

Sharing

 Community Bible Study

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1765 Business Center Drive, Suite 200, Reston, VA 20190-5327
703-438-8223 • 800-826-4181 • 703-438-8228 (fax)
www.communitybiblestudy.org • info@communitybiblestudy.org

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Remembering God's Faithfulness

Remembering allows life's struggles to be seen through the lens of experience. Because we have experienced God's faithfulness in the past, we are able to "keep on keepin' on," knowing that He will be faithful in the future. The study of

1 Peter is challenging and very significant to me, for it helps me to remember...



Jennifer & Bob Kolb
Philip & Nathan

Five years ago I shared what God was teaching me through the life of my son Daniel. At that time he was only a few months old. Since then, God has deepened my faith and my knowledge of Him in ways I could not have imagined.

Our son was born after we had struggled with infertility for several years. Though I learned a big lesson in trusting God through those painful years of waiting, there was still much to learn. Daniel arrived into this world a beautiful baby boy, weighing over 8 pounds, with red hair, blue eyes, and an undetected metabolic disorder. He was blind and had a severe heart condition, brain damage, feeding disorders, and seizures. The fact that God provided this baby as the answer to my prayers is a mystery that I am still unraveling even today.

Six months into Daniel's life, I was overwhelmed to find out I was pregnant again. Fear consumed me. Would this baby be like Daniel? Soon after the pregnancy was confirmed, a large tumor was found on one of my ovaries, and it was growing rapidly because of pregnancy hormones. Eventually, the doctor said it should be removed because it was taking up space needed for the baby. Surgery was risky, but she assured me it would be best. The tumor was removed successfully, but our second son, Timothy, was born prematurely and did not survive.

The day after Timothy's death, Daniel started to decline. He went into the hospital before I was even released. Ten

days later I held my firstborn son in the ICU as he breathed his last breath. The heart-wrenching pain and total helplessness a mother feels watching her babies die is something that can't be described. I heard myself screaming and screaming, only no sound escaped my lips. Motherhood was something I had dreamed of and had waited years to experience, but it was nothing like I had anticipated. At the time, I had been a Christian for just a few years, and I really wanted to know where God was and why this happened to me. Five years later, I know the answers to some of my questions. They have been found in the Lord, who has given me an enduring hope.

1 Peter has reminded me how suffering encourages a deeper fellowship with God. It allows us to see His hand and feel His presence in a way we often miss when life is good. Since 1997, God has shown me that He was with me every day of Daniel's life. He provided endurance, patience, love, and even joy in the months of caring for a severely handicapped child. He brought me to my knees in prayer and showed me the meaning of true dependence. He graciously forgave my doubts and fears. I was drawn into His presence as all other insignificant distractions were removed. There was no where else to go. I was learning who the God of the Bible was beyond mere words on a page.

My experiences also opened my eyes to the suffering of others. During the many times I sat in the ICU, I saw that many others also suffered, some of whom didn't have a supportive and loving spouse, a community of caring believers, or knowledge of a loving and gracious God. I saw beyond my pain into the lives of others for the first time. God was able to use me to offer hope to many who I would ordinarily not have had the opportunity to meet. As our 1 Peter commentary stated, "Suffering provides the believer a visible means of demonstrating faith, love, and loyalty to Christ. Beyond that, in some inexplicable way, it confirms the existence of God and the certainty of His concern and thus results in inner peace and conviction."

Our church family, CBS, and even Christian strangers

surrounded us and supported us in a way I never knew could exist. Until that time, I never felt the hand of God so profoundly, the power of the living God intersecting with human life. Our pastor describes it as “a glimpse of our future destiny—an appetizer of heaven.” It makes heaven so much more of a reality to me. I am able to look forward with hope and anticipation.

Suffering also has given me a history of God’s faithfulness to tie my anchor to. The doctors told me future children would not be possible, so we entered into the world of adoption. God again saw us through, and this time the outcome was more positive. We were allowed the great privilege of adopting our son Nathan. We learned, through Nathan’s birth parents, what it is to die to your own will and turn your most cherished treasures completely over to Christ.



