



Laurence T. Bell

September 29, 1948 - June 16, 2015

Welcome to my celebration! I'm glad you came. Some of you know me as Larry, Elder Bell, Bro Bell, Pastor Bell, Mr. Bell, or just Bell. My beautiful wife and amazing partner in life, Barbara Bell, affectionately calls me "Honey." God's five gifts to me proudly call me Daddy, and to my grandchildren and great grandchildren; I'm Dad and Pop-Pop. I'm a son, brother, and uncle.

To many of you, I was a teacher, pastor, Overseer, mentor, therapist, counselor, motivator, leader, community activist, and friend. Though all of those roles are important, and I was gratefully blessed that God graced me to fulfill each one of them, my most important role in life is being a Son of God.

An obituary is a notice of death, and since I am alive in Christ, I decided to share with you my journey of life. Since I have a captive audience, I'd rather share how the facts of my life shaped the faith of my life.

My Spiritual Birth

I was born September 29, 1949 to Alva Handy Bell and William Thomas Bell, at home, in Marion Station, MD. I would tell you about my elementary and middle school days, but truth be told, my life really began at the age of 16 when I said "YES" to Christ.

A fire destroyed our home in 1963, which forced us to relocate to Lewes, DE. I

was 14 years old. I had no idea that God would use that tragedy to change the trajectory of my life. Two years after moving, a co-worker invited my mom to attend Booker St. Church of God in Georgetown, DE under the leadership of Pastor Alberta Waples. My mom raised us in church, but she didn't know Christ. It wasn't until February 28, 1965, at that church, that my mother came to know the Lord and it forever changed our lives. A few months after she accepted the Lord, I accepted Christ as my personal savior. I was 16 years old. Immediately, I started sharing the gospel and a year later, I preached my first sermon "You Must Be Born Again."

Finding Favor

It wasn't easy being a Christian, while attending William C. Jason Comprehensive High-School in Georgetown, DE. I wasn't perfect, but I did it. I didn't do it alone though. God allowed me to meet the most beautiful woman who helped me grow in my relationship with Christ, Barbara Drummond. She was serious about Christ. I was so attracted to her faith that I pursued her relentlessly until she finally allowed me to court her during our senior year of high school. She was so devoted. Once she sat on my hand and slapped me because she thought I was trying to touch her. This kind of devotion helped shape my faith and my ministry. Proverbs 18:22 says "A man who finds a wife, finds a good thing and obtains favor with the Lord. I knew she is my good thing and I definitely obtained favor from the Lord.

After graduating high school in 1967, I was drafted in the Army. Two years into my military service, in 1969, I married my beautiful wife Barbara. I thought living for the Lord in high school was tough, but it was nothing to the challenges of serving Him while in the military. During my years of service, I earned the Good Conduct Medal and National Defense Medal. But more importantly, I earned the respect of my fellow officers. Many of you have heard me tell the stories of how my fellow officers tried to entice me to drink and be

unfaithful Barbara. They said, “Rev, I know you say you’re a Christian, but just wait...you’ll see.” Eventually, with the help of the Holy Spirit, I was able to demonstrate that I was a true believer and many of them protected me from anything and anyone they thought would hinder my faith. They would tell others, “Rev is a true Christian.”

Kingdom Service

When I ended my military service we had five beautiful children. I realized that I needed a good education and career to be able to provide and care for my family. I also wanted to model the value of faith, education and hard work and how it’s used in our service to God.

I obtained an Associates Degree in Human Service Technology, from Delaware Technical and Community College, a Bachelors Degree in Social Work from Delaware State College and a Masters Degree from Salisbury University. I also had the pleasure of teaching at each of those institutions as an adjunct professor. I also used my knowledge, skills and abilities to serve at various organizations: Turnabout Counseling Center, Seaford House and Residential Treatment Center, Mobile Crisis Intervention, First State Community Action, and Delaware Guidance Services to name a few. This work allowed me to serve God by serving my community.

