

Lives of Fragrance

March 2024 | Vol. 2, Issue 9

2 Corinthians 4:14-17



The Blessing of Suffering

By Cheri Biggs

"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." 1 Peter 5:10, NIV

As with most people, the diagnosis of cancer hit me like a ton of bricks. However, I don't recall going through the so-called stages of grief. If I did, I went through them in rapid succession. I spent some time crying and worrying about my family, but eventually I landed at, "Why me?"

After a few days of my pity party, instead of "Why Me," it became "Why Not Me?" After all, God had blessed me and spared me from so much. How could I question His will for my life, when I had been blessed with 69 wonderful years?

That's when He blessed me with breast cancer.

C.S. Lewis once said, "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pains; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." I was hearing God's voice loud and clear. He used my momentary suffering not only to conform me more to Christ, but to put my focus on eternity.

God gently reminded me of all that Christ had suffered – the perfect example of how I should endure trials. He assured me of what awaited on the other side of suffering, when one day I would be permanently restored!

Lord Jesus, thank you for all that you have suffered on my behalf. You knew the suffering that was to come when you went to the cross, the agony of being separated from your Father, and still you chose, willingly and obediently, to see it through.

I am so grateful that I can rest in the fact that nothing will happen to me that hasn't first passed through Your hand. I praise You, Lord, that You are the anchor that holds me secure, no matter what suffering may come. YOU are my Rock and the eternity in which I can be absolutely assured.

What's New

March 9th

Kelsy Schlotthauer and Lance Patterson Wedding

March 31st

Easter Sunday

April 6th

A TBC Women's Spring Event, Clay Pots and Cupcakes, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Lighthouse room. Watch for lobby sign-ups and online registration. \$5.

Reminders

Volunteer Sign-up: If you love to decorate, to plan food for events, or to plan activities and crafts, and are interested in helping with women's events in 2024, please sign up online. The TBC Women's Council welcomes your help!

Books: The TBC Library has a wide selection of books. Take a few minutes on Sunday to browse and find a new favorite book! The library is on the right side of the hallway past the church office.

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Charles Wesley, 1739

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Dying once, He all doth save, Alleluia!
Where thy victory, O grave? Alleluia!

The Wondrous Beauty of the Cross

By Karen Krueger

Hundreds of Christian hymns and songs either directly refer to the cross of Christ or tangentially refer to the cross in the context of Christ's suffering and death. Why do we focus on the cross? Is this a gruesome, morbid interest in the wooden structure which was a Roman instrument of torture and death? How can we refer to the cross with such love?

The cross upon which Christ died is more than a symbol, yet not in itself an object of veneration. The wooden beams do not have an intrinsic value to confer salvation. Yet the cross is the focal point of history, that upright wooden post with its crossbeam, upon which the unbelievable became fact: Christ, the Son of God, died.

So why do we sing of cherishing the cross, of clinging to the cross, and of the power of the cross?

Charles H. Spurgeon, in 1885, gave a sermon entitled *The Cross, Our Glory*. Near the close of his message, he states, "The cross is the standard of victorious grace. It is the light-house whose cheering ray gleams across the dark waters of despair and cheers the dense midnight of our fallen race, saving from eternal shipwreck, and piloting into everlasting peace . . . When I see my Lord bearing away my sins as my scapegoat, or dying for them as my sin-offering, I feel a profound peace of heart and satisfaction of spirit. The cross is all I want for security and joy. . . Beneath the shadow of the cross I sit down with great delight, and its fruit is sweet unto my taste."

The Scriptures speak of the glory and the power of the cross of Christ. Paul writes in Galatians 6:14 (KJV), "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." I Corinthians 1:18 (ESV) states, "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

We sing, therefore, in the knowledge that the cross is where God chose to sacrifice his only begotten Son, Jesus. We sing with tears, remembering that Christ willingly suffered to bear our sins on that cross. We sing, praising our Lord for his shed blood, which paid the penalty for the sins of the world: each evil thought, word, and deed. We sing, awe-struck, that Christ, our Savior, humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:8).

With wonder and worship, we glory in the cross, the dark implement of Christ's sufferings, because by his suffering and death, our sin debt has been paid (Colossians 2:14). The song of the cross is all the sweeter because Christ conquered death, rising on the third day, and becoming the first-fruits of those who die, ensuring that we too will be raised (1 Cor. 15:12-26). A passage from 1 Peter summarizes our eternal hope and joy. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-4, ESV).

So, with joy, awe, and deepest gratitude, let us sing the beautiful song of the cross, because it is the victory song of our Savior, and share it with those who have not yet heard, so that they may join in this song now and forever.

Hallelujah! Christ is Risen!

Recipes

Kinsey Biggs shares a favorite family recipe passed down from her maternal grandmother. Rebecca Metcalfe shares a recipe for chicken divan. She says that the chicken divan is a long-time family favorite! She has been able to make it gluten-free with GF soup.

Spinach Salad and Dressing

Kinsey Biggs

Dressing:

- 1 small onion, minced
- 2/3 c. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- ½ tsp celery seed
- 3 tsp regular mustard
- ½ c. vinegar
- ½ c. oil

Salad:

- Fresh spinach
- Boiled eggs
- Croutons
- Bacon
- Tomatoes

Mix dressing ingredients in the blender, then toss gently to coat the salad.

Easy Chicken Divan

Rebecca Metcalfe

- 2 c. cooked chicken breasts (skinless, deboned) or 6 thick slices of turkey
- 1 9-oz. pkg. frozen (or fresh-cooked) broccoli (or asparagus spears, cooked)
- 1 T butter
- 1 10-oz. can cream of chicken (or mushroom) soup
- ½ c. cheese, grated
- ½ c. mayonnaise
- 1 tsp lemon juice

In shallow baking dish, layer chicken, broccoli, then sauce (mix & warm first). Bake at 350° for 15 min. Broil 2 min. Serve over rice. (Opt. place cooked rice in the bottom of the Pyrex as the first layer.)

Lives of Fragrance is a publication of the Women's Ministries of Tulsa Bible Church. For corrections, comments, or contributions, please contact Karen at flnewsandviews@gmail.com.

Editor/Contributor: Karen Krueger

Contributors: Cheri Biggs; Kinsey Biggs; Rebecca Metcalfe

Editor/Design: Lydia Krueger