

Divine love has a powerful, purifying influence. It is to be found only in renewed hearts, and naturally flows out to their fellow men.

A Miracle Twice Over

by Tanya James as told by Jeff Elliott

Miracles are God's way of showing man His ultimate power. God uses totally impossible situations to show man who He is. For example, the walls of Jericho fell with a trumpet blow and a shout; Gideon fought an entire army of over 120,000 Midianite soldiers with only 300 Israelite soldiers; The red sea parted and the Hebrews walked on dry land, just to name a few. God is all powerful and all He wants from us is to let Him control our footsteps so that He can lead us to safety. If we lead, we take wrong turns. If God leads, every turn is right. God has performed so many miracles in my life that I can't even name them in this story. All I can say is that when things seemed impossible, God made them possible. *"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."* Matthew 19:26. The following story is a testimony to the power of faith and miracles.



A Miracle of Faith and True Conversion

Nikki and I had been trying passively for a year and a half to conceive a child and we finally became ready to actively try so we went to a doctor. They told us that since we had been trying for at least 3 months and were not pregnant then something was probably wrong. They told us that they could probably do a few drug treatments and we could get pregnant. They wanted to do some tests. We were a little concerned but it was ok, we'd be pregnant soon. Little did we know that this was the beginning of our rollercoaster ride of emotions.

Shortly thereafter Nikki and I went skiing and she injured her knee and would need to have surgery. The day before the surgery at the pre-op exam, they said that Nikki would not be able to have the surgery because she was pregnant. Of course we were shocked as well as excited! A couple of weeks later we began experiencing problems. There was some bleeding so we went in for an ultrasound and the doctor said it was an ectopic pregnancy. The baby would not develop. We were totally devastated. The doctor then became concerned and anxious and said the mass would keep growing rapidly and would need to be removed. He said to go home to think about it, but call him the next day because it was so far along that if it ruptured, Nikki could die from internal bleeding.

We went home, prayed about it and decided if this was what the doctor thought we should do, we

would do it. They removed the mass from the tube, successfully, but the tube was now damaged and may not work. In our post-op surgery checkup a couple of weeks later, the doctor examined Nikki and said that she and I would not be able to have children. He said that this was good news because we lived in Atlanta and we have the finest invitro-fertilization doctors in the country so it wouldn't be a problem. We went home and thought about it and decided that we were not ready for that kind of decision. A month or so later, Nikki was feeling sick and was bleeding again. We went to the doctor and

they determined that we were pregnant. A few weeks later, Nikki began bleeding very heavily due to hemorrhaging. We didn't know what to do so we called the doctor. We went in on Friday and the doctor said that this pregnancy would probably end up like the first one. He excused me from the room and told Nikki that she would probably end up losing the baby over the weekend. He would be out of town for the weekend, but she could call the office to let them know when it happens. Nikki and I were both hurt that this doctor would say such a thing in such a callous manner.

We went home and the doctor told us to keep Nikki off her feet. God intervened and we didn't lose the baby that weekend. We continued scheduling doctor visits every month. We went in for the ultrasounds. Nikki continued bleeding throughout the entire pregnancy and they saw hemorrhages just fractions of a centimeter from the baby. One time it was above the baby, then it would be below the baby. But by God's grace, it never dislodged the baby from the uterine wall. The baby continued to grow and develop. They told Nikki that she had to go on light duty (no work, no lifting, etc...) The hemorrhaging continued and after the next doctor's visit, they told her she had to go on complete bed rest. She could only get up to use the rest room and to get something, not make something, to eat. Even after that, she continued to hemorrhage.

One evening, Nikki coughed and her water broke. The doctor said it was not completely broken. It was a small tear and water was draining out of the sac. They said if it got to a certain level, they would have to do something, but we were not to worry. They sent her back home and she began to have pre-term labor. At the next doctor's visit (5-1/2 to 6 months) he examined her and said that since she had gone into pre-term labor, and because of the tear, that she was now labeled as "high-risk". They were going to admit her to the hospital so they could watch her until the

baby was born. She had pre-term labor, she had a tear in the sac, she had HELLP syndrome – elevate liver enzymes, she also had preeclampsia which deals with the blood pressure. For no reason her blood pressure would spike. This could cause stroke in the mother or the baby killing one of them or both of them. We settled in the room, where I stayed on the couch, going to and from work from the hospital. I brought all of the pictures, stuffed animals, flowers, clothes for work, food, etc. ready to settle in for 3 months.

