



**GIVE IT OVER
AND
GET ON**

By Dr Cecil Stewart OBE

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When disappointments come and we feel deeply troubled and even shaken we need to know we **have a choice** to either let the trouble on the inside through focusing on it, or let peace rule and reign in our hearts right in the midst of the storm, see **Colossians 3:15**. This is possible if we will turn our attention fully on the good life God has given us through His promises and provision, empowering us to overcome every opposition and challenge we face, turning it into an opportunity to grow stronger and fulfil our God given purpose.

When a ship is in the midst of a storm the captain can continue to go on so long as the sea stays on the outside, but

if the sea gets into the ship it will cause it to sink. We likewise are sailing through stormy waters but if we refuse to let the storm on the inside we can get through it and use the storm to grow stronger in our maturity with the Lord.

Paul said in **Romans 8:31**

‘What shall we say to these things?’ then he answered ‘If God be for us, who can be against us?’ So we can either carry our burdens, hurts and offences or give them over to the great burden bearer and get on with our lives. **1 Peter 5:7** says ‘casting all your cares upon Him for He cares for you’.

I felt shaken and troubled when my mobile phone rang as I was about to go onto the platform to speak at an event in Tralee, Southern Ireland. It was my consultant with the results of my recent scan. He asked if I could find a place to sit down, then he proceeded to tell me ‘you have a very aggressive, cancerous tumour and you need to come to see me urgently’. One of my first thoughts was ‘how am I going to speak tonight?’ and secondly ‘what will I do about the major mission in Tanzania coming up shortly?’ The question in my mind soon arose ‘is it over for me?’ Evelyn and I went to our room

and prayed for strength to minister that

“ *...use the storm to grow stronger in our maturity with the Lord* ”

night, my subject was strength in the storms of life. By the grace of God we were strengthened, although still shaken, the Lord empowered me to speak with great liberty and anointing of the Holy Spirit, with great results to the altar call that only God could bring.

Upon our return to Belfast and after telling the family about my challenge we met with the consultant. He told us how serious my condition was and said he could promise me nothing but the only option was for major surgery and because the tumour was on the main artery he couldn't promise me anything. He did however emphasise that because of the aggressive nature of the tumour it could spread rapidly to my vital organs and cause failure, so I should not delay in having the operation. After much prayer and heart searching I felt that I should not have the surgery, and although this was totally against the

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advice of my consultant and surgeon, my wife and family left the final decision up to me without any pressure.

I would emphasise that I totally respect the surgeon and his advice and the wonderful work done by the medical profession, but on that occasion I did not feel it was the will of God for me. This happened in October 2003 and now almost 12 years later I am still strong and grateful for the mercy and grace of God in my life, which has enabled me to continue with the work of the ministry and business, both at home and overseas. We are especially grateful for the honour and privilege of conducting major missions where multitudes have filled the stadiums and fields in many African countries, as well as places like Italy and Romania, where countless thousands have responded to the call of salvation and become followers of Jesus.

The life-giving leadership seminars attended by thousands of church leaders and politicians have made a huge impact on many nations. Millions more have been reached by the television broadcasts across many nations.

When we look at the challenges and problems we face in our own personal lives and families today we recognise they are

far too big for us to solve, so why would we hold onto them in our thoughts and worry over them, when the Lord has invited us to give them over to Him and get on with our lives, trusting Him to do what we could never do? In fact, when we insist on holding on to our problems, we prevent the Lord from taking over.

Philippians 4:6 says 'be anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God'. These words are inspired of the Holy Spirit and will transform our lives when we consistently act on them. We have the power to choose how we respond to challenging circumstances and when we use our faith by coming into line with God's word His power is released to empower us to overcome obstacles and reach our objectives.

Philippians 2:5 invites us to let the

mind of Christ be in us, so we can think like Jesus thinks, talk like Jesus talks and walk like Jesus walks. Remember God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind, **2 Timothy 1:7** So we must stop focusing on things that discourage and weaken us and give it over to the Lord and get on with our lives. Why would we carry what Jesus has already carried when He died on the Cross and rose again? **Isaiah 53:4** 'Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows'.

