

# GRACE Great Good News!

NOVEMBER 2002

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know (Ephesians 1:18).*

This prayer of Paul is also my prayer for myself and for all who read this newsletter. This verse is a prayer to KNOW. To know what? What was burning on Paul's heart that inflamed prayer to rise up as incense for others? What knowledge was so precious to Paul that he just couldn't keep it to himself? God reveals in Ephesians 1:18-19 three things He dearly wants everyone to KNOW:

1. **The hope of His (God's) calling.** Paul wrote in Galatians 1:16 of one foundational call on a person's life, and it is not a call to DO anything...It is a call to RECEIVE something...to receive a revelation...It is God's call on a person for God "TO REVEAL HIS SON IN ME." Colossians 1:27 is a beautiful proclamation of the hope of this calling: "CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY!" KNOWING Christ as your very LIFE (not just a Helper for your life, but the very source of your life) is the only true hope. There is no true hope if you and I have just one molecule of responsibility to help produce life. *Christ is our hope (1 Timothy 1:1).*
2. **The riches of the glory of a person's inheritance in the saints.** When the LIFE OF CHRIST is revealed in a person, that person can begin to realize how incredibly rich he is. I love this reminder in 1 Corinthians 4:8 that "YOU ARE ALREADY RICH!" This is the message of Christ through me to others. The world counsels by telling people WHAT IS WRONG with them and what they need to do to get better. Christ counsels by revealing to people WHAT IS RIGHT with them because of His cross, and then He enables them to rest in His finished work. I have witnessed healing and transformation in many people as they personally hear Christ: "You are already rich in Me!"
3. **The exceeding greatness of His (God's) power toward us who believe (trust).** Once Christ is revealed as your LIFE and you begin to realize just how RICH you are in Christ, you will begin to experience not just the power of God, but THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER. Do you see the difference? Many of us seek the power from God to do something for us. However, God wants us to know that He (the Holy Spirit) IS the power! God wants us to KNOW HIM personally by simply trusting Him. I used to say that I believe in prayer...now I proclaim to anyone who will listen that I believe in Christ...for Christ IS the power of prayer.

Sometimes I get confused about how to pray for Joy as she recuperates for so long from her back surgeries and the resulting staph infection. These words from Jennifer Kennedy Dean are helping me so much: "Don't put your faith in an outcome; put your faith in God. When we invest our faith in our ideas of what God should do, we will not see the power of God operating in the circumstances of earth." Through prayer, God is enabling me more and more to simply entrust Joy to Him. Oh how He loves her, and oh how I want Him to love her through me! With this growing freedom, God is answering prayers for me and Joy through the "healing" truths of Ephesians.

It appears that Joy's back incision will take at least the remainder of December to completely close, while she stays on IV antibiotics. At times, I find myself wanting to force the incision to close with my hands. However, as I recently changed her incision bandage for the 157<sup>th</sup> time, for the first time I saw my hands as the hands of Christ. This is the truth I believe God wants us to be anchored in: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." I see now that I don't need any more patience, I already have all of His patience. Perfect healing is in His hands. *The article on the back is my heart.*

*I recently shared these truths with a young man who is seeking hope and who was referred to Christ Life Ministries by In-Touch Ministries. I am also sharing these truths in weekly discipling sessions with four other individuals.*

*In early November, I had the privilege of fellowshiping around these truths with three precious people in a 12-hour GraceLife Conference in Simpsonville. In the photograph from left to right are Tricia, Mary, and Ken, and me. I witnessed the radiance of Christ in each of their faces! Each one is planning to continue training through a 40-hour GraceLife Workshop in 2003.*

*Christ Life Ministries is looking forward to teaching a GraceLife Conference at Emma Gray United Methodist Church in Woodruff, SC January 17-18, 2003. Two members of this church attended a GraceLife Conference and GraceLife Workshop in Simpsonville this past year. As always, this Conference is open to anyone who would like to come.*



#### GRACE NOTE

Believe in miracles, but trust in Jesus...the greatest miracle is the miracle of God's redeeming grace.  
(Book title and quote by Adrian Rogers)

*Last month, Joy came across an article that perfectly expressed her heart in regards to her bouts with pain.*

*We shared that article in the October newsletter.*

*This month, I came across an article (below) that so well puts into words my heart and my perspective of Joy's bouts with pain. The truths in the following article are why I believe in and speak of Christ, and minister His life. I hope it encourages you, too.*

## **HEALING**

*by Jim Minker (www.theshovel.net)*

Though I have seen some incredible answers by our Father in physical healings, I am convinced the true healing of Christ has much more to do with that which we cannot see ... and is often missed because we put our hopes on the body that day by day keeps getting older and weaker. I have lived for 48 years in relatively good health, but am married to a woman who has learned to live with so many afflictions the whole time we have been together that it hurts to have experienced it with her. Even though I often asked God why she had to suffer, and would have changed it if I could, there is much of the grace of life we have experienced together that would have not been otherwise seen. The disappointments of my life have shaped more of what I have learned of God's grace than anything else.

Paul was a man who had somehow been afflicted ON PURPOSE by God Himself through the agency of Satan! God gave him this GIFT because of the incredible revelation he had received of the grace of Christ. And Paul begged God repeatedly to take this thing away from him. You know what I have come to sense about this man, Paul? That he was just like you and me! He gradually came to learn through his afflictions that God was all that he needed.

*Jesus has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for MY POWER IS PERFECTED IN WEAKNESS" (2 Corinthians 12:9).*

I have come to love the letters Paul wrote to the Corinthians because they are the testimony of God's power in that man who was so pathetically weak. While the Corinthians were getting sucked into the "powerful" testimonies of those who preached themselves, Paul finally broke down and gave them HIS credentials. And what were those credentials? 1 Corinthians 4:9-16 reveals that his credentials included being a spectacle to the world. A fool. Without honor. Hungry and thirsty, poorly clothed, roughly treated, homeless. Reviled, persecuted, slandered. The scum of the world. And Paul exhorted the Corinthians to imitate him in this!!!

The fact is that we have been healed already through the wounds of Christ on our behalf (1 Peter 2:21-24)! For though the healing of the outer man is wonderful, it is merely a shadow of an inner healing of our very beings. We were plagued from within with a sickness that affected every single matter of our existence, and we strayed not only from all that is good, but also from the Giver of goodness. The Father has taught me in so many ways of my former desperate condition, and I am coming to see what has happened to me in Christ as being so utterly amazing!!

For the Father to have allowed me to be a blessing in ministering His healing in the outward vessel for others, but to have left me totally inadequate to minister such healing in my own life convinces me of my true adequacy IN HIM, and not in myself. The Father brings me to experience the death from which life springs forth. Death working in me, life in those I minister to. He has been graciously stripping away all confidence from me, and I sometimes misunderstand it because it is so painful, but He brings me to believe ... and that is why I speak.

*But we have this treasure (Jesus Himself) in earthen vessels,  
so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;  
we are afflicted in every way...  
always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.  
But having the same spirit of faith...we also believe, therefore we also speak,  
knowing that He who raised Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.  
-- 2 Corinthians 4:7-18 --*