The nurses were closely monitoring her vital signs. The prenatal doctors from the neonatal intensive care unit were monitoring the baby's health. The baby's heart is fine and we want to keep that baby in there for as long as we can. The doctor was keeping up with Nikki's health with the preeclampsia and the preterm labor as well as the dilation. They didn't consult with one another, they just decided if the problem they examined was the only thing wrong, then everything is ok for now.

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Family First: Pray Without Ceasing

by Marsha Peters

I once read a story about a woman who came to know Christ as her personal Savior and decided to follow Him all the way. She had never experienced such joy in all her life as the joy she felt the day she took her stand for Jesus. She was very excited about her decision, and wanted her husband to experience what she was experiencing, but he was not at all interested.

Day after day she talked to him about giving his life to Jesus, and why he needed to change, but it seemed the more she talked, the less he wanted to do it, and the angrier he became.

She decided to back off and pray about it. She asked God why He wouldn't change her husband, and make him over again? Was she doing something wrong? She needed an answer, so she stayed on her knees until she started hearing the answer to her prayer. The more she prayed, the more she felt impressed that perhaps she was part of the problem. By the time she got off her knees, she was certain that God did not want her to talk to her



husband any more about giving his life to Christ, but, He wanted her to live like Christ before her husband and continue to fast and pray in secret for his salvation.

She had a plan and she was elated over it. No matter how her husband acted toward her, she always reacted in a Christ-like manner. Weeks went by, then months went by, and still no change.

Year one and two went by, and she became discouraged, but she prayed and decided to persevere even though she saw no signs of change. Years four, and five passed with things much the same as before, but in year six she got up one day to go to church and her husband got up too. She paid no attention because sometimes he slept in and other times he got up and went out also. But today he dressed up in a suit and met her in the kitchen for breakfast. She thought, "maybe he has some business to take care of." When she picked up her things to go to the door, her husband approached her and asked if he could go with her to church. She nearly fainted right there on the floor.

When the appeal to give your heart to Christ at church was made, her husband was the first one to go down to the altar. He testified that he wanted to give his life to Christ because of the example his wife had lived before him for six straight years. He admitted that he thought it was a phase at first, but when she continued, he purposely tried to discourage her so she would quit. Because of her determination he had changed instead.

O what power there is in prayer! *"The effectual fervent prayer...availeth much."*

Quote of the Month

"Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him...Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds...Nothing that in anyway concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice."

~EGW

My Cup Runneth Over

by Karla Bliss

(The real names in this article have been changed and the name of the city and hospital has been purposely omitted)

In 1982, Marva and her husband Brian moved to the United States from Africa and settled into a home in a large metropolitan city in the south. Her husband had a job working for the UNICEF (*United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.*) This organization provides long term humanitarian and developmental assistance to children and mothers in developing countries. They provide things such as food, healthcare, basic education and child protection programs. Brian was doing quite well financially and traveled all over the world with UNICEF.



Brian was the bread winner and Marva was initially a homemaker. They had two small children and except for Brian and the children, all of Marva's family was in Africa. One day Brian came home and stated that he wanted to take an assignment in Ghana for two years. Marva informed him that she had just applied

to a local college and had been accepted. Besides that, she was preparing to start the 3-11 p.m. shift at one of the city's hospitals downtown. She pleaded with him to reconsider so that she could complete her education. They began to argue and Brian stated that he was going to Ghana anyway. The subject didn't come up again and Marva went about her daily routine activities.

Not long afterwards, she arrived home one evening to find her house empty. All the furniture was gone, all of the dishes were gone, all the food was gone, all of her keepsakes were gone, even her passports and legal documents were gone. The only things that remained in the house were clothes for her and their children. Marva sat down and cried. She had nothing. Her husband even sold the car which was her means of transportation.

He took care of all the finances so she knew nothing about bank accounts or managing money. She knew nothing about the U.S. system. She had no family in this country and no close friends. "How am I going to make it?" Marva said to herself. "I only make \$3.65 per hour and my rent is \$360 per month. Marva had no choice but to try to make it. She went to

work every day and cried. She wanted to kill herself. She cried on her lunch breaks because she had no food, she cried when she arrived at work and she cried on the way home. When she got off work at 11 p.m. she had to catch the train and then a bus to get to her home. By the time she reached the bus stop the last bus going her direction would have left for the night, so every night she had to walk 2 miles from the train station to her home. Marva's situation after some time, became so difficult that she was forced to make a heart wrenching decision. She had to send her baby and young child back to their father in Africa because she couldn't financially continue to take care of them