Philip & Nathan

Six months after Nathan’s exciting arrival, I found myself miraculously pregnant, but I did not rejoice in this pregnancy. A tidal wave of fear assaulted me as I considered the possibility

of having to once again suffer great loss. Philip arrived prematurely, yet he was able to come home after only a brief stay in the ICU. The doctors assured us he looked fine, but as a precaution they ran tests to determine whether he possessed the same metabolic disorder as Daniel. When Philip was three weeks old, we were told his tests results were positive.

We were asked to come in right away and discuss our options, but the doctor was not encouraging. Again a deep sorrow swept over me and I fell on my knees before God and sobbed out my anguish. But this time it was different; I knew that I would get through this. Because I had previously experienced God’s faithfulness, I knew that He would be with us, that His family would be there for us, and that He could use this to bring glory to Himself. I prayed for the strength and faith I needed to love my son, to care for him, and to give him back into his Creator’s hands. We took Philip before the church elders and had them pray for him and for us; we petitioned our faithful friends to pray for us, and we felt God’s hand immediately. I cried and grieved for an entire week. Every time I looked at my precious son, I tried to memorize his face and his smell, knowing he soon would be gone.


Then the phone rang again; the doctor said she had decided to send in more blood to a different lab. The results had come back and they were completely normal! I had no words to say. I just fell to my knees with the overwhelming knowledge of God’s grace, His undeserved favor. He gave us our son back! We just celebrated Philip’s second birthday and he is completely healthy.

God’s faithfulness is new every morning, His compassion never fails. Am I cured of my fear? Not completely. My greatest fear is that something will happen to one of my boys or to my husband.

Sheila Walsh, in her book *Living Fearlessly* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), says, “We know what we are sup-

posed to be (trusting) and we know what we are not supposed to be (fearful)—so we pretend, and it nearly kills us. Grace welcomes us back and keeps us from going insane.”

It was solely God’s grace that breathed hope into my life and allowed me to see Him for who He is. His grace makes it possible for me to say that suffering has matured my faith and continues to refine me into the child of God He desires me to be. Would this have been possible without suffering? I don’t think so. The path of suffering often does not make sense, but it is not senseless! “*The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?*” (Psalm 27:1).

One of our study questions asked us if we agreed with the phrase “Suffering is a part of God’s will, a necessary process to refine the faith of believers.” *I know it is.* He uses each experience in the process of transforming us into His image. All of us, at some point, will be called upon to suffer. I do not feel I have suffered more than anyone else, only in different ways than most. I am simply sharing what God has revealed to me through my spiritual journey so far, a journey that is not finished. 

Jennifer Kolb
Overland Park, KS CBS

New Classes Starting in Fall 2003

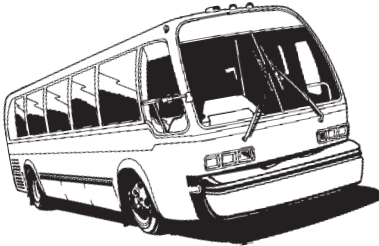
Amelia Island Teen, FL
Chatsworth Eve, CA
East County, CA
Easton/Eastern Shore, MD
Houston Memorial, TX
Keizer, OR
Lake Norman Men, NC
Layton, UT
Lee County Eve, IA
Lewiston, ID
McAlester, OK
Midland Early Teen, TX
Mt. Vernon Eve, IL
Orange Coast (W) Eve, CA
Savannah, GA
Statesville, NC
Taylor (W) Eve, TX
Warsaw/Winona Lake, IN

Check our website: www.communitybiblestudy.org for a complete list of classes in the United States or contact Community Bible Study at 1-800-826-4181 or info@communitybiblestudy.org.

The Crosstown Bus

When I lived in Manhattan in the 1950's, I took the crosstown 42nd Street bus to and from work, connecting with it via transfer ticket from the First Avenue bus. Day after day I showed up at the bus stop, used my transfer ticket, and ended up across town at my job. . . .

I was born in 1933 in Washington, D.C. Immediately following my birth I was left at the hospital with nothing more than a birth certificate that listed an apparently false name for my birth mother (we haven't been able to trace it) and the word "unknown" in the blank for the birth father's name. I was placed in a foundling home until I was eight months old, when I was adopted by a single woman from New Jersey.