Romans 14:17-19 will give you great hope as you study it. The Kingdom of God is not all about material things, although these things are important, but not to be compared with righteousness, peace and joy. This means when we are right with God and each other, peace and joy flow, so when we look after our relationship with the Lord on a daily basis we will walk in righteousness, peace and joy. So remember, it's not our righteousness that gives us right standing with God, for we are told in **Isaiah 64:6** all of us have become like one who is unclean and all our righteous acts are as filthy rags.

It is the gift of righteousness we receive when we are born again, see

Romans 5:17-18. Our trust is not in what

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we do, but in what Jesus has already done,

Ephesians 2:8

. Let us follow after the things that make peace and edify one another, not focusing on the failures of ourselves or others, but magnify the grace and goodness of God, who has forgiven us and empowered us to rule and reign in life.

Some months ago I was shocked and disappointed by a serious situation in a family that was close to our ministry. We did everything we knew to help them but they decided to separate. We were so challenged by what happened, but after a few weeks I felt the Lord impress me to give it over and get on with the work. Soon other people, who before were not very active in the ministry, began to step up and support us, using abilities I never realised they had. It's wonderful what God does when we give it over and trust Him to lead us.

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2 Timothy 2:2 – Paul told Timothy the things you have heard from me, commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

This is so powerful in relation to going on with the Lord and fulfilling His call. We must get on and share the treasures of truth we have learned, so that others can also see our example and use their talents, for the greatest cause of all, the advancement of the Kingdom of God and the salvation of our generation. Jesus said in **Matthew 12:34** 'For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks', so we need to be filling our hearts and minds with His word, so that when trials come, that is what we will speak. We do ourselves a great favour when we discipline ourselves daily to feed on His word and walk in His love. **Galatians 5:6** states 'Faith works by love'.

Remember we live in a world of fear and hate so it is vital to manifest God's love and faith in these last days. When we are filled with faith and the power of the Holy Spirit there will always be an opportunity for us to make a difference and see lives transformed. When we fully realise the amazing grace and power that God has given us we will step out with boldness in His strength and impact the nations with

His kingdom power. Paul says 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,' **Philippians 4:13**.

Genesis 50:20 reveals the wonderful words of Joseph when he said 'you meant it for evil but God meant it for good'. His brothers sold him into slavery and he suffered a long time in the pit and in the prison, but he kept a good attitude and refused to be offended. Then the day came when he was moved from the prison to the palace and he ruled and reigned to serve his generation, which would have been lost had he not been faithful.

Romans 8:28 states all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

One of the snares of Satan is to take our attention onto disappointing circumstances, which we don't understand.

For example, we had finished a series of events in Italy and our TV team were loading our cameras and TV footage into the back of a taxi at about 5am to go to Naples airport. We had experienced the blessing of the Lord and seen many people transformed through the Word of God. As the team were about to leave one of them remembered he had left a piece of equipment in the hotel, so he told the taxi driver he would run back and get it. When he returned the taxi driver was gone with the cameras, equipment and all our TV footage of all the events. Thousands of pounds worth of equipment was stolen, that was a big challenge for us all and the enemy tried to focus us on why this was allowed to happen when we had poured our hearts out and financed the trip ourselves. Now our precious TV footage was gone. So we learned a lesson on how to give it over to the Lord and get on with our lives.

Let me give you some life-giving points as I conclude this article.

1. Pursue His plan

Even when bad things happen that we can't understand we must keep focused on God's great plan no matter what set backs we face. Remember when we pursue

“ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. ”

God's plan it will bring us through our struggles so we can fulfil His purpose. David said 'Thou will show me the path of life, in thy presence is fullness of joy' **Psalm 16:11**. When we continue to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit He will bring the right people across our path and give us the wisdom to give it over and get on with our lives. Study **Galatians 6:9**. However, we need to stay in faith and watch our words for it is easy to start speaking contrary to God's word and grieve the Holy Spirit, thus bringing us to a standstill. See **Proverbs 18:21 & 1 Peter 3:10-12**.