A co-worker, realizing her distress one night, convinced her to open up and she confided in her. This angel of mercy began picking Marva up for work and taking her home. She brought lunch for Marva every night and purchased food for her at home. She arrived at work one evening and her co-workers had raised \$400 for her. She arrived at work another day and they had raised \$200 for her. This was just what she needed to get on her

See [My Cup](#) on page 6

Healthful Insight: The Shadow of Death, Part II

by Karla Bliss

Francis Burrowes had just survived a near death experience - so near death that he was placed in a body bag on his way to the hospital, but by the grace of God he survived. He was diagnosed with Emphysema and the air quality in New Jersey was only exacerbating his condition.

Some months after his near death experience He and his family were going to the baby blessing of one of his grandchildren and Francis once again didn't feel good. He was taken to the hospital by his son, Yon, and his condition once again turned critical. On the way, a police cruiser began to follow Yon because of his speed, but sensing it was an emergency the policeman escorted them all the way to the hospital. Meanwhile, Noreen stayed behind to support their daughter and her family as they dedicated their child to the Lord. The baby dedication never happened because the church was soon notified that the family needed to come to the hospital at once because Francis condition had suddenly worsened.

Family members were called in from New York and surrounding areas. The doctor asked Noreen if they had a will because it looked like Francis wasn't going to make it. Their pastor, St. Clare Phipps, and the church once again began to pray, and within 4-5 days a nurse took out the multiple

tubes and machines that Francis was hooked up to and he was able to go home. "You should have died", the nurse said with amazement.

Francis had another experience some months later and stayed in the hospital for 13 days. His family realized that they needed to move to a warmer climate, so they moved to Atlanta. The Atlanta weather was good for Francis and he never had severe flare-ups with his Emphysema again. What brought him to the hospital 9 years later took him totally by surprise.

In March of 2008 Francis noticed that he had to keep clearing his throat. He later started spitting up blood. By noontime he clearly was not feeling well. He went to the bathroom and upon his return he stated that he was throwing up blood. He went to the bathroom again and weakness caused him to slump down to the floor. Noreen encouraged him to try to get enough strength to get to his knees and he then crawled to the bed and got in.

Around 5 p.m. he was preparing for a Bible study with a close friend Essil, and their daughter-in-law Paula. Feeling better he felt extremely thirsty and went to get some

water. As he picked up the glass he began to shake uncontrollably. He started passing out and hit his head on a nearby cabinet. His son Gregory, who works in the medical field, was quickly summoned from the next room. Startled because he was awakened out of sleep, Gregory quickly noticed his father was not breathing and performed the head tilt, chin lift of CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) which opened his airway and Francis started breathing again. Suddenly copious amounts of blood started coming from his mouth.

They live in a senior citizen apartment so someone pulled the emergency cord behind the cabinet and an ambulance quickly arrived and took him to Emory Crawford Long Hospital and he was admitted to the ICU (Intensive Care Unit). By the weekend Francis was out of the hospital giving his testimony. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Ps. 23:4. Francis knows that God is with him, and wherever he is led to walk and whatever circumstances may arise, God is there.



I Believe I'll Testify! The Power of Prayer

by Derek Peters

May 1st was the National Day of Prayer. It speaks volumes to the great need and importance of prayer in the spiritual lives of the citizens of this country.

Paul instructs us in the Bible to "pray without ceasing" 1Thes. 5:17. A prayerful heart is one that is always in a constant communion with heaven, and it is thus that the soul derives spiritual power.

Prayer is on of the most powerful weapons in the arsenal of the Christian believer. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16. Prayer has the power to transform lives, change hearts, and overcome seemingly impossible odds. Most importantly, Satan knows that he cannot overcome a soul who is "prayed-up", and solidly connected with Christ.



Jesus, our Great Example, taught us how to pray. The scriptures are full of instances where He took time off to go and connect with His Heavenly Father.

The Bible also lets us know that some things can only be accomplished through fasting and prayer, whether it be what course of action to take, or the answer to a particular problem. Prayer must at all times be accompanied by faith.

Approximately four years ago, my mother was diagnosed with uterine cancer at the age of eighty-one. It was frightening, but my siblings and I were encouraged by the fact that our mother is a praying woman, and she conveyed to us that she had prayed about her situation, left it in God's hands, and was at peace.

