

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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I Will Never Leave You... Never!

Last night I received a call from a dear friend; he was very emotional as he said, 'We just found out that my wife has late stage cancer of the pancreas and there's nothing they can do.'

It hit me hard but I could only imagine how hard it hit them.

They are a little older than we who are now, 70; I think they're in their 80's but anymore, to me, hardly anyone looks old; instead, so many now almost seem like children... I never expected to grow old... I've been daily, looking, waiting, watching for our Lord's return for a long time but I will not be discouraged though He tarry; He will come for us one day soon.

What would we do if we received such a terrible blow as our friends' report of cancer... first, Debbie and I would be drawn to each other in tight embrace and then we would fall, together, to our knees and seek the Lord and His comfort, strength and peace; we would seek His face, drawing near to Him, allowing His Holy Spirit to hold us and to comfort us as only He can and does.

There is no comfort in anger or in lashing out at God for what He has brought; I trust that we would remember that nothing comes to us but through His loving hands, that He is bringing this trial to accomplish, in us, hearts and minds that will be even more fully prepared to step into the work and ministry He has planned for us, now, but even more, for what He has planned for us in the future, after we are all reunited in the Rapture and given our new, glorified eternal bodies, fit to rule and reign with Him for 1000 years and then forever.

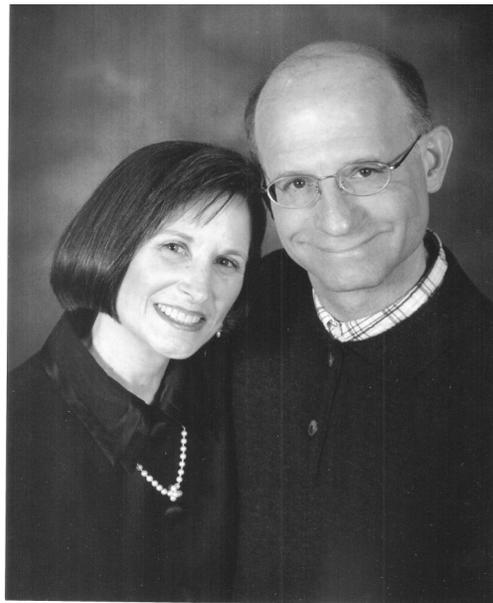
My main thought has been, how can I comfort them in such a dark time, but I realized that first, I needed to be strengthened and comforted. The Psalmist wrote, *'In the day when I cried thou answered me, and strengthened me with strength in my soul.'* Psalm 138:3

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me... 2Tim 4:17

'And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.' Zechariah 10:12

'For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me.' 2Samuel 22:40

Then I remembered Psalm 18 as our most perfect encouragement: *'The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower... I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. ⁴The sorrows of death compassed me... The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me... ⁶In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears. ⁷Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.... He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet... ¹⁰And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did*



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2 Corinthians 5:19,20

fly upon the wings of the wind. ¹¹ He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies... He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters... He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. ¹⁸ They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. ¹⁹ He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me... Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight. (For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; **that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.** 2Cor 5:21)... ²⁵ With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; ²⁶ With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. ²⁷ For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks. ²⁸ For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness... As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him... ³¹ For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God? ³² It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. ³³ He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places. ³⁴ He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by

mine arms. Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.

³⁶ Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip... For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me... The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted... ⁴⁷ It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me...

⁴⁹ Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name. ⁵⁰ Great deliverance giveth he to his king... (And **hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father;** to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.' Revelation 1:6) Psalm 18

'You are my Peace; You are my Joy; You are my Crown of Rejoicing; You are my Strength and Shield; You are my Hiding Place; You are my only Help and Safety; You are my Rock and Salvation; only in You is there Hope and Peace; You are my Lord and God; You are the One in Whom I trust; You are Whom I patiently await; even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!'

When heartache and distress come and make no mistake... they will come, sooner or later, to each of us... our only hope is God. David wrote: 'Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt

compass me about with songs of deliverance.' Psalm 32:7

'The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?' ² When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

³ Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. ⁶ And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek... I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.' Psa 27

Jesus said, 'These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.' John 16:33

Our only hope and comfort are to be found as we remember to see ourselves as we are: IN the Holy Spirit as He is IN us. We must learn to draw ourselves into Him as our 'hiding place.' James wrote: 'Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?' ⁶ But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. ⁹ Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves

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in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.' James 4:5

We must not run from God in desperate times, even if our first response was to lash out and blame God. He loves us and 'jealously' desires us for Himself. Jesus experienced the same pain and the same temptations as do we. He has told us: 'Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. ¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' Hebrews 4:14

'Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore. ⁵ Remember his marvelous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;' Psalm 105:4

No matter what we go through, what we suffer, what we endure... we are never alone. God's Word tells us: 'And the Lord he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed... Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.' Duet 31:6

'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.' Joshua 1:8

'... Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. ¹⁰ Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.' Isa 41:9

'... for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. ⁶ So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.' Heb 13:5

We have His never ending promise of never ceasing peace: 'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4:6

He chose us from the foundation of the World and everything that comes

to us, He will cause it to be for our good and His Glory: 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.' Rom 8:28

He is our Hope, our Joy, our only Salvation; trust in Him alone, always!

Want more of Tom's teaching?

Join us every Sunday morning from 9:30—10:40 Tom teaches 'The New Bereans' class, a great group of Saints at Grand View Baptist Church on the corner of Hwy 213 and Leland Road. 14855 S. Leland Rd.

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