

BIOGRAPHY

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. 2 Cor 4:7-18, NIV

Indeed, it is very true that the plans God has for our lives are all mapped out before we were even formed in the womb. For Divine, his favourite scripture verse, 2 Corinthians 4:7, and the subsequent verses (quoted above) spell out all his life plan very clearly.

Early Life and Education

Reverend Divine Philip Yao Kumah was born on 29th May 1959, at Vakpo, in the Volta Region, to Mr. Michael Yao Emenyo Kuma (of blessed memory) of Wusuta-Anyigbe and Madam Renate Adzoa Denutsui of Awate-Todzi. He was the first child of his parents.

At five, Divine began his formal education in Wusuta, at the Roman Catholic Kindergarten and the Evangelical Presbyterian Primary School, where he went through Classes One to Three. He continued Classes Four and Five at Akatsi, where his father, a social worker, had been transferred. Again, as a result of another transfer of his father, young Divine was taken to Juapong Methodist Primary School, where he completed Primary Six. Divine was later brought back to Wusuta to continue with Forms One and Two at the E.P. Middle School.

Normally, one would expect that such rather frequent changes of schools of a child would impact negatively on his academic performance, but this never happened in the case of Divine. He was so exceptionally brilliant and gifted that throughout his Primary and Middle School education, he always topped his class in examinations.

Due to his honesty and academic brilliance, he held the positions of Office Boy and Class Captain for his two years in Middle School. It was said that, as Class Captain, he hardly wrote down names of 'talkatives' in his class, and would rather prefer to be caned by the teachers to 'atone for the sins' of his naughty colleagues.

While in Middle Form Two, Divine wrote and passed the Common Entrance Examination and gained admission to Peki Secondary School, where he successfully completed Form Five in 1977. After a year's employment with Lever Brothers, Ghana Ltd., Tema, Divine proceeded to Navrongo Secondary School for his sixth-form education.

Divine entered the Institute of Professional Studies (IPS) in 1980/81 to study Accountancy and Management Studies. However, the Lord cut his study short and called him into full-time ministry.

Thereafter, Divine had the opportunity to attend short courses in various disciplines, including a Post-Graduate course in Publishing Management in Cook Publishing Institute in Colorado Springs, USA, in 2006.

Ministry Life

With much trepidation, Divine humbly sought permission from his father, the late Mr. Michael Kuma, to enter into full-time ministry. He was quite worried about his father's response, being aware of the financial struggles he had gone through to see him thus far in his education.

His father lovingly looked at him and responded: "Son, I have brought you this far. If God needs you, go and serve Him. Don't be afraid. Even in pepper, worms do survive." This was all the blessing and encouragement Divine needed to go to any lengths to serve the Lord, and faithfully too.

The Ghana Evangelical Society (GES) played a very important role in Divine's ministry. That was where he fellowshiped and felt called to serve. Thus, in 1981-82, Divine served with GES as Administrative Manager. Bro. Enoch Agbozo, the founder, gladly trained Divine in prayer, much fasting, preaching, administration and other leadership skills, leaving no stone unturned. Bro. Agbozo's fearlessness definitely rubbed off on Divine as evidenced in the dangerous assignments the Lord would give him later.

When the nest became too comfortable, the Lord ruffled it, and got Divine to move on to Calvary Baptist Church, Adabraka, where He had His son, Rev. Stephenson Alfred Williams, ready to polish him up. Here, Divine had the fine opportunity to serve as Pastoral Assistant, 1982-84. Along with Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe, Dr. Oppong, Rev. Tim Brew and others, the entire Pastoral and auxiliary staff was one big family, under the loving care of Justice Mrs. Selassie Sawyerr-Williams. Divine was exposed to another level of ministry altogether, for which we will forever be grateful to God.

God had another mentor waiting in the person of Rev. Dr. Seth Anyomi. Thus, Divine moved on to serve with the Africa Christian Mission (ACM) as Director of Evangelism, 1984-85. Under Uncle Seth's tutelage, the Lord called Divine to be His watchman.

Divine moved back to Calvary Baptist Church for another 'shine' in 1985, before he finally launched The Watchman magazine in April 1986, at the Avenida Hotel. For the first two years of the publication, Divine and his family went to bed without food, each time the magazine came out. They spent all the money they had in addition to monies they had borrowed.

