

Forgiving and Forgetting

by Tony Evans

“...For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. .”

Jeremiah 31:34

God doesn't forget anything. He couldn't be God if He could forget. He forgives our sins, not forgetting that they ever happened, but in spite of the fact that they did happen. He then relates to us on the basis of forgiveness rather than our sinfulness.

How often have we told ourselves that we could forgive someone who wronged us, but we could never forget the offense? We may even have tried to forget what happened, but our efforts failed. The fact that the deed comes to our minds is not necessarily a problem.

First, if we remember these events in pain, perhaps forgiveness has not yet occurred. The problem is not that we remember but that the memory makes us bitter and angry. That's a warning to us that forgiveness must take place so that we can be released from the bondage of these feelings.

Second, God could be using these memories for a purpose. For example, the apostle Paul remembered when he was a blasphemer and a persecutor of the church (see 1 Timothy 1:12-14). He knew God wanted to use those memories in his ministry to others.

If God has allowed you to go through some painful experiences, and if you have forgiven the person but still have the memories, God wants to use that event for your growth and His glory.

Heart to Heart Newsletter

Fall 2016

The Reality of Eternity

by Tony Evans

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Colossians 3:2

At the end of time, we will all face the Lord, and He will want to know how we used our time on earth to get ready for eternity. If we only live for earth, all we will receive is earth. But once we start living for heaven, earth is just a bonus to the eternal existence we will enjoy.

If you are in Christ, you have no reason to fear death because when you die, you will instantly be with God. Paul said to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8).

Paul got a glimpse of what comes next when he was “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Corinthians 12:2). And Paul set the example for us when he told us to set our minds on things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Paul's mind was on heaven, but he was still functioning for the Lord here on earth. He was heavenly minded but still did earthly good. Because he lived in light of His eternal purpose, he made his life decisions an eternal point of view.

The way you view your tomorrow ought to affect the way you live your today. Are you investing in the kingdom for eternity?

An Incredible Way To Look At GOD

God's accuracy may be observed in the hatching of eggs.

- those of the canary in 14 days
 - those of the barnyard hen in 21 days;
 - eggs of ducks and geese in 28 days;
 - those of the mallard in 35 days;
 - The eggs of the parrot and the ostrich hatch in 42 days.
- (Notice, they are all divisible by seven, the number of days in a week!)

- God's wisdom is seen in the making of an elephant. . . .
- The four legs of this great beast all bend forward in the same direction. No other quadruped is so made. God planned that this animal would have a huge body too large to live on two legs. For this reason He gave it four fulcrums so that it can rise from the ground easily.
- The horse rises from the ground on its two front legs first.
- A cow rises from the ground with its two hind legs first.

How wise the Lord is in all His works of creation!

- Each watermelon has an even number of stripes on the rind.
- Each orange has an even number of segments.
- Each ear of corn has an even number of rows.
- Each stalk of wheat has an even number of grains. (All grains are found in even numbers on the stalks.)
- Every bunch of bananas has on its lowest row an even number of bananas, and each row decreases by one, so that one row has an even number and the next row an odd number.
- The waves of the sea roll in on shore twenty-six times to the minute in all kinds of weather.
- God has caused the flowers to blossom at certain specified times during the day. Linnaeus, the great botanist, once said that if he had a conservatory containing the right kind of soil, moisture and temperature, he could tell the time of day or night by the flowers that were open and those that were closed.

The lives of each of us may be ordered by the Lord in a beautiful way for His glory, if we will only entrust Him with our life. Only God, who made our brain and heart, can successfully guide them to a profitable end.

JUST LOOK UP

THE BUZZARD

If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner.

The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top.

THE BAT

The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkable nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place.

If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash.

THE BUMBLEBEE

A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists, until it completely destroys itself.

PEOPLE

In many ways, we are like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. We struggle about with all our problems and frustrations, never realizing that all we have to do is look up!

That's the answer, the escape route and the solution to any problem....Just look up!

