

Jim Jones... as seen through the eyes of those HE LOVED...

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For the 27 years I've known JJ I've seen many miracles, but the greatest of these is the miracle of the life of one who chose to die that God might live in him. He was my lover, the father of my children, but became my leader, my example of God's love and the Father of all who loved ~~and~~ justice, peace and equality.

I met JJ when he was a high school senior and worked full time as an orderly in the Hospital where I was a senior in nurse's training. I first encountered him when I sent for an orderly and he answered my call. A young pregnant woman had died from trichinosis, a disease ~~dis~~ contracted from eating raw pork. He helped me prepare her body for the undertaker. He was visibly touched by the suffering of her family.

JJ was handsome, brilliant and ambitious, but the thing I noticed about him first was the sensitivity and concern he exhibited. As the months passed, I became more aware of the attributes I mentioned first. We worked together in the hospital, started dating, and I fell in love. He pursued me diligently. I often teased ~~me~~ him by saying, "I married you go ~~sk~~ get rid of you." but the truth is, I knew there was something special about him. I saw greatness. But little did I ~~know~~ how great he ~~was~~ would become. Just as he pursued me ~~when~~ ^{once} he decided I was the one he wanted, he has pursued truth -- once he decided to live and to die to free the oppressed of the world. He didn't have to do it, but he did.

The process of dying that God might live in him started when he was a boy. He climbed the ladder to perfection by saying no to selfishness and yes to love, when making the decisions of his life. Understanding this takes all excuse from us. Our lives are made up of decisions: we may choose self or others, death or life, hate or love. As JJ chose the way of the gap of love, so can we.

It was JJ who first made me aware of the race problem. He was a HS basketball star and quit the team because the coach referred to black players on an opposing team with racial epithets. He left a barber shop with an unfinished haircut because a barber said he wouldn't cut a black man's hair. He was hitchhiking between college and home when a man who picked him up spoke of blacks in a derogatory manner and he demanded to be let out in an isolated area. These are examples of things that happened during ~~at~~ the year and a half that we dated. I can't begin to reiterate all that has happened since our marriage.

But, I'll try to tell you some of his activities in the area of civil rights, in the area of equality, racially and economically and the marvellous ministry of healing that has confirmed all that he ~~has~~ stands for.

He was a freshman in college when we were married in 1949, during the McCarthy era, a time when this nation bordered on fascism, and political witch hunts were rampant. Jim bravely opposed injustice during that entire time. He at a very young age, saw the

hypocrisy in the practicing religions in the churches of that day. I remember well him standing in a church auditorium in Bloomington Indiana and telling the people of his displeasure at seeing such an elegant edifice and the minister's Cadillac parked in front of it when poverty was so evident in the community that the ~~congregation~~ congregation served.

We had been married about 2 years when he decided to become a minister of the gospel. He was eager to awaken the people to the humanity of Jesus and to let them know that what Jesus was they could also be. Jesus was the first born of many brethren. Although Jim knew the Bible from beginning to end, he emphasized the human service ministry of Jesus and said, there must be no creed but the helping ministry of Christ and no law but love.

Jim was 20 when he became a minister. After J had been ministering for about 1 year he went to a church convention in Columbus, Ind., where a fellow minister prophesied that he would have a deliverance ministry. That night J was the speaker and he was introduced as one who had a ministry of healing and discernment. My reaction to the introduction was one of concern for J. because I didn't know how he could live up to it.

Imagine my amazement when he got up and he called people out by name and by their social security number, and by their disease and their illness and marvellous healings took place. My reaction was one of amazement, it was one of feelings of deep concern and one of being aware of the responsibility of such a ministry. But for three days it was as if I walked on air and I could not feel my feet on the ground and it was difficult for me to even speak. I stood in such awe of this marvellous ministry and I stood feeling the burden of this responsibility that had been placed upon the one that I loved more than any one in the world. After that, the knowledge of Jim's ministry of healing, ministry of discernment went around the world and he received many offers. He was asked to go to England to ^{hold} meetings, he was asked to go to Africa, he was asked to go to Siam.... And I said to him, "J why don't you go?" and his reaction to me was it's easy to take a ministry like this and go from one place to another, but someone must use a ministry like this and live a life of Christ, a life of selflessness before the people.

