

LIVING WATERS NEWSLETTER

HARRY BOWERS, EDITOR

7844 GRIMSBY CIRCLE, HARRISBURG, N.C. 28075

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PRAYER WORKS...AN EXAMPLE

Speaking as one that began preaching in a little one room school house in the mountains of East Tennessee sixty-five years ago sometimes we wonder if anyone has actually taken seriously what they have heard and have any of these sermons produced any real results? After printing a "Letters to the Editor" column in a recent issue of *Living Waters Newsletter* we received a letter that laid to rest any doubt about the above question. We think this letter from our dear friends, Col. Lane Rogers (Ret) and his wife Carla should be shared with our readers.

Hi Harry,

Carla and I just read some of the "Letters to Editor." How little the dissenters know or understand. Thanks to your faithful and courageous scriptural teaching...after being neurologically and clinically dead for 4 days, with five physician sub-specialist demanding daily that we "unplug" Lindsey (after her sky diving accident on 4 June 2008) and their demanding daily that we "let go...she is gone," the faith that comes from the truths of your teaching was sufficient to heal her, and allow her to return as a productive member of society and a living and proclaiming example of those truths. When we received the phone call from the trauma center treating Lindsey's injuries, their second comment was "I am sorry but it is not too early to make funeral arrangements." Thanks to your teachings (that contain more truths of scripture than all of the other preaching from all other preachers I have ever heard), when Carla and I bowed and asked the Father, "How do we approach you on this?" His immediate answer was "Approach Me the way Jesus did in the Garden." Your teaching was the only teaching we have ever received that allowed us to understand His response and to do exactly as He directed. Two days after the Lord returned Lindsey to life (stopping a number of physicians from making their daily demand for us to "unplug" her), all the physician-sub-specialists (Neurology, Neuro Surgeon, Orthopedic etc.) gathered in one room to inform Carla and me of their most definitive prognosis from their then 6-day combined and coordinated information resulting in a unanimous medical opinion that concluded it would be a minimum of 2-3 years before Lindsey could do as little as feed herself. They showed us her brain scan (a circular picture measuring approximately five inches in diameter). The Neurologist said, "Anywhere you see a black area, that part of her brain is dead." There were 3 small white spots, each less than 3/8" in diameter.

Your teachings produced the faith sufficient for a series of subsequent miracles: Lindsey satisfied all medical criteria necessary for her to be discharged from the trauma ICU in 4 days (instead of 4-6 month minimum unanimously asserted by the sub-specialists), she was discharged from the Step-Down Unit in 2 days then discharged from the Inpatient Med-Surg Unit in another 2 days (instead of the 4-6 month minimum unanimously asserted by the sub-specialists) resulting in her discharge from the trauma medical center in a total of 12 days (instead of the minimum 12-18 months unanimously asserted by the sub-

specialists). On the day Lindsey was discharged from the trauma center, she was admitted to one of the nation's "top Five" Inpatient Neuro Rehab Facilities ("Texas Rehab" in Austin Tx.) for 6 weeks (instead of 6 month minimum unanimously asserted by the sub-specialists). On the day she was discharged from Texas Neuro Rehab, she was accepted into Outpatient Neuro rehab and required only three weeks to satisfy all of their medical criteria to "return to society" (instead of the unanimously asserted 4-6 months by the sub-specialists). Your teachings were sufficient to return our daughter to society on August 28, 2008 after a total of 10 weeks, including her passing a State Drivers' Test and other objective criteria (instead of the unanimously asserted 2-3 years before she could feed or clothe herself).

Two years before the series of miracles described above, your teachings saved the lives of 14 American combatants critically injured in Afghanistan who were subsequently transported to their "medical bus-stop" which was their last medical unit in-theatre before their 6-hour flight out of the combat-zone to Germany. All the patients arrived separately to the "medical bus-stop" over a 4-month period. The physicians and critical care nurses of each of these critically injured patients unanimously agreed none of these patients would live the time it took us to transport them the 1.5 miles to the flight line, let alone the 6-hour flight to Germany. A small number of believers used your teachings to pray for each of these men. They relied on your teachings on Jesus where he "spoke" to the tree and it withered, where he said if you have the faith of a mustard seed speak to the mountain and it will be cast into the sea.

When assisting these patients, these believers usually had just minutes between the time these men arrived at the "bus-stop" and the time they were transported on the flight line for their departure to Germany. Each time, these believers asked the physicians "what's the number one thing killing this guy?" Whatever the doctor stated, the believer spoke to that exact injury and "commanded the injury in the name of Jesus to do whatever the doctor described." Thanks to your teachings, the believers did not park any of these problems at Jesus' door step. Jesus gave us the authority and method to use in his name. There was 100% survival rate for all injured during that tour of duty for these believers, including all 14 of those most critically injured. Without the truths in scripture that you and a minority of other leaders courageously share, many others would not be alive either physically or spiritually.

The dissenting believers writing these Letters to the Editor are enjoying a minimal portion of the spiritual lives that they could be living. How frustrating when we encounter believers whose eyes are partially and usually minimally opened. Thank you for teaching the truths in scripture that save lives, heal the sick, and encourage us to enter the City now, eat from the Tree of Life now, and live before the throne in the very presence of God!

Col. Rogers was Commander 20th. Fighter Wing, Medical Group, Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina before his retirement. He and his wife Carla now live in Sumpter. S. C.