Her family took financial responsibility for me but always made it very clear to me that I was not part of the family—I was adopted. I did not have a father. They were not trying to be mean, but this was their deep belief. If my cousins, aunts, and uncles were visiting our grandmother, I would be excused from the dinner table when they began to talk family business. Three years ago in conversation with several of my cousins, I received confirmation that this exclusion was not just a figment of my imagination. Thus I viewed life through a filter of rejection.

My mother married an alcoholic man when I was ten, and years of verbal, emotional, and physical abuse followed, although God protected me from sexual abuse. I lived in fear; major acceptance, abandonment, and self-assurance issues followed me into adulthood. I never really felt wanted by anyone, always feeling "second rate." The vice principal of my boarding school told me that my SAT scores didn't suggest that I should pursue a college education, which did not help my self-esteem.

While growing up, I attended church on Sundays, but I never heard about a personal relationship with Jesus. Upon graduation from high school, I left home to live and work in New York City, ten miles from my home. A back injury made it impossible to follow my dream of becoming a nurse, but I worked hard to become successful as a private secretary and personal assistant in the advertising, film, and TV industry.

By the time I was 24 years old, I had a great job, made good money, enjoyed friends, theater, vacations, etc., but I felt like a caged gerbil on a treadmill. I was like the crosstown bus, just plying my route back and forth, back and forth, day after day after day. I would lie awake at night wondering what this life was all about. Life was dark, depressing, and frightening. I cried out to God, but I did not see any release from the issues that plagued me. It looked like a very long haul until I could leave this earth.

In late May 1957 Billy Graham arrived in New York to hold a crusade. There was huge media coverage, but even though I'd heard about it, it wasn't something I wanted to do. But God had another plan. One night, through a set of circum-

stances that could only have been His doing, a friend and I ended up sitting in box seats listening to Billy Graham. I thought it was all a little crazy and had to bite my cheek to keep from laughing. We went to a bar after the "show" and laughed about it, tossing it aside as ridiculous.

But God would not let me go. Secretly, each night for a week, I went to the arena and lost myself in the huge crowd. I listened and watched, then I'd grab the crosstown bus home, only to return the following night. Slowly God's voice cut through the layers of self-protection, telling me that Jesus was the answer to my life. The eighth night I made my way from the top balcony of Madison Square Garden, rode the escalator, and walked down the long aisle to stand in front of Mr. Graham and pray the sinner's prayer.

I did not know what God had in store for me, but I remember thinking, "Now I have a Father; I belong to a family." When I boarded the crosstown bus and headed home from the crusade that night, June 8, 1957, I was a new creation, a child of God, and eternal life was mine. Jesus Christ had invaded my life. I vividly remember that as I sat in my seat it seemed as though there was a new light in the bus (I even wondered if they had changed the light bulbs); there was a newness to what I was seeing all around me. Now I understand that the scales had fallen from my eyes and I was seeing true light for the first time.

Two words, "But God," have woven themselves into the bleak and unanswerable situations in my life, and over time God has used His "eternal eraser" to remove my old belief system and replace it with His truth.

I cannot make it on my own,

But God came to give me abundant life (John 10:10).

I am not acceptable,

But God says I am of one spirit with Him
(1 Corinthians 6:17).

I have no worth,

But God says I was chosen to bear fruit (John 15:16).

I am not loved,


But God has loved me with an everlasting love
(Jeremiah 31:3).

I am not secure,

But God says I cannot be separated from His love
(Romans 8:35-39).

I do not know what will happen when I die,

But God provided eternal life through Jesus Christ
(John 3:36; 1 John 5:11-12).

It has been many years since I rode the crosstown bus to the Billy Graham Crusade, years of wonderful adventure. Although the path has been full of joy and sadness, peace and turbulence, and at times I struggle with my acceptance/rejection issues, the light I saw that night has never changed. I look forward to all that He has in store for me here, and the promise of what He has for me in heaven. 

*Maggi McCutchen
Charlotte, NC CBS*

What Is God Calling Us to Do?

I have fallen in love with middle school—junior high—people. What a blessing and privilege it has been to hear the answers to their questions in Core Groups this spring. At the end of each lesson were the same questions. What is a new truth that you have learned from this Scripture? What hope have you gotten from this Scripture? What is an action that you can put into your life as a result of studying this passage? The answers nail down the fact that the Bible is Truth. In it is found our hope and a plan of action for each day.

