

A Stop by Quiet Waters By Dick Germaine

“If Bad, Then Good”

Romans 8:26-28 says, *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”* NIV

Is your present assignment from God filled with struggles and hardships? Are you wondering if you really are where God wants you to be? Are you unable to see why He's allowing you to go through what you're facing? Do you find your faith and trust at a low ebb? Are you running out of strength? Do you find yourself secretly wondering whether God is actually working for your good? Romans 8:26-28 is a powerful promise for those who love God and seek to fulfill His call on their lives.

I want you to see just how powerful this promise is through the story of a pastor and his wife, Juan & Ana Saa, who have been tested to the core of their being through the terrible illness of one of their young daughters, Emily. Late in the fall of 2006 Emily became ill but the doctors were unable to diagnose the problem. It seemed that no matter what the doctors did or prescribed nothing worked. Throughout the winter her condition continued to deteriorate with a mix of good days followed by days worse than before. Doctors began to suggest it all might be in Emily's head. The Saa's eventually felt led to take her to Colombia, their home country, for medical care.

Here is their story summarized through excerpts from a stream of emails sent to his congregation by Juan, who pastors Life Way Church, Derry New Hampshire. The date of each email precedes the excerpt.

12-18-2006

“With tears in our eyes as we watched Emily's wasted body tremble in pain and silent tears of fear and uncertainty roll down her pale skin, we prayed to God and asked Him to deliver her from such torment. But there we stood helpless, feeling like our tired prayers were not being heard. It was 3:00 am when Emily was being introduced into the MRI chamber, realizing that things could go very wrong. We were confronted with reality. Anything could happen. We had prayed, persisted, confessed, declared, proclaimed, rebuked and resisted. But when the dust settles, reality is still standing unmoved right in front of you. What do you do? This is a moment when you decide if God will continue or not to be your Master, your Lord, your Shepherd, your Faithful deliverer, your friend. It is the point where you either fight Him or you praise Him, where you turn away or you trust. You either fall apart or you bind yourself stronger and tighter to Him... We still don't know for sure what is causing her pain in her head and leg. But we know that

through it all God is faithful and just. This is a very strong statement that has kept us tender inside.”

12-30-2006

“Thank you again for your continued prayers for Emily. Her right leg is working very well. Her left one still needs lots of physical therapy. She has had a good day today. Ana and I decided to accept an invitation to Orlando by my parents, after being in and out of the hospital with Emily for several days since Christmas. The change of weather seems to be helping her. Seeing her cousins is cheering her up and we can't tell you how beautiful it feels inside to see your children laugh after a long month of nasty pain.”

2-16-2007

“Emily is home with us. Please continue to pray for a full restoration. She continues to be in pain, unable to walk, and connected to a feeding pump. We are planning on bringing her to church on Sunday. I would like to have the body pray over her. Thank you for your amazing and encouraging support.”

(At this point because the doctors here could not get to the cause of Emily's illness they felt led to take her to Colombia, their original home)

2-22-2007

“I simply want to thank you all from the depth of my soul for standing in the gap on behalf of Emily. Ana and I understand that the intensity of the attack against our family is very linked to our commitment as a city church to break down spiritual forces of wickedness and godlessness in our region. The Lord has begun this process through the cleansing of His house, pruning leadership, demolishing pride and self-dependence, purifying the body as being detoxed from a form of religion that denies the very power of God and His Holy Spirit... We are seeing a gradual progress in Emily's health in the last four days of treatment. She is able to move her fingers more, and sleep better at night. She is still unable to walk, eat, or speak. So please pray for a full recovery. The doctor that the Lord put on our hearts to visit before leaving Derry, just "happened" to be in the same plane we were in when traveling from Miami to Cali. We know this is nothing but God's hand of grace in this journey of faith.”

3-7-2007

“As you pray this morning, please ask for immense wisdom for us and the doctors. Emily continues to have constant pain and miserable nights. She is so weak. Ana and I can hear her right now whispering a cry for relief. It's becoming very tiring. Emily is at the Imbanaco Clinic... We almost lost her Monday morning after a general body shutdown. Her vital signs are stable now. She is on her third day of treatment with antibiotics for Lyme and Babeosis. We pray the hand of our Lord will guide us every day.”

3-10-2007

“Have you ever prayed and prayed, cried and cried, and it seems like He is not listening? Ana and I have certainly felt this way lately as we see our daughter’s body waste away one day at a time. But we are learning something very valuable. God has heard our prayers, like He heard Jesus prayers during His darkest hour. He is listening. Emily’s cries for help are being heard by God every second of every night and morning hour, of every week and month. And even though we are His children and servants dedicated to His cause, we are not exempt from suffering. God is giving us the opportunity to learn obedience from the things we are suffering. To submit to His whole plan and not our own idea of His plan for us, which surely would not include an ounce of suffering.”

3-12-2007

“Dear Church: We want to thank you again for all your relentless support during this time. Last night Emily had a very rough night with acute pain in her whole body, specially her stomach. Yesterday was probably her best day in months as it relates to her overall mood. We saw her smile and she seemed unusually calm and relaxed... Today is Emily's 7th day of treatment against Lyme and three other diseases through intravenous antibiotics. We are seeing some positive signs: - Strength in her fingers. She is able to grab a cup and drink for herself. - Her voice is back and able to communicate. This has improved significantly our interaction (yet during strong pain, the whole hospital floor is deprived from sleep. Last night was probably the loudest night).”

3-17-2007

“Our trust in God's unfailing love during seasons of trial is one of the best ways we can show that we honor Him. God finds no delight in doubters because doubters become dissidents. Doubters will end up rebelling against the plan of God. They fight, disagree, oppose, protest, and end up doing their own thing. They become avid controllers and manipulators, working independently of God's will. Suspicion against God breeds anarchy and disloyalty. That's why you find so many people running to psychics, palm readers and witches. God's words are not enough for them. You'd be shocked to learn how many politicians and army leaders look for strategic answers for a nation through the demonic wisdom of sorcerers, crystal-gazers, and mediums. Instead of putting their trust in God, