

MISSION UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2017



THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

JAMES RAFFERTY

I WAS A BABY Christian, just a few weeks old, when asked why I still listened to rock 'n' roll music. My response was quick and defensive. I've given my heart to Jesus, I go to church instead of bars, so it really doesn't matter what music I listen to. End of conversation.

And it was true. My life was consumed with Jesus. I went to church three times a week. I read the Bible constantly. I was, without really understanding the concept, abiding in Jesus.

Sometime later I came home and noticed dust had gathered on my drum set. Dusting them off, I grabbed some music. It was Van Halen and one song read, "Runnin' with the Devil." Then it hit me.

"Wait a minute," I thought. "I'm not running with the devil."

I proceeded to haul my rock collection out to the garbage can. Not because I had to. Not because someone told me to. My experience is described in this chorus:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus.
Look full in His wonderful face.*

*And the things of this earth will grow strangely dim;
In the light of His glory and grace.*


I had no idea at the time that I had stumbled upon the science of salvation. The secret of success in the Christian experience is not in our learning. We may understand the Bible from cover to cover and still find no victory over sin.

It is not in our position. We may be looked up to as spiritual leaders and examples in our community and church and still fail.

It is not in our numbers. We may have the support of hundreds or even thousands of brothers and sisters in Christ without success in the innermost life.

It is not in our entrusted talents. We may be more talented than everyone around us and yet fall short in our Christian experience.

It is not in the will of man. Our wills may be strong, very strong and yet they will never be strong enough to carry us through every temptation. While all of these have a place, none of them can replace continual dependence on Christ.

The secret of success is simply this. Feeling our inefficiency we are to contemplate Christ, and through Him who is the strength of all strength, the thought of all thought, the willing and obedient will gain victory after victory. Amen. 



GOD'S OWN GRAPES

DAVID ASSCHERICK

EVERY ARISE CLASS IS a miracle. And not just a miracle, but *miracles upon miracles*. Like a cluster of delicious grapes, each one is amazing in itself and the cluster magnifies the miracle all the more. This 2017 class is no exception!

This year one of the “grapes” is a Pakistani young man named Zeerick, 18, who preached his first sermon at age four and his first evangelistic series at age six! What’s even more amazing than this, is that, after five years of marriage, Zeerick’s parents could not get pregnant and James Rafferty, while visiting Pakistan 19 years ago, prayed for them that they would be able to have a child! That child is now at ARISE, where James teaches!

What else can you call this except a miracle?

Then there’s Jeremy. Jeremy felt the pull of same-sex attraction as a teenager and, though raised in a Christian home, left the church before he was 20. That decision led to nearly two decades of participation in the LGBT lifestyle and community. Then a literal miracle happened. I don’t want to spoil that specific miracle here, because Jeremy will be writing his testimony up for the Light Bearers blog soon, so be on the lookout for that. But the end result of that miracle is that Jeremy left the LGBT community three years ago and is now an on-fire follower of Jesus and a member of the board at the local church he grew up in!

What else can you call this except a miracle?

Then there’s Edmar. Edmar is one of those guys you love immediately upon meeting. Friendly, funny, and intelligent. A former urban gangster type, Edmar found Jesus (or rather was found by Him!) just recently. His family life and former lifestyle are a far cry from where Jesus has him today. Such a great distance of grace in such a short time! If you get the

chance to meet Edmar, like me (and everyone else), you will love him immediately.

What else can you call this except a miracle?

We will hear The Story from the Storyteller and Story-maker Himself.

Then there's Caleb. Caleb, 22, was scrolling through YouTube videos and found a series of my prophecy sermons. He watched and watched and watched. He couldn't get enough. He's a wonderful, intelligent, and committed young man who insists on sitting in the front row for every class. He's overwhelmed with the love of Jesus and all the new truth he's found.

What else can you call this except a miracle?

Then there's Arlana, 20, who has experienced enough pain at this young age for several lifetimes. Her tenderness, simplicity, care, and compassion are unmissable. She bears scars, internal and external, that Jesus has turned into evidences of His saving and matchless grace. She is a new believer and an on-fire one at that! She is a living and loving testament to the goodness of God.

And these are just five of the more than 30 "grapes" from this class. No story is more or less amazing than the other. They are all signal fires of grace. From young to old, male and female, married and single, black to white to brown, each one is a living miracle.

Like always, this class is also decidedly international! Brazil, Croatia, Pakistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, states from across the United States, and Canada are all represented! They're all here to learn how to better know and communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ in their local situation and context. They're here to learn what we at ARISE call The Story, with its seven chapters—Pre-Creation, Creation, Fall, Covenant, Messiah, Church, Re-Creation.

To carry the analogy to the next level, not one of these students is a "raisin." That is, they are not shriveled and dried up shells of what they could be. No, they are grapes! Miraculous, sweet, wonderful, and unique fruit *from and for*

Jesus Christ! (Note: I like raisins too, on my cereal, but you get the point.)

"The days are coming," says the Lord, "when the man who plows will catch up with the man who gathers. The man who crushes the grapes will catch up with the man who plants the seed. The mountains will drip sweet juice, and all the hills will flow with it. And I will return My people Israel to their riches. They will build again the cities that have been destroyed, and live in them. They will plant grape-fields and drink their juice. And they will make gardens and eat their fruit" (Amos 9:13-14).

Someday soon, all of the miracles of God's amazing and illimitable grace will be together in one enormous ARISE class which will be taught by Jesus Himself. We will hear The Story from the Storyteller and Story-maker Himself.

What else will we call that except a miracle? 



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SPEAKING SCHEDULE

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<http://pvclife.com>
Ty Gibson

DECEMBER 2

Fall Creek Adventist Church
Fall Creek, OR
<http://fallcreekor.adventistchurch.org>
James Rafferty

NOVEMBER 4

Fall Creek Adventist Church
Fall Creek, OR
<http://fallcreekor.adventistchurch.org>
James Rafferty

DECEMBER 16

Fall Creek Adventist Church
Fall Creek, OR
<http://fallcreekor.adventistchurch.org>
James Rafferty

see more events at lightbearers.org

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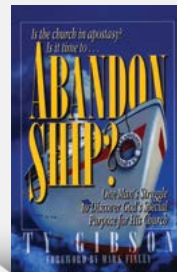
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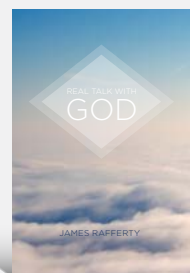
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