

# **MARKETPLACE APOSTLE**



**WERE YOU BORN  
FOR A TIME SUCH AS THIS?**

**Written by George La Du**

## CHAPTER 1-Created To Do His Will

*“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”*

Romans 11:29

It was a Sunday night in June, when I walked into a small church service in the suburbs. I knew there was something different about the atmosphere but I couldn't put my finger on it. There seemed to be an expectation in the air, like *something* was going to happen. At the end of a wonderful time of praise and worship a minister got up and began to “prophesy”. Apparently this is when someone feels like God is imparting a message to them for someone or someones! Having come from a church where this was not a common practice, this was all new to me. Although I didn't understand it, I sensed there was something genuine, something true and real about what was going on. From there it “seemed to spread”. Another minister joined the first and they began sharing additional encouraging words and direction for others in the congregation. Now, that really got my attention.

I would have left the service that night with enough awe and wonder that would have served me well for a few years except one of the ministers called me out of the group. He began to “read my mail” as it were. It seemed as though someone told him about my past life and my current situation. If that wasn't enough he began to share what was going to happen to me in the future! This was my introduction to what I was going to find out was the Gift of Prophecy. [It's a realm where God wants to walk with me and talk with me. It a realm where He wants to

have a personal relationship with me and not just on Sundays! It is a new realm for me where things are done in this Spirit Realm that will then have a direct relationship to my physical realm. Boy, did I have a lot to learn.

## Let The Prophets Speak



In searching the scriptures for what happened to me that Sunday night, I found this scripture...1Corinthians 14:29 says “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge.” Then I found out that the minister who spoke to me was what some call a prophet. Little did I realize at that time that the prophetic ministry was a “calling” of God that would also be on my life. Good, bad or indifferent that’s just the way God ordered things.

That was thirty some years ago and I am still in awe of God speaking to us through an earthly vessel, man or woman or child! To be clear, you don’t need operate in the office of a prophet for God to use you to speak a “word” for Him. When someone speaks a word for Him, they are operating in the *Gift of Prophecy* vs. being an actual prophet.

The music that night was wonderful. Part of what made it wonderful was that the worship leader had a voice like an angel. Also, they had a saxophone player in the band (my favorite instrument!). The sound of the sax made it very easy for me to close my eyes and imagine I was in heaven worshipping with the others saints before the throne of glory.



The reason I mention the special worship time is because often I wished that I could sing like that leader or play the sax like that musician. I was going to find out that I wasn't alone in wanting to be like others when it came to ministry. Part of growing up in my faith was learning who God has made me to be. I was already convinced that He made each one of us different and unique for His special purposes. But it was still hard not to want to wail on that sax for God!

As I grew in knowledge and understanding, I found out that God has a place for each one of us in His Body as He wills. All who have been born again are the Body of Christ— collectively. Some might be a baby finger while others might be a toe. For analogy's sake, the sax player might be a thumb and I might be a knee. Different but ever so much as important. *“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is give to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith:”* Romans 12:4-6

### **We Are Made Perfectly To Do The Work He Wants Us To Do**

The apostle Paul was making it clear in 1Corinthians 12:27-31 and Ephesians 4:11-13 as well as other scriptures that God has fashioned and formed each one of us to do exactly what He has called us to do. In other words, we are made perfectly for the work He wants us to do. Even as a hammer is perfect for driving nails in, no matter how much the hammer admires and wishes he could saw logs like a chain saw, it will never be able to

perform the same work. And so I finally realized that no matter how much I wished I could sing like that worship leader or play the sax like my hero in the worship band, it just wasn't meant to be. What I needed to do, I finally realized, was find out about the gifts and callings of God in my own life and begin to walk in or exercise them. I might be a pretty bad "sax player" but you know what, I am pretty good at what He has made me to be.

Popeye the sailorman said, "*I am what I am and that's all that I am.*" When I began to find out what that was for me and began growing in it, I felt a great sense of fulfillment and power. When I stopped trying to be someone or something else and instead focus on who and what I am, power and life became new and vibrant for me.