Principle #2
Every Sin has its origins in our Hearts
by Renee Cox

Sin is devastating. We all know it. But do we KNOW it; recognize it and see it for what it is? Fifty years ago if you didn't say yes sir or no sir you were disrespectful and it was looked down upon. Church was a common activity for the family on Sundays. Today, people don't go to church on a regular basis. Even the "Christians" opt for a better option if available. Church has become a second choice. I cannot turn on the TV, go to the grocery store or gas station and not hear foul language. I remember when smoking cigarettes and "weed" were the worst things around. Today heroin and meth have taken over, especially in our area. What changed? How did we get here? One word – SIN!

Ephesians 5:11-12 *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."*

The devil has slyly wormed his way into everyday life, and we have ever so gradually become anesthetized to how far down the rabbit hole we have gone.

Proverbs 23:7 *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:.."*

I meet several times a week with girls at the county jail and the Community Based Correctional Facility for women (CBCF). ALL of them are in there for drugs or a drug related crime. Their stories of childhood, and loss are heart wrenching. I think, how can people do that to other people, how can they knowingly hurt, manipulate, use, and throwaway others. SIN! When I first meet these ladies they are usually angry, depressed, blaming others and generally ill tempered, but as time goes on the drugs leave their system and you get to know the funny, kind, caring, hurting person on the inside. This is when the spiritual warfare really begins. Satan knows these girls are searching for "the Truth" which is Jesus, but he uses the flesh to entice them away. Satan uses their years of worldly living and influences to send them down the same road, just disguised as something else. We have to change their "World View". Help them to realize that it is their choices, their sin that brought them down this path. No one did this to them but their own choices.

It's no wonder, we have spent the last 20 years saying "just do it"; "if it feels good do it". Is that of God? NOPE! "Put yourself first!"

"Do what you need to do for yourself". That is what we hear in the world! What does God say? Put Jesus first!

Romans 13:14 *"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."*

Meeting with these ladies has given a new meaning for me regarding the parable about the lost sheep in Luke 15. Sin is a slippery slope. Guard your heart!

Proverbs 4:23 *"Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life."*

Pumpkin Date Bread

3½ cups flour
3 cups sugar
¾ teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons soda
1 ½ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
2 cups pumpkin
1 cup vegetable oil
4 (beaten) eggs
⅔ cup water
1 cup (coarsely chopped) walnuts
1 cup (chopped) dates

Preheat oven to 350°.

Combine the flour, sugar, salt, soda and spice then mix thoroughly. Add the pumpkin, oil, eggs and water.

Mix until smooth. Stir in walnuts and dates. Pour batter into 3 well-greased loaf pans.

Bake for 50 minutes or until bread tests done.

Makes 3 loaves.

|-Brenda Angelo

RECALL NOTICE

The Maker of all human beings (GOD) is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to a serious defect in the primary and central component of the heart.

This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units.

This defect has been identified as "Sub-sequential Internal Non-morality," more commonly known as S.I.N., as it is primarily expressed. Some of the symptoms include:

1. Loss of direction
2. Foul vocal emissions
3. Amnesia of origin
4. Lack of peace and joy
5. Selfish or violent behavior
6. Depression or confusion
7. Fearfulness
8. Idolatry
9. Rebellion

The Manufacturer, who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect, is providing factory-authorized repair and service free of charge to correct this S.I.N. defect.

The Repair Technician, JESUS, has most generously offered to bear the entire burden of the staggering cost of these repairs. There is no additional fee required.

The number to call for repair in all areas is: P-R-A-Y-E-R.

Once connected, please upload your burden of SIN through the REPENTANCE procedure.

Next, download ATONEMENT from the Repair Technician, Jesus, into the heart component. No matter how big or small the SIN defect is, Jesus will replace it with:

Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self control.

Please see the operating manual, the B.I.B.L.E. (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth) for further details on the use of these fixes.

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human being unit without correction voids any manufacturer warranties, exposing the unit to dangers and problems too numerous to list, and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded. For free emergency service, call on Jesus. (Hebrews 3: 13)

DANGER: The human being units not responding to this recall will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The SIN defect will not be permitted to enter Heaven so as to prevent contamination of that facility. Thank you for your attention!

-GOD

P.S. Please assist where possible by notifying others of this important recall notice. You may contact the Father any time by Knee Mail!