God put together a group of faithful brethren to fulfil the calling of The Watchman, among them, Messrs. Ormsby Asiedu, Patrick Arku-Nelson, John Anim-Koranteng, Joe Adu-Gyamfi and Rev. Francis Philips (of blessed memory). Ralph Bluie (of blessed memory) also joined the team later on. The Watchman Board, made up of Dr. K.A. Opuni, Captain Joe Kyeremeh (of blessed memory), Messrs. Noah Acolatse, Ben Quarcoopome, Rev. Ebo Paitoo and others, was effective and very active. Mr. W.A.N. Adumuah-Bossman served as our advisor.

It was a lot of fun, working so hard with no salary and not knowing where the next meal was coming from. As if hunger and long walks in the hot sun were not enough, Divine and his team were under constant threats from aggrieved parties that God prompted Divine to write about or expose – from churches, to cults, pseudo-Christian groups, false prophets and politicians. Divine

received hate mails from within and outside the country, death threats, magazines soaked in incense that were meant to make him blind, etc.

In addition to spiritual attacks which the team had to fight off with much prayer and fasting, there were libel cases which saw them in courts. With hardly any money in their pockets, one libel case after another were defeated by a noble father, Mr. W.A.N. Adumuah-Bossman, who would also put money in their pockets to pick transport home from the court. Oh God's providence! How awesome!

'News from the Christian World' in The Watchman have been used by the Lord to set Christians free from jails in other countries. The Prayer Calendar also served as a prayer guide in many households across the country. But most important, many souls have been set free from enslaving, demonic cults and from sin. Only eternity will tell the effect of the paper called The Watchman.

To say Divine made many enemies is an understatement. However, the Lord also used the paper to lift him to such heights, deemed impossible for a man with no college degree. So, Divine sat with princes among nations and delivered papers on various platforms. One of the reasons we used to have a big laugh in our home was because we felt many people knew very, very little about Divine. Hence, we would ask, "Ah, did that Big Man know whom he was dealing with at all?"

Divine was blessed with such a large mind and heart. He could discuss any problem and, in the process, come out on top of the issues at stake, offering solutions to serious issues with such ease. Divine could fix anything, from broken taps at home, to spiritual and political issues, amidst much humour. That made way for him to sit among princes, serving on many local and international boards.

1989-1990 saw Divine as the Acting Pastor, Legon Baptist Church, University of Ghana, when Rev. Samuel Otu Pimpong went on further studies.

Divine was ordained in 1990 by Rev. Dwight Pate of the Church Point Ministry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA.

Sonlife Press

This grew out of The Watchman newspaper which was founded in 1986. SonLife Press was officially registered in 1994 in a quest to run a printing business to provide Christian organisations, churches and educational institutions with quality printed materials at an affordable price. It is also a Christian Resource Centre, and Divine served as the Chief Executive Officer.

Today, SonLife ...

- Produces millions of gospel tracts and other literature locally for free distribution or for a small donation.
- Serves as Distributors for some local and foreign Christian organisations like One Hope, Cook Publishing, etc.
- Offers Counselling Services.
- Organises Christian Retreats and Discipleship Training Sessions, especially for Young People.
- Helps co-ordinate the activities of several International Christian organisations.

Many Christian organisations continue to remain our clients, in addition to other institutions. Many individuals are also led by the Lord to us to have their books published.

We shall forever be grateful to Tear Fund that helped us with publishing The Watchman and also establishing SonLife Printing Press. Other individuals, including Board Members and staff have laboured in prayer to sustain these ministries. God richly bless you all.

Family Life

The Lord brought together Divine and Paulina in December 1980 through the Ghana Evangelical Society. In 1983, their marriage was celebrated at the Calvary Baptist Church, Adabraka, by the Rev. Stephenson Alfred Williams.

The Lord blessed the marriage with six biological children (Dr. Divine, Mrs. Grace Madjie, Sue, Mrs. Paulina Nyamekye, Angela and Samuel), four grandchildren (Isabella Kumah, Kimathi Madjie, Olivia Kumah and Dede Boamah Madjie) and three in-laws (Erika Kumah, Simon Madjie and Kofi Nyamekye). We have many other children God blessed us with, among them, the Hosis, Joseph and Frederick Osei, Janet Loli, Nii Nortey Dowuona, Kobby Kyeremeh, Jennifer Brown, Mary, Jeanette, Kafui Kumah, Bishop Kumah and Pia Amoringe. Though Divine would not be counted among the rich in the land, his house was run like a hotel and served as a bread basket for his family, friends, foes, strangers and the entire community. A Dutch consultant had lunch in our home one afternoon. We had 25 people at the table. Perplexed, he asked: "Are you having a party?" "No, this is normal lunch," came the reply.