As a social worker, I was in constant contact with people who were hurting, suffering from addiction, suffering from the effects of trauma or who just simply needed help. I knew I had the answer, and the answer was and still is JESUS. This is one of the reasons I had such a passion to teach and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

My training in ministry helped develop my gifts as a teacher and preacher in the Body of Christ. My ministry training started to take shape 1966 when I

started attending Refuge Temple in Seaford, DE under the leadership of the late Reverend Leon and Ethel Williams. I ministered, traveled and served this ministry with my wife and children for decades before the Lord sent me to serve Bishop Nathaniel and Rosie Edwards at Tabernacle of Prayer, Inc. where I was ordained as an Elder. I served as a bible teacher, minister and in many other capacities. God was developing a gift of teaching in me that would impact people throughout my life and beyond my time on earth. He was also developing me for the role of pastor years before I took the office. I realized this after serving as assistant pastor at Rehoboth Temple of Praise, Inc. under the leadership of Overseer Leon Wilson. During my service there, I was introduced to the man I call Bishop and my father in the Gospel, Bishop Carl H. Montgomery. This man of God has been a spiritual covering for my family, my ministry, and me for years. I cannot be more grateful. Thank you Bishop. God also sent a beautiful mother in the faith in the person of Idel T. Williams. It was this woman that helped me establish my first church. The church I pastored for the last 15 years. I will be forever grateful for her support, leadership and confidence in the assignment God placed on my life.

Working with so many people, I learned to never treat people differently because they didn't share my faith, or live the life I thought they should. My assignment was to love them to LIFE, life in Christ. What's also important to know is that my career and ministry work are both KINGDOM WORK. There is no difference. God uses both to fulfill his purpose in you and in the world. Never compartmentalize what you do. It all belongs to God. I'll sum it up like this...serve God by serving people.

Family

I know you are thinking, "That's a lot. You did a lot for other people, but what about your family. You had a wife and five children?" I'm glad you asked. Everything I did, I did for Christ and my family. My children came to work with me; they served in ministry with me. My wife and I taught them how to pray,

made them memorize scriptures...going to church was not optional. Our children knew...Christians, that's who we are; serving Christ is what we do! I didn't just preach and teach the Word of God. I lived it. I believe that what I did in my career and ministry would be an example for them to follow. I trained them in the Word of God and showed them how to live it. I imparted Godly wisdom, teaching and revelation in each of them. If you are a parent the greatest blessing you can leave your children is not material, It's spiritual...a spiritual heritage in Christ; that's a blessing that will last for eternity. I am at peace, knowing that I live on, in the earth, through my children and the generational blessings that are still being revealed.

I'm finally coming to the end. There is no way to really record my entire journey, so I just gave you highlights I felt led to share. I know I left out some details, but that's OK. Just recall the memories we shared and add it where you see fit. My assignment today isn't merely to recall facts, rather to encourage you in the faith, a faith in Christ that is living, breathing and transforming. Before I go, let me share my heart with a few people:

Mom, thank you for introducing us to Christ. The spiritual heritage I leave with my family is because of what you passed down to me. Your prayers and support over the years helped shape me as a servant of Christ.

Anthony 'Tony' Bell, I'm blessed to call you brother. You and my sister-in-law Delilah were the closest friends Barbara and I had. We've been through a lot together. Never forget how much I love you both.

Gwen Gibbs what an honor to be your brother and hero. You deserve the best life and that has always been my desire for you, more than you will ever know. Jack Gibbs, brother-in-law, take care of my baby sis; love her more than anything on this earth. I pray you both walk in the gifts God has given you.

To my mother-in-law, Evelyn Drummond, thank you for sharing your only daughter with me. You raised an amazing woman, because, you're an amazing woman. Thank you for your tireless prayers. It sustained our marriage and family more than you know.

My wife Barbara, Bobbie, I know this is hard. Please know your faith in Christ will sustain you. I want you to know how much I love you and how much you mean to me. You are the epitome of a virtuous woman and I am honored to call you my wife of forty-six blessed years and mother of my children. Never forget, what you need to carry out God's assignment is already in you. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Now go forth and continue the work of the Lord! I love you

Sherri: I love you honey. We've had some tough times, but our relationship is so special. I've always wanted the best for you and your husband Jerry Henry. My greatest joy is to see you fully walk in the anointing God has placed on your life. God has not left you; He's just waiting for you to respond.

Tonya: You have so many gifts and talents; I always told you that. You always say you don't see them. Trust me, they are there. You are my child; I passed many of them to you. I now want you to spend the rest of your life discovering them and using them for the Lord.