As National Director of *Teen CBS*, my heart's desire has been for high schoolers and 18 to 24 year olds to have ownership of their spiritual growth. They can do this by reading the Bible and joining weekly with other followers of Christ to discuss God's Word in a loving community atmosphere. God has created us to be in relationships and has given us the longing to have a place where we feel we belong. We need these things to thrive as believers. Over the last nine years, many young adults have been provided with this opportunity through their local *Teen CBS* classes.

Teen CBS classes are flourishing and growing in numbers. We now have 45 across the country. In the last few years, my energy has been directed toward the growth of another arm of *Teen CBS*, the 18-2-24 ministry. After two years, our group in Midland is still the only 18-2-24 class in the world. I have seen such fruit from this class and I realize anew what a crucial decision-making time this age can be. I had hoped God would quickly raise up more 18-2-24 classes. As we see *Teen CBS* students graduate from high school each year and hear them



Teen CBS St. Louis, MO
Girl's Core Group

wish for a class on their college campus or in the town where they work, we know there is a need.

God had other, or shall I say, additional plans. At our *Teen CBS* National Team meeting last July, Kelly Cassels, Teaching Director of the Roswell, New Mexico, *Teen CBS* class and the Mountain Regional Director for *TCBS*, asked, "When are we going to include junior high? CBS is a caring in-depth Bible study for all except junior high." I began to pray.

I wondered, "Who can pray with me, Lord?" God sent Kendall Clark to me (see page 5). Kendall was Children's Director in the Midland Day class and Marilyn Yates is the Teaching Director. When Marilyn mentioned Jr. High CBS to Kendall, Marilyn saw a bright look in Kendall's eyes. I am sure Marilyn started praying that God would give her a new Children's Director, because both she and Kendall knew immediately that God was



Teen CBS Littleton, CO
Boy's Core Group

calling Kendall to work with junior high school students.


Often, we think of our vocation as our job in the work place, but the first meaning of vocation is "a call, summons, or impulsion to perform a certain function or enter a certain career, esp. religious." God speaks and His voice can enter our hearts like a huge loud speaker. God's call plus my action. All of us are called to discover our vocation, to find a passion from God that results in action. I believe that is why God says, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10) so we can hear that voice (see the *Prayer Corner*, page 7).

When we die, I believe that God will ask us "Did you do what I created you to do?" Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." God is calling me, He is calling you,

to fulfill the purpose for which He created us. For Kendall it is to feed junior high students in Midland, Texas, for me it is the *Teen CBS* ministry.

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17). Thousands of people have answered that call through the ministry of Community Bible Study, making it possible for men and women, college-age young people, high school kids, middle school youngsters, grade schoolers, those in preschool, even creepers and crawlers (Baby CBS) to know Him through the study of His Word. How can I ever thank the Children's Teacher in the Austin, Texas CBS who taught my three-year-old granddaughter, Cate, this year?

It is so exciting to see God take three people praying one hour a week to raise up the junior high ministry known as *eTeen CBS*. He answered with 250 early teens (*eTeens*) and 30 leaders. Did we ever get discouraged? Yes. Will we get discouraged again? Of course.

God called us, gave us the passion and energy to pray, and then *He did it*. The response from the kids as well as their parents has been breathtaking. Only God can cause people to tell their soccer coach or a dance teacher that they can't practice on Tuesdays anymore because they have a Bible study. God is the source of our time. Matt Redman's song *Better Is One Day* reminds us that "better is one day in [God's] courts than thousands elsewhere." I do not want to spend my days elsewhere. Like many others, I have already wasted too many of my days here; I want to hear His voice, hear His call. Will you choose to join me in spending time in His courts, listening for His voice, and asking, "What is my vocation?" 



Kitchen Helpers: one of the many ways to serve in the *Teen CBS* Program

Janice Henry
National Director
Teen CBS Program

Introducing...eTeen CBS

I vividly remember the exact moment I heard the words “Junior High CBS.” A dear friend Marilyn Yates and I were at a Young Life fundraiser in Midland, Texas, on October 9, 2002. In conversation, Marilyn said that Janice Henry (see page 4) wanted to start a prayer group to pray for a Junior High CBS to start. My heart started pounding, and the look in my eye must have changed, because immediately Marilyn said, “Don’t even think about it!” Marilyn is my Teaching Director and I was serving as Children’s Director.