*"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."* Romans 11:29 Paul is letting us know that God has made each one of us a special way and that He is NOT going to reverse or change us "in mid stream". He has made us with gifts and callings. Although we may not be representing Him very well with our gifts, He is not going to take them back because of our lack of faithfulness with them.

On the following pages I want to talk about an often misunderstood and overlooked part of the Body of Christ. A new understanding of this has produced freedom for many people to walk in the power and life they have always desired.

## CHAPTER 2-The Emergence of the Marketplace Apostle

*“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.”*

Matthew 24:14



Have you ever wondered when the end of the world will come? Certainly there are those who make their living by discussing such matters. This short treatise is not to debate the issue but rather simply to acknowledge that it will come, whenever that is. And apparently the end coming has something to do with this scripture, *“and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world...then the end shall come.”* There are many, many wonderful ministries that are about the work of preaching this gospel in all the world. I am convinced that we have the people and ministries to fulfill this scripture yet we don't have the finances to do it. I don't know of one ministry that is about our Lord's work that has enough money to fulfill the vision they have!

### **Money And Finances**

In the kingdom of God, money and finances can be likened to the gasoline in the car. There are many wonderful cars out there fully equipped to go, with capable drivers but without gasoline this beautiful car is going nowhere. Why did Jesus talk so much about money? And why does the New Testament deal with this subject so much? I'm convinced that God wants us to learn and understand His way of bringing money in and giving it out.



Our Lord has given gifts to the body of Christ (see previous chapter) some in the Body of Christ have been equipped and called to bring in finances and to give them out. This is a very important call but one to which we have not paid much attention. In other realms of life we see our Lord has provided helpers for us to flourish and grow. We can see it in the calling of a pastor. Why did Jesus give pastors to the Body of Christ? He gave them to the Body of Christ to help the Body to grow and be healthy and fulfill the call of God on the Body's life. A pastor is like an overseer or a coach if you will. Likewise, with teachers, prophets, apostles, worship leaders, etc... they are given to “coach” us to maturity.

There is, however, an office and a calling in the Body of Christ that is just as vital, just as important. Without this gift, much of the work of God could never begin, much less come to completion — and that calling is...

### **Marketplace Apostle**

Marketplace Apostles (MPA's), they are given to 1) fulfill their calling, 2) be an example of what they do, and 3) coach others in their dealings with finances.

Let's look at each of these:

1) Fulfill their calling- Simply put this means they are to execute God's call and equipping for them to “make” money and to give it out. An MPA has vision in the area of commerce that most of us don't have. They have the ability to see a need and meet it and in so doing, make money. They see how to start a company because of a need and then bring it into existence. They have the ability and grace to envision the beginning of a project all the way through to the end.

And then finally, make a success of it. This is very rewarding and exciting for a MPA. For most of them, money is simply a tool to get something done. As a carpenter would use a hammer, a MPA so uses money.

2) Be an example of what they do

3) Coach others in their dealings with finances

The difference between an MPA and a traditional businessman is that the MPA is born again and has his mind renewed. The MPA understands that there is more to this life than just providing for his/her family. *The MPA has his eye on the kingdom of God.* His hearts passion is to fund the purposes of God. His greatest joy is to “put gasoline in the car” of the many worthy ministries. Also, an MPA has a clear understanding of the concept of seed time and harvest. He expects his seed to produce much fruit, much return. An MPA is a son of God who is growing up to “take over the Father’s business” as we will see in the next chapter.

## Sons Are People Of Vision



Why do we call them Marketplace Apostles? The apostles of the New Testament were people of vision and courage. They saw a need to establish churches, support them and make sure good fruit came from them. They were endued with power from on high to fulfill the vision they were given. In other words, they had an anointing to build something others couldn’t see.

Likewise with Marketplace Apostles they see what others can’t. They are endued with power from on high to build

a business in the Marketplace, to support it and make sure good fruit comes from it. Also, they walk in an understanding that they are stewards or overseers of God's businesses. The vision, the plans, the businesses, and the fruit all belong to the Lord. MPA's live in the comfort of understanding that they are not their own but rather they are bought with a price and their passion is to do the will of Him who sent them.

