

## **Bend But Don't Break**

I remember back in the early 1990's I was watching TBN one evening and a man, whom I do not remember, who probably has passed away by now, was introduced on TBN and sat down to talk with Paul and Jan Crouch the host and owners of TBN. They introduced him as an accredited prophet at that time. Back then I was very young in the Lord and the interview has stayed with me ever since, as if it just happened yesterday.

I do not remember how the conversation got to the point for the story to be told but the story changed my life forever regarding, believing for miracles. The man said he had a dream, and in his dream, he suddenly found himself standing in the middle of an empty house on the main floor. There wasn't any furniture, or curtains or wall hanging to be seen anywhere. He asked God why he was there, and God told him to go over to the basement door and open the door. So, the man walked over to the door and opened it, and it was very dark. Again, he asked God what He wanted him to do, and God said go down the stairs. The man reached for the light switch but did not find it. God said the light switch was at the bottom of the stairs.

The man started down the stairs holding on to the railing and he realized it was a long way down to the bottom. He finally got to the bottom and God said the light switch was on the right, so the man turned the light on, so he thought. When he flipped the switch, to his surprise the light turned on, but one light turned into a continuous string of lights that went on and on beyond the distance he could see. Then he saw every kind of miracle a person might need in their lives. Things like hearts, lungs, cars, homes, Jobs and money. There were so many different things that he saw, it was more than he could possibly remember.

The man asked God what all these items were, and God said, these are all the miracles his children were praying for, but they didn't hold on to their faith long enough to receive them. God said, often His children would give up just before their miracle was about to happen. Then God said, these are the miracles you can see but attached to this room were also the intangible things like family relationships, marriages, wayward family members that had pulled away from

their families and God and fighting their battles on their own and many more. God continued to tell the man of all the things His children had asked of Him in prayer, but they gave up believing that their miracle would happen. 1 Peter 3:12 NLT says, “The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and **his ears are open to their prayers...**” Often Christians feel that their prayers are not getting through to God so why keep believing. The truth is He hears every prayer, but most importantly He never forgets one of them. Proof that he never forgets is found in Psalm 38:9-10 ESV which says, “O Lord, **all my longing is before you**; my sighing is not hidden from you. 10 My heart throbs; my strength fails me, and the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me.” This principle is so important let’s add Isaiah 49:15-16 NLT saying, “Never! Can a mother forget her nursing child? Can she feel no love for the child she has borne? But even if that were possible, **I (God) would not forget you!** See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands...” A lot of us do not remember prayers we prayed two weeks or six months ago, yet God takes each one to heart and works on them to our last breath. **There will never be a prayer that you can call wasted time seeking God, because God is always listening and cares about everything that concerns each of us.**

Then the man said, God didn’t tell Him why His children had let go to soon, but what he did say was there is a specific purpose for why some miracles take longer than a person thinks it should. God explained the reason why it takes longer is because He was working on more than just one part of their miracle they had been praying for. Isaiah 55:8 says, “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts, says the Lord. And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.” We only see the manifestation of our miracle at that moment, so we think it just happened. In truth we only see the moment, but God was at work in the background preparing our miracle for a long time. He had to prepare us for the miracle and get the setting ready. When those two pieces come together at a specific moment in time, we receive our miracle.

As I am rewriting this story I am reminded of “The Weaver” poem, by Corrie ten Boom, that shows how God is weaving each of our life’s story and the line that says, “Oft times He weaveth sorrow; and I in foolish pride, **forget He sees the upper And I the under-side.**” We think we are seeing the upper side of our lives when we see all the miracles, that God gives us. What we are really seeing is the underneath side which shows all the good, bad, and ugly in our lives, just like the

loose and untidy threads on the underside. The upper side is the development of our character, godliness and being conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. **The more we become like Christ, the more beautiful our tapestry shows His Glory.**

When we feel pressure regarding a specific miracle that we are asking for, we do not realize that it is in these moments God is truly answering our deeper prayers helping us fulfill Romans 8:29 NIV which says, **“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son,** that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” Jesus wasn’t molded into who He became overnight, no he walked through life’s challenges, and we must go through the same process. It is written in Hebrews 4:15 NLT, **“This High Priest (Jesus) of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all the testings we do, yet he did not sin.”** Consider our Christian life like a Palm tree which develops the roots of the tree before it begins to grow upward. The foundation is the same as the underside of our tapestry. Palm trees are a special tree because they can withstand storms with winds of 70 to 100 miles an hour and not break. **Our faith and belief in God our Father have the same ability to bend but not break as we hold on to our prayer request/miracle, and not give up when Satan throws life’s challenges at us trying to get us to give up on our miracles.**