A short time after that we decided that we would go to a convention in Detroit ..to the Bethesda Temple. And I remembered at the time that I didn't want to go too much. And we were on the way, driving, and I'm one who never had very many supernatural things happen to me -- and I never had any until I met and knew the ministry of JJ. But while I was thinking and even expressing my displeasure with making this trip to the Bethesda Temple and to the church convention, the words spoke in my mind, "You'll not be sorry my dear that you came here." And in fact, I wasn't sorry because it was an

incident at Bethesda Temple in Detroit Michigan that really gave the opportunity to J to take his ministry further and reach more people with it.

At that time J was having horticaria, or in laymens term for ~~di~~ hives, and when he was in a meeting and he was having discernment on people and he could not express hhat discernment, he would break out with hives. His eyes would swell shut, his lips would swell: he was covered with them. And during the meeting in Bethesda Temple there was a well known evangelist there from LA who had a ministry of discernment, but it wasn't as detailed as J's ministry: he would do things like pointing out people in the audience to the left who had a pain in the back or a pain in the side, and ~~wix~~while he was doing this, J was looking at ~~the~~ these people: knowing their names, knowing what had happened in their patst, knowing what was going to happen to them in their future -- but he was unable to express it and so he broke out in hitive and his eyes were swelling, and it was so evident that the Pastor of this church, who was a woman, came to him and asked him what the problem was and he told her. Jim at that time was about 21 years of age and she said, Why by all means ~~o~~if you feel that you have a ministry to give, feel free to express it. Well, when J did express it, it was so superior to the ministry of the visiting evangelist that this pastor, this woman pastor was so threatened by this young man who ~~was~~ ^{had} superseded the person who was supposed to have more knowledge and more experience ~~than~~ in the ways of ministering the gifts that God had given him that she ordered J to be removed from the church and he was physically removed. In that meting was a pastor of a church in cincinnatti who ~~saw~~ ~~xxx~~ saw J's ministry and who asked him to please come and hold services in his temple in Cincinnatti Ohio

Therefore, J began to hold meetings at Elmwood Temple in Cincinnatti Ohio.. There were marvellous healings that occurred: catarracts were removed, hip sockets were replaced; people were healed by just having his shadow fall upon them. Growths were spit up. I used to carry a paper bag to the meeting just for the purpose of carrying the growths away. People climbed into the windows to get to him. They would come at 2 oclock in the ~~morning~~ afternoon in order to have a seat for a 7 30 meeting. One day I was sitting in this church and in the front of the church was a large picture of Jesus. I was sitting there and in my mind I said, Oh God, if I could have just lived back in Jesus time and served him... This was another time that words seemed to drop into my mind... which said: Follow your husband and you will have followed Jesus. I am convine

I am convinced that if he had been content to just be a healer, there would have been no evangelist in this world that could have compared to him in drawing crowds, but Jim was too much of a man of principle not to also teach people the truth about living the life of Godliness: the life of love. And when he started telling these people that wanted to be healed, and these people that were healed that living a life of God required something of them, that is when the crowds began to fall off. They didn't want to hear that Jesus meant it when he said: You must feed the hungry, and you must take care of the sick, and from each according to his ability and to each according to his need... and that God is no respecter of persons, and that we must live together in peace and harmony with racial and economic equality. When he began to tell them, as Jesus told the rich, young ruler, that in order to enter the kingdom, you must sell all and give it to the poor...they were not interested in hearing this.

However, at the same time that the numbers began to drop, people that did stay were people that wanted to go on to perfection: they wanted to be more Godlike; they wanted to live a life of sharing, and a life of selflessness. And, so where numbers were sacrificed, quality was gained and we began to develop a church family with ties that were much stronger than any blood tie could be because we began to know what living for truth, what living for justice, what true living was about.

At about the same time O. L. Jagers in California had heard of Jim's ministry and he was offered a large sum of money to come out and hold a revival meeting for him. The amount was around \$3000 a week which in 1951 for a 21-22 year old was a fortune. And so he came to see about holding the meeting. And I will never forget the Sunday that we went to the World Church to attend a meeting and O. L. Jagers was very unkind to his own father in front of the whole congregation, and without any hesitation, JJ decided that he could not associate himself with a man that would be so unkind to an older man: the fact that it was his father was not so important, but he was a father and a human being that deserved to be treated with dignity. It was during our trip to California then that quite a phenomenal healing happened to me. I became quite ill when I was there and I had very enlarged lymph nodes and both sides of my neck, you would have thought there were marbles in under my skin, and Jim touched them and they disappeared instantly...