A Friend Who's Always There

-- by Author Unknown

If I could catch a rainbow
I would do it just for you
and share with you its beauty
On the days you're feeling blue.
If I could build a mountain
You could call your very own
A place to find serenity
A place to be alone
If I could take your troubles
I would toss them in the sea
But all these things I'm finding
are impossible for me.
I cannot build a mountain
Or catch a rainbow fair
But let me be what I know best -
A friend who's always there.
The Father's Love Letter

The Oyster

There once was an oyster whose story I'll tell --
Who found that some sand had slipped under his shell.
Just one little grain --but it gave him much pain --
For oysters have feelings --although they're quite plain.
Now did he berate the working of fate --
Which had led him to such a deplorable state?
No! He said to himself, as he lay on the shelf,
"If I can't remove it --I'll try to improve it."
So, the years rolled by as years always do,
And he came to ultimate destiny --stew!
But the small grain of sand which had bothered him so --
Was a beautiful pearl all richly aglow.
Now this tale has a moral for isn't it grand --
What an oyster can do with a morsel of sand?
What couldn't we do -- if we'd only begin
To enrich all those things that get under our skin.
- Anonymus

Sherry's Book Corner

Hello ladies! Since Grandparent's Day is coming soon I thought I would feature a fun picture book for you. I sold it to my library during a meeting and I love it. A perfect book to set down with those little ones of yours. I like where the Grandpa swings his grandson around as if they were dancing. It reminded me of my grandpa Elmer as we danced to Lawrence Welk on Saturday nights.

Actually, my times spent with him and my grandma Edna left such an impression on me I wrote an article for the Carroll Electric Cooperative Magazine Country Living. It was published in October of 2011. I called it, Hot dogs, cherry pie-and Lawrence Welk. Some of you may have read it. My friends, if you are a grandparent rejoice with the honor God has given you.

This story is a heartwarming celebration of the special bond that children and their grandparents cherish. Why not snuggle up with your little one and spend some time together. As the years go by you'll be glad you did.

Until next time, have a warm and wonderful Grandparents Day!

In Him,
Sherry

Adult Book:

Title: My Grandparents Love Me

By: Claire Freedman

Illustrated by: Judi Abbot

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

Age group: 4-8

Price: \$16.99

Meet Grandpa and Grandma Zebra! They are all ready for a fun day with their grandson, and, he might just spend the night. They go for a splish-splash ride and then off for some ice cream. And Gran's handbag must be magical.

After a day full of activities all warm from a bath and tucked in bed, they smile and kiss night-night and say. "We love you, little one."

Kid's Book

Hi kids! Since I am deeply in love with my grandparents, I wanted to share a fun picture book with you to honor Grandparent's Day. All four of them have been passed away now for a long time, but they will always hold a special place in my heart. On my dad's side his parents were named Clyde and Gladys. On my mom's they were called Elmer and Edna.

The cover of this book enchanted me. Our characters are bears. A granddaughter and her grandpa sitting on a dock fishing together with sticks and white string for fishing poles. What a fun book cover! But the love shown for each other is what made me pick up the book. And I was sure glad I did. It reminded me of all the many fun things I did with both my grandpas.

If you are able to spend some time with your grandparents on Grandparent's Day I hope you do something special. But when you think about it, just being together is special enough. What do you think? I think they'll agree.

Until next time, make the most of Grandparent's Day!

In Him,
Sherry

Children's Book:

Title: Me with You

Author: Kristy Dempsey

Illustrated by: Christopher Dense

Publisher: Scholastic Inc.

Age group: 4-10

Price: \$4.99

Whatever this little girl does with her grandpa is alright with him. Rich in color these illustrations will warm your heart. As she says as she grows older. "And though I'll find new ways of being my whole life through, my favorite me will always be...when I am with you."

SONGS WE LOVE

Ruth Warren

It was Bill Gaither's desire to serve the Lord in full time music ministry, but upon graduating college with a musical degree he could not fulfill his dreams. He found a job teaching English. While at the school he met a young teacher, Gloria Sickal, who was also an English teacher plus teaching French. They married in 1962 and spent their free time writing songs. One would say "Someone needs to write a song that says....." and then they would compose such a song and prepare it for Wednesday night's choir practice.

During those early days, Dr. Dale Oldham was a beloved preacher who had a church near them. His son, Doug Oldham's personal life was falling apart. His family was gone and he was thinking of taking his life he was so depressed. He finally came to grips with his own failures that had caused his personal problems, and started going to the Gaither's church..He began asking for God's help in forgiving him and eventually got his life back on the straight and narrow and won his family back also.

