

<i>In Search of</i> Truth and Right Tim Henderson, Editor		
Vol. 01 No. 49 07/08/ 2007	<i>"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."</i> Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)	A publication of the Wellsburg church of Christ

"And She Prevailed Upon Us"

The Story of a Certain Woman

By: Jason Moore

Part 3— *"Lydia's Notebook"*

Lydia was diagnosed with breast cancer August 29 and underwent a double mastectomy on September 1. A week after her surgery she was comatose with septicemia. The infection was brought under control and she regained consciousness on September 19. Five days later her fever returned. Tests revealed that she had contracted bacterial meningitis.

This past Tuesday night, September 26, just before Lydia's temperature rose again and she slipped back into a comatose sleep, Lydia called me on my cell phone. Her oncologist had reported that her cancer was worse than expected and that more surgery was needed before she could begin her treatments. We prayed together and wept some too. But during that thirty-five minute conversation, the last I've had with Lydia, we talked mostly about a certain woman whom we'll call "Ruth."

Ruth is Lydia's sister-in-law who during Lydia's entire hospital stay has been caring for her with all the tenderness and affection reminiscent of the biblical Ruth's attendance to Naomi. "How can I teach her?" Lydia asked.

Lydia said that Ruth's husband, whom we'll call "Jonah," had asked her (slightly teasing and slightly serious), "What have you been telling my wife?" Apparently, Ruth had been asking Jonah some questions about baptism. Lydia assured Jonah that she had not been talking to Ruth. Weeks earlier, Ruth had inquired about why Lydia felt the need to be baptized and Lydia had shown her some Bible passages. But that had been the end of the matter and Ruth, at that time, had ex-

TIMES OF SERVICES	
SUNDAY	
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)	



From the editor's desk: This is the second of seven in a series of articles written by Jason Moore. This is the record of the conversion of a young lady and the effect it had on those around her. *TRA*

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112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

pressed her disagreement with Lydia's conclusions.

"I'm concerned about whether they're reachable," Lydia told me. "Jonah has been a youth minister in the Baptist church for twenty years. This could mean his job and they have two children." I replied, "Lydia, they know what your decision to become a Christ has cost you. They know how hard you have studied the matter. Your story is making a difference among folks at Vestavia. It may well be that the Lord is using your sufferings to open the door to the hearts of other people, just like He did with our Savior."

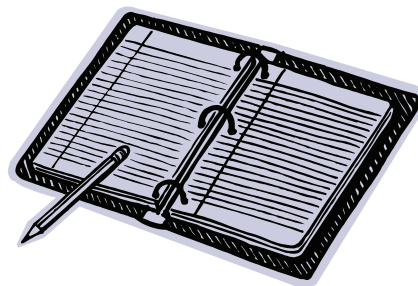
I suggested that I come to Montgomery on Wednesday to visit her and to deliver the prayers that the folks from our congregation had written on her behalf. "If we both pray for wisdom and an open door, maybe the Lord will give us some opportunity to at least begin a dialogue with Ruth." She agreed.

At 6:30 AM Wednesday morning, Ruth called and told me that Lydia was back in a coma. A friend of mine had taken the day off from work and the two of us headed to Montgomery. I didn't tell Ruth we were coming. I just prayed that the Lord would somehow open a door for us to Ruth's heart.

We arrived at the hospital in Montgomery only to find that Ruth had returned to her home in Troy for the day. It seemed that the door was shut. I called Ruth and told her that we had come to the hospital. "We've come this far already. Why don't we come to Troy and bring you the prayers that folks have written for Lydia?" I suggested. "Besides, I'd really like to meet you." After a moment's hesitation, Ruth replied, "I don't think that's a good idea." She added, "Don't take this the wrong way ... but you scare me to death." Now the door was locked.

"Has Lydia told you about my struggles?" she asked. "She told me that Jonah was concerned about you asking some questions about baptism," I answered. I waited ... hoping. Suddenly, the door swung open. For an hour and half, my friend drove us around Montgomery and Ruth talked. What she said was amazing.

Ruth had spent a number of nights at Lydia's home in Montgomery while caring for Lydia in the hospital. She found in Lydia's study along with some other books, a *Strong's Concordance*, Lydia's Bible, and a notebook. The notebook contained all of Lydia's notes on the subject of salvation. Ruth had been reading. "I can't believe, I've never seen this before," she said. "I'm really afraid, because of what this could mean for my family. But right now, I have no argument against it. I'm going to put a yellow cover on Lydia's notebooks and publish it as *Salvation for Dummies!*"



Our conversation ended that day with Ruth's request that I pray for her in her studies. "I'll pray hard," I said. Laughing, she responded quickly, "Now, I didn't say pray *hard*." We arranged to leave the basket of written prayers from the saints at Vestavia with Jason Cicero who preaches for the Perry Hill Road congregation for her to retrieve on the following day. My friend and I headed back to Birmingham thankful that God had done more than we expected, and awestruck that all this time Lydia had been teaching Ruth and didn't even know it.

Thursday was punctuated with lengthy phone conversations with Ruth. Part of the time she reported on Lydia. Part of the time she reported on conclusions she had reached in her studies. The day ended with an intense two-hour conversation. "I'm afraid," she said. "you better call Jason Cicero to come baptize me before I change my mind."

Sixty seconds later, Jason Cicero called Ruth on her cell phone. "Ruth, I live twenty minutes from the church building. My family and I are on the way. Where are you?" Ruth answered, "I'm

sitting in my car in the church parking lot.” There was much rejoicing Thursday night tempered only by the wish that Lydia was awake to share in the celebration.

Ruth’s husband, Jonah, had been away all week in a men’s retreat. But Ruth had kept him informed of her questions and conclusions and called him to tell him of her decision to be baptized. Her conclusions troubled him. “Pray for us,” Ruth asked. “And now, I’m asking you to pray *hard*.” “I’ll pray *real* hard,” I replied.

The last two days have been trying for Ruth and Jonah. At the same time, Lydia has continued to decline. Doctors called the family together Friday night and at 1 AM Saturday morning they took her off the ventilator. At this writing, Lydia is alive, but still unconscious, her fate still uncertain. Late Saturday afternoon, Ruth walked into the study where her husband Jonah was sitting at his desk, visibly troubled. They had had several intense discussions over the last two days about Ruth’s baptism, but now his mood was different. On his desk lay his Bible and a notebook—a notebook that he had picked up at Lydia’s house. Jonah had been reading. He said to Ruth, “I can’t believe that all of this is Lydia’s fault, and I can’t even go in and fuss at her!”

“Now, I *really* want you to pray hard,” Ruth said late Saturday night. “I will,” I promised. And so I prayed for Lydia, Ruth, and Jonah—this whole remarkable family whom the Lord’s hand was upon in

News N Notes

Please remember these in your prayers:

Sick/Surgery:

- Terry Smith, Jr., Terry and Lora Smith’s son as he deals with cancer
- Susan and Scott Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster’s daughter, and their baby.

- Continue to remember—

- Blake Headen, Alberta’s husband
- Amanda Dowdy
- Dorothy Sams, Linda Marshall’s mother
- Vicki Renshaw
- Terry Smith’s brother George
- Faith Kress, Linda Marshall’s niece
- Ed Roberts father
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall’s mother
- Marie Roberts
- Cindy North
- Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll
- Pauline Sellers

Shut-ins:

- Rhea Henthorn
- Ethel Mahan
- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap