



Compassion

Sharing hope...

2018 - Fourth Quarter



**Turning Weakness
Into Strength**



Two Steps Forward



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Pregnant and Afraid

I remember what it was like finding out I was pregnant for the first time. I had a job, a home and four years of marriage under my belt. Nevertheless, it was both exciting and overwhelming all at the same time. The revelation of each subsequent pregnancy also came with differing amounts of denial, anxiety, joy and fear. Yet I faced each pregnancy with the knowledge and confidence that I had a good, big and loving God, who not only created this new life in me, but would be with me and my baby every step of the way throughout this incredible journey.

Now, imagine what this experience would be like for someone in jail – someone who is dealing with the uncertainties of what the future holds, crowded and uncomfortable cells, not to mention the constant unrest that is all around. Imagine what it would be like going to see the nurse as she makes her rounds throughout the jail and discovering that you're pregnant.

In one of my Bible studies at the jail recently, one of the ladies shared this very life-changing news with the group. She was noticeably shaken with the news and asked for our prayers. She was looking to God for guidance as to whether she should keep her baby or give it up for adoption. I assured her that she was going to the right place with her fears and concerns in trying to figure out what she should do.

After we finished praying for her, we turned our attention to the story of Elijah – to a time when he, too, was feeling so overwhelmed and alone that he begged, "I've had enough, Lord. Take my life..." God's answer to Elijah's prayer was the touch of an angel, the aroma of fresh-baked bread, and the honest evaluation of what lie ahead: "the journey is too much for you," you cannot do this without God's help (1 Kings 19:3ff).

A well-used phrase by women in the jail is "God won't give you more than you can handle." These words, while well intended, need some clarification. So when I heard them today, I said to the group, "Yes, God is in control of whatever confronts us in this life, but those challenges are often too much for us. On our own,

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NEWS

Pregnant and Afraid

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we can easily be overcome by the stress and strain of the challenges we face. But," I continued, "regardless of the challenges that face us, they are never too much for God to handle. And when we walk with God, stay connected to His love, His truth and His promises, we soon discover that He truly can handle anything."

I realize that this young lady still left with a great deal on her mind and heart. My prayer for her is that she remembers that God hears her prayers and that He also promises to be with her throughout this journey. May God bring her a rich measure of comfort and peace as she faces the challenges that lie ahead.



by Chaplain Sarah Guenther

Turning Weakness Into Strength

"I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms ...whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle ...These were all commended for their faith ...God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:32ff).

The Lord gave Samson strength to rule God's people in a most unusual way. With bare hands, Samson tore apart a lion. He struck down a thousand enemies with the jawbone of a donkey. In one last burst of strength as a prisoner, he brought the temple down on the Philistines who were mocking the Lord. He lived in the shadow of the promised Messiah and died in faith for Christ. His "weakness was turned to strength."

Adam was an athletic teenage boy who battled cancer for several years. He died in the hospital at the age of seventeen, but like Samson, his "weakness was turned to strength."

On one of my visits with Adam, I asked him to pick out a Bible story. The strength God had given to Samson appealed to this cancer-weakened boy, and he chose the story of Samson for us to discuss. Yet without realizing it, Adam was becoming stronger than Samson. He told me he was afraid to die, but that he found comfort in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus his Savior. The more we talked about Jesus and the promises of God during our visits, the more Adam's physical weakness began turning into spiritual strength. Adam may have lost the physical battle, but today he enjoys the blessings of heaven.

During the final months of his battle with cancer, Adam shared the comfort he found in Jesus with his parents, siblings, friends, and even the staff at the hospital. Like Samson, Adam impacted the lives of others, not with physical strength, but with his faith in Christ. In a special grief support group for the hospital staff after his death, I was able to expound upon Adam's faith and the comfort he found in Christ. I was also able to use Adam's understanding of Samson and his faith in Christ to bring comfort to his family as they mourned his death. What a privilege to serve as an Institutional Ministries chaplain and witness how God turns weakness into strength.



by Chaplain Ken Wenzel





Two Steps Forward

“Two steps forward and one step backward.” It’s an old saying that is used to convey slow and difficult progression toward a goal. And sometimes it seems to apply to Gospel ministry.