One night in 1963 all three men, Dale, Doug, and Bill, were together and they were talking about how God's touch to a person's life brought healing and peace. Dr. Dale told Bill that he needed to write a song about how God touches peoples lives.

By the next night, he had written two verses and chorus and had composed a simple melody for the song. He decided to sing it for Dr. Dale's revival services the following week. Bill handed Doug a copy of the song and asked him to sing it with him that night at the revival service. They Did.

Doug was the first one to record the song in 1964 and soon many other gospel singers also recorded it. Congregations today are still testifying ".....the hand of Jesus touched me, and now I'm no longer the same."

He Touched Me

Shackled by a heavy burden,
neath a load of guilt and shame;
Then the hand of Jesus touched me,
and now I'm no longer the same.

Since I met this blessed Saviour,
Since He cleansed and made me whole;
I will never cease to praise Him,
I'll shout it while eternity rolls.

He touched me, oh, He touched me.
and, oh, the joy that fills my soul;
Something happened, and now I know,
He touched me and made me whole.

Trivia Facts

- Nine out of every 10 living things live in the ocean.
- Airports at higher altitudes require a longer airstrip due to lower air density.
- Fish and Chip selling officially remained an offensive trade until 1940 due to the smell it produces.
- The tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot heal itself.
- When a person dies, hearing is the last sense to go. The first sense lost is sight
- Strawberries are the only fruits whose seeds grow on the outside
- Avocados have the highest calories of any fruit at 167 calories per hundred gram
- The painting that won second place in a competition held by the US National Academy of Design was hanging upside down when it was judged
- Everything weighs one percent less at the equator
- The letter J does not appear anywhere on the periodic table of the elements.

Swap this delicious side dish for mashed potatoes—you'll trick even the biggest mashed potato fans and save yourself hundreds of calories! It's the perfect comfort food to indulge (or over-indulge!) in without harming your waistline!

Cauliflower Mash

Ingredients

- 1 head cauliflower
- 1/8 cup skim milk
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Pepper, to taste
- 2 teaspoons Earth's Balance organic natural buttery spread, or similar spread (optional)
- Sprinkle Parmesan cheese

Directions

Steam cauliflower until tender when poked with a fork. Place cauliflower (pieces), skim milk, garlic, pepper and vegetable spread (if using) in a blender. Blend until smooth. Place mixture in a small baking dish and sprinkle with Parmesan and paprika, if desired.

Makes 3 servings.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories 32.6, Total Fat 0.6 gram, Saturated Fat 0.1 gram, Carbohydrates 5.7 grams, Protein 2.7 grams, Fiber 0, Sodium 34.2 milligrams

The Puzzle

A father wanted to read the paper, but was being bothered by his little daughter, Susie. Finally, he took a sheet out of his magazine, on which was printed the map of the world. Tearing it into small pieces, he gave it to Susie, and said, "Go into the other room and see if you can put this together."

After a few minutes, Susie returned and handed him the map correctly fitted together. The father was very surprised and asked how she had finished so quickly.

"Oh", she said, "on the other side of the paper is a picture of Jesus. When I got Jesus in His place, then the world came out all right."

Slow Cooker Caramel Apple Crumble

Ingredients

For the apples:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 5 large apples, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

For the topping:

- 2/3 cup oats
- 2/3 cup loosely packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3-4 tablespoons softened butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions

1. In a mixing bowl, combine brown sugar, granulated sugar, apples, salt, and cinnamon. Spread onto bottom of slow cooker.
 2. Mix your crumble topping ingredients until it comes together. Sprinkle it over top of the apples. Cook on low for 4 hours, or high for 2 hours.
 3. Turn off heat and let sit, covered, for one hour to let the caramel thicken
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Apple "Cookies"

Prep time:5 mins; Total time:5 mins; Serves:1-2

Ingredients

- 1 apple, sliced and cored
- 2 Tbsp peanut butter or almond butter
- or sunflower butter
- mini chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Spread peanut butter on top of the apple slice.
2. Next sprinkle with chocolate chips.
3. Continue until all slices are done.
4. *Serve and enjoy!*

MAKING A LEAF BOWL

A leaf bowl is exactly what it sounds like: A bowl made out of leaves! In just a few minutes and with minimal supplies you can whip up your own bowl and add some instant charm to your fall table. This is also a fun project to do with kids, and they can admire their project when it is used as a centerpiece on the dinner table!