Constantly, we had the privilege of hosting missionaries and conference participants in our home. To God be all the glory!

Devotional Life

Though Divine was baptised into the E.P. Church family, he ended up worshipping with the Calvary Baptist Church, Adenta, with his family. However, Divine ministered in almost all the Christian Churches across the country.

Divine has a personal relationship and fellowship with Jesus. Each morning saw him quietly communicating with God in personal devotion. Thereafter, he and his wife had another Quiet Time and wrote notes. That was their Bible School. They would then have another round of devotion with the children and the final one with the staff. Family devotion attracted many friends of the children several evenings. This also served as a forum for various discussions and also for sharing jokes. Many evening devotions ending with the family reeling in laughter. We all looked forward to hearing from God together and having our great Teacher explain Scripture in plain language and with much humour. We had the chance to pray about every issue, from mosquitoes to finances.

Boards Divine Served on include:

- Challenge Magazine Board;
- Window 4/14;
- Destiny University;
- International Leadership University (ILU);
- Bulk Oil Supply & Transport (BOST);
- Third World Missions Association - TWMA (Co-ordinating Body for Evangelical Missions Agencies in countries outside Western Europe and North America (i.e., Latin America, Asia, Africa & The Middle East);
- World Link University, Portland, Oregon, USA;
- Anglican Retreat Centre, Ashale Botwe;

- Samaritan Strategy, Ghana;
- Bible League, Ghana;
- Promise Keepers, Ghana.

Some Major Professional Conferences he attended include:

- 2003 Facilitator/Participant, Religious Committee on final ethical considerations on the South African Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report, Organised by Promise Keepers & the South African Council of Churches.
- 1988 Participant - Litt World, Wheaton College, Illinois, USA.
- 1987 Speaker, Indaba on Literature in Africa. Potchesfroom University for Christian Higher Education, South Africa. Delivered a paper on, "The State of Christian Literature in Ghana."
- 1986 Participant, International Christian Media Conference, Flevohof, The Netherlands.
- 1986 Participant, International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Publications

- The YAFCFA Story 1989 (With Ormsby Asiedu)
- Is Ghana Under a Curse? 2000, Sonlife Books
- The Mormon Deception, 2000, Sonlife Books
- Jehovah Witnesses, 2000, Sonlife Books
- Saul: A Lesson in Fatherhood, 2017, Sonlife Books
- The Catholic Puzzle, 2017, Sonlife Books
- Communicating the Gospel Effectively, 2017, Sonlife Books
- Hundreds of Articles in The Watchman and in other periodicals, local and international.

Hobbies

Divine's hobbies included Serving, Cooking, Reading, Assembling of Computers, Listening to Classical/Opera Music and being outdoors.

Divine's Legacy

Divine's life's purpose was very clearly defined and he spared no time nor resources in fulfilling it with joy, humility, boldness and speed: He lived to contend for the faith of Christ. Divine knew Christ intimately, and he made Him known. He was restless to make all come to the saving knowledge of Christ, hence his fierce battle with the pseudo-Christian cults that have held many in their talons.

Divine set a very high standard of moral discipline, humility and integrity. He was so friendly, always joyful and full of humour. These traits, undoubtedly, sustained him and his family through the difficult life they have been through.

We are grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to care for Divine during his short period of ailment.

Yao, the numerous orphans and widows, you took care of every month, are very grateful. The many missionaries on your prayer and tithing lists are mourning. The many strangers, who visited your home, are asking of you. Your aged Mother, Dada Renate, and your siblings, nieces and nephews are crying. Men, women and children are mourning you, Great Father.

Yao, Fare Well! God's General, Great Warrior, our friend, father, husband, mentor, leader, brother, son, uncle, cousin ..., Yao, you have fought a good fight. Ayekoo! Sleep well!
We will see you in the morning!

How Can You Comfort the Family?

Divine's life burden was that all would come to the saving knowledge of Christ and be rapture-ready. Thus,

- For the UNSAVED: If you have not yet met Jesus, please do so. He is waiting for you.
- Call upon Him now. Christ alone is the Saviour of the world. There is none other.
- For the SAVED: Please, be holy, because God is holy. Work for the Lord now as if there is no tomorrow. He is coming soon. We do not have much time left.
- For GHANA: Let us pray for Ghana "till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch" (Isa 62:1, NIV).