She had to travel by ship to Cape Town, South Africa for her medical treatment. She walked

into the hospital under her own power. She came through the surgery and radiation treatment with no complications, or side-effects, and about ten days later, again, walked out of the hospital under her own power! My mother is still alive, and living independently today at age eighty-five! I can certainly testify to the amazing power of prayer.

No situation or circumstance is bigger than the living God that we serve. Hesitate not to lay your petitions and fears before his throne of grace. Be still and see the salvation of the Lord. Witness again and again the amazing, incredible power of prayer as you rededicate your life to Him anew each day.



Holiday Feature: Passover



In the days before Passover, the house is prepared. All traces of bread, or anything using yeast, is eaten or removed from the house, and all of the dishes, silverware, pots and pans are changed for a set that is used only for Passover.

The day before Passover, the house is searched for any trace of yeast products, (chumetz) and the whole family is involved in the search. Anything found is discarded, or given away to non-Jewish people.

History of Passover relates back to over 3,000 years ago, when the Jews were held as slaves by the Egyptian Pharaoh, Rameses II. Moses, who looked after the cause of the Jews, asked Pharaoh several times to release them from slavery, and warned Him that he would devastate his people by plagues. Moses inflicted 10 plagues, and after all the 9 plagues, the Pharaoh agreed to release the Jews from slavery, but quickly changed his mind. (You can read about the 10 plagues by clicking here.) After the 10th plague however, he let the Jews go. The Jews left in a hurry, owing to the fickle-mindedness of the Pharaoh, and could thus only take unleavened bread with them, called Matza, which is a part of celebration even today. As expected, the Pharaoh send his army after the Jews so that they could be brought back. The Jews travelled for 40 days and nights, and reached Red Sea, where they saw the emperor's army advancing towards them. In despair they asked for help from Moses, who parted the waters of Red Sea for the Jews to cross. As soon as the Jews crossed, the Red Sea regained and drowned the soldiers.



Since the time of Jewish freedom from Egyptian slavery, Jews have celebrated this historical event by having a feast called the 'Seder'. The word 'Seder' means 'order' and refers to the order of historical events recalled in the Passover meal as well as the meal itself. The story of Passover is read from a book called the 'Haggadah'. While the main story of Passover is read by Jews the world over, local customs and traditions have changed over time, so that the festival has been adapted to reflect the life and routine of individual communities. This is why the festival of Passover is celebrated differently in Tunisia than in Canada.

Passover is celebrated for 8 days (7 for Reform Jews), and always begins on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan.

Taken from: www.theholidayspot.com



Passover Trivia

Submitted by Marsha Peters

Please circle True (T) or False (F)

1. The festive meal eaten on Passover night is called Seder. T F
2. Two cups of wine are drunk at the meal. T F
3. Matzoh is the name of the bread. T F
4. Passover usually coincides with Christmas. T F
5. Passover is celebrated for seven days. T F
6. Ecclesiastes is the book read from during Passover. T F
7. Pesach is the Hebrew name for the holiday. T F
8. The sacrifice is eaten in groups made up of family. T F
9. Olives may not be eaten at Passover. T F
10. Dayenu is a song sung during this holiday. T F

Answers:
1.T, 2.F, 3.T, 4.F, 5.F, 6.T, 7.T, 8.T, 9.F, 10.T

Ponder This

Something to Think About

By Phyllis Beckford

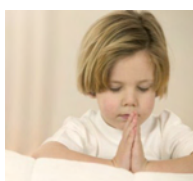
God puts the rainbow in the sky, The sunshine, the flowers, and even the butterfly.

His stars light up the darkest night and His holy angel guides you all right.

Bring to Him all your pain and fear, He knows just how much you can bear.

He is kind and understanding too; He only asks so much of you.

To you He will be true, Trust in Him and don't be blue.



When the burden of life seems hard to carry, Give them to Him and don't you tarry.

Start your day with a prayer and a song, Whatever awaits, you'll never go wrong.

Look to Him, for He's keeping each moment you start anew; He hears the feeblest prayer through the words sometimes be few.

Take God's hand as He leads you down the winding road, He'll never leave nor forsake when you are under the load.

The smile you share with others will brighten someone's day, and you will see the benefit when He leads the way.