Large dollar amounts don't seem to faze them. Actually, the larger the need or challenge, the better they like it. Don't tell them something can't be done, especially if it is the will of the Lord! Be careful not to make the mistake that you know what a MPA "looks like". He or she may be a businessperson in a suit, a lawyer, a plumber, landscaper or realtor. Whatever one of his/her endeavors is, they have a heart of an entrepreneur. The heart of a MPA in the marketplace is like a band of marines landing on a beach ready for action.

### **CHAPTER 3-Sons of God, Not Children**



Earlier when we discussed MPA's, we said they are sons of God who have the attitude of "taking over their Father's business". You see it's the sons of God that take over His business NOT the children of God. By the way, when we speak of "sons" it is inclusive of women as well. Just like men are part of the "Bride of Christ" so women are "Sons of God". Let's spend a little time understanding this concept of sons of God because if we really understand it, then it will make sense in the next chapter when we discuss the price we must pay to be a Marketplace Apostle!

Let's look at a couple key scriptures.

### **Galatians 4:1-7**

*1 Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*

### **Romans 8:14-19**

*14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

John 4:34 Jesus said unto them, "*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*"

## **Sons Of God Inherit The Promise**



The sons of God inherit the promises and are doing the "will of him that sent me". Children don't do the Father's business. They have stewards or guardians. Though children in the legal manner are "masters", they are not able to exercise their "office" because they have need of maturity. They need to really understand who they are, who their Father is, who their elder brother is and then as a family together perform their mission which is ***"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."* Isaiah 61:1-3**

When we speak of going on to maturity, we mean going on to, through and with the *"elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, and of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."* Hebrews 6:1-2 Going on to perfection then means going on to maturity. One of the main elements of maturity is doing the Father's business.

What is the Father's business? Matthew 4:23 says, *" Now Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people."*

1John 3:8 states *"He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."*



From the above scriptures (and others) we can see that the will of Him (the Father) is to teach and preach the gospel of the kingdom, heal all kinds of sickness and disease and destroy the works of the devil. We could mention many others here such as to *"seek and to save"* and *"that none should perish but have everlasting life."* But suffice to say the above makes clear our mandate. This mandate, work or business of the Father is why the sons of God need to inherit or manifest the promises of God which is our inheritance. The inheritance is what gives us the power and ability to *"destroy the works of the devil"*. Now that we see the need of responding to the call of sonship, so that we might finish his work (John 4:34), let's talk about how we release this kind of power that would destroy the works of the devil.

Jesus, our elder brother, is our example.

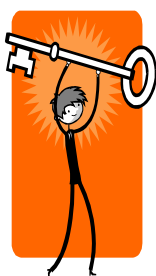
### **God's Sons Do Their Father's Business**

If we will look at the four gospels in all instances where Jesus was doing the Father's business (vs. communion with the Father) He was commanding, requiring or calling for something to be a certain way. If our elder brother is doing this, we likewise might imitate Him; follow His footsteps in commanding, requiring or calling for. Scripture makes it clear that we are on solid footing when we do so. There are many scriptures that use the word ASK, such as John 15:7 *"If you abide in Me, and My*

*words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."* In the Greek, this word, *ask* has a wide range of interpretations such as: to beg, crave, desire, **require, or call for**. A good possibility that the Lord specifically chose this word is because His children and sons are of such a wide range. When we are children we need to beg, crave and desire. But as we learn the Father's business, we like Jesus, go on to require and call for a thing or situation.

In looking at Jesus going about His Father's business we see him speaking (or commanding, requiring or calling for) to the spiritual and natural realms of life. Out of all the miracles we never see Him calling on the Father for help. A few times He calls on the Father to glorify His name but not for help. Jesus is not looking to the Father for help when He is destroying the works of the devil. Jesus knows who He is and that He has been given all authority to do the work He is doing. The application of power has to do with authority and Jesus has been given all authority.

Here are just a few examples of Jesus at work. Pay attention to His "prayer".



