

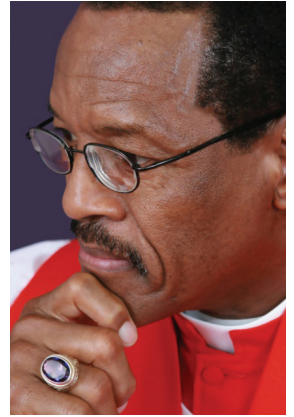


THE APOSTOLIC MISSIVE IV

YOUR SERVANT IN CHRIST

I am confident He will finish what He starts in You! (Phil 1:6)

January 2008



Greetings to the Beloved of Christ!

I want to begin this year by conveying a heart-felt invocation of blessing for your life and ministry in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Eight. I pray God's choice blessings upon every Kingdom effort you have planned this year that will bring glory to God, edifies the believers, and evangelizes the world.

Our centennial celebration of 2007 was a great opportunity to reflect on our heritage and embrace our tradition of holiness and Pentecostal fervor. Oh, what a great out-pouring we received from the Spirit of God as His presence descended upon us as the Spirit descended upon Christ like a dove when John baptized him in the Jordan River.

In writing to the Church at Philippi, the Apostle Paul highlights a glimpse of glory that is as relevant to us today as it was for the first century church. He says that our position in Christ and his righteous depends upon "knowing Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." First, knowing Him and His power; secondly, personal acquaintance with His suffering and conformity to His death (deep humility and earnest striving would be a contemporary translation of conformity). It is from this verse that I want to launch the theme for 2008: **"MARCHING INTO THE FUTURE WITH RESURRECTION POWER!"** (PHIL 3:10).

Given the circumstances that surround the global church and even the challenges within the Church, it ought to be said with as much passion as I can bring to the surface, that our future is dependent upon our willingness to plug in to the resurrection power of Christ. Regardless to any new initiative of the local church, district, jurisdiction, and national, we have no power that can insure our success and divine influence in the world that equals the power of His resurrection. This source breathes life and produces fruit from our labor! If your best efforts failed, in 2008, I want to encourage you to rely more on His resurrection power to produce fruit for your labor. For the issues of life and ministry that have seemed beyond repair, it is my earnest conviction that God is prepared to do a new thing in you and yours!

As we launch new initiatives in the life of the Church of God in Christ, surely you know that as the day of Pentecost required one accord, this mandate for single-mindedness is equally valuable to the Church in the 21st Century. Our fathers and mothers sang a familiar tune that is applicable to us today: **"Lord Make Us One, Everywhere!"**

Two Thousand and Seven (2007) brought about a completion of many things. And, if it represented for the Church of God in Christ, Inc. the fulfillment or completion of something, then 2008 marks a NEW BEGINNING. How fitting that 2007 is symbolic of completion, while 2008 represents we have arrived at the portal of spiritual power that regenerates and runs deep for the saints to advance the cause of Christ.

Let us take advantage of the winter of 2008 for consecration and preparedness for ministry. But, know that as we move into the Spring, we do so knowing the urgency to yield to the power of His resurrection; the life-source that breathes revival, revitalization, and renewal!

My prayers for this year are focused on your success around the world in every venue of ministry the Lord has called you to undertake for the sake of the Kingdom. Let us be faithful to the words of the Apostle Paul whose words compliment our times; "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection!"

Your Servant in Christ!

Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.
The Seventh Presiding Bishop
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC.