

# The Heart Beat

SPECIAL  
EDITION

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## *Will I Ever Get Over This?* by Karla Bliss



If you live on this earth long enough, you will experience loss, be it from death, divorce, friendship, or a job. Each loss has varying degrees of intensity and grief. The loss of a friendship may not be as intense as the loss of a marriage to divorce. The loss of a parent may not be as intense as the loss of a child or a spouse. The loss of a job would be more difficult if you are living on one income and had no family or support group, than if you had many resources and your spouse was still working.

We all react to pain differently, based on our family background, our culture, our temperament and other stressors that may be

going on in our lives. But one thing is certain, we will all grieve at one time or another for the simple fact that we live on planet earth.

This month our theme is 'Compassion and Comfort for the Hurting'. In this issue we wanted to share comfort and hope for the grieving through the eyes of those who have had their own personal struggles with grief and the journey towards healing. You may have already lost someone in death, already experienced a divorce, already experienced the loss of a job, or even the loss of your reputation. You may be dealing with the terminal illness of a loved one or battling an

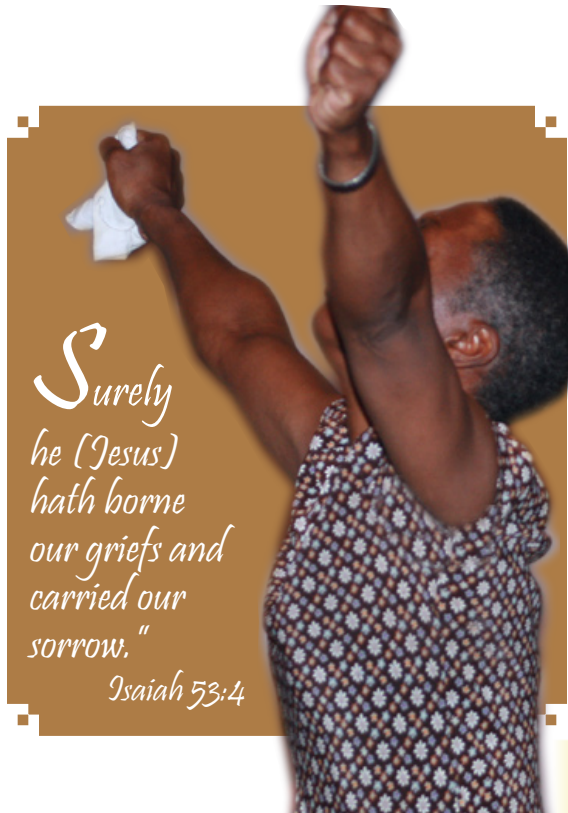
illness yourself. If so, you are grieving. If you are experiencing the loss of a job, in addition to reading this newsletter, please refer to the story 'The Trust Factor' in our December/January issue which addressed the loss of a job. This month's we will talk primarily about a loss from illness, death, divorce and abandonment.

The Bible says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you will find rest unto your souls." *Matthew 11:28-30.*

Are you tired? Are you hurting? Do you need comfort? Come, find rest. Does it seem like no one really understands what you are going through? Come, find rest. Have you felt like giving up lately? Then come, find rest. Let God touch you, let Him heal you, let Him restore you and may you never be the same.

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*Surely  
he (Jesus)  
hath borne  
our griefs and  
carried our  
sorrow."*

*Isaiah 53:4*

## Exactly where does it hurt? by Gary James



Gary and Tanya James are the Ministry Directors for Renewed Hearts, Inc.

Some months back I was experiencing chronic headache pain. I tried all kinds of remedies and medicines that offered no relief. The pain was getting worse and finally my wife convinced me to go and see a doctor. The doctor asked me what problems I was having. I responded by saying, "My head will not stop hurting."

I remember plainly his next words being, "Exactly where does it hurt?" I then begin to describe exactly where on my head the pain was coming from. I replied, "It

was the left side, near the front, around my left eye and the inner part of my nose on the left side".

I thought smugly to myself, "I wonder if that is specific enough". After a brief examination,

I was diagnosed with a sinus infection and the doctor prescribed an antibiotic which should clear up the problem within a few days. I was relieved to know that this pain in my head would soon be gone.

I took the medicine as prescribed, however, one week passed and the pain was still there. In fact several weeks passed and the pain had gotten worse. Now, really frustrated and a little worried, I went to see my eye doctor. Once again she asked me the same question, "Exactly where does it hurt?" Being quite familiar with the pain by now, I described again, exactly as before, where the pain was located. After a thorough examination, she discovered and was quite confident that the pain was related to a condition called 'astigmatism' in my left eye. In other words, my vision had worsened and

I needed a new contact lens prescription.

My previous prescription was not correcting the astigmatism, therefore causing strain in my left eye, which was identified as the true source of my headache pain. She prescribed a new set of contact lenses and the pain was gone a day later. After several long months, I was so thankful to finally pinpoint the source of my pain.

My point in sharing all of this is simply that in order to properly deal with the hurts and pains that we can and will experience in this life, we must first truly identify with the source of our pain so that we can receive the proper treatment for healing. The medical doctor gave me some medicine, but

See 'Hurt', continued on p.11



## Short Cutz.....

If you are like me I detest cutting out coupons. For one thing, it is time consuming and then having to keep up with all of those little pieces of paper can be a frustrating. I feared looking like a super mom in the grocery store while flipping through coupons and taking an extra hour to shop for food.