The Leper--Matthew 8:3

The Centurion's Servant—Matthew 8:13

Peter's Mother-in-law—Matthew 8:14-15

The Sea is Stilled—Matthew 8:26

Demons Cast Out—Matthew 8:32

Paralytic Healed-Forgiven—Matthew 9:2

Two Blind Men Healed—Matthew 9:29

**A new paradigm of "prayer" is offered here!**

Understanding, receiving and walking in the authority that Jesus walked in will guarantee us the results *and greater works shall ye do (John 14:12)* that Jesus got. Let us be clear. All that we do to destroy the works of the devil is simply an extension of Jesus Christ, Christ in us the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). We are the Body of Christ. It is His Body that destroys the kingdom of darkness and advances and builds the kingdom of our God and of His Christ! We are not looking to the Father for help. He has already given it to us. We are commanding, requiring, calling for the spirit realm and the natural realm to come into alignment with the will of God, His Word, and His promises.

## **God Has Chosen His Sons To Release His Power On Earth**



God has chosen to use us, His sons to "*execute the written judgments, this privilege have all the saints*", Psalms149. Jesus has restored unto us the keys of the kingdom, to bind and loose. With these keys of authority, we are to bring the kingdom of God to earth as it is in heaven. We see Jesus at work rebuking on one hand and blessing on another. Binding and Loosing might be otherwise described as Rebuking and Blessing.

Apart from knowing the promises of God throughout His Word, our inheritance, how shall we walk in them? Our ability to release power in the earth is directly proportionate to our faith. "*So Faith comes by hearing, and hearing the word of God.*" Romans10:17. Do you have the faith to command the wind, call for a fish with money in it, and heal the sick? We should. Jesus died so that the sons of God would be revealed.

You see saints, all creation is waiting, it's groaning for the revealing of the sons of God. **When will creation see them?** I believe it's time to see them in the Marketplace!

## **CHAPTER 4-The Cost of Becoming a Marketplace Apostle**



In chapter 1 we talked about walking in the Spirit Realm in our lives and businesses. We brought up the concept that there is a worldly way and a Spirit way to walk. And when we walk in the Spirit we are tapping into Heavens power to “facilitate” things here on earth. In chapter 2 we describe what a Market Place Apostle is and some common characteristics. In chapter 3 we discussed the need to go onto maturity to become Sons of God not just children so that we can exercise Power in the earth for the advancement of God’s kingdom.

### **God’s Sons Know There Is A Price To Pay**

In this chapter we are going to discuss the cost or price we must pay to walk in this special anointing of MPA.



Not long ago, I was counseling with a MPA in the making. As we discussed the trials and tribulations he had experienced in this last 12 months, I had great empathy for him. When we face failure, loss, being greatly in debt, IRS issues (and big ones); when we can’t get away from feeling that this current entrepreneurial path is the one we must stay on, even though it is NOT producing like we had hoped; and even when it seems everyone is telling

you to do something different; if we respond properly to these trials, it will produce a brokenness and dependency on the Lord like never before. You see my MPA in waiting or in the making, if you will, was going through all of this. He and I both understood that this was the death process of God and NOT of the devil, the world or man, he was able to rejoice that by God's grace he was able to "pass the test".

As he saw himself coming out of the "other end" of his journey, he marveled at the work God had done in his life. And in his marveling he said, "Now I feel worthy for the Lord to use me in the bringing in and dispensing of finances for His purposes!" I sure knew how he felt in being able to recognize the great work the Lord has done on his character, priorities and values. But I needed to correct him there and make it clear what was really happening. I said to him, "I know how you feel but let's make our foundation sure here. By going through those hardships and responding to them in a godly way, God was able to do a great work in you and change you *"from glory to glory"* so that you look more like your elder brother Jesus in thought, word and deed. You went through a "dying" process so that you could experience *"resurrection power"* (Philippians 3:10).



Actually, being willing to go through this God process is what has QUALIFIED you for ministry of Market Place Apostle. When you accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life you became worthy. The blood of the Lamb paid the price for your worthiness. It's important to make it clear the difference between being qualified for ministry and being worthy!"

A friend of mine has the unique saying, “The bigger the dung heap you are on, the greater the destiny!”