Monica: I didn't get a chance to tell you Happy Birthday baby girl... Happy Birthday! I don't want your birthday to be a source of pain. God NEVER does anything to harm us. He only has good thoughts towards us. I was more than your natural father; I was your spiritual mentor, trainer and teacher. I not only challenged you, but you challenged me in ways you'll never know. Thank you. Remember; NEVER STOP PURSUING YOUR PURPOSE.

Michael: My son, what an honor to be your father. I want you to know I AM PROUD OF YOU! I'm grateful you're walking in my footsteps, but better. You are showing how generational blessings flow to the next generation. You and my amazing daughter-in-law Michele (who I consider my daughter) have an amazing responsibility with the Life Church. Don't worry about how it's going to work, just relax in Him and watch God do the work.

Brian: I love you son. You're an amazing man. You're so much like your mother. You care for her deeply. Please continue that. I know all of my children love their mother, but your connection is different and that's the way God designed it. I'm grateful for that. Son, you have no idea what God is getting ready to do in your life. Don't resist it. I want to say to you and Desiree Peterkin Bell, my daughter-in-law, my other daughter, no matter what, keep Christ First and everything your hands touch will be blessed.

To all of my grandchildren and great-grandchildren: I know I help raise some of you. Tyneisha "Neisha" Bell-Winder, Sierra "Nikki" Bell and Ny'Ajah "Ny" Henry, but I love you all the same. I know Pop-Pop got on your nerves always teaching you lessons and asking you to get stuff for me, but you will soon begin to see why. Every Godly principle I taught you is your key to a successful life and serving others is a key to a blessed life.

To my host of nieces and nephews, don't let what I've shared with you be in vain. Today may be filled with some sorrow, but get up, get yourself together and go and be EVERYTHING God intended you to be. That's always been my message to you, that's still my message to you.

To my church family, Maranatha Holistic Gospel Fellowship, I love each of you, what an honor to serve you for nearly fifteen years. I wrote the vision and made it plain so that you could read it and run with it. Continue to use our

confessions of faith, continue to stay in position, continue to trust and obey the Lord. I completed my assignment here, now you continue the work of the Lord and take care of Lady Barbara.

It's time to go for now, my sister Miriam Harmon, my brother John Franklin, and my father are calling for me. You see, they beat me here ☐. But first, let me leave you with a few of my favorite sayings:

What is a surprise to us is never a surprise to God. Since, it is not a surprise to God, He's already provided everything you need.

Remember, life is choice driven. You live or die by the choices you make. I made a choice to live, not just in word, but in deed.

Finally, my first sermon in 1966 was "You Must be Born Again" and my final sermon to you, if you want to see Jesus, live forever, and see me again, is **You MUST BE BORN AGAIN!**

My time is up, and I thank you for yours.

Written By Monica Speight

Inspired by the Holy Spirit and the life of Laurence Bell

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Laurence T. Bell, please visit our [Heartfelt Sympathies Store](#).

Tribute Wall

TL

“ *People come into our lives for a reason. Bringing something we must learn and we are led to those who help us most to grow. And so it is with much sorrow that we say farewell to such a wonderful man. My condolences to the Bell family.* ”

Thais Lessa - June 26, 2015 at 12:00 AM

PS

“ *Rest in peace, our friend and may God be with your family.* ”

Peter and Natasha Singleton - June 25, 2015 at 12:00 AM

NF

“ *I am sorry for the lose, but he is with his father, Jesus Christ.* ”

Nocks Family - June 24, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RW

“ *Dear Bell Family,
Sending my deepest sympathy. Please always remember that God needs the best and so he has chosen your loving and joyful "Larry". He was a wonderful human being. May he rest in peace.
Holding you all in my thoughts and prays.* ”

Robbin Wells - June 24, 2015 at 12:00 AM

PI

“ *Grace & Peace to the immediate family, church family and friends of Overseer Laurence Bell. May the peace of GOD continue to keep your hearts in divine harmony during this time of transition. Without a doubt Overseer is resting from his labor to one day soon receive his anticipated reward from the Father!*

Pastor Terrance L. Murray of Seedtime & Harvest Progressive Church, Inc. -
June 24, 2015 at 12:00 AM