Holiday Feature: History of Mother's Day

The history of Mother's Day is centuries old and goes back to the times of ancient Greeks, who held festivities to honor Rhea, the mother of the gods. The early Christians celebrated the Mother's festival on the fourth Sunday of Lent to honor Mary, the mother of Christ. Interestingly, later on a religious order stretched the holiday to include all mothers, and named it as the Mothering Sunday. The English colonists settled in America discontinued the tradition of Mothering Sunday because of lack of time. In 1872 Julia Ward Howe organized a day for mothers dedicated to peace. It is a landmark in the history of Mother's Day.

Mother's Day In 1907, Anna M. Jarvis (1864-1948), a Philadelphia schoolteacher, began a movement to set up a national Mother's Day in honor of her mother, Ann Maria Reeves Jarvis. She solicited the help of hundreds of legislators and prominent businessmen to create a special day to honor mothers. The first Mother's Day observance was a church service honoring Anna's mother. Anna handed out her mother's favorite flowers, the white carnations, on the occasion as they represent sweetness, purity, and patience. Anna's hard



work finally paid off in the year 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as a national holiday in honor of mothers.

Slowly and gradually the Mother's day became very popular and gift giving activity increased. All this commercialization of the Mother's day infuriated Anna as she believed that the day's sentiment was being sacrificed at the expense of greed and profit.

Regardless of Jarvis's worries, Mother's Day has flourished in the United States. Actually, the second Sunday of May has become the most popular day of the year. Although Anna may not be with us but the Mother's day lives on and has spread to various countries of the world. Many countries throughout the world

celebrate Mother's Day at various times during the year, but some such as Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, and Belgium also celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May.

Source: www.holidayspot.com

Inspiration



'Tis the Blessed Hour of Prayer

A song by Fanny J. Crosby

'Tis the blessed hour of prayer,
When the heart lowly bends,
And we gather to Jesus,
Our Savior and Friend;
If we come to Him in faith,
His protection to share,
What a balm for the weary!
O how sweet to be there!

'Tis the blessed hour of prayer,
When the Savior draws near,
With a tender compassion
His children to hear;
When He tells us we may cast
A t His feet every care,
What a balm for the weary!
O how sweet to be there!

'Tis the blessed hour of prayer,
When the tempted and tried,
To the Savior who loves them
Their sorrows confide;
With a sympathizing heart
He removes every care;
What a balm for the weary!
O how sweet to be there!

At the blessed hour of prayer,
Trusting Him we believe,
That the blessings we're needing
We'll surely receive;
In the fullness of this trust
We shall lose every care;
What a balm for the weary!
O how sweet to be there!

Why Women Cry



Author Unknown

A little boy asked his mother, 'Why are you crying?' 'Because I'm a woman,' she told him. 'I don't understand,' he said. His Mom just hugged him and said, 'And you never will.'

Later the little boy asked his father, 'Why does mother seem to cry for no reason?' 'All women cry for no reason,' was all his dad could say.

The little boy grew up and became a man, still wondering why women cry. Finally he put in a call to God. When God got on the phone, he asked, 'God, why do women cry so easily?'

God said: 'When I made the woman she had to be special. I made her shoulders strong enough to carry the weight of the world, yet gentle enough to give comfort. I gave her an inner strength to endure childbirth and the rejection that many times comes from her

children. I gave her a hardness that allows her to keep going when everyone else gives up, and take care of her family through sickness and fatigue with out complaining. I gave her the sensitivity to love her children under any and all circumstances, even when her child has hurt her very badly.

I gave her strength to carry her husband through his faults and fashioned her from his rib to protect his heart. I gave her wisdom to know that a good husband never hurts his wife, but sometimes tests her strengths and her resolve to stand beside him unflinchingly.

And finally, I gave her a tear to shed. This is hers exclusively to use whenever it is needed.'

'You see my son,' said God, 'the beauty of a woman is not in the clothes she wears, the figure that she carries, or the way she combs her hair. The beauty of a woman must be seen in her eyes, because that is the doorway to her heart - the place where love resides.'

A Lesson in Life

Submitted by Tanya James, author unknown

Life is a theater - invite your audience carefully. Not everyone is holy enough and healthy enough to have a front row seat in your life. There are some people in your life that need to be loved from a distance.

It's amazing what you can accomplish when you let go, or at least minimize your time with draining, negative, incompatible, not-going-anywhere relationships, friendships, or fellowships!

Observe the relationships around you. Pay attention to: Which ones lift and which ones lean? Which ones encourage and which ones discourage? Which ones are on a path of growth uphill and which ones are going downhill?

When you leave certain people, do you feel better or feel worse? Which ones always have drama or don't really understand? Which



ones know and appreciate you and the gift that lies within you?