To make a leaf bowl, here is what you will need:

- Several dozen palm-sized leaves. They should still be pliable and not dry. If you wish you may use artificial fall leaves. My Dollar Tree sells packages of them for \$1.00.
- Mod Podge. This is available at all crafts stores and even Walmart for around \$3.00.
- Paintbrush
- Plastic Wrap
- Cooking Spray
- Paint Brush
- Medium sized bowl

Once you have your supplies organized, put the bowl together! You must prep the bowl you are using as your mold.

-Do this by spraying the outside of the bowl with cooking spray, then covering it with plastic wrap. This protects the bowl and prevents the leaves from adhering to it.

-Turn the prepped bowl upside down. Begin placing the leaves on to the bowl and “painting” them with Mod Podge. Use A LOT and paint it on thick to make sure it fully saturates the leaves.

-Continue “painting” on the leaves until you have the designs you want. Make sure there are no gaps in the leaves and that the entire bowl is covered.

-Put another coat of Mod Podge over all the leaves that cover the bowl. Allow it to dry overnight.

-The next day, gently separate the leaves from the plastic wrap.

The bowl mold should fall off nicely and leave you with a sturdy leaf bowl. Place it on your fall table and fill it with small items such as candy, or place it under a glass bowl and use it as a fun serving piece.

Either way it is a quick and easy craft that you can quickly put together with items you already have! And it’s a fun conversation piece that will leave your guests wondering how you did it!

Caramel Apple Pork Chops

PREP TIME 5 MINUTES; COOK TIME 25 MINUTES; SERVES 4

Ingredients

- 6-8 boneless pork chops (1/2 inch to 3/4 inch thick)
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 apples, peeled, cored, and sliced (A firm apple like a Granny Smith is best)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°. Heat the oil in a large skillet, over medium high heat and then brown the pork chops (about 1 minute on each side).

Remove the browned chops from the skillet and set them aside. In the same skillet, over medium heat, melt butter and add the brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir until the sauce is completely combined and then add the apples.

Cook the apples in the caramel sauce for about 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Then add the pork chops back to the skillet and sprinkle with the chopped pecans.

Bake for 25 minutes or until pork chops are cooked through. The apples will be tender and the sauce will be bubbly. Spoon the apples and sauce over the pork chops when serving.

The Farmer and the Pig

A farmer and his pig were driving down the road when a policeman pulled him over. The policeman asked the farmer, "Didn't you know it is against the law to ride with a pig in the front of your truck?"

The farmer replied, "No, I didn't know that." The policeman asked the farmer where he was going and he said, "To Memphis".

The policeman said, "I will let you off the hook this time if you promise to take the pig to the zoo when you get to Memphis." So the farmer promised he would.

Several days later the policeman spotted the farmer with the pig driving down the road and he pulled him over again. The policeman said "I thought I told you to take this pig to the zoo when you got to Memphis."

The farmer replied, "I did and we had so much fun, I'm taking him to Kings Island now".

Shirley & Marcy

A mother was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school. He didn't want his mother to walk with him. She wanted to give him the feeling that he had some independence but yet know that he was safe.

So she had an idea of how to handle it. She asked a neighbor if she would please follow him to school in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her. She said that since she was up early with her toddler anyway, it would be a good way for them to get some exercise as well, so she agreed.

The next school day, the neighbor and her little girl set out following behind Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbor girl he knew. She did this for the whole week.

As the two kids walked and chatted, kicking stones and twigs, Timmy's little friend noticed the same lady was following them as she seemed to do every day all week. Finally she said to Timmy, "Have you noticed that lady following us to school all week? Do you know her?"

Timmy nonchalantly replied, "Yeah, I know who she is."

The little girl said, "Well, who is she?"

"That's just Shirley Goodnest", Timmy replied, "and her daughter Marcy."

"Shirley Goodnest? Who is she and why is she following us?"

"Well", Timmy explained, "every night my Mom makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, cuz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says, 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life', so I guess I'll just have to get used to it!"