I was so excited about the possibility of Junior High CBS that I could barely sleep that night. The next day I called Janice and she said, “Let’s start praying and see what happens.” The following Tuesday night the two of us met to pray during *Teen CBS*.



eTeen Girl’s Core Group

We prayed that God’s plan for Junior High CBS would be revealed to us. We also asked that, if it was His will, additional people would come to participate in a prayer group. The following week my 11 year-old daughter, Reagan, asked if she could come. She was extremely dedicated and

God used her to reveal many things to us. It was awesome.

Every week our prayer group grew. We would pray for men to come forward and hear the call, and men would show up. We prayed for wisdom and discernment, and a fresh voice would come and lead us forward. We called a few friends, mailed a few fliers, started a 6th grade Core Group with Reagan and her friends, and then we watched in amazement as God ordered the steps of this new program.



eTeen Boy’s Core Group

I have been blessed beyond words as God opened the perfect location, brought forth His Servants Team to lead, and called the men and women to serve in all areas of the Junior High ministry. He performed miracle after miracle right before our eyes and brought the teenagers to hear and learn more about Him.



Kendall Clark
eTeen CBS Director
 Midland, TX *eTeen* CBS


When my mom became the Children’s Director for her CBS class, not only did her life change, but our family’s life changed as well. We had always been a Christian family, but not really strong Christians. As I watched my parents’ and sister’s lives change, I wanted mine to change, too. So the day my mom came home and told me about a prayer group for a Junior High CBS, I was overjoyed. I thought this would definitely be the life-changing experience God had planned for me.

The first prayer meeting I went to, I was so excited about starting *eTeen CBS* that I couldn’t share my ideas. But


at the next prayer meeting I tried to tell all my ideas. God shined through me to Janice and my mom, Kendall, while God shined through them to me. As time passed, I looked forward to going to these prayer meetings. When my mom suggested we start a Core Group with my friends and me, I was so happy I couldn’t see straight. I couldn’t wait to tell my friends. In this Core Group, I met people who would be a part of my life-changing experience. Kelly Hullender and Catie Bosworth were two people, besides my family, who made my experience great.



Kendall & Reagan

My life has changed so much because of *eTeen CBS*. I have met incredible people and lifelong friends. I will never forget how *eTeen* has helped me, encouraged me, and given me knowledge and understanding about God. As you can see this has truly been a life-changing experience. 

Reagan Clark
eTeen CBS Midland, TX

The hunger in these kids for God’s Word was obvious from the beginning. They know God has a plan for their lives and—praise God—they also know where to look to find out more about that plan. I am totally convinced that He is ready to change the lives of 7th and 8th graders and to raise them up to be the Christian leaders in their communities. What an incredible honor it is to be part of *eTeen CBS* and to see God work in the lives of these students. 

B.J. Parrish
 Teaching Director
 Midland, TX *eTeen* CBS

If you would like to know more about the *Teen CBS* program check our website: www.teenCBS.org. If you hear God’s call and want to know how to start a prayer group for a *Teen CBS*, 18-2-24, or an *eTeen* class, please contact Community Bible Study for information at 1-800-826-4181 or tcbs@communitybiblestudy.org.

Creating a Legacy with God

We are an average Christian family. We live in a great neighborhood—the kind that is not quite rural, not quite urban. When we moved into our home seven years ago, we realized that there were no other families with young children and only two other families of believers. We were encouraged



Lori & John McClung
Emily, Grace & Jonathon

by a friend to start an annual neighborhood social, which we did. It grew quickly and we began getting to know the families on our street.

The Lord led me to pray for each home that became vacant. I would pray that He would bring the family He wanted to live in that home. God is so faithful. We now have many believing families on the street, and to our kids' delight, numerous children of comparable ages.

Not all of the new families were believers when they first settled into the neighborhood; for example, the family with three young sons who moved in next door. Our children took little time in getting to know them because they were of similar ages and home schooled as well, but we did not get the impression that their belief system was similar to our own.