The more you seek God and the things of God - the more you seek quality, the more you seek not just the hand of God but the face of God - the more you seek things honorable - the more

you seek growth, peace of mind, love and truth around you, the easier it will become for you to decide who gets to sit in the **FRONT ROW** and who should be moved to the **BALCONY** of your life.

You cannot change the people around you.....but you can change

the people you are around! Ask God for wisdom and discernment and choose wisely the people who sit in the front row of your life!

Be Immensely Blessed!

My Cup, *continued from p. 2*

feet. She opened a bank account and started buying one item at a time. She moved from a 3 bedroom to a 1 bedroom apartment to help lower her expenses.

Had it not been for the Lord, she would not have made it. She started talking to God every day. She started listening to a Biblical support line that helped her deal with issues such as depression and loneliness. She was left totally abandoned but learned that she had a friend in Jesus.

She worked hard and eventually she was able to purchase a car. She learned how to manage money well. Last year her son left Africa and is now living with her and going to school. Her daughter who is in college will soon be arriving for an extended stay with her mother.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: though annoyest my head with oil: my cup runneth over." Ps. 23:5. Marva feels like God's goodness and mercy is with her each day of her life and helped get her through the most difficult time in her life.

Financial Tips: 9 Ways to Save Money with Little Effort

Submitted by Tanya James

Reprinted from Ebony Magazine, June 2008

Regardless of what income bracket we happen to fall in, people are trying to cut expenses and save money. For many, saving money may seem an impossible task. But with a little forethought and planning, it can be achieved.

Think about your everyday expenditures. Make a list of your daily, weekly, and monthly expenses. Surely there are some expenses that you can cut.

Ten to twenty percent of the budget is spent on fluff stuff, such as newspaper subscriptions, health club memberships, book club dues, restaurant meals, snack foods, etc.... Many such things can be cut without severely impacting your day-to-day lifestyle.



Here are some additional tips to help you save money during these uncertain times:

1. **Watch those banking fees:** Only use your bank's ATM machines. If your bank's ATMs are not conveniently located, try withdrawing once or twice a month. Also avoid bouncing checks.
2. **Shop sales:** Time your purchases to great sales and discounts. Buy last year's everything - clothing, appliances, electronics, car models, etc...
3. **Wisely shop for food and household needs:** Check out what is on sale at your grocery, hardware, and other stores, and stock up on necessities. Clip coupons. Cut out junk food.
4. **Don't waste energy:** Make simple, but smart moves like turning the heat or air conditioner down in the evenings and when no one is at home. Cut off/unplug appliances and lights when they are not being used.
5. **Dial down phone costs:** You can save hundreds of dollars each month by using telephones, especially cell phones wisely. Be mindful of roaming fees and use your phone during off-peak times. If you talk to family members often, get a cost-saving plan. Reassess your calling plan to see if you are getting the best deal.
6. **Insure savings:** Though you are an adult, you might be able to save money by putting your car on your parents insurance. If you and your spouse both have health insurance through your jobs, review both plans and determine if the cheaper plan works best for your family.
7. **Burn less gas:** If you have a gas-guzzler and plan to do a lot of driving, you may save money by renting an energy-efficient car. Plan your driving activities and team up with friends or family members to run errands. Try car-pooling or ride the bus.
8. **Utilize space:** If you have an empty bedroom, consider renting it to a family member, friend, or student. It does not have to be a permanent arrangement, but the extra money can help you through a tough period.
9. **Make a budget:** Budgeting can help you save. You only have so much money available, and if you make a budget, you will try to stay within your financial range. People who don't have budgets tend to spend more. Establishing a budget helps to contain costs.

Miracle, Continued from page 1

On our sixth day in the hospital, all of the doctors met together and discussed their findings.



They each said I got this but if that's all... But once they each discovered all that was going on with Nikki they said that's it. We cannot wait any longer.

So at 8am on the sixth day of our hospital stay, the doctor came back and said, "You are going to have an interesting morning. You are going to have this baby today!" At 9am they wheeled us downstairs and we had a beautiful 1lb 11oz baby girl. We didn't have a name picked out but we had talked about names. At that moment, we chose Elizabeth (Dedicated to God) Evelyn (from Eve meaning life). We decided that we were dedicating her life to God at that point and that there was nothing we could do.