About four years ago, Kyle was incarcerated in a county jail. Once there, he quickly acquired a Bible and began attending a WELS Bible study. A few months later, when he was transferred to Dodge Correctional in Waupun, he joined our Tuesday morning Bible study at that prison. When Kyle was subsequently transferred to Fox Lake Correctional, we began to meet one on one almost every week to continue studying God’s Word together. By God’s grace, I watched as Kyle grew in his knowledge of God’s Word and, more importantly, his faith in Jesus. And then one week, one of the state chaplains notified me that Kyle no longer wanted to meet with me. No explanation was provided. Our study of God’s Word stopped. Just like that!

Fast forward some eighteen months. I received an e-mail from the state chaplain that Kyle had requested a visit with me once again. When I met with Kyle he apologized for discontinuing our study of God’s Word more than a year earlier. He explained that he read a book on Paganism. It was interesting, even captivating, to Kyle. His Bible began to collect dust as he read one book after another on Paganism. He joined the pagan group, and it became his life.

But then the Holy Spirit brought Kyle back to his Good Shepherd. Kyle began to reread the Gospel of John. When he read Jesus’ words in 17:17, “Sanctify them by the truth; your Word is truth,” the Holy Spirit led Kyle to realize that ONLY the Word of God is the truth. Paganism is just a bunch of stories.

Kyle was released from prison a few weeks ago. But before he was released, he asked me for the name and address of the WELS congregation nearest to where he would be living. I gladly supplied that information, through the state chaplain. I thank the Holy Spirit that he had brought Kyle back to his Savior Jesus. And I look forward to seeing Kyle in heaven one day!



by Chaplain Charles Iles, Sr.

*“Sanctify
them by
the truth;
your
Word is
truth.”*



Sharing hope...
with those who need it most!

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1833 Executive Drive, Suite 101B
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OUR MISSION

*"To provide
direction, comfort
and hope by sharing
God and His love
with individuals
(and their families)
who are, or have been,
in an institution."*

Special Gifts & Memorials 7/26/2018 to 12/04/2018

IN CELEBRATION OF

**Anita Rodewald's
100th Birthday**
Mrs. Karen Gehring
Joni Brick's 95th Birthday
Mrs. Ruth Rauch

IN HONOR OF

**Agnes Froemming's
100th Birthday**
Ms. Larnette Voss
Rev. David A Tetzlaff
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Johnson
Joe & Bell Metoxen
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Krause
**Pastor Joe Radsek
25 Years in the Ministry**
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Finn
Mr. & Mrs. Rolf Aldinger
Rev. & Mrs. Daniel Krause
25 Years of Ministry
Rev. & Mrs. Joseph Radsek
Myrtle Whitcomb
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Peterson
**Grandmother Nellie
Greisen**
Mrs. Judy Mielke
**Pastor Philip Henselin
& Family**
Mr. Steven Nelson
**Phyllis Schedler's
85th Birthday**
Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Lauth
Rolf & Carolyn Reineck
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Reineck
**Work by Chaplain
Sarah Guenther**
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Hupman
Scott Sterr
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Schulz

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Mrs. Carol Rohleder
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Mrs. June Bitney
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Mr. & Mrs. Alan Uher
**All Institutional
Ministries Does**
Rev. & Mrs. Arthur Koepsell
God's Blessings
Ms. Barbara Weithing
God's Mercy
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Haddle
Institutional Ministries
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Fisher

**The Love of Our Lord
& Savior**
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis Hopper
**21 Children/
Grandchildren**
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Mr. David Beyer Sr.
God's Blessings
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God's Grace
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God's Many Blessings
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in this Way**
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