Our son Jonathon has a very sensitive heart toward the things of God, and he became spiritually burdened for his new friends. Every night when we pray with our children, we ask each of them to “pray for someone the Lord has set on your heart.” Jonathon always insisted on praying for the boys next door. This was the beginning of a year’s worth of prayers for our “new neighbors.”

One day, months after they moved in, their mom, Julie, came over to pick up her sons, and the subject of God came up. I was amazed at how long she wanted to stay and talk. She asked question after question about the end times, Jesus Christ, truth, etc. I was afraid that, at some point, my statements might offend her and she would stand up and leave, never to be heard from again. To my surprise an hour passed and unfortunately, I was the one who had to end the discussion. Similar conversations took place over time.

In August 2001, the Lord nudged me to invite her to CBS. In my always obedient way I said, “Lord, I don’t think she would like to come and besides her sons may not like the curriculum that is being taught.” After negotiating with the Lord, I gathered my courage and invited them to CBS.

Our church had just finished a building program, and we were meeting in the new building, but the carpeting in the sanctuary had yet to be installed. Our pastor came up with a plan of faith to impact our community. At the end of the first service in the new facility, we were asked to come forward and write down on the uncarpeted floor the names of those we know and love who do not know the Lord. In doing so we were committing to pray for their salvation. We all went up as a family and wrote down names of family members, friends,

and our “new neighbors.” This was September 2nd and our CBS class was to begin on September 5th. At some point between those dates, Julie decided to accept my invitation to class, saying she was excited to start.

Walking out of the lecture the first week, Julie commented that she had learned more about the Bible from that one class than she had her entire life. The following week, which was the day after the September 11 tragedy, the Lord had clearly spoken to Julie’s heart. She asked how she could come to know the Lord, and I offered to pray with her. She assured me that she was serious, but she needed to do it alone. She asked what she needed to do, and I explained to her it was all about faith and a contrite heart. I couldn’t wait to tell my family.

This led to her praying for her husband’s and children’s salvation. The following month her husband, Troy, went to church. We sat in our sanctuary where only weeks earlier the Lord had led our family to write their names on the floor.

Jonathon and the two older boys, Evan and Forrest, were in the same Jr. CBS class,


and he continued to pray faithfully for them. Their teacher, Sandy, was aware the boys were new to the Bible and were just getting to know about Jesus. She, too, was burdened for their salvation. One evening in January they came over for dinner. My husband and I heard a conversation taking place in the living room



Troy & Julie Evans
Sage, Forrest & Evan

where the boys were discussing salvation. After a few minutes we heard Jonathon say, “Hey, you guys want to accept Jesus into your hearts?” They agreed that this was a good plan and that they wanted to. Tearfully my husband and I listened as our ten year old led two of his best friends to Christ. The next day, the youngest son, Sage, came over. He and Jonathon prayed in our front yard and Sage entered the family of God.

On the last CBS class day the boys’ Junior CBS teacher shared that one January afternoon the Holy Spirit nudged her to pray for their salvation, which she did. Could this be the day they prayed to accept the Lord? I could not hold back the tears.

Troy also came to know the Lord and his family began attending our church regularly. On Father’s Day, their whole family and our son Jonathon were baptized. What a wonderful God we serve. The Holy Spirit, in His perfect will and timing, led us to pray for our neighbors. He provided a window for us to see the future of a legacy He created. 

Lori McClung
Sacramento, CA

Our family, the family mentioned in this story, and many of the believing neighbors on our street meet each week for prayer. Among other things, we pray that our unsaved neighbors will one day come to know His salvation.

Easter's Aftermath

The Fellowship of Feet

Before the traitor had taken off,
Jesus humbled Himself
before twelve pairs of familiar feet.

Feet that had run with delight in His direction
when He had first nodded in theirs.
Feet that had walked with Him for the better part of
three years
on "a long obedience in the same direction."

Feet that had remained on a narrow path
far removed from a broader (more popular) road.

Feet that had stumbled on stones thrown by critics
who questioned their determined allegiance to a
carpenter-turned-rabbi.

Feet calloused by the number of times
they had squashed their doubts and trudged-on in faith.

Feet that (ironically) still longed
to climb the rungs of self-importance
in hopes of landing on a pedestal of glory.

Feet smudged by the mud of daily compromise
smelling of imperfect devotion.

Feet that would soon flee in fear
when the feet (and hands)
of their Righteous Friend
were nailed to a Roman cross.