They took her down to the neonatal ICU expecting the worse and not knowing any better asked when we would be able to take her home. That shocked them, they said that we will just have to watch. Normally, they keep preemies here until the due date. She was three months early, so she will be here for three months. They really expected her to be there much longer than that because of the complications that come with babies being born around 26 and 27 weeks. The skin doesn't develop until week 27 and 28 so her skin was transparent - like jello or gelatin. They kept her in a humidity tent that was inside the incubator to keep her skin moist. For the first two weeks we could only see her through the tent. Shortly after that, her skin developed and we asked the doctors what should we do, what can we do, what can you do, what are your plans, what do you all do for kids like this? All they said is that we wait.

Each week we looked at each aspect of her development. The skin had developed so next was the lungs and then the heart. She had a hole in the heart. The doctors just waited. At each obstacle, we would ask everyone to just pray. The hole closed up on its own. Then it was the brain, and then eyes. I just watched as the doctors watched and I realized that this is not in their hands, it was in God's hands.

Earlier, I met a gentleman whose child was also there. He would come everyday to see his son. The second day we were in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), he told me that my little girl was going to be alright. But three weeks later, they were pulling the plug on their baby because his body was now nine months old but his organs were staying the same size. This was his sixth child and he was willing to let him go. After he left, I asked the nurse how that man was able to be



here everyday while he has five children at home? The nurse said, "What children? He doesn't have any children. He has been through this same situation six times with each baby having the same condition." Immediately my heart went out to that family. How could I possibly complain about my situation? How could I be selfish and ungrateful with all that man had been through, and is still able to smile and encourage us?

At that point, I got on my knees and I said, "God, I know that there is nothing the doctors can do but wait on You. She is yours. If You decide to heal her and make her perfect and unblemished, just a perfect little human being that I get to take home and raise and watch get married - grow up before my eyes, God I will praise you and I thank you. But if you decide to take her away, I will praise You and I will thank You for the little life you allowed us to experience."

Each week God continued to make her whole and heal her and move her through this little journey that He had for her.

I began to struggle and say that I was able to give Libby's life to Christ completely, good and bad, no matter what happened, but I had never done that with my own life. I never let go completely. I grew up in the church in what was called a "Christian home". I knew all of the answers, I read the Bible, I prayed, I had been good and all of my life I had done what I thought I was supposed to do. I struggled for six months on whether I really was a Christian. It was easy to surrender Libby because there was nothing anyone could do. But I struggled with surrendering my own life.

After two months, they allowed us to go home with our little Libby, a 3lb. 15oz. tiny little girl. So, six months after our journey began, I got on my knees and said God, I thank you for Libby and I thank you for my life. I gave my life to Christ. So the question is which miracle to talk about - the miracle of a 1lb 11oz birth that God created and carried along through those months and made completely whole or the miracle of a new life brought to Christ. I thank God for both of them.

After being told that we could not have children, we have been blessed to have three beautiful, healthy children - each one a wonderful gift from God!



Useful Resources

This is a list of information that may be useful for you, your friends, or your families:

Families

[Foundation for Men's Awareness](http://www.fmainc.org) - www.fmainc.org

[National Fatherhood Initiative](http://www.fatherhood.org) - www.fatherhood.org

[Safe Families](http://www.safefamilies.org) - www.safefamilies.org

[Women's Ministry: Revive Our Hearts](http://www.reviveourhearts.com) - www.reviveourhearts.com

Information

[The Adventist Times](http://www.adventisttimes.com) - www.adventisttimes.com

Finances

[Mind Your Finances](http://www.mindyourfinances.com) - www.mindyourfinances.com

[Our Family finances](http://www.ourfamilyplace.com) - www.ourfamilyplace.com

Health

[Family Doctor](http://www.familydoctor.org) - www.familydoctor.org

[Nature's Remedies](http://www.naturesnaturalhealing.com/sitemap.shtml) -

www.naturesnaturalhealing.com/sitemap.shtml

Music

[Gospel Lyrics](http://www.allpraiselyrics.com) - www.allpraiselyrics.com

[The Cyber Hymnal](http://www.cyberhymnal.org) - www.cyberhymnal.org

Students

[Webster's Dictionary](http://www.merriam-webster.com) - www.merriam-webster.com

[Acronym Finder](http://www.acronymfinder.com) - www.acronymfinder.com

[Online Resource For Black College Students](http://www.blackstudents.com) - www.blackstudents.com

[Georgia Dept. of Education Testing](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_testing.aspx) - www.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_testing.aspx

[Georgia Dept. of Driver Education](http://www.dds.ga.gov/Training/index.aspx) - www.dds.ga.gov/Training/index.aspx

In Case You Didn't Know... "A Lasting Vision"

The Gideons International, founded in 1899, serves as an extended missionary arm of the church and is the oldest Christian business and professional men's association in the United States of America. Here are some highlights from their long history of service:

The Idea—In the autumn of the year 1898, John H. Nicholson of Janesville, Wisconsin, came to the Central Hotel at Boscobel, Wisconsin, for the night. The hotel being crowded, it was suggested that he take a bed in a double room with Samuel E. Hill of Beloit, Wisconsin. The two men soon discovered that both were Christians. They had their evening devotions together, and on their knees before God the thoughts were given which later developed into an association.