SUFFERING, CATASTROPHES AND GOD

“God is great and God is good...” so says the opening words of what is perhaps the first line (and sometimes the only) prayer we learn for the giving of thanks for our food. In the times of crisis, hardships and suffering many people, even Christians, are prone to accept the first statement that God is great, but are quick to question the fact that God is good. Ravi Zacharias, who has challenged liberal attitudes and made a case for Christianity at Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and other prominent universities around the world, in his book *Deliver Us From Evil* says that “on virtually every campus where I debated the issue of God’s existence, some individual challenged God’s goodness by pointing out all the evil in the world... ‘A plane crashes, thirty people die while twenty live...what sort of God is that?’...The implication was of course, that since God is so arbitrary in His actions He must be evil.” When this was tossed to him by a female student his answer was: “My question to you madam is this: when you arrogate the right to yourself to choose who may live in your womb and who may die, you call it your moral right...but when God exercise the same right, you call Him evil. Can you explain that contradiction to me?”

It is difficult to understand the contradictions with which people live and with no hesitation reproach God for things they cannot accept. How can people live a life of rebellion, sin and disobedience, then have the audacity to be angry at God or question His actions? If He were not a good God and a God of grace they would have been judged and destroyed before they had the chance to complain against Him. When trouble comes into our lives or we have to deal with situations we cannot explain or when we see so much suffering and adversity in our lives we ask “How can God let this happen?” or “Why does this have to happen in my life?” In these instances, to paraphrase the words of the popular German theologian, Helmut Theilicke in his book *Between God and Satan* we become “gods of God...We expect God to act as we think God should act. We think we know how God should act and what He should do. He *must* act in a ways that makes sense and is best for me. He *must* enrich my life only with happiness, He *must* preserve our nation, He *must* turn stones into bread and He *must* be able to leap from the pinnacle of the Temple. He *must* deliver us from any suffering, pain or hardship.” If He doesn’t then He must not be just. Further: “We believe in a God of glory and splendor, and lo, God comes in one disposed and spat upon and nailed to the tree...we believe in the highest wisdom and lo, God comes in foolishness (I Cor. 1:18-21)...we believe in miracles and lo, God is silent and Christ does not descend from the cross...we believe in greatness and power and lo, God comes in weakness and an occasion of stumbling. Troubles are not pleasing to us, but they are aspects of God’s schooling for us. Some of us are sent to God’s graduate school again and again in terms of His sovereign purposes, not because we like it, but because He ordains it.”

The Apostle Paul touches on two aspects of the sufferings of the Christian in Romans 8:18-25. Suffering in the body caused by disease, persecution and bodily weakness: “We ourselves having, the first fruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves waiting eagerly for the redemption of our body (ver.23). Suffering caused by the curse upon the creation: “The creation itself was subjected to futility...the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now” (ver. 21, 22). He says “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to be revealed to us” (ver. 18).

James D. G. Dunn states in his monumental work: *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* “Suffering is an integral part of salvation. It reinforces awareness of our own weakness and mortality, and thus reinforces our reliance on God. And in it we see the wasting away of our own flesh and the growing conformity to Christ’s death with its promise of fuller participation in Christ’s resurrection beyond.”

On the subject of suffering the late Curtis Dickinson wrote in *The Witness*: “Suffering inevitably comes even to those of faith. We might say that it comes *especially* to those of faith, for these are the ones who can profit by it. To understand suffering, we first must understand the purpose of God. ‘And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose’ (Rom. 8:28). All things! Even suffering? Yes especially suffering. But the key to understanding this bold statement is the word, *purpose*. It is God’s purpose that is to be done. His goal is not to give everyone a paradise on earth, but to prepare us for the eternal paradise to come...Whatever the suffering the Christian must endure, it cannot defeat His purpose to attain this goal”

The emaciation of disease and famine, the horror of floods, earthquakes, mudslides, the land being made desolate, homes being destroyed. lives being lost, bodies rotting in the streets and beaches, destruction, devastation and misery that have never happened before is being brought live to us as we sit comfortable in our dens and living rooms. Catastrophic events are nothing new, but modern communication systems have brought them to us in a way never witnessed in the past. The first question we ask is do these things foretell the future? Many cite Biblical passages such as Matthew 24 and certain chapters in Revelation as proof that these physical catastrophes are a fulfillment of Scripture and are ushering in “the last days.” However, history is replete with the horrors brought upon the world by such events. What we are experiencing today is no different than what has been happening throughout the history of the world. Further “the last days” is a popular phrase used by prophesy preachers to indicate the soon coming “end of the world.” “The last days” “the latter times” and “the day of the Lord” are terms describing the end of the old covenant system and the judgment of God upon the nation that rejected its Messiah. Also “the end of time” is not mentioned in Scripture. (Rev. 10:6 cited as the end of time is correctly translated “delay no longer” that is no more delay until the 7th angel sounds). Are such happenings of God or Satan? Let’s understand that Satan is the god of this age, yet his power is limited and restrained. God is still in charge of His creation.

Our question is: Why do these things happen? The answer is simple, found in Romans 8:19-23: the world is under a curse. “The creation itself was subjected to vanity, not of its own will but because of Him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from the slavery of corruption unto the freedom of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation *groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.*” Someday the creation will be redeemed and the curse lifted. Meanwhile the catastrophes and devastations are simply labor pains before the bringing forth of a new creation. Further this shows man is not in control of the creation. Hebrews 2:5-8 states that the world was subjected to man but we do not yet see this, but we see Jesus (ver. 9) and this implies the world will someday be subjected to man as God intended in the original creation. These events also demonstrate the mighty power of God (Isa. 40:12-17).