

God Won't Give Up On Us

Joshua 1:5 (MSG) *All your life, no one will be able to hold out against you. In the same way I was with Moses, I'll be with you. I won't give up on you; I won't leave you.*

Over the last few weeks I've been speaking about thoughts, words, and actions as the building blocks for achieving God's Will. It is my belief that when God says in Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future," He is referring not only to plans for us, but plans by which to use us. We are part of the elemental material for God's good in Creation.

Philippians 1:6 *I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns.* Bible commentators have said that this means until we leave the body and face our Christ face to face. In other words, until the day we die God is using us to do His works, and what He starts in us will be maintained through to completion or death, whichever comes first.

God will not give up on us; He won't abandon us, forsake us, or leave us. He is always with us. As our Prayer of Protection states: The Light of God surrounds us, the Love of God enfolds us, the Power of God Protects us and the Presence of God watches over us. Wherever we are, God is, and all is well. So, it is our thoughts, words, and deeds that serve God's good.

...Or not. We can allow the ego and our desire for personal control and personal plans to obfuscate God's plans. We can wander in the desert aimlessly, or worse, be guided only by our smallest self, our human nature.

The choice is moment by moment: we can choose to be weighed down by the demands of the world or be lifted up by the Love and Power of God. The same power that helped a woman named Morgan Lake. She was in her car, stopped at the Chesapeake Bay toll booth when a tractor trailer slammed into her and pushed her car off the 40 foot bridge into the treacherous waters below.

As the car quickly submerged, fear and panic gripped Morgan. Her seatbelt was locked and would not open, and her car, her mouth, and body were filling up with water. Morgan said she could feel the drowning sensation. With that thought, she felt a rush of hope as she told herself; "I'm not going out this way -- I'm not dying."

Morgan said in that moment of defying death she reached out to God. And she claims God turned her situation around; "I just felt as if God touched my shoulder and pushed me back against my car into my seat to relax me."

Morgan claims that this divine intervention allowed her to unlock her seat belt and then pull herself out of the driver side window, swim to the surface, and then swim to shore where help arrived.

This Power of God is the same that enveloped Gandhi as he freed his nation passively. It is the same Power that Dr. Martin Luther King called upon to continue his ministry despite the bigotry and hatred he faced. It is the same Power that gave Aron Ralston the resolve to amputate his arm in order to survive when it was pinned by a boulder as he was out hiking.

This Power doesn't have to be recognized as such. Let the scientists call it an adrenaline rush when, in 1982, Tony Cavallo was under his jacked-up car and it fell on him, and his mother was able to lift the car long enough and high enough for two neighbors to replace the jacks and pull Tony out.

Let science call it excited delirium when, in 2012, 22-year old Lauren Kornacki was able to lift a BMW from off her father after the jack slipped and then perform CPR. Let them call it hysterical strength that allowed 185 pound Nick Harris, in 2009, to lift a Mercury sedan off a 6 year old girl pinned beneath it.

The lesson seems to be – stay away from the underside of cars!

But call it what you want, we have access to the Power of God when we are in the right frame of mind. And it is not just for super strength; it can be for guidance, peace, love, joy.

I felt this Power when Daniel, Mary's and my first child was born. He had severe jaundice and needed an emergency blood transfer. The doctor came out and explained the situation and said that it was possible that he could now have brain damage because of the

procedure. On hearing the news, at first I felt fear and dread, and then came a feeling of absolute peace as I came to know that Daniel would be fine. It was the Power of God, the Holy Spirit, call it what you want ... but I knew that Daniel was ok. And he was, and is.

In Ephesians 1:19b-20 Phillips we are told: *"How tremendous is the power available to us who believe in God. That power is the same divine power which was demonstrated in Christ when he raised him from the dead."*

Some say it is the placebo effect that allows people to respond to inert substances. We scoff that it is just the Placebo Effect; it really has no value – like the people who are responding are somehow imagining it. But research has shown that in some instances the placebo can yield up to 20% greater positive results than the actual active treatment.

In 1950 there was a new medication developed called Krebiozen. People looked to it as the cancer cure that the world had been waiting for. The American Medical Association and American Food and Drug Administration were studying the drug. One of the doctors participating in the study was physiologist, Bruno Klopfer.

Doctor Bruno Klopfer was treating his patient Mr. Wright, who had advanced cancer of the lymph nodes. When he found out about the AMA and FDA experiments with Krebiozen, he asked to be a part of it. Mr. Wright had been through many unsuccessful treatments and didn't have too much time to live. His neck,

armpits, chest, stomach, and groin were full of tumors as big as an orange, not to mention the horrible condition of his kidneys and spleen. Dr. Klopfer injected Mr. Wright with one dose, but was concerned that this “cure” would kill his patient because the studies were yet incomplete.

After few days, miraculously Mr. Wright got out of bed by himself and was able to walk around. His tumors were half their original size. Even the strongest radiation or chemotherapy could not have been expected to cause such a result. Ten days after the Krebiozen injection he was released from the hospital as an absolutely healthy man without a trace of cancer. When Mr. Wright got back home from the hospital, he was even able to pilot his own plane again.

Mr. Wright was absolutely healthy for two months when the press started releasing articles about how Krebiozen was not effective as a cancer treatment. Being an analytical person who was interested in science, Mr. Wright became depressed. Eventually, the cancer came back and he was forced to go back to the hospital.

This time, Dr. Klopfer decided to try a psychological experiment. He told his patient that the articles were based on an ineffective line of Krebiozen and that he had a new formula, which was of higher quality, very concentrated, and more effective. Mr. Wright gladly agreed to another injection. But this time it was placebo—distilled water. The results were sensational again, and after a few days Mr. Wright was released from the hospital free of cancer.

Unfortunately, after two months, the American Medical Association released an official article, finally stating that the completed study of Krebiozen showed that it was ineffective. The information spread throughout the country and impacted Mr. Wright. The cancer came back again and he died within two days.

We may not ever be in a situation where we have to saw off our arm, or swim from a submerged car to live, but we have our own challenges: finances, relationships, health problems; the list is long.

Where does this power come from to allow our faith to heal us without the active ingredients required by science? Scientists don't have the answers; they just believe it isn't God. And that is the difference between theists and those who place their faith in science: we of spiritual faith don't really know either, but we believe it is God.

Not only does God give us access to Divine Power, but God does not give up on us and continues to guide us, call us, and encourage us. No matter how many times we stumble and outright fail, God whispers to our hearts and souls, at a level that only we can feel: "I will not forsake you, ever. You may turn your back on Me, but I will not turn my back on you. Get up, forgive yourself, and let's go again. This time, try it with more love, faith, and compassion and less thought to yourself...."

1 Corinthians 10:13 *No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be*

tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

It is inconsequential to God that we bumble, falter, or feel awkward in our attempts to allow the love, joy, and peace of the Christ to flow through our thoughts, minds, and actions. As a Child of God we are created by Love in order to love. We are given Grace from God, the undeserved forgiveness, blessings, help, favor, and kindness from God, so that we can learn to extend grace to others.

As we are told in Isaiah 41:10 -- So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

My prayer is that we can accept that God will not give up on us, and that we can apply that quality to all others. We will not give up on each other, on our friends and loved one. We will not give up on the good that is being done by people in the world. We will not give up on humanity as it struggles to evolve. We will not give up on a vision of peace, harmony, and tolerance for all of God's Children.

Let us pray....