking about. This ministry began on April the 1st, 1980 and one month later in May I got a telephone call from a farmer in Hereford, Texas, I didn't even know where Hereford, Texas was, but I found out it was up in the panhandle. And he said, "Sir, I just listened to a tape of yours about the Jews in Prophecy that someone gave me. And right in the middle of that tape God spoke to me." I said, "He did?" He said, "Yes, God spoke to me and he said, 'You call this man and you tell him get on the radio.'" So he said, "You get on the radio." I said, "Well, sir, this ministry is only a month old. I don't have the money to get on the radio." He said, "Well how much does it cost to get on the radio?" I said, "I have no idea." He said, "You find out and call me back." So I called him back the next day and I said, "Well, it cost \$50 a day." That was one station here in the Dallas, Texas area in 1980. And he said, "That's peanuts." I said, "It maybe be peanuts to you sir, but I don't have \$50 a day." So he said, "I'll tell

you what I'll do." He said, "I'm going to send you a check and you get on the radio. And don't you ever ask me for any money again." I said, "Well, sir, I didn't even ask you for this." A few days later I got a check in the mail from a man I'd never met, the check was for \$4,000. We took that check we went down and signed a contract to start broadcasting on the radio, and that radio program took off. And every year I would write that man a letter and I would say, "Dear Sir, I want to thank you for that original step of faith that you took and the check that you gave me. We are now on 30 stations. We are now on 50 stations. We are now on 80 stations." And he'd always write back and say, "Praise the Lord." And he never gave the ministry another dime. But that's man step of faith is what started us in our media ministry.

Well I could tell you stories like that all day long. I'll just mention one other and that is that 22 years into this we decided that we would switch to television. And after a year of broadcasting on the DayStar Network we decided well, it would be good if we could get on another network as well and we wanted to get on the Inspiration Network. So, we started praying about that and we prayed earnestly about it for over a year. And finally I decided that we really needed to pray earnestly for one week. And so every day for a week we prayed about that. And on Friday of that week I went to my office after our prayer and I sat down and the phone rang and it was a supporter from Houston, Texas. And he said, "I love your program I'd like to see it on the Inspiration Network." And I said, "Well I would too, but we can't afford that." He said, "What does it cost?" I said, "Well, it cost \$150,000 a year." He said, "I'll put a check in the mail to you tomorrow." I was stunned. I called our staff together, I told them about it. We prayed. We thanked the Lord. And then it suddenly occurred to me, hey I don't even know if the Inspiration Network has an opening available for us. And so I picked up the phone and I called them and I asked for the Vice President in charge of programming. He got on the phone and I said, "Hello, sir, my name is Dave Reagan, I'm with Lamb & Lion Ministries. And I'm calling to see if you have a space for us on TV." He said, "Oh, you got my letter." I said, "What letter?" He said, "Well I sent you a letter just about three days ago." I said, "No, sir I haven't received your letter." He said, "Well, we have an opening on our network. And my wife has been on my back to invite you to put your program on our network since she's been using your materials in her Sunday school class for the last three years." I said, "You mean you wrote me a letter?" He said, "Yes." It was God's perfect timing. And it was God's way of saying, "This is the right thing to do."

My friends, God responds to faith. And I want to urge you to reach out to God today in faith for whatever you need may be. If it is salvation, then repent of your sins and receive Jesus by faith as your Lord and Savior. You will receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and through the Spirit you will receive new strength to deal with the problems of your life. If you are already a born again child of God, then I would urge you to step out in faith and allow the Holy Spirit to take over every aspect of your life. I can guarantee you that faith will be blessed. God is on His throne. He still hears prayers. He still answers prayers. He still performs miracles. But you must reach out to Him in faith. I want to conclude with 2 Peter 5:6-7 and here is what it says, "Humble yourselves . . . under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you."

Closing

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you, and I hope you will be back with us next week. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program