Forgiveness and perseverance will also be an important part of the journey. We will have opportunity to be offended and upset but we have a choice to give it over and get on. See **Matthew 6:12 & Proverbs 4:23**.

“Remember God Almighty is with us.”

2. Get on toward the goal

It has been said that even if we are on the right road, we will get run over if we just sit there, so we must move forward toward the goals that God has put in our lives.

John 9:4 Jesus said 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night comes when no man can work'.

Living a life of prayer, praise and thanksgiving will take us forward toward our goal. See **Philippians 3:14. 1**

Thessalonians 5:18 'In everything give thanks'. Remember God Almighty is with us and so we can do all that He has called us to do in His wisdom and power. **James 1:25** shows that it is the doer of the work that is blessed. See also **Hebrews 6:12**.

3. Divine connections

When we give it over and get on with our lives new divine connections will be made that will take us forward further into His purpose for our lives. But we must disconnect from negative voices and influences that speak of doubt and fear instead of life and faith. Paul said 'thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in our Lord Jesus Christ', **2 Corinthians 2:14**.

When an aircraft takes off the cockpit stays in contact with the control tower in order to climb higher towards the destination. Likewise we must keep clear communication with the Lord day by day and follow His guidance in everything. See **Proverbs 3:5, Hebrews 10:23 & Hebrews chapter 10:35-38**. When anxiety and frustration try to come into our lives we can say 'no, I've already decided to rejoice in the Lord always and be anxious for nothing'. We have a choice as to how we respond to the challenges of life and the great reality is that we have been connected to our Heavenly Father through what Jesus did on the Cross and we are reconciled to Him. Therefore, we have the highest guidance, wisdom and protection that is available on the earth, see **Revelation 12:10-11**.

Let me close with this encouraging story. For many years we hosted Christian leaders' breakfasts and luncheons at CCN. Leaders, Christian workers and business men were blessed and empowered to be stronger ambassadors for the Kingdom of God. A local pastor brought an African pastor who had been visiting with him to one of these events. He brought him forward to speak with me after fellowship and he asked me if we would consider coming to Nairobi, Kenya for a life-giving leadership conference and a mission to reach the nation. I promised to seek the Lord about his invitation and take advice from our advisors. After one year we accepted the invitation, my first meeting was speaking to city leaders, judges and businessmen. They had asked specifically that I share my experience within the business world but not to preach, as there were Hindus, Muslims and people of different religions present. I thought about this request and said I would speak on

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creating a climate for change, which included my personal story. After sharing my business story, as to how my wife and I had pioneered private nursing homes in Northern Ireland until we had the largest privately owned nursing home group in Ireland and the UK at that time, employing almost 2,000 people, I then spoke on the greatest change that ever happened in my life, when I received Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. After explaining the way of salvation I made an appeal and several hands were raised. One of them was a famous Hindu leader and because of his transformation the news media arrived and his story ran for days on television and in the newspapers. This highlighted the mission in Uhuru Park, Nairobi, which we were due to commence a few days later and a great spiritual awakening began, attracting a massive crowd, estimated by

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some local leaders at over 100,000.

The 10 years that followed took us all over Africa where fields were filled with hungry hearts seeking a relationship with Jesus. Life-giving leadership conferences were held in many nations, where thousands of leaders received a new vision and passion to serve the Lord and the harvest was beyond our expectation. TV and radio helped us reach millions more and only eternity will reveal the full result of what was accomplished through that one divine connection, which happened at a leadership breakfast at CCN on the outskirts of Belfast. One divine connection can transform the lives of countless multitudes.

God Bless you!

“...and a great spiritual awakening began, attracting a massive crowd...”

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