



Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor (burning desire, commitment and fire for God), serving the Lord. Romans 12:11

Dear Partners,

Do you remember when you first gave your life to Christ? Do you recall how the love of Christ was burning in you and you felt like you could float in His presence? Many of us remember our first love for Christ at the time of our salvation and it's a memory we will never forget. John will never forget when his uncle first took him to an underground church during the communist regime where he collapsed under the presence of God and all hatred and anger that he had in his heart was completely overtaken by the love of God. Alexandra recalls so clearly the day the Lord revealed Himself to her in the middle of the night in a corner of her dorm room, healed her, and her life has never been the same. We were young but so on fire for God! Regardless of whether or not they would put us in jail, torture us with interrogations, or even kill us, we were not going to let anything come between us and the Lord. Between our work shifts, we were either traveling to remote villages to spread the Gospel and fellowshiping with the few believers, going to local prayer meetings and pulling all-nighters in the presence of God, and attending church services on Wednesdays and Sundays. We were eating, breathing and sleeping God and His presence. We couldn't get enough of Him!

Fast forward five years later, we escaped Romania, we were living in southern California, putting down roots for our family, and establishing a successful business. Then one day, the Lord stopped us in the middle of our tracks and asked us a simple question, "*Do you remember your purpose of escaping Romania when I helped you cross that river?*" This shook us to our core! The promise we made to the Lord before escaping Romania was that we would spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth and allow God to use us in any degree or capacity He saw fit. At that point in our lives, we were extremely comfortable in our day to day lives. We were raising a family with three children, going to church regularly, establishing a life for ourselves, building our business, and truly living the "American dream." Everything looked good on paper. We were serving in our local church, John was attending the Bible school, Alexandra was singing on the worship team, the children went to Sunday school, but somehow in the middle of all that, we put the vow we made to God on hold. In our minds, we thought we'd get there eventually, but the Lord reminded us that if we didn't answer the call now and stay true to our promise, the opportunity would pass us by.

We answered the call. **We took the route of uncertainty (because God never gives you the whole picture at first!), but we were Holy Spirit led!** Several months later we were moved to northern California and serving under another ministry before eventually establishing our own.

We had to leave everything behind, including our business, friends, and church. If it wasn't for God waking us up in southern California, we would not be where we are today and this Ministry would have never been born. We give Him all the honor and praise for the Holy Spirit's guidance and strategic timing in our lives! Looking back, we can fully understand Jesus' rebuke to the church of Ephesus where He said to them, *"I know your works, your labor... you have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works."* This church had fallen out of the first love they had for God. In southern California *our* true spiritual state was dry and dead before the Holy Spirit stopped us in our tracks and redirected our path. Our fire and first love for God was revived once again because we found our purpose again.

Friend, you and I were created with a purpose on this earth. When we are not walking in that calling (purpose), we are in danger of living stagnant, irrelevant lives. We can easily fall into the deception that we're "serving God" in our everyday life, but all the while we have left that first love and passion for the Lord behind. Keeping the fire and fervency burning inside of us means we are falling in love with Jesus more deeply everyday by spending time in His presence *just to be with Him and for no other reason at all*. By being in the presence of God daily, we are *refilling ourselves with a fresh infilling of His Holy Spirit*. By doing this, we keep the fire of our first love burning in our hearts lest we get the same rebuke from the Lord as the church of Ephesus did in Revelation 2. That first love should grow stronger every day until the day we meet our Saviour face to face!

Next month, when we celebrate the Day of Pentecost, we want to take a look at how the Apostles from Acts chapter 2 continued to replenish themselves by the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31) and how they never let their first love grow cold. They lived life everyday as if it were their last by seeking His kingdom and His righteousness first *above all else*. Friends, this is exactly how we should live our lives everyday until we finish our race here on earth and meet our Maker face to face.

But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides. Matthew 6:33 AMPC

Thank you for your continued prayers and support! Please keep us in prayer as we travel and minister overseas in the next few weeks. We want to be a tool, used by God, to further spread the uncompromised Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and see people healed from all bondages, oppression, sicknesses, and diseases in Jesus' name! We covet your prayer and support, dear friend. We're blessed to have Holy Spirit-called partners working with us in this great work for the Kingdom! Until next time, stay blessed, friend!

In His Service,
John & Alexandra