It was only when I began to take a look at how we were saving a considerable amount of money on food that I really begin to appreciate the sacrifice of coupon cutting.

As a result, our two teenage sons are now looking out for coupons. They have discovered that the more mom and dad save, the more it benefits them. I have a free subscription to the local Sunday paper which has many coupons I use. I used my frequent flier miles to get the subscription because I will never have enough mileage to get a free ticket.

Also, keep your eyes open for stores that offer frequent sales, such as Kroger's, every Thursday and Publix with their weekly buy one, get one free deals. With the uncertainty of

our economy and financial stability, now is a good time to stock up on 2 for 1 deals. You will save a great deal on your food bill. When you combine the coupons with the sales prices already available, you are truly working as a good steward of God's blessings.

So start cutting and remember, the more you save, the more you can be a blessing to someone in need. See you next month.

Gary



# Terminal Illness and Financial Planning

by Pastor J. M. Phipps, Jr. of Ft. Worth, TX

There are those who find it difficult to deal with reality when facing the financial responsibilities involved in the terminal illness of an immediate family member. Three factors typically cause this state of trepidation. One, the fear of stripping the terminally ill of their dignity by taking control of their finances. Two, fear that planning for the demise of the terminally ill might cause the patient to give up or stop fighting to live. Three, fear that planning for the demise of the terminally ill will demonstrate a lack of faith and block God from working on the patients behalf. Let us examine these three factors in turn.



An adequate understanding of banking rules and state laws is important, the advice of an estate attorney is advisable and a loving and trusting family environment is imperative. State law and banking practices prohibit the use of checking or credit accounts by anyone other than those assigned to the accounts. The closeness of familiar relationship is irrelevant. Should the terminally ill

pass into a comma, lose the ability to communicate verbally, due to stroke, paralysis, or God forbid, death, their finances would be unavailable to the family, possibly with catastrophic results. The terminally ill and the family should be assured that a second signature on accounts is in the families' best interest. The terminally ill should be encouraged to do what they can for as long as they can. As much as possible, the second signature should be the choice of the terminally ill. Unless there is some extreme or mitigating circumstance, all financial planning that will affect the

family should be openly shared and discussed so as not to cause unnecessary stress on the terminally ill or the family.

The fear that the terminally ill will give up the fight if they feel total loss of control of their life can be greatly alleviated if the patient is assured of the families' love and respect. Thoughtful and sensitive inquiries as to the location and contents of life insurance and burial policies should not cause any undue stress to the patient if handled in the right way. Again it is vitally important that the patient be encouraged to perform whatever task they are still capable of performing for as long as they can.

Finally, there is no fear of demonstrating a lack of faith by prudent preparation unless one asks amiss when they pray. We can not demand anything of God, nor do we command God. Such impetus is

blasphemous. God will do what is in the best interest of His children and what will bring glory to His name. Our prayer should be sincerely, not my will, but Thine be done. If we submit our will to God's will, then our faith will be rewarded and we can live at peace with God, ourselves and the world, no matter what God's decision might be and we can avoid the calamitous results of not properly preparing for the expenses involved in making final arrangements for our loved ones.

## Tax Saving Tips

Taxpayers whose wages were slashed in 2008 or who were laid off, may be eligible for tax credits this year. Check with your tax professional for more information.



### 1. Recovery Rebate Credit

A second chance to get the Economic Stimulus package.

### 2. Homeowner Credit

A no-interest loan equal to 10% of the home's price that has to be repaid over 15 years by owing more taxes or lowering your tax refund.

### 3. Child Tax Credit

Parents are eligible to receive a tax credit for children under the age of 17.

### 4. Earned Income Tax Credit

For families with two or more children with income less than \$41,646 and one child with income less than 36,995.

Source: *The Wall Street Journal*

## Quote of the Month

*"Compassion that God manifest toward us, He bids us manifest toward others."*

EGW

## Family First: When it's Hard to "Let Go", by Karla Bliss

I was making my usual nursing rounds when I arrived in Mrs. Crane's room. She appeared to be resting quietly and as I was turning to leave, I heard what sounded like water dripping on the floor. The only problem was that it was coming from the bottom of her bed. The only light in the room was the light coming from the corridor, but in the dim light I saw blood at the foot of her bed. Alarmed, I pulled back her covers and discovered she was lying in a pool of blood. In fact, it was such a large amount that it was now cascading off the side of her bed.

I could see it was coming from her right stump. She had multiple surgeries on her leg and it was now amputated right below her hip joint. With kidney disease, diabetes, poor circulation and high blood pressure, she was a very sick lady. When the nurses changed her dressings they wore masks to keep from gagging or regurgitating from the stench of her wounds and the decaying condition of her body.

I immediately called for help and the doctor was paged. We held pressure until he came and wheeled her off to yet another surgery. She made it through the surgery and continued to deteriorate. She got so bad that the medical staff was confused as to why and how she could keep holding on despite the fact that she was almost in total body system failure.

Her body was for the most part gone, but yet she lived.

I began to notice the devotion of Mr. Crane to his wife. They had been



married for many years and had no children and very little extended family. He was having a very difficult time with her illness. It soon became evident that Mrs. Crane was still alive because she was

holding on for her husband. She was afraid he would not fair well with her passing and so despite her worn down condition, she fought on.