### **But Coach...Is Practice Really Always This Hard?**



Scripture says something similar in a *little different way*. “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*” 2 Cor. 4:17. These struggles, challenges, tribulations, sufferings, light afflictions, fiery trials, and the cross: are all saying and doing the same thing, if we respond to them properly recognizing that they are the processes of the Lord. What are they saying and doing? They are working in us a “*far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*”. They are “removing the dross”, the impurities so that the power of God can have its way in our lives. We in essence are “*taking up our cross daily*” and following Him. We are dying to the carnal man so that the spirit man can come forth. We are being mindful of the way God works and putting to death our carnal or fleshly ways (our own scheming and planning, our own manipulations, talents and abilities).

The fact of the matter is that everyone who chooses to go on to sonship, to maturity must go through the death process. This is the price we pay for our qualifying for this ministry. This is the cost.



One of the ways the Lord helped me through this process was to show me the picture of a soufflé in the oven. Since I like to cook, He related to me in a way I could understand Him. He explained that He was the Master Chef and I was the soufflé!

## God's Sons No Longer Complain



I was inside the oven looking out. I was in this heated box wishing to get out. I was knocking on the inside of the door “suggesting” that it was time to let me out. Now understand the trials and tribulations, my young friend was going through was exactly what I was going through, this was my “being in the oven”. Our Lord in all His wisdom saw that I was trying to talk Him into “letting me out of the oven” or in other words, bring some finances into my life, heal my wife’s back, get me out of debt...and so on. That’s when the Lord spoke to me and said “You know George, I could let you out of the oven. But the trouble with letting a soufflé out of the oven before it is perfectly ready is that it could cause it to drop! And if it drops, we have to throw it out and start aalll over again! The Lord knew I knew what He meant when He said aalll over again. It meant I would have to live my thirty years of Christianity aalll over again. As I began to ponder my early life as a Christian I began to shutter at the thought of having to go through certain lessons and experiences all over again. The more I thought about it the more horrendous it sounded to me. Finally I told the Lord that I could not go through this aalll over again. He would have to “take me home”. I could not do it!

All of a sudden I found a grace, strength, to remain in the oven. I was no longer complaining or trying to get out. But rather I had a renewed confidence in the Lord, my Master Chef, that when it was time for me to come out, He would bring me out at the right time! There was purpose in my “season” in the oven. It wasn’t for nothing. One of the things about being in the oven is that it kills all kinds of bacteria, viruses, and pathogens. Not

only does it kill that bad stuff, it changes the old stuff into something new. It's like the caterpillar and the butterfly. Forever changed, from glory to glory! I realized I must remain in the oven until the heat (or fire) had no more affect on me. Once acclimated to the fire, I could rejoice and live and move and have my being in the midst of the oven! All of this is so that I would be able to endure the "fires" or "heat" of this world and not compromise His standard. Run the race without faltering.



It reminded me of the three Jewish boys, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when they were thrown into the fiery oven. All they cared about was that Jesus was with them. They weren't even interested in getting out of the fire because their Lord and elder brother was there with them. When we come to that place in our oven where the fire has no more effect on us, we are probably near our breakthrough, our coming out!

**I Am Ready To Play The Position Now Coach...  
Put Me In the Game**

God is going to release His power to those He can trust, to those who have been purified by the holy fire of God. He will remove the dross so that pure gold remains. He is bringing forth the pure gold in you and me!

### **FINALLY**

Some final thoughts- Ideally the MPA is designed to work in team ministry with his pastor and others of the same vision. MPA can be male or female! This is a very special anointing. It's not for everyone even as other callings are not for everyone (i.e. worship leader, musician, helps, benevolence, etc...). Yet just like there

are those called to be an Evangelist, we are all called to “be a witness” and share our faith and make disciples. Just as there are those who are called to major intercession, we are all called to pray and intercede. Just as there are worship leaders, each of us is called to be a worshipper, as well as other examples of our faith. And so with Marketplace Apostles, they are all called to make provision and give it out. And oh! By the way, it is Life for them. They find great fulfillment in doing it. They love it!