Beautiful feet that (with the exception of one pair)
would in time climb the mountains of the earth
finding their ultimate worth
declaring the incredible good news that our God reigns!

It was these feet the Savior cradled with compassion
as He rinsed and towed them dry.
It was this amazing act of undeserved humility
and unforgettable grace
that Jesus commanded His friends to emulate.
And to that end we lace up our shoes
and follow in His footsteps
in the shadow of His cross.

by Greg Asimakoupoulos




The Prayer Corner

Listening to God

Prayer in its simplest form is talking to God as one would talk to a loving father or much trusted friend. Talking to God is extremely important, and we have spoken in previous *Prayer Corners* about aspects of prayer such as persistence and consistency as well as the elements of prayer such as confession, adoration, thanksgiving, and intercession. Most recently we discussed praying according to the will of God.


There is another much neglected area, which I must confess is one that I find challenging, and all too often neglected, in my own life. It is the matter of listening. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." This is a brief command that is pregnant with truth. Neither confession nor adoration, neither praise nor intercession, while all of them important, will in themselves lead us to knowing God or hearing Him. It is when we are not speaking ourselves that we can hear Him...in silence He can speak to us so that we might hear Him clearly.

Why do we listen so seldom or so briefly? We give any number of reasons: we are too busy, too distracted, and even too overwhelmed with the burden of intercession. Or perhaps, unfortunately, all too often it is because we are afraid of what God will say, or we simply don't want to hear it.

In thinking of this, the scenario of Martha and Mary in Luke 10:38-41 comes to mind. Martha was distracted and upset about many things, but Mary had chosen what was better. She was listening to Jesus. When our Lord was at Simon the leper's house and Mary was anointing His feet with very expensive perfume, I am sure that once again she was listening. What was the consequence of that anointing? The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume (John 12:3), and I believe not only fragrance from the perfume, but from her adoration in listening: "We are to God the aroma of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:15). We, too, should make listening a disciplined part of our daily prayer time. Have you, have I been listening to God? 

John Woods
Teaching Director
Rochester Eve, MN

Prayer Warriors Needed

If you are willing to make a commitment to pray *DAILY* for the CBS *InPrison* ministry, please email *Genia Engelbert* at engel2024@juno.com and ask to be added to the CBS IP prayer list. 

A Personal Word...

Everything in His Time

*"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...
He hath made every thing beautiful in his time."* (Ecclesiastes 3:1,11a, KJV)

We are always amazed when the Lord accomplishes something in just the right time! Many of you have prayed for our daughter, Cami. You knew about her weakening condition as a diabetic since age thirteen, and her going through nearly four years of dialysis three times a week. We really didn't expect her to survive another year without kidney and pancreas transplants. Last year, Cami spent 84 days in different hospitals, making it a very hard year. Yet, God was continually faithful to strengthen us in Him.

Bill and I attended the CBS Teaching Directors Conference in January, returning on Monday night, January 27. We had driven home and enjoyed a full night's rest after the long trip. On Tuesday morning, January 28, Georgetown Hospital called to tell us they had a kidney and pancreas for our daughter. The long surgery was done later that day.

After four months we see continuous improvement. She has had no need for insulin and no need for dialysis since the transplants. The organs are working beauti-

fully in her body, with no sign of rejection.

We are grateful to the Lord for the parents who donated their 19-year-old son's organs to help others after he tragically died. When we knew someone would have to lose his or her life to help our daughter live, we prayed ahead of time for "whomever" it would be. We prayed for the family that would have to make the difficult choice to help others in their time of personal grief. We continue to pray for that family. We don't know who they are, but our Lord does. What an unselfish thing to do. Please join with us and pray for them.

We know God's timing is always just right, never late and never early! We praise Him for His abundant grace in our lives. Thank you for your prayers and love. *"He has made everything appropriate in its time"* (Ecclesiastes 3:11a, NAS). ☩



Camilla Seabolt
Executive Director

...from Camilla

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Community Bible Study, 1765 Business Center Drive #200, Reston, VA, 20190-5327
800-826-4181 • 703-438-8223 • 703-438-8228 (fax)
info@communitybiblestudy.org (e-mail) • <http://www.communitybiblestudy.org>*

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