When Mr. Crane arrived the next day I spoke to him outside his wife's room. I told him that I believed she was ready to die, but she was afraid too because she was concerned about how he would fare without her. I told him, "She needs your permission to die. Tell her that you are going to be alright, that you are going to make it, that you will miss her, but that it's OK to go now." He cried for quite some time outside her room before he gathered enough courage to tell her that it was OK to do what he dreaded most – die. She died peacefully the next day. Was it easy for him? No, but he was at peace. And even more importantly, she was at peace about him.

Over and over again I've seen this scenario in action. It's humanly difficult to let go, but it's one of the most loving acts. To push a loved one to hang on when they are tired of fighting and there is no quality of life left,

is selfish. Many times patients suffer extended illnesses because they are holding on for the family because the family cannot "Let Go."

Letting go means you stop fighting for them to live, that you stop trying to find one more cure, that you stop trying to fix what you have no power to fix and you turn the situation, your loved one and the outcome over to God. Do you need to "Let Go"?

### Inspiration

#### *I Said a Prayer for You Today* Author Unknown

*I said a prayer for you today,  
And know God must have heard.  
I felt the answer in my heart,  
Although He spoke no word.  
I didn't ask for wealth or fame,  
I knew you wouldn't mind.  
I asked Him to send treasures,  
Of a far more lasting kind.  
I asked that He'd be near you,  
At the start of each new day,  
To grant you health and blessings,  
And friends to share your way.  
I asked for happiness for you,  
In all things great and small.  
But it was for His loving care,  
I prayed the most of all.*



## My Personal Journey to Healing! by Tanya James



It has been 26 years since I have seen my father and dealing with the pain and rejection has been a long hard journey to travel. My father chose to walk out of my life completely, seeming not to care about how that decision would affect my sister and I. We had a fragmented relationship with him for many years, but when I reached my teens, I thought our relationship was developing a little better. We were getting to know each other better. I really thought we had a decent relationship because I visited with him often. But I was totally misguided.

The last time I went to see him, he wasn't there. I was told that he had moved and was never coming back. I was completely devastated because in all of our visits, he never mentioned that he was thinking about leaving town. How could he do this? How could he break my heart, tearing it to shreds as if it was a piece of paper? I was in shock trying to deal with the fact that he was gone. I felt so stupid for fully opening up my heart to him. You see, I loved my Daddy completely. He was my heart and now he was gone, taking my heart with him.

I cried all the way home feeling so alone. Soon, I became very angry. I stopped caring about my grades. I stopped caring about people. I was a complete mess. After I turned 17 years old, I decided to get it together because I was tired of being angry about Daddy. I got more serious about school and I tried to straighten out the mess I had made with my life. I was determined to put Daddy out of my mind.

See 'Journey', continued on p. 11

## "I Believe I'll Testify", by Derek Peters, Sr.

I love the rhetorical questions contained in the words of the following song, especially, as it pertains to the hurting:

"Does Jesus care when my heart is pained too deeply for mirth or song; as the burdens press and the cares distress and the way grows weary and long?

Does Jesus care when I've said "good-bye" to the dearest on earth to me and my sad heart aches 'til it nearly breaks- is it aught to Him? Does He see?"

Just recently, on a bitterly cold night, a mother and father in the metro Atlanta area lost three of their four daughters in a fiery blaze. The three daughters that died in the inferno were 13, 9 and 6. The one, who escaped along with her parents, was 12.



As I sat in my work-van, stuck in traffic, the horrific news report of the tragedy came over the radio. I listened in stunned disbelief, with a lump in my throat and tears welling up in my eyes. I tried not to imagine the horror, the agony of heart, the desperate, utter helplessness of these parents to save their children as the hungry flames claimed their little lives. I tried not to imagine the despair that must have settled over them like a thick black cloud as they realized that their children were forever gone.

I drove slowly along pondering the awful solemnity of what had occurred at that home and those two verses at the beginning of this article came flooding into my mind. I wondered if those parents cried out in despair, "Jesus, do You care?" I wondered too, how tough it would be to encourage and comfort people like that, who have sustained great loss and

who are enduring the "dagger of pain" thrust so brutally into their hearts.

Then the chorus of the same song came with firm assurance into my mind, "O yes He cares; I know He cares, His heart is touched with my grief;" and I fervently hoped that the bereaved family would believe that in faith.

What can take away our hurt; nothing but the love of Jesus. He is the Great and only antidote to combat pain and suffering. He has promised in His word that He will never leave us or forsake us, (*Heb. 13: 5*) no matter how bleak life may get. *Deuteronomy 33:27* says, "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are His everlasting arms."

See 'Testify', continued on p. 9



## *The Way Maker, written by Karla Bliss, as told by Geannie Watson*

It had only been a year since Geannie and her husband Dexter had given their lives to Christ and she was already seeing signs that all was not well. At first it was just subtle signs, then later, more obvious red flags. Dexter tried to hide it from her, but when he came from work she smelled cigarette smoke and alcohol on his breath. Soon after this, he started not having money to pay bills or buy food and she wondered if he had reverted to his old habit of using drugs. Believing that God could do anything, she started praying that He would work a miracle in their marriage.