The need for the Marketplace Apostle to arise today is monumental. This gift, acknowledged, equipped and supported will give us the assurance that we will have gasoline (so to speak) in these end times so that God’s cars don’t run out until:

**“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14**



**“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”<sup>1</sup> Thess.4:16-17**

*ALL SCRIPTURES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED ARE IN THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION*

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## **EPILOGUE**

### **ONE MARKETPLACE APOSTLE' TESTIMONY**

I started writing this testimony and then stopped. I thought maybe I was suffering from 'writers block', even though I'm not really a writer. Can I suffer from Tennis elbow if I don't play Tennis? Maybe it was procrastination settling in... I'd better check my email, pay some bills, oh look I was tagged in someone's Facebook update. Lord, why am I hesitant? Why do I feel obligated to write instead of energized to share yet another testimony of your work in my life? Have I yet again put my efforts before yours, Lord, what do you want, give me the words, put the testimony on my heart that you want to be shared...

I serendipitously stumbled into some things I'd written in the past – so I began to read. I read "My Testimony", something I presented at an Easter service back in 2002. I read a business version of "My Testimony" that I presented in Sept 2002 to a group of business people. I stumbled into my journal and somehow ended up engrossed in entries from 2009. A theme was developing, my words, my story, and a consistent theme, even somewhat circular, better yet - concentric circles, each one getting smaller or more near the core, ok maybe like

peeling back the skin of an onion (and yes that analogy is way over done).

I'm seeing a theme; I love the Lord, a trial ensues, I love the Lord more. Another trial – this one more intense than the last, but I'm better prepared, although it breaks me and I draw more near to the Lord. See a pattern? This last one stretched me to my outermost limits, tested the sinew that holds my muscles together, visceral pain, but yet a more intimate nearness with the Lord followed. Cliché' turning into foundation. Consider it pure joy my brothers in the trials you endure.... Ya right, no, ya Right! Romans 5:3, pain & suffering, perseverance, character I didn't have, he needs me as an ambassador for his kingdom, but I didn't have the character to do it, so the pain and suffering forged it into my life, refiners fire, cliché' again, no just a reality... the pain was searing, ingrained, but He was faithful and near and intimate and vocal and never left me, cliché' ...no reality. He was with me in my most dire moments, suicide? He left fingerprints for me to find which were literally life saving. So He is faithful, noble, comprehensive, able and near, not far away, but so intimate and near.

The worst nightmare of my life walked in the door in October of 2009. I won't share the details, but suffice it to say that the most secure, desirable, faithful, foundational thing in my life walked away and left me betrayed and bewildered. My very core was rocked, no... ripped away.

Was this yet another layer to the onion skin being peeled away? Peeled (or ripped) being the operative word. This one hurt, far worse than the other trials I'd experienced over the past 23 years of my Christian walk. Refiners 'fire' took on a new definition. The Enemy's attack moved from a dart game to a Predator Missile. I wasn't

prepared or ready in any sense of either word. But, my heart was like David's, pure and contrite and even within my failures, I truly loved the Lord and wanted His will for me. It took but 8 weeks to hit rock bottom... Yes, I'm a little stubborn, even a little self-made-man going on inside, but it does yield, eventually. Needless to say, my Lord got my attention.

I yielded and turned over yet another layer to the Lord. One so deep I wasn't even sure it was available to give away without losing who I am, but it was available, and I did give it to Him. At that point he started rebuilding me, filling me up, very vocal, very interactive, liberal with His fingerprints in my life. Calling me to trust Him, with things I never thought possible.

Now on another front, the business world, there was work going on as well. Like two separate worlds, one personal, one professional, separate it seems, but connected. I was letting go of one via excruciating pain, yet holding on to the other, thinking the ducks were lined up. Then I ran the reports... It was sitting there right in front of me, a fruitless crop, no matter the efforts.

The business was in a precarious position; not small enough to maintain an entrepreneurial stature or fleet nimble position, yet not big enough to develop a war chest to fend off industry attacks. Vulnerable to say the least. So my entrepreneurial spirit and pitbull attitude kicked in and I called all noses to the grindstone. No elbow grease left unused. Hired the best sales manager I could find, enlisted the best marketing company in town, took off all constraints on advertising and marketing investments, carried 7 sales people including a telemarketing agent, no holds barred – the goal was to

double the top line revenue by increasing sales. All hands on deck.

