

# Seeing with eyes of faith



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Lately I felt like I have been involved in a war. Not just a battle, a war. For the longest time, I could not figure out what the war was about. All I knew was that I was fighting with everyone and everything, and most especially with God.

Sometimes I fought with Him just as a toddler would, throwing a temper tantrum because my Daddy would not give me the treat or trinket that I so desperately wanted.

Other times I fought like the defiant teenager, insisting on taking control even though my Dad knew best what was right for me. And not only would I take control, I would have the gall to talk back to my Dad!

And then there was the mother of all fights, the knock-down-drag-out-rant-out-loud-for-an-hour fight where I embodied *both* the toddler with the temper tantrum *and* the defiant teenager talking back. It's a wonder I wasn't struck down by a lightning bolt from heaven! But that's why God is God and I am, well, very human.

During that fight I actually *demand*ed a sign. I couldn't see a way out. How could I have known that my Daddy, who loves me so much, would not only give me one sign, but many. Even though I had behaved so badly, He still sought to comfort me.

The first of the many signs He would bestow on me since that fight was granted that very night. I was to provide music for a special baptism of the Holy Spirit mass and people were to be prayed over. I was so upset by the time I arrived that I felt naked and totally exposed. In my skewed

vision I thought everyone could plainly see all the ugliness inside of me. Yet, despite all that, God granted me a beautiful and simple sign through glorious singing in tongues.

The singing was sweet and soft, with lovely harmonies and beautiful words that I didn't understand because they were meant for God alone. I could sense the depth of the prayer. This praying and singing in tongues was deeper than any I had experienced before. And while I still had work to do to let go of my anger, what I walked away with was an invitation - a gentle, pleasing, and tantalizing invitation, to get deeper with God and to see things through His eyes, through eyes of faith.

After all the terrible things I had said to Him earlier, after the demands and the tantrums . . . He invited me to go deeper with Him. I hurled insults and committed sin after sin . . . and He invited me to go deeper with Him. Anyone else would have walked away, never to return. But He invited me to go deeper with Him. And only now as I write this, am I beginning to get a glimpse of what that invitation meant.

So what does this story have to do with *GrapeVine*?

Everyone involved in a ministry knows how difficult it is to remain faithful. When the heat is turned up and the attacks keep coming, the hurt, frustration and anger can quickly escalate. We can become blinded by our own narrow vision and imprisoned by self absorption. And we can lose faith so quickly!

What we see with our eyes may be true right at this very moment, but it's a

passing truth. Only God knows the full truth and He reveals it in His perfect time. We must have eyes of faith to see it. As long as we have these eyes, we cannot be consumed by the trial we may be experiencing -- we can rise above it. I believe that the invitation I received from God that night was to see my life through these new eyes of faith.

In this issue you will read about artists who see with those very eyes, who have remained faithful and risen above their trials to follow God's special plan for them.

Teresa Smith shares a story about a heartfelt prayer for a larger home to better accommodate their growing family and business, and the patience and faithfulness it took to hang in and trust God.

Three Catholic women share about their calling to be involved with theater. Eyes of faith enabled them to stretch and grow, to step outside their comfort zones and allow God to take them places where they could truly 'be all things to all people' for the sake of the Gospel.

Matt Maher shares how eyes of faith allowed him to develop a personal relationship with God and how that transformed him into the trail-blazer that he is today in Praise and Worship music.

There are many more stories. Read this issue with eyes of faith and let God invite you to new places. †