Geannie was nine months pregnant with their youngest child when a letter from the Department of Children's Services arrived in the mail. Uncertain and curious, she opened it. Her hands began to tremble as she read its contents. By the time she finished reading, her body was shaking uncontrollably. She felt an empty pain in the pit of her stomach. She couldn't believe what she was reading! The letter was a Paternity Suit for unpaid child support and the father of the child was her husband! She was now crying uncontrollably. "What's wrong Mom?" She could hear the sound of worry in her oldest son's voice. Too engrossed in her own sorrow she couldn't say much. "Mama's fine baby," she said.

She eventually gathered herself together and called her husband at work and he immediately came home and apologized profusely. He tried to console her, but it was impossible. He had hidden this terrible secret for two years. "How could

he?" she thought to herself. The child involved in the case was 1½ years old and to make matters worse, the mother of the baby was Geannie and Dexter's 18 year old baby sitter. Reeling from this second blow, she was in a daze.

She still wanted the marriage to work, but one month after their baby was born, Dexter went to work and never returned home. Ashamed, she withdrew into a shell and didn't want to talk to anyone. She didn't feel pretty and her self-esteem was at an all time low. Despite the odds, she held on to the hope of saving the marriage. For 2 ½ years she prayed, but one day she found out that her husband had a second child outside of their marriage. She then knew it was time to let go.

Geannie tried to find comfort in church, but found out that things weren't the same. Now husbandless, she was treated differently. Some of their former friends shunned her, making her feel isolated and alone. Withdrawing even more, she felt tainted and unwanted.

One day a close friend of Geannie's asked her if she would like to re-locate and start over. Without telling a soul and making her four children promise not to reveal anything to anyone, she sold her belongings and moved to Atlanta with only clothes for herself and the children. Even though she only had the clothes on her back, for

the first time in a long while, she was truly happy.

In Atlanta, healing began and she became free. God started telling her that the way to healing was to share how He delivered her. She began sharing her story with strangers on the bus and strangers on the street. The more she talked, the more the weight seemed to be lifted from her shoulders and the more she experienced the healing grace of Christ. After all God has done for Geannie, she can say, "When I am weak, then I am strong - the less I have, the more I depend on him." *2 Corinthians 12:10*. God made a way for Geannie and He will make a way for you.



### *In God's Time*

*We move to the rhythm of life  
As sure as the beat of a heart.*

*The waves of the sea  
As they rush to the shore  
Return to begin where they start.  
All time is measured by God,  
Each hour is held in His hand.  
For He sees the span of all our days,  
And He guides us in the way that  
He has planned.*

*In God's time prayers are answered,  
In God's time wounded hearts are healed.  
In God's time there is comfort,  
There is peace, there is rest.  
In God's time there are trials;  
In God's time there are hopes and dreams,  
But in time, by His mercy,  
There is love, there is joy, there is life.*



## Children Have Feelings Too! by Sherrie P. Moreland of Phenix City, AL

Sometimes when death occurs, in the turmoil of the aftermath, children are often unintentionally over-looked or neglected. Much attention is focused on the surviving spouse, parent, grandparent, etc., while the children receive an initial hug, "poor thing". But children have feelings too!

By the time a child reaches about nine years old, they should be able to grasp the permanence of death. Prior to this age, especially if the subject has not been addressed before, the child may expect the dead person to return. A child may believe that they

caused the death of the loved-one because they had been angry with that person, or because they were a "naughty" child. Then comes a fear of the dark; fear that the child himself or the surviving parent will soon die. Grief-stricken children may also regress to behavior, such as, bed-wetting, or thumb-sucking. They quickly cry or become angry about things that normally wouldn't disturb them. Fatigue, loss of appetite,



stomach aches and fear of being separated from close family are also typical of grieving children.

What can adults do to help a grieving child? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Be able to acknowledge your own grief and feelings and know what you believe regarding death and God. If you have a good relationship with God and are allowing Him to be your refuge and strength in trouble, (Ps. 46:1), You will more than likely be able to be there for your grieving child.

See 'Children', continued on p.13

## In Case You Didn't Know..., by Todde Y. Bliss, Sr.

We were simulating a mock war with full battle gear on a warship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, in a high state of alert. While practicing in tandem with our allies for a week, the weather channel reported that Hurricane David was heading our way. Just barely missing the hurricane, we headed to England for Liberty Call. Our ship had just anchored in the English Channel, as I was making my final itinerary to visit the most famous sights in England with some of my Marine buddies. Big Ben, Stratford on Avon, Liverpool and Buckingham Palace were just a few that made our list.



I was called and then escorted into the Chaplain's quarters. This was not the usual routine for a person about to go on leave. The chaplain asked me if I knew why I was there and I replied,

"No sir." He then proceeded to tell me that the American Red Cross sent a telegraph message from my mother (Mutti), requesting that I return Stateside for my father's funeral. From that point on, I was oblivious to anything

and everybody around me.

If you were to ask me how many times I asked the chaplain who died and where I was suppose to go I would tell you I don't know. (Later, I was told that because I was in a state of shock, I asked the chaplain over ten times what

had happened). If you were to ask me how I got off of the ship I would tell you I don't know. (I was airlifted off the ship by helicopter.) The only thing I remembered thinking was, "I've got to get home." This was a road that I had to travel all by myself. The burden was unbearable and I was wondering how Mutti was holding up. I felt that I had no one to confide in, no one to help me get through this difficult time in my life, especially since I was half-way around the world.