After two years of that all out effort, I sat down one August afternoon and ran a 2 year P&L (Profit and Loss statement – standard pulse taking effort by a CEO). The results were shocking... after all that effort, all I had, every idea, every inspiration, a half a million dollars in advertising and marketing investment... the difference in the top line revenue after two years of nose to the grindstone was 10 dollars. Yes, 10 bucks, 3 Starbucks Latte's. All that skill, all that effort had amounted to virtually nothing. I was now at the end of me.

I prayed Lord, I'm done, I'm exhausted and I'm now at the end of me. If you're going to make anything out of this business, it's going to be all you. I'm out of ideas, my entrepreneurial spirit is done, I'm exhausted and finished. It's all yours, to your glory if you want it.

We cut back substantially, trimmed nearly all of the advertising and marketing spending, cut the sales force from 7 to 3, hired a corporate Chaplin and started praying in the sales meetings. Praise the Lord that my business partner had been on a similar track and was like-minded. When I shared with him my thoughts on hiring Corporate Chaplin, he bewildered me with his uncharacteristic response "make it happen". His commitment to the Lord and transition in his life mimicked mine, "Lord, you're will be done, take the business away if need be, you know our will, but yours be done". Talk about locking arms.

It was in the Lord's hands now and I was finally done with me. The entire culture at the company changed. We started praying in the sales meetings, the Chaplin ran a Chapel for us once a week and nearly half the staff

attended. Worship music is now playing the cubicles and frequent conversations revolve around what books people are reading or where they went to church and what the sermon reflected.

A good friend of mine, and presenter at a luncheon, shared a PowerPoint slide that summed things up. It was an excerpt from a larger presentation, but in a nutshell it illustrated the path that Joseph took;

My business, My way  
Your business, My way  
My business, Your way  
... finally...  
Your business, Your way

It narrated my journey. That was my path, from 1998 to 2010, that exact transition and the last stage took place for me in August 2010, Lord it's now your business, run it your way.

So...How did things work out?

September was our biggest month of the year.

October proved to be the second biggest month of the year.

The fourth quarter was the second biggest quarter in the history of the company.

In an eight week period, we've grown 25% since December of last year and we're still in 1Q2011.

I keep praying "Lord, is this a wave or a trend?" I've prayed that 3 times and each time one of my two remaining sale people comes to me later that morning and says "hey, you'll never guess what just walked in the front door", ... oh yes I would. Thank you Lord, apparently it's a trend.

I now have two sales people and a support engineer. Both sales people say “chief, I don’t get it, I’m not doing any proactive, outbound activity, yet the business is walking in the front door. My funnel is full, I can hardly keep up with the inbound traffic”. Praise the Lord, that’s all I can say.

But it’s not about the business. It’s not about growth. It’s not about sales, or finances, or success, or management, or tactics, it’s about yielding.

This is about the n-teenth time I’ve “totally committed things to the Lord”, like I said earlier, yet another layer to the onion, cliché’ ya maybe, but the pain I endured and the ripping I felt and the tears I shed earned me every smelly broken piece of this last layer of the onion.

I’m learning that there’s no separation. No spiritual life vs. business life. It’s integrated, holistic, one mind, one Kingdom mindset. Integrated. He, the Lord, wants to be involved with every detail of my life, be it coffee with a friend, a business luncheon, or major contract negotiation. His Spirit is inside me and wants to interact on every level. Kingdom mindset. Kingdom business. No separation of church and state, whatever that means, but an integrated, holistic, Kingdom perspective each minute of every day.

This past two years of my life have been a real nightmare. The most emotional pain I’ve ever felt in my life. I found a new end to myself, a deeper deep than I even knew existed. A valley so deep that suicide actually seemed a very viable option. But while the pain is still very real and palpable, something I wouldn’t wish on my worst enemy, I wouldn’t trade it for anything.

The cost is excruciating, the result is exhilarating.

Galatians 2:20

**I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.**

Phil 1:21 – **for me to live is Christ, to die is gain.**

It's not about business, it's about Zoe life:

**“Abundant, Full Life: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (abundant life)." - John 10:10”**

What next Lord?...

Isaiah 60:1-3

***“Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.”***

Photo above: Tom Gillihan, CEO of Sterling.net (right)  
George La Du, Corporate Chaplain (left)