It was so phenomenal for the simple reason that I, as we all are, are strong believers in medical science...but I had never turned to Jim for healing to me, and in fact at that very moment I had said, "No, leave it alone and I will take care of it.." but in spite of me, in spite of my pride, in spite of my disbelief: however you want to describe my attitude at that time, ^{I am not sure myself what it was} he touched me and and I was made whole: I was healed, instantly.

In Indianapolis, Indiana, there was a large Assembly of God Church called Laurel Street Tabernacle. It was there that Jack Beam was on the Board, it was there that Mother La Tourneau and her family had been members for years, it was there that Eva Pugh had attended for a long, long time... The pastor of that Church, Mr. John L. Price, was a very brilliant man, he had met Jim, he knew

of his ministry, and he had asked him to come and upon his retirement become the pastor of that church. Jim went and he was holding, every Sunday afternoon, deliverance meetings. This was a large church that was packed out every Sunday afternoon -- and I remember that one Sunday afternoon Jim came to me and he said, "I know by discernment that there are black people coming to this church and the ushers are sitting them on the back row..." He gave me the names of two black women that would be there and he said, "I want them to be sat on the platform..." Well, as you know, Jim is never wrong; the two black women came; the ushers sat them on the platform and as a result of that a Board meeting was called. The Board was upset about the black people being on the platform, as a matter of fact, they did not want black people in their church... they did not want to lose Jim's ministry because he was quite a drawing card, after all, not only as far as members were concerned, but financially. So they made an offer in which they said they would help him establish a church in the black neighborhood. And, without hesitation, Jim said, "There will be no church in the black neighborhood -- I will not be a pastor of a black church or a white church: wherever I have a church ALL people will be welcome, and with that he walked out. And with him walked Jack Beam and his family, Mother La Tourneau and her family, her husband and children, and Eva Pugh... We had no money and so Jim borrowed the money to put a down payment on the church in the inner city part of Indianapolis, Indiana, and that was the first Peoples Temple.

In the beginning he had a hard time making black people believe that he was sincere and he and his workers knocked on the door of every black family in Indianapolis, Indiana. I think they estimated that they knocked on 10,000 doors...and out of that campaign came a few black people and among them was Archie James. It didn't take Jim long to realize that Archie had ability, he had promise, he also was dedicated and he was made associate pastor of the church.

One of our members, one of our white members, who played the organ and was quite a financial support threatened to take away her support if Archie was not taken from the platform: and of course, I don't have to tell you that Jim had no problem deciding which one should go... Archie stayed on the platform and we were very glad to get rid of the racist who had been sitting on the organ bench.

As Peoples Temple developed, Jim's work and life to free the oppressed, and his ministry of deliverance and healing worked simultaneously. As always, and up until just the last few years he worked a full time job in the community as well as ^{ministering &}pastoring a church. And one of the jobs he held was with the Marion County Welfare Dept in Indianapolis, Ind. And I remember a time when his gift ministry helped him on the job. He was walking in one of the less desirable parts of Indianapolis, Indiana, and he had on him a large sum of money that he was to pay on the church when a bandit came to relieve him of whatever money he had...and by discernment, Jim knew that the man needed \$29 for a specific need, and he told the man you need \$29 and he gave him the \$29 and saved the \$5000 that he had with him to put as a payment on the church...

He became well known in the area for his work in civil rights, and so he was appointed the first Director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights in Indianapolis, Indiana. This was before there were any civil rights laws...and everything he had had to be done by ~~conciliation~~conciliation. I want to tell you that there was nobody too big for Jim Jones to tackle.

All the way from Bell Telephone company for their hiring practices, the largest hospital in the state: the Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana, and he was so brave, so unafraid, that the local chamber of commerce in Indiana offered him a job which ~~paid~~ paid \$25,000 a year to get him out and away from this job as Director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights: the job as Director was a \$7,000 a year job...but the \$25,000 a year that the Chamber of Commerce offered him was no lure for Jim Jones because he can't be bought, and he stayed on the job as Director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights.

Before closing this particular session, I would also like to say that Loretta Cordell, and her mother and ~~father~~ step father also came from the Laurel Street Tabernacle with Jim to start the new Peoples Temple. There were others that had come to Laurel Street as a result ~~as a~~ of Jim's ministry, such as the Stahd and Edith Cordell, and they also followed him.