The rest of my trip home was a blur. I remember arriving at Royal Air Force Base Mendenhall, in Scotland and waiting on the tarmac for the next available plane to take me to Dover AFB, Delaware - the entry point for all military personnel coming home for emergencies.

See 'In Case...', continued on p. 8

## Taking Care of the Caregiver, by Marsha Peters

The job of a caregiver can be very hard and very stressful, especially if you are the only caregiver to someone who is sick or unable to care for themselves. You may take care of a sick parent or child, or you may be a single parent who is the sole provider and caregiver to your children. In either situation, your job as a caregiver can be over-whelming.



In the December/January issue, I shared with you that both my parents were ill at the same time. Thank God they had six children; two boys and four girls! We all did what we had to in

order to take care of both of them at home and still, with all of us there to help, the care-giving job was stressful. I always feel empathy for those who are solely responsible for the care of their loved one. The same is true with single parents. They never get to take a break.

The following are some suggestions for caregivers, taken from my own experience with my siblings and our parents:

1. Take time for yourself or you will become sick or get burned out.
  - Ask a spouse, close relative, friend, or church member who you trust to come and sit for an hour or two.
  - Contact a medical or social agency which would provide sitters, house cleaning, or someone to run errands.
  - Take up a hobby and start exercising.

- Start reading more.
  - Eat right.
  - Don't feel guilty for taking time off, even if it has to be for a week.
2. Don't keep your fears, feelings and concerns bottled up. Talk to someone about your situation. It takes the pressure off of you.
  3. Laugh a lot! It relieves stress.
  4. Pray a lot! "God is a present help in trouble."

Often, when you are in a situation, you can't see simple solutions. Take time to reach out to those around you. They may be going through similar situations and just maybe you can be a support to each other.

Two of my sisters decided to go to an Alzheimer's support group just to get more information from others who might have gone through what we were going through with our mother. When they got there, they discovered that they were able to help others more than others were able to help them. They ended up being the ones that everyone else directed their questions to because they had more experience dealing with the illness than anyone else in the group. This happened to both of them on separate occasions. Both said that even though they didn't receive any information that they didn't already know, it was rewarding being able to share and help others. So I

encourage you to take care of yourself by taking time for yourself because somebody needs you.



## In Case..., from p.7

I remember waiting for a commercial airplane to fly me to Washington D.C. The closer I got to home the more anxious I became.

I arrived on the day of the funeral, so I had to wash up in the public restroom, put on my Dress Blue uniform and go straight to the church for the funeral. Mutti was in good spirits and glad to see me and to know that I had made it. But underneath all that, she was really hurting for the loss of her husband. I was hurting for the loss of an (earthly) father.

In Case You Didn't Know, the road that we travel doesn't have to be a lonely one. We make it that way. We are never alone even when we think we are. The Bible says in *Deuteronomy 31:6 (NKJV)*, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

The burdens that we carry are not for us to carry alone. Maybe due to guilt, anxiety, or stubbornness we make it very hard on ourselves. Again, the Bible says in *Matthew 11:28-30 (KJV)*, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Only by putting our trust in Him and holding on to His unchanging hand can we find comfort and peace.



## The Shirt Off My Back by Elbert James of Crestview, Florida

The other day my eldest sister and I went to visit my youngest sister in the hospital. We had received news that she was not doing well at all and that her body and face was swollen. Our purpose for going to see her was to anoint her and pray for her. After praying for and anointing her, we sat for awhile and comforted her and assured her that all would be well with her. Before we left we asked God to continue his watch care over her. She was very thankful for our visit.

On our way back home that evening as we left Pensacola and entered the highway, we came upon a man who

was hitch hiking a ride to Ocala, FL.

After going down the highway about two

blocks, I decided to stop and give him a ride, so

I pulled over

and proceeded to back up. The man saw me backing and started to pick up his back pack and his dog that he had traveling with him. My sister had seen several homeless people that day with their dogs. I motioned for him to hop up into the back of the truck since it was a nice day and the sun was shining. I am a bit cautious about having hitch hikers sitting behind me while I am driving. That was not something that I wanted to do. So the man threw his belongings onto the truck, picked up his dog and put him into the truck and then climbed in himself. He didn't seem to mind sitting down in the floor of the truck.

As we got back on the road I couldn't help but notice how he sat there enjoying the ride and the wind blowing in his golden bronze hair as he stared at the passing landscape and passing cars, I wondered what could be going through his mind. Every once in a while I would glance in my rear view mirror to check on him and he seemed as though he didn't have a care in the world. I saw what seemed to be a great peace on his face. I began to imagine myself in his place and I was horrified at the thought of being homeless and destitute.

Then I began to think about the Israelites traveling through the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land. I began to think about the promises that God made to Abraham before he left his home land headed to a place that God would show him. It was then that I realized that we must trust in our Heavenly Father to see us through the wilderness and like Abraham, we must have faith and remember that God will take care of us.

As I came to our exit to turn off the freeway, instead of stopping on the side of the road, I decided to go to the McDonalds restaurant and let the man get off. As I turned to go, I began to wonder what I could do for this weary traveler. It was then that God spoke to my heart and said, "As you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

I reached into my pocket and pulled out what money I had and my sister also reached into her purse and contributed more. I don't know how much

it was, but I know that it was ALL that we had. It was then that I saw that his clothes were soiled and dirty and that he needed some more clothes so I pulled off my shirt and gave it to him. He said, "You don't have to do that." I assured him that it was not dirty because I had just put it on to go to Pensacola just a few hours earlier.