Each of us desire to get closer to God and be more like Jesus. What we do not realize is sometimes this process is like taking a rough diamond and shaping it into a beautiful piece so it can fit the very place and purpose it was intended to be used, this is the journey of a Christian’s life. We see this in Psalm 66:10 NLT which says, **“You have tested us, O God; you have purified us like silver.”** This Purification is the growth of our faith being molded into the image of Jesus. Our level of seeking God is always greater when we are desperate for our miracles. We listen to everything God is saying, and it is in these times we see the biggest changes in our character and nature that impacts our lives, and others around us.

We all have needs and desires we want in our lives and that is not wrong. Psalm 37:4 NLT says, **“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart’s desire.”** Then, the next verse explains the process that makes everything work, in Psalm 37:5 NLT says, **“Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.”** There are people who have gone their own way, away from God and done well in their earthly life but in the end, they lose their place with God in

heaven. The things of earth last only for a moment as seen in James 4:14 NKJV which says, "...you do not know what will happen tomorrow. **For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.**" So what value is there in being self-made? Our end goal of life is to end up with God our Father in heaven as Paul writes in Philippians 3:14 NLT, "**I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize** for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us." **The things of God and heaven are eternal and will never end.**

When we try things on our own most of the time the end results are we usually fail, but when we have God involved, we see success somewhere down our road of life. To give us a clear understanding of why this process happens this way is found in two places in the Bible. First, in Proverbs 19:21 that says, "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but **it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.**" And second, 1 John 5:14-15 says, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that **if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.** And if we know that he hears us whatever we ask we know that we have what we asked of him." **So, what is needed for a safe and prosperous life is to be sure your needs and desires line up with God's plan for each of our lives.**

Our miracles and desires are important because they are part of our lives here on earth. God does care about our miracles and our desires, but He cares even more about who we are in Christ. The misdirection is we get so focused on our miracles and desires that we become impatient trying to rush the process and cause our prayers fail. That impatience creates fears and doubts which makes us feel like either God is not listening, or we have done something wrong, so God is not going to bless us. Our fears and doubts resemble the words spoken in Matthew 8:25 NLT which says, "The disciples went and woke him (Jesus) up, shouting, 'Lord, save us! We're going to drown.'" The word "drown" expresses our desperateness, almost like life will end if we do not get what we are praying for, the way we want it to come. **Desperation is one of the weapons that Satan uses to erases our trust in God** as our provider, protector, and guide through our life's journey. The last step from there is we give up and let go of our prayers, our hearts desires, that we were hoping our Father in Heave would help provide for us. If this happens a few times you are less likely to go to our Father in Heaven and ask Him for anything else. Can you see how Satan can pulled us away from trusting and believing in

God, our Father in Heaven for our daily needs and miracles? **All this happens on the underside of our tapestry of life's journey.**

Now let's turn to the upper side and see the rest of what God wants to give each of us that has eternal value here on earth as well as when we get to heaven. **The very reason God answers our prayers is to help us see Him as a loving Father who cares about us.** God wants each of us to experience His faithfulness and love every breath we take. When we see God our Father this way it will change us, so life is viewed from an eternal perspective that is lived out through our lives here on earth.

Our eternal value here on earth is seen in our kindness, forgiving one another, mercy and the list is endless because each person needs something different that can only come from God, through His Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit pours that gift out through us as His vessels to give others. Proverbs 27:19 NLT says, "As a face is reflected in water, so the heart reflects the real person." We must desire the changes in our character and nature to help us trust God more which removes our fears and doubts from having any foot hold in our lives.

To sum up all that has been said here in this simple story is stated in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 which says, "**For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord who is the Spirit makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image." Prayer is never a waste of time nor believing our Father in heaven is a loving and caring God. The final thought is found in The Weaver's poem at the end which says, "He knows, He loves, He cares; nothing the truth can dim. **He gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him.**"**

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