

# T estify Revival

## IN YAKIMA, WASHINGTON

By Mike and Sharon Lyon



Mike and Sharon Lyon founded Open Bible Christian Center in Yakima, Washington, in 2001. Mike has a B.A. in pastoral ministry from West Coast Christian College, and an M.A. in pastoral ministry from the Church of God Theological Seminary. Sharon has a B.S. in pastoral ministry, and an M.A. in practical theology from Regent University. The Lyons have been married nearly 33 years and been in ministry for almost 30 years. They have three sons and three grandchildren.

In August 2005 our church took a missions trip to India. God had prepared a harvest. Over 300 people accepted the Lord. When we returned home the devil launched a counter attack and caused strife and division in our church. Finances dropped. Satan attacked Sharon's body as well. She was hospitalized three times in six months. By June 2007 the church was at its lowest numbers since its 2001 launch.

Earlier we had asked Dr. Sunny Bhaskaran, a medical doctor who attends our church, to begin a home group. People came from everywhere to attend, while our church numbers continued to decrease. We were hurt, disappointed, disillusioned, and felt unwanted. Mike hung onto the word the Lord had given him when He called us to Yakima, but was frustrated, wondering if the Lord wanted to bring someone in with different gifts to take the church to the next level. One Thursday morning in August 2007, Sharon went "toe to toe" with God.

"Quite frankly," she recalls, "if something didn't change, starting with me, I was going to get another job. I prayed, 'You are a covenant keeping God, and I'm calling on my covenant with You today.'"

Something happened at that point. Sharon spent the entire day with the Lord and learned something valuable about "crying out" to Him. Peace flooded her heart. She knew everything would be okay, no matter what.

The following evening Sharon arrived early for the Friday night service, which met in the back of the church. Discouraged, she went to the platform to play the keyboard and sing. When people arrived at 6:30 Sharon was still there, worshipping. As Dr. Sunny ministered to people in the back of the church, Mike sat quietly, seeking the Lord. Suddenly Dr. Sunny looked at Sharon and said, "Sing that song!"

"WHAT song?" Sharon thought, as she wasn't playing anything in particular. In faith, she opened her mouth and sang, then watched in amazement as

people fell to their knees and wept.

The next two nights the Lord awoke Sharon in the night with a new song. As she sang Sunday morning in church people rushed forward, saying they had just been healed. The chains of oppression were broken as the Spirit of God moved powerfully. Reports also came in from the Friday night service. When Dr. Sunny led a team of individuals to minister at the Indian reservation, a blind woman came forward and instantly received her sight.

Church finances were so tight in 2007 we did not always know if we would make payroll. Along with the church council, we decided to match the five percent we gave to Open Bible and sow it into ministries not directly connected to our church, in addition to the amount we gave to missions and benevolence. We never lacked after that point, and sowed \$53,444 in 2008.



The water was so cold in January we had to break the ice off before the baptism.

In 2007, 17 people received Christ. By February 2008 we had already passed that number and finished the year with 49 recorded adults' and 40 children's commitments. We were

baptizing people in the river in January - at their request! Testimonies like the following came in:

*I was desperately clinging to a troubled marriage. I grew up in a Christian home, married at age 19, and spent the next 21 years "hiding" from God. As I neared implosion Dr. Sunny Bhaskaran, my primary care physician, invited me to his home group. I realized I couldn't live without a relationship with God any longer.*

*When my husband and I separated, I went to Pastors Mike and Sharon for counsel. I felt more loved than I had for the past 23 years. I learned how to give my anger, bitterness, rejection, fear, and stress to God. While things still aren't easy, God has blessed me with salvation, peace, a strong church, close Christian friends, the opportunity to serve Him, and mentors that teach me to keep pressing in. All three of my children came to the Lord in 2008.*

- Kelli Wheeler-Forthun

*I was diagnosed with macular degeneration and cataracts before Dr. Sunny prayed for me. I now have 20/20 vision in both eyes.* - Velma Chronister

*I had constant, sharp pain in my right shoulder blade area. During a service a word of knowledge was given that God wanted to heal someone with shoulder pain. I took that to mean me but the pain worsened through the service and after lunch. I kept claiming the Word and resisting doubts. About 3:00 that afternoon the pain completely vanished. It has never returned.* - Wendall Aston



*I had been battling lymphoma since 2003. The cancer was growing and the devil was winning the fight for my life. I received an invitation to the "Friday Night Live Healing Service" in August '08 and gave my life to God. By December my cancer was receding. I am now lymphoma free!*

- Fred C. Fusselman

*I suffered from severe degenerative arthritis for 30 years. In August 2007 Pastor Mike prayed for me before a service. During worship a man came to me, said, "Receive your inheritance," and hugged me, pulling me sideways. I was amazed to feel no pain as this normally would have caused immediate back pain. By the end of the service the pain was completely gone!* - Jerry Kneff

*Four years ago I was diagnosed with a pinched sciatic nerve. In March of 2008 Pastor Mike laid his hands on me and prayed for me. At once I felt washed in warmth, like someone wrapped me in a heavy blanket, starting at my head and traveling to my feet. Instantly the pain in my leg was gone and the pain in my back faded away.*

- Rory Terrill

*A viral infection was attacking my organs, particularly my liver. When Dr. Sunny prayed I felt a weird feeling go through my body. I went to the doctor the next day and my liver was back to normal.* - Rosemary Dawson

*In January 2008, an MRI scan of my son, Michael, revealed a huge softball-sized tumor engulfing his prostate region. I immediately prayed and asked my church to pray. Michael was tested for cancer and three different labs found none - a miracle in itself. However, the size and location of the tumor would most likely result in total removal of the*



*prostate. The whole church prayed over Mike. The tumor moved to one side of the prostate, allowing removal of only the right side of the prostate. The surgery was a success. After two months, Mike is a picture of health and will marry in the spring.*

- Helen Downs (mother)

*A nasty fall at work resulted in burning, searing pain in my lower back and left leg for three weeks. Pastor Mike and Dr. Sunny prayed for me and I felt warmth, like oil, pouring over my lower back and legs. I had instant relief and could bend, kneel, stand on both feet, and sit!* - Karen Schmidt

*In a downward spiral, I begged God to take my life. He did, but not where I expected Him to. A woman invited me to church, saying, "Fridays are pretty crazy and we have a great Sunday worship." I attended in early March and was saved that day! Two weeks later, March 16, 2008, I was baptized. The Lord has taken away pain in my foot from a car accident and restored hearing in my son's ear. Most of all, the Lord has released me from the bondage drugs had on my life.* - Dawn Amazzalorso



*I was wheelchair bound for seven years. In August of 2008 I was praying for others to be healed when I heard a voice say, "Stand up." I stood up. The voice said, "Walk." I couldn't walk because I was so amazed I was still standing! The voice said, "I said, 'walk.'" So I started walking, and walking, and walking. I am now wheelchair free!* - Monika Stockwell (with husband, Tim)

"God has brought many great leaders to our church," said Mike. "One key to the revival has been to allow their gifts to shine. As long as I control everything, the move of God is limited to one man. When I die to my pride and ego and release others, the move of God is launched forward and multiplied."