I asked him if I could have a word of prayer with him. He welcomed the thought and as he stood in the back of the truck and I stood on the ground, I began to pray for him. After the prayer, I bid him a pleasant journey.

As I drove home I couldn't help but wonder what else I could do for him. The thought came to me to go home and get some of the new shirts and pants that I had in the drawer that I had never worn. I hurried home and dug out some of the new stuff and hurried back to the spot where I had dropped him off. When I got there, I didn't see him and I was afraid that

*See 'Shirt', continued on p. 10*



### Testify, from p. 5

My friends, let's comfort and encourage the hurting with the precious, sure, promises of God's word. May His "peace which passes all understanding" bring healing and solace to battered souls.



## Help For the Hurting, by Karla Bliss

Many times when someone goes through a loss of some kind and is grieving, it's hard to know what to do, or what to say to comfort them. Sometimes, because some don't know what to say, they don't say anything at all. Others say things, but say the wrong things and end up offending, (though not intentionally), those who are already grieving.



sat down on the ground in silence with him for seven days. They were supporting him. They got into trouble in chapter 4 when they started trying to give advice and answers to his predicament because in Chapter 26 Job said "What a big help you are to me-sick and weak as

I am! What have you said to give me hope or to strengthen my feeble faith?" (*The Clear Word Bible Paraphrase*)

How are we supposed to help those who need comfort, be it from illness or death? *Romans 12:15-16* makes it clear how we should carry ourselves in a situation like this. The Bible says, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

Let's break this text down. When someone is happy, be happy with them, but if they are grieving and need comfort, cry with them. Don't be above them in your thinking or think that you have all the answers, but adapt and conform to where they are.

Notice that it doesn't say tell them not to cry. It doesn't say to tell them that their loved one wouldn't want them to be mourning. It doesn't say tell them it's time to get past this and move on. When someone is grieving they need support. When we talk too much we give answers or advice where it is not warranted or needed.

In *Job 2:11-13* when Job's friends first heard about his illness and went to comfort him, they wept. They then

Grieving is a process. There are stages to grieving, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, in her book, "*On Death and Dying*," gives us an example of this. The stages are: "Denial (numbness, this isn't happening); Anger (Why is this Happening?); Bargaining (I promise I'll be a better person if...); Depression (I don't care anymore); and Acceptance (I'm ready for whatever comes). You cannot rush people through these stages or they will pay for it later.

When we try to force someone through a grieving process it causes them to bottle up those feelings and become unhealthy. Sometimes we rush people through the grieving process because we are uncomfortable with the stage of denial, anger, or depression they are in, not realizing that these are all doors the grief-stricken go through before they reach the stage of acceptance.

So what can you do to help the hurting? "I'm sorry for your loss." "Can I pray with you? Or "I will pray for you." Give them a hug. Visit only if they feel up to it, bring food, assist with children, house cleaning and taking relatives to and from the airport. Help them clean up or do chores.

See 'Help', continued on p. 12

## Shirt, from p. 9

he had gotten back on the highway to continue his journey, so I went down to the freeway, but he was nowhere to be found. I went back to the area to look for him and saw him coming from the Wal-Mart. As he approached I offered him the new clothes. He refused and said that He appreciated the offer but that he had no where to put them in his back pack. I could see that his pack was full, so I didn't insist.

That evening when I got home, my wife was curious as to what had happened to my shirt, but before I could say anything, my sister said, "Now I fully understand the meaning of '**Giving the shirt off of your back**'".

That night as I prayed, I thanked God that He had allowed us the privilege to work in his vineyard to bring healing and comfort to someone. He had reminded us that we are as the grass that is here to day and gone tomorrow and that "if we can help somebody as we pass this way, then our living shall not be in vain."



**"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."**

*Hebrews 13:2*

## Journey, from p. 5

I joined the military, where I would soon meet my future husband, Gary. God has really blessed me with a wonderful husband who has been very instrumental in helping me to grow spiritually and mentally.

About ten years ago, I received a call. It was Daddy! I was so excited but also very cautious. We talked briefly and I asked him about where our relationship was heading. I told him that he had a son-in-law and two wonderful grandchildren and I would love for him to meet them. I also told him that I needed to know that he was here to stay. I told him I didn't want my family to fall in love with him and then he disappear again. Well, he made his decision - he never called me again. The pain of that decision re-opened all of those old wounds that I thought I had dealt with.

Soon, I started displacing my anger towards the rest of his family. Why haven't they told him that what he has done to us isn't right? How could my grandmother (his mother) continue talking to him when he won't talk to his children? I just didn't understand. Then one day, a few years back, my aunt (his sister) came to me and said that she was so sorry for what Daddy has done. She said she just didn't understand how he could neglect us and that he was really missing out on seeing what we have become. I really felt better knowing that there was someone in the family who sympathized with how I was feeling.

As time goes by, it gets easier to cope with the void that I have as a result of my father being absent. God has really helped me to deal with the pain. I am even learning to be at peace when the family talks about seeing him recently. Don't get me wrong, it

still hurts, especially when they speak of recent events, but I am making it one day at a time. And each day I am getting stronger. God's word says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give

you rest." *Matthew 11:28*. God has been my comfort and my strength. Now, I am able to pray for my father and perhaps one day our paths may cross again, if not on this earth than hopefully in Heaven.