First Meeting Called —On May 31, 1899, the two men met again at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, where they concluded to band Christian commercial travelers together for mutual recognition, personal evangelism, and united service for the Lord. They decided to call a meeting in Janesville, Wisconsin on July 1, 1899, in the Y.M.C.A.

"We shall be called Gideons."—Only three men were present at that meeting: John H. Nicholson, Samuel E. Hill, and Will J. Knights. They organized with Hill as president, Knights as vice president, and Nicholson as secretary and treasurer. Much thought was given to what the name of the association should be, and after special prayer that God might lead them to select the proper name, Mr. Knights

arose from his knees and said, "We shall be called Gideons." He read the sixth and seventh chapters of Judges and showed the reason for adopting that name.

Effective Witnesses in Hotels—In view of the fact that almost all of the Gideons in the early years of the association were traveling men, the question quite naturally arose regarding how they might be more effective witnesses in the hotels where they spent so much of their time. One trustee went so far as to

suggest that The Gideons furnish a Bible for each bedroom of the hotels in the United States. He commented, "In my opinion, this would not only stimulate the activities of the rank and file of the membership, but would be a gracious act, wholly in keeping with

the divine mission of the Gideon Association." This plan, which they called "The Bible Project" was adopted by the convention at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1908.

Church Support—It is interesting to note that the practice of the churches contributing to the support of the Gideon Scripture program originated with a pastor. Just two months after the 1908 Louisville Convention, a state convention convened in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. National Secretary Frank Garlick and Mr. A. B. T. Moore attended a meeting of the Ministerial Union, and after their program they asked if Brother Garlick could address the ministers on the work of the Gideon Association. He spoke of the needed Bible distribution, and at the close of his 10-minute address, Mr. Moore's own pastor, Dr. E. R.

Burkhalter, First Presbyterian Church, arose and moved, "...that Gideon Bibles be placed in all local hotels and that the Union be responsible for the funds." The motion was unanimously carried and a committee appointed to apportion the cost to the churches, according to their strength.

A Worldwide Effort—It's been nearly 100 years since The Gideons International placed the first Bible in a hotel room in Montana. Today, The Gideons are organized in more than 180 countries around the globe and print Scriptures in more than 80 languages. Through God's grace and to His Glory, more than 1.3 billion Bibles and New Testaments have been placed by The Gideons, and the work continues . . .

Source: www.gideons.org

If you would like to support this ministry, please send all donations to:

Renewed Hearts, Inc.,
P.O. Box 5474, Atlanta, GA 31107

Renewed Hearts, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Check out our website!
www.renewedheartsinc.org

If you would like to submit an article, a poem, or share a testimony, email us at:

heartbeat@renewedheartsinc.org.

All articles are subject to editing and may not be included in the current issue. However, it may be included in a later issue.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for this ministry. Renewed Hearts, Inc. is a 501(c)3 self-supported, non-profit organization. If you have a request, please email us at:

prayers@renewedheartsinc.org.

Please pray for the following individuals:

- PF - strength to make a commitment to Christ and let bad relationships go
- M - she needs strength to get out of an abusive relationship
- B - break strongholds of a relationship that she needs to get out of.
- RF - suicidal thoughts and tendencies

- EW - Health
- TC - Health

Also, please pray for:

- Our family members
- Our Church members and our Pastors
- Adults - that we will exemplify Jesus Christ to the youth
- The Youth - desire to follow Jesus
- A grant writer - to help raise funds so the ministry can provide services for the community
- A facility for this ministry

The News Crew

**Gary James, Tanya James, Derek Peters,
Marsha Peters, Todde Bliss, Karla Bliss**



The Heart Beat
Renewed Hearts, Inc.
P.O. Box 5474, Atlanta, GA 31107
www.renewedheartsinc.org
heartbeat@renewedheartsinc.org