



Dear Supporters,

I want to start this year's letter off by quoting from last year's letter. Not because I want to be redundant but because it's such a wonderful thought and way for us to walk into this new year. Last year I said, "The greatest testimony this world will ever see is a true believer continuing to walk when all the odds are against them. A believer holding to what they know is true when everyone else says they have to be wrong." It's obvious from the wording of those sentences that I said those words in a singular, very personal tense. I said it talking about each of us as individuals. As I write this letter to wrap up 2025 I have this thought far more as it pertains to Living Springs as a ministry and organization. It really struck me as we were ending 2025 how alone it feels in spite of how many very large ministries exist around us. It feels a little like standing in a room that was once full and you notice people leaving now and then, but at some point you look up and realize you're the only one left. To some that might sound arrogant but I assure you it's not meant in that way. It's more akin to the prophet Elijah who at one point said to God, "...I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." I Kings 19:10 It's a lamentation of the fact the feeling exists, and while not totally factual it's far more true than any true believer would like it to be!

The fact it's not one hundred percent true is seen in God telling Elijah that there were still seven thousand in Israel who had not bent a knee to the false religious system everyone seemed to be submitting to. (I Kin. 19:9-18) I realize it feels lonely some days just due to the more old fashioned standards we hold, but it's also just so true as an organization and worse with each passing year. It's not that there aren't other ministries who do similar things to what we do, but the gap between how they go about it and what they teach has gotten so wide they feel like something totally different. Over the years I've watched so many ministries get caught up in raising funds and growing their ministries that they've forgotten to teach anything other than what the masses want. I've watched so many older ministers pass on leaving the younger generation to fight the fight the next generation just isn't willing to fight. This is no different than what God was talking about when He referenced the idea of bending a knee to Baal as he talked to Elijah. So many think it's about joining an obvious false religion or beginning to literally worship idols, but what it's really about is simply forgetting the truth and beginning to teach the lie so many want to hear. (II Tim. 4:1-8) The people are heaping to themselves teachers willing to leave God's truth out of the picture, and teachers want to teach it because these people reward them with their support. Having support provides the validation most people in ministry seek, but that's because they seek validation from men instead of God! (Acts 5:29)

Ministers/ministries are also drawn to do it because man's support means you don't have to worry about how you're going to afford that next big expense your ministry has to cover. God has literally left the equation for most ministries because they are so accepted by the world at large it doesn't feel like they need to have trust in God to keep going and they don't have to worry about whether God really approves of what they're teaching/doing. Of course, these are the last days Jesus told us were coming but it's really heartbreaking to live in a time like Noah where it's so obviously around us every day. (II Tim. 3:1-5) It's not really a surprise because I remember my earlier years of being in the ministry and being told by different people what I should and shouldn't do to be "successful" in ministry, and to this day I still marvel at how much of that advice had to do with being successful in the same way one might go about being successful in something such as a secular business. Almost never was I given advice that talked about how much you have to hold on to The Lord, grow your personal faith and in turn grow your personal understanding. Thus, it almost never was about holding on to that faith and understanding; holding the ground you've gained in faith while still fighting to gain more. Now, I've gotten to that age where almost all the ministers still running ministries are either around my same age or quite a bit younger than me and I think about how much that advice I was given is how most all of them have gone about what they do. They were taught things like, growth in faith and growth numerically are equally important and from there it's not a far leap to numerical growth is what you're looking for. This is especially true because it appears without it you'll have no ability to maintain your ministry!

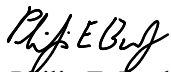
This is how faith gets lost in the lives of so many who whether they realize it or not have bent the

knee to a religious system that has a form of godliness but denies the power thereof. That's what Living Springs has been up against for many years now. The pressure to bend the knee and get the support that would give us the larger office space it feels daily that we so desperately need. To be able to put in orders for supplies without having to worry about where the money will come from for the next supplies we'll have to have and the postage to get the materials those supplies are bought to produce into the hands of those who desire them. The feeling that we are in this world but not of it, not walking like it, looking like it, and going about our business like it, is truly palpable. It's hard and yes, at times frustrating on so many levels it feels overwhelming! However, what always catches my attention in the end of the day is the still small voice that just keeps saying, you've made it this far without all the support bending the knee can bring and nothing has changed when it comes to the power God holds! Is that voice my own? Satan would love the fear to take over and for me to say yes to that, but only God could bring us this far and He didn't bring us this far to leave us! (Heb. 13:5-6)

This is critical because something I've found myself worrying about this past year is that Living Springs now does more with less than we ever have before. Some of the hands that used to do the work can no longer do that work. Some of the hands can't do it as fast as they use to or as much in a day as they use to. However, when we don't lose God from the equation we think about those truths very differently. Why? Because it begs the question, how is what we do even still possible? How do we do more than we've ever done before with less than we've ever had before? With men such things just aren't possible but with God all things are possible! (Matt. 19:23-26) That is really the only explanation, and when we keep our minds in that right framework we find the strength to just keep doing what we can do. Are the orders all caught up? No, not at all but materials keep going out. Is *Shaqah* and the calendars all out on time? No, but a 2026 calendar does exist and six issues of *Shaqah* did go out for 2025. This might not have been all we wanted to do in the timing we wanted it to happen but it has been and is getting done, and it will continue to get done as long as God gives the strength. I don't have answers (as I so often do not have) for how we will survive as a ministry through 2026, but if it's God's will, it'll happen. People will continue to reach out to us for Bible teaching materials because no big ministry that's more "successful" is willing to give them anything if they can only donate little to nothing at all. In return, we will continue to send materials that teach and encourage each person who does reach out not to bend a knee to the system that denies the power of God in our lives!

No matter how many or how few other individuals or ministries serve God in the way we strive to serve God in running Living Springs, we begin 2026 still holding our ground. The work is great and the laborers few. (Luke 10:2) That makes everything those truly serving God in this world do that much more important and a grindstone to keep one's nose to. God told us the last days would come and when He returns to this earth is entirely in His hands! (Matt. 24:36) However, our job remains as it has been since the day Living Springs put out that first issue of *Shaqah*. So I say, it is a privilege and an honor to serve our Great God, and it is humbling to look down the pages of names we send our materials to on a regular basis knowing you must be receiving a blessing in getting them and for so many of you, it's been such a very long time now. That's the true definition of success! Not the numbers but teaching what God tells you to teach without compromise, and what a blessing it is to still have eyes that want to see and ears that want to hear! 2026 may be in so many ways just another year but with God at the center of everything we do, it will be more time, more opportunity, to grow our faith and with it our personal understanding of God's Word, His ways, and His will for each and every one of our lives. Whether new to Living Springs or with us for a long time, we say thank you to all of you who make what we do a true success in the eyes of The Lord!

Sincerely,



Philip E. Busby
Executive Director
Living Springs
2025