

*In
search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"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." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Christ**

"And She Prevailed Upon Us" The Story of a Certain Woman

By: Jason Moore

Part 7— *When I am Weak Then I am—Strong*

The apostle Paul's "*thorn in the flesh*" shows the complexity of suffering in the kingdom (2 Cor. 12:7-10). The identity of Paul's thorn is a mystery. We just know it imposed more than passing pain and anguish so that he "*entreated the Lord three times that it might depart*" (v. 8).

The source of Paul's pain is not a mystery. Paul called it "*a messenger of Satan*" (v. 7). Satan's hand was upon him inflicting pain. At the same time, Paul explains that this thorn was given to him "*to keep me from exalting myself*" (v. 7). Certainly, keeping Paul humble was not Satan's purpose, but God's.

So while Satan was causing Paul pain, God was permitting it, despite the apostle's multiple pleas for deliverance. And the pain that Satan designed for the sole purpose of Paul's destruction, God exploited for three positive purposes—the apostle's protection, his spiritual progress, and the broadening of his influence. Using the devil's thorn God protected Paul from pride, preventing him from exalting himself (v. 7). Utilizing the devil's toolbox God improved Paul's character, teaching him to be "*well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake*" (v. 10). Using the devil's workshop God broadened Paul's influence in the kingdom; as God explained to him, "*power is perfected in weakness*" (v. 9).

Did God ignore the prayers of His apostle? No sir. The Father did for Paul what He often does with His children's petitions. God hears *whenever* His children call. But God does not always do what His children ask; He usually does *more* (Eph. 3:20). If we with the limitations of our wisdom and character and strength "*know how to give good gifts*" to our children, "*how much more shall your Fa-*

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 last article in the series written by Jason Moore. This is the record of the conversion of a young lady and the effect it had on those around her.

TRH

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ther who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him" (Matt. 7:11). God is not in the habit of being stingy with His gifts. Paul's thorn makes the point (excuse the pun) that God can turn Satan's curses into divine blessings.

Folks mistakenly attribute the effectiveness of first-century evangelism to the apostles' miraculous gifts. The power of apostolic preaching was not in miraculous power alone but in human frailty. It was their willingness to suffer for the Lord's sake that made them effective. Where did they learn that strategy? From the Master Teacher. It was not Jesus' miracles alone, but His cross that arrested the attention of sinners. Miracles make people listen, but suffering makes the *right kind* of people listen. When Paul says, "*I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me*" (v. 9), he's not finding strength in supernatural power, but in superlative weakness. "The power of Christ" is the power of the cross. What was true of Jesus, was true of His disciples. It was the fact that they took up their cross to follow Him that opened doors and made them effective messengers. So Paul concludes, "*When I am weak, then I am strong.*"

I have prayed many prayers for my beloved friend, Lydia. Maybe you've heard about her? She has a thorn in the flesh. I believe that it's a messenger of Satan. Beginning the very day of her baptism, the devil has robbed her of every vestige of womanhood—her husband, her ability to bear children, her ability to nurse children, her hair that is the "glory" of woman (1 Cor. 11:15). Since September 1, she's undergone a double mastectomy, brain surgery, and a radical hysterectomy. Every surgery has required multiple emergency surgeries, reopening old incisions or making new ones, to fight infections, to drain excessive fluids, to re-stitch the wound on her head after a fall reopened it, and to repair a collapsed lung.

In a twenty-seven hour period Lydia was under surgical anesthesia for fourteen hours. She's been comatose multiple times, for days at a time, sleeping through her thirty-fourth birthday and Thanksgiving Day. No less than thirty times her heart has stopped and doctors have revived her breaking three ribs in the process of administering CPR. In addition to breast, brain, and cervical cancer, she has suffered from septicemia (a dangerous blood infection), meningitis, and pneumonia. And between surgeries she was treated and released in an Atlanta hospital when the SUV in which she was a passenger broadsided a drunk driver's vehicle and rolled. Last week a biopsy revealed cancer in her lungs. Doctors have ruled out additional surgery and treatments.

Yes sir, Satan has been buffeting my dear sister, Lydia, but God has had His hand in her sufferings too. But not to deliver her. Oh, we've prayed for that. But God has done better. Instead of saving Lydia, God has used Lydia's sufferings to deliver others. On September 28, Lydia's sister-in-law, Ruth was baptized after reading Lydia's study notes. Ruth's husband, Jonah, a youth minister for a Baptist church, was baptized after reading Lydia's notes and studying with Lydia herself after midnight in her hospital room on October 11. October 31 witnessed the baptism of a young lady from Atlanta—the "angry lady" who questioned Lydia after hearing her speak about her conversion. On November 1, Jonah distributed Lydia's sixty-page notebook to the board of his fellow ministers and deacons, an assembly of about eighteen leaders. On November 14, one of the deacons was baptized. The same day, another young lady in Atlanta was baptized—the "troubled lady" who spoke with Lydia privately after her speech. Another Baptist deacon has studied with Jonah and is studying with the deacon already baptized. Four other ladies in Atlanta, including the "angry lady's" mother, are studying also. And on December 6, Lydia's nurse from ICU was baptized after bringing her Bible and a *Strong's Concordance* to study with Lydia in her hospital room.

A friend of mine said, "We are so blessed that we've never had to suffer the things Lydia has suffered." I replied, "Maybe we're not so blessed as Lydia whom God has used to be such a blessing to others." Maybe I should pray for more Christians to have cancer. If only we would bear it and all burdens as gracefully as Lydia and the early Christians before her, like Paul. God help us to emulate the model that Christ left, that Paul learned, and that Lydia is living: "*When I am weak, then I am strong.*"



From the Editor :

With the start of a new year of bulletins you will notice a small change in the layout. Unfortunately, due to the growing number of sick and shut-in, it has been moved to the back page to give us more room to keep one another updated on the ailments of our brothers and sisters in Christ. But for this list to be effective, I must depend upon you, our readers, to keep me up to date on those on the list and send information of anyone who needs to be added or changed.

You may call me at 304-914-2262 or you can email me at tim@truthandright.org

You may also contact me if there is a request for an article subject.

I hope that this year will bring you articles and information that will be beneficial in your search for
"Truth and Right" *TRH*

News N Notes

- The men need to remember the Business Meeting today at 5:00 PM
- Our booth at the Brooke County Fair—September 7,8,9—we will need help staffing the booth, please plan to help.
- October 14-19—our fall meeting with Jarrod Jacobs

Please remember these in your prayers:

Sick/Surgery:

- Amanda Dowdy recovering from back surgery in hopes to alleviate the suffering she has had for much too long.
- Matt Ferrell recovering from surgery to drain an infection
- Terry Smith, Jr., Terry and Lora Smith's son as he receives treatment for cancer
- Susan and Scott Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster's daughter, is scheduled to have their baby delivered by cesarean section, Monday (6th) and the baby is to have surgery on Tuesday (7th) to try and correct some of the problems the baby faces such as spina bifida
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband as he continues to deal with cancer
- Vicki Renshaw recovering from a broken foot
- Terry Smith's brother George is scheduled for surgery Sept. 7th
- Ed and Marie Roberts as Marie recovers and Ed without a job due to his plant closing, also remember Ed's father, Jim Roberts.
- Faith Kress, Linda Marshall's niece
- Dorothy Sams, Linda's mother
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall's mother
- Cary and Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll
- Pauline Sellers

Shut-ins:

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