## Hurt, continued from p. 2

the treatment only addressed the symptoms of my pain and not the source. The eye doctor identified the true source of my pain and relief followed soon after. I am not saying that your hurt and pain will all of sudden disappear. I am saying that you play a big role in helping to identify the true source of your pain. God or a close friend may ask you, "Exactly where does it hurt?" Will you continue to give general answers or are you really ready to pinpoint the real source of the hurt. So many are hurting and really don't know or understand the reasons why.

Sometimes we may feel that God would be displeased when we are true to our feelings. God gave us our feelings and they can be pure as long as they are guided by the Holy Spirit. Oftentimes, anger is misunderstood as an emotion that we should not have or display. The Bible gives us clear direction that anger is a proper emotion as long as it does not lead us into sin. Jesus himself clearly was not very happy when he had to rebuke the money changers for the misuse of God's house. *Eph 4:26, Matt 21:12-13*

Perhaps it's time to start asking yourself some tough questions. Are you angry because God answered someone else's prayer for healing

and blessings while it seems your prayers go unnoticed? Are you hurt and asking why God let your loved one die while another He allowed to live on? Are you angry because you are left with all the responsibilities while the other spouse is off having fun without a care in the world? When God ask you, "Where does it hurt?" don't be afraid or ashamed to tell Him just how you feel.

I have been angry with God many times because I just did not understand what He was doing in my life. It was not until I told myself and God why I was truly angry and hurting that I begin experience healing. I have found that His word has brought so much comfort and understanding. Everything else is just simply my faith and trust in Him. He is a big God and He can handle your anger and your pain.

The reason that God is asking is so that He can prescribe the right treatment. He already knows, but you also need to know so that you can in turn help someone else identify with their true source of pain and anger. The next time the Master Physician asks you, "Exactly where does it hurt?" What will be your honest reply?



## My Deepest Sorrow, by David Bradley



The trauma torments me - the day I lost baby Sue forever. On December 3rd, 2007

she passed away from early onset

Alzheimer's disease. She was

only 62 years old. I will

cherish my 38 years of

marriage to the most

special human being on

earth. I met baby Sue

in South Korea in 1969.

As a young US army

soldier, I fell madly in love

with her. She was 4 feet 11

inches in height, glamorous and

had a beautiful shy smile. I remember

ividly, the first night we went out

together, Sue wore this fabulous black

silky Chinese dress. It had a fancy

neck collar and those special pretty

wrap around buttons.

God brought us from two different worlds. I was a clean cut American guy from New Mexico and she was from South Korea. Today, as I reflect on my life with her, I consider myself to be the luckiest man on the face of the earth. We all remember our marriage vows, for better or for worse, until death do us part.

During my years with baby Sue I was very quiet, reserved and didn't communicate well. I believe it was because of my upbringing. I really didn't show much affection towards her. Even though I loved her, I kept my feelings to myself. I came from a broken home and I was never shown any love.

Alzheimer's is a cruel disease. I didn't have any family support so it was just baby Sue and I. There were days when I thought I couldn't continue any longer,

but my deep love and compassion for her kept me going. During her illness, she would always tell me, "Without you I would have been dead a long time ago." Sometimes I couldn't hold back my tears and Sue would say, "Don't cry, I'm OK." Sometimes she would cry uncontrollably and these were times when I wanted to faint and say, "Please God, help me."

When I cared for Sue at home she would cry and say, "I don't understand what is going on." I would always tell her, "Don't worry, I will take care of you." Other times she would say, "Honey, I'm sorry I can't take care of you anymore, maybe you should find someone else." Several times when she was in an assisted living facility, she started crying and saying, "I'm innocent, I didn't do anything wrong!" Other times she would cry uncontrollably, "My mother is dying, if I don't go home I will kill myself!" Once I called the facility to talk with Sue. As the caregiver was giving her the phone I could hear her voice in the background, "Oh, thank you so much, I'm going to buy you lunch!"

One time I went to visit Sue and she was walking down the hall very slowly. She had on a long pretty, pink nightgown. At the age of 62, she was still a very attractive woman. On another visit she said, "I'm happy to see you, I'm so scared." Sometimes just thinking about these things tears me apart.

Sue had other issues besides dementia. She had hypothyroidism, a hormone deficiency and a rotator cuff problem that caused her to be in agonizing pain. With Alzheimer's she would pace the floor day and

night. She was on medication to help with this, but it caused other complications. She suffered from depression and would cry severely about her family in Korea.

As the disease progressed I had to first hire home caregivers. Later I put her in day care and finally in an assisted living facility. Sometimes her behavior was hard to control and the doctors had to adjust her medication. Other times she was admitted to facilities that could better help her. Every time she went I would cry.

After Sue died I learned of all the remarkable things she said about me. I was told that she was so proud of me and that she respected me so much. She even told the church to pray for me that I would find God. She was a wonderful Christian woman. Sue would stand out in the community for hours and introduced many people to Christ. The church she attended increased in membership from 30-200 largely because her dedicated service.