*May Shirley Goodnest and Marcy be with you today and always
I know you smiled! I sure did.*

DON'T FORGET TO SMILE

A little girl walked to and from school daily. Though the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to the elementary school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with thunder and lightning. The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school and she herself feared that the electrical storm might harm her child.

Following the roar of thunder, lightning, like a flaming sword, would cut through the sky. Full of concern, the mother quickly got into her car and drove along the route to her child's school. As she did so, she saw her little girl walking along, but at each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up and smile. Another and another were to follow quickly and with each the little girl would look at the streak of light and smile.

When the mother's car drove up beside the child she lowered the window and called to her.

"What are you doing? Why do you keep stopping?"

The child answered, "I am trying to look pretty, God keeps taking my picture."

May God bless you today as you face the storms that come your way.

Blessed

-LeuAnna Taylor

How we progress in life from point A to point B is commonly a long event filled journey. A journey where in looking back can you sometimes see how one event led to another, and to another to bring about something good in your life, or where you've been helped through a bad time. But sometimes it happens very quickly with everything dropping into place almost without any effort on our part at all and in a very short time. One of those times happened to me recently.

I was on my way to work one morning. Everything was as usual until I was passing through Massillon, Ohio. I had just made a turn onto Lake Street on my way to Route 21. It's four lanes there and since I planned to make a left turn onto Route 21, I got in the center lane and immediately had to stop for a red light. Seconds after I stopped I got a glimpse in my peripheral vision to my right of someone waving their hands at me. It was my boss! He was trying to tell me I had a flat tire. I'd not felt the car driving any differently and was totally unaware that my back tire was almost completely flat.

My boss, Esteban lives in Massillon and was also on his way to work when he saw me. The traffic in that area especially in the morning rush is really bad. As he was in the lane to my right, he held the traffic for me so I could make a right turn in front of his car from my lane and get off the street. As it happens the business on that corner and the lot I pulled into was Hi-Way Tire – a full service tire store. They weren't open at that early hour but I only had to wait about a half an hour for the store to open. Esteban went on to work and left me to wait on my own. When the tire store did open, they took me right in and changed my tire. I was out the door and on my way in a very short time.

During that whole event I was totally relaxed, non-stressed and somewhat amazed at what some people might call coincident after coincident occurring. I tend to look at things a little differently and simply call it blessed. First, if my boss hadn't happened along at just that time, I'm sure I'd been much farther along in my journey to work when I discovered I had a tire problem. It could have been possibly in the fast moving traffic of Route 21 or maybe even later along a long stretch of Route 62 somewhere between small towns with no help readily available. No matter where it would have happened after that, it would at least have been very inconvenient and at the other end of

the spectrum been even dangerous. Next, what are the odds of my boss coming along at just the exact moment he did to help me. I had not seen him before or after when coming through Massillon in the morning. We usually arrive at work on a little different schedule so it never happened before. By Esteban being there, he not only let me know about my tire but helped me to safely get out of traffic and into the parking lot at the tire store. When the tire store opened they moved my car inside, checked the bad tire, found an almost new tire that was in my price range, and replaced it. They also went a step further and did a pressure check of all three other tires to be sure they were okay, too. Everything just fell into place throughout the event right down to not having to call work to tell them I would be late that morning. My boss already knew where I was and why.

There are events similar to this happening all the time in people's lives. Some notice but some fail to put together the pieces to spotlight the obvious hand of God at work in our lives. It seems that more people would like to chalk things up as coincident or accident or luck, than give God His due. He never said trouble wouldn't find us but he did promise to be there and support us when bad things did happen.

Most of the time I hear people lamenting the bad thing while not giving voice to the good that happened either to help with the bad thing or as a result of the bad thing. They look at each event as being totally unrelated one to the other – spotlighting the bad thing while ignoring the good, just taking it for granted.

Each of us needs to take a step back sometimes and take a long look at where we are and how he got to this place. If we are honest we will be able to see a clear picture of the path that has led us to where we are, and why as well. God did not put us here with no idea of what to do with us or to just let us run amuck. He has a plan for us and it's all good. It's up to us to recognize His influence, follow His instructions, and just enjoy the journey.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Jeremiah 29:11