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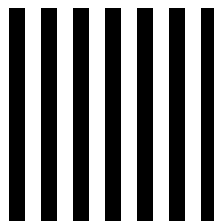
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The Meaning of Love



Randy and Tammy Miller attend Risen King Community Church in Redding California

about asking her to marry me when suddenly, I received an unmistakable message from the Lord. He told me, "through this woman I will teach you the meaning of love."

Risen King Community Church in Redding California is just one of many Alliance churches that has benefitted from a partnership with the Alliance Development Fund. Below is the changed-life story of a couple who attend Risen King.

I am not the type of person who talks a lot about the things that God has "told me" but when it comes to what happened in my marriage, I simply cannot tell the story without sharing God's very specific words to me.

It started in early 1996 when I was courting my future wife, Tammy. I was in the bedroom of my tiny townhouse apartment, thinking about how much I enjoyed spending time with her. I was even thinking

Tammy and I got married in August of that year. While I never doubted that I had heard from God on this matter, I did find myself trivializing God's message to me. I began to think, *of course God is going to show me the meaning of love through this woman; she's my wife!* And I began to think, that perhaps God's word to me wasn't that special—certainly God uses marriages and spouses all the time to teach His children about love. As a result, for many of the years of our marriage, I didn't give God's special word to my heart much thought. But God never forgot His word to me or the promise He had made. From time to time during those years, I would hear another specific word from Him. It always came

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in the form of a command. He would say to me, "Love your wife." This went on for many years and when the Lord would tell me to love my wife, sometimes I would think, *Yeah of course Lord or Get off my back, Lord. You don't know how hard she is to love.* I never had the right response. I was disobedient and unloving toward my wife, and our marriage paid the price.

We began attending Risen King church in 2004. From the first day we walked through the door and heard Pastor Bill's teaching, we knew we had found our new church home. But we were not really walking with the Lord, and we attended church sporadically. We generally came late, sat in the back, and left early.

When I was involved in a boating accident, Pastor Jim Padilla visited me in the hospital. That visit knit us even closer to Risen King Church. Little did we know how God would use Pastor Jim in the fulfillment of His word to me. By Christmas 2007, my wife was planning to end our marriage. She didn't think I loved her anymore and she had found someone else.

I was crushed. I prayed for God to save our marriage. His response was to repeat His earlier command to me. He said, "Love your wife." So I resolved to obey God and to love my wife.

Since I had asked God to help us, I made sure that we were attending church each Sunday. The first Sunday was a tough one. Tammy was hard-hearted and probably suspected that I was merely using God as a crutch because I was distraught about the state of our marriage. But the second Sunday, God



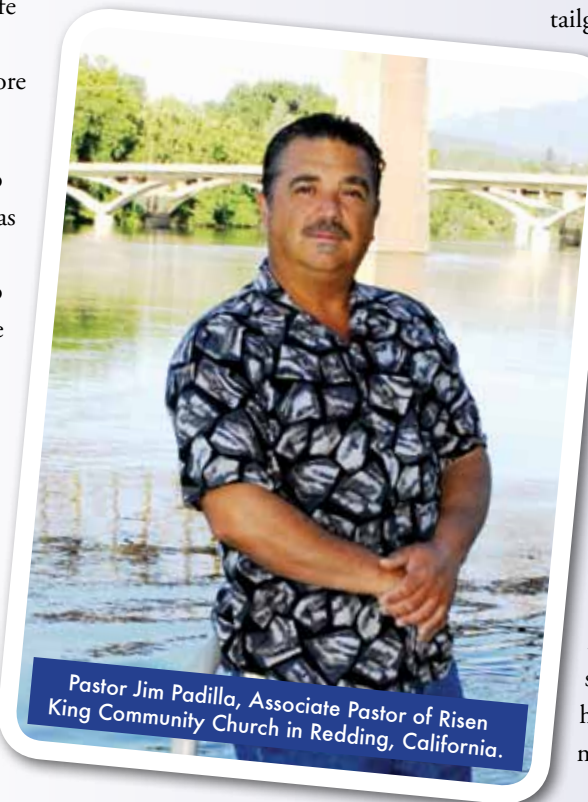
used Senior Pastor Bill's message in a special way. I do not remember what he preached about that day, but I do remember that the Holy Spirit got a hold of my wife during that service. Afterward, she resolved to stay in the marriage to see if we could work it out. However, reconciliation and healing were needed. We had a long way to go and I don't believe we could have made it without the help of our church family at Risen King.

"I was crushed. I prayed for God to save our marriage. His response was to repeat His earlier command to me. He said, 'Love your wife.' "

Pastor Jim perceived that we had a marriage in crisis and made himself available. In short, he loved us. On several occasions he confirmed words that the Holy Spirit had given to me. At one point during the painful process, I was thinking about giving up. Pastor Jim came to my workplace and we sat on the tailgate of my pick-up truck.

He reminded me that I had no right to be angry or to disobey God's command to continue to love my wife. He reminded me that my life is not my own and that I belonged to the Lord.

This was a critical point for me personally because Pastor Jim persevered even after I had tried to brush him off. He confirmed several things the Lord had already been telling me. After this visit, I



Pastor Jim Padilla, Associate Pastor of Risen King Community Church in Redding, California.

Continued on next page

determined to continue obeying the Lord's command to love my wife.

Now fifteen months and innumerable answered prayers later I can confidently proclaim that the Lord has saved our marriage. In the process He also gifted us with a healthy church family at Risen King, where we are truly a part of the Body of Christ. Of course, He completely fulfilled his prophetic word spoken to me all those years ago.

So what was God's answer to my heart concerning the meaning of love? Well before I go there, I feel compelled

to share this—God never promised that He would save my marriage, and there were times when I thought He might show me the meaning of love through the loss of my wife. He didn't just "show" me the meaning of love—He required my active participation and my obedience. So while I was "trying to love my wife," I was learning about love in the process. In closing, the meaning of love as revealed to my heart is this; service, faith, surrender, and forgiveness. In short, the Cross of Christ—at least that is the way the Lord communicated it to me.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

with Lawrence L. McCooey

Dear Fellow Investors and Friends:

For over 30 years, The Alliance Development Fund has been helping Alliance churches and ministries build, buy, renovate, and expand their facilities. In fact, we've made over 2000 loans which have provided the capital needed to see those facilities placed in the hands of God's people for advancing the Kingdom. The buildings are merely tools, but to the churches ADF serves, they are essential in accomplishing a God-given mission and vision. They are places where ministries are housed and launched, beachheads are established, and lives are transformed.

And God continues to bless and use ADF. Right now, there are over 100 churches talking with us about loans totaling \$83 million.

We want to be sure that ADF will have loan funds available for every qualifying church in the future, just as we always have in the past. Therefore, in addition to our other fine investment products, ADF has launched a special **14-month Investment Certificate paying 4%** for new investments. We believe this is a very attractive rate and hope you'll consider this new offering, as well as other ADF products that suit your savings, investment, retirement and stewardship goals.

As always, we are very grateful for the investments of our Alliance family and friends who are *Building the Kingdom. Transforming Lives. One Investment at a Time.*

Please let me know if you have questions, comments, or prayer requests.

Sincerely,

Lawrence L. McCooey, CPA, PFS
President



B "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." —Ephesians 4:2-3

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