On Saturday, December 2, 2007, in the late evening Sue was in a deep sleep and her little chest was moving rapidly up and down. Many times that night I would whisper in her ear, "Baby Sue I love you so much." She would open her eyes, smile and fall back into that deep sleep. She did this several times during the night. On Sunday, December 3, 2007 at 2:45 am, she passed away. To this day I thank God I was Sue's husband who took very good care of her. I learned how to put on her make-up, dye and style her hair and get her dressed for Church. "My dearest little angel, don't worry, we'll be together someday with our Personal Savior.



## Children, continued from p. 7

### 2. Communicate with the child.

- Be truthful and gentle – children need to be respected, just like adults and they need to be able to trust those who are close to them – never lie to them. It's OK if you don't know all the answers, just admit it. God does. Help them accept reality.
- Speak simply (a person dies when their body stops working) and answer consistently; even if they ask the same question over and over. They are trying to understand, work through and accept a loss and that's difficult even for an adult.
- Take time to listen and make sure you understand what the child is asking and answer that question. Don't overload the child with too much information, follow their lead.
- Make sure the child understands what you are trying to communicate to them.



negative behavior that is just a reaction to their loss; be patient with them. All children need hugs and kisses, but especially when they are grieving. Don't spoil them with things, give them yourself.

4. Don't put a time limit on the child's grief because each person is an individual. One never gets over it, as if it doesn't hurt anymore. Birthdays, holidays, special occasions may re-trigger the grief.
5. Try to keep your daily routine as normal as possible. This helps bring stability to the child's life.

Help the child in your life find an appropriate way to remember the person they lost, i.e., help them put

a picture album together, write a poem or story, plant a tree, flowers, or a garden.

Death is not the only form of loss that causes grief for a child. Divorce, even if both parents stay involved in a child's life, is still a major loss to the child. Moving to a new house,

leaving an old school, or losing a pet, are all examples of loss that can lead to grief. Helping children deal with loss while young, will help to ensure their ability to deal with loss in a healthy way later on in life.

These warning signs may indicate that you need to get professional help for your child, *Helping Hands, Vol. 4 Issue 3, 1993*:

- School grades dropping and delinquent behaviors rising.
- Becoming a loner or becoming over-active in social activities.
- Hints at suicide (giving prized possessions away, extreme happiness after a long period of gloom).
- Personality changes (believing all are against them).
- Acting out sexually.
- Self-destructive behavior (smoking, drug, abuse, reckless driving).
- Displays of anger such as slamming doors, cursing, or talking back, when this is not normal behavior for the child.
- Prolonged depression.

### 3. Be vulnerable and affectionate.

Don't try to be strong for the children 24/7. Children need to see and know that it is OK to cry when you are hurting and that sometimes one needs a release to be able to go on. The pain you feel is just because you loved that person so much and you will miss them and the time you had together. Help them deal with their own emotions and don't be so quick to punish for some of their

## Help, from p. 10

If the loved one dies follow up with them after the funeral, don't forget about them after the funeral.

Remember that everyone deals with death differently. Just because you may have worked through the process of grief quickly doesn't mean someone else is dysfunctional because they take a

while working through the process. If someone does get stuck they may need professional help, but we can't gauge this by our own emotional thermometers. The most important thing is to be there for them. Be reachable. Be teachable. Be humble and be prayerful.

## Prayer Requests

Please pray for this ministry. Renewed Hearts, Inc. is a 501(c)3 God-supported, non-profit organization. If you have a request, email us at: [prayers@renewedheartsinc.org](mailto:prayers@renewedheartsinc.org).

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Please pray for the following families:

*(Initials are used for confidentiality reasons)*

- S of Florida
- H & P
- F & S
- KW and Praise Team
- J & S
- EJF

Also, please pray for:

- Our finances and the economy
- The jobless
- Our families
- Our Churches and Pastors
- Those who don't know God
- A grant writer - to help raise funds in order to provide needed services.
- A facility for this ministry

## Support

Renewed Hearts, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We operate primarily on the funds from those whom God has divinely inspired to bless this ministry. We are not seeking riches or fame, for it is our desire to be used for the service of God giving all glory and honor to Him. We never want it to be said that we could not help someone, provide a service or minister in a church because of finances. Therefore, we believe, by faith, that God will supply all of our needs.

For these reasons we DO NOT charge any fees for this ministry. If you are so moved, we have several ways that you can support this ministry:

**1. Use H&R Block to do your taxes.** You must be a new client.

H&R Block will donate \$25 to our non-profit organization. (You must use our referral form. See our website for more information).



**2. Become**

**a member of S&K Gives Back.** Every purchase you make at any S&K Menswear location provides a donation of 5% of your purchase amount to a charity of your choice. Visit [www.sksgivingback.com/join.cfm](http://www.sksgivingback.com/join.cfm), select Charitable organization and type in Renewed Hearts.

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4. You may make a personal donation. Please visit [www.renewedheartsinc.org](http://www.renewedheartsinc.org) and click on donate or mail to: Renewed Hearts, Inc. P.O. Box 5474, Atlanta, GA 31107. All donations are tax-deductible.

*Thank you for your support of this ministry.*



*He who stood beside the sorrowing mother at the gate of Nain, watches with every mourning one beside the bier. He is touched with sympathy for our grief. His heart, that loved and pitied, is a heart of unchangeable tenderness.*  
EGW

## Support

Check out our website!

[www.renewedheartsinc.org](http://www.renewedheartsinc.org)

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Thank you for your prayers and support of this ministry.

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

[heartbeat@renewedheartsinc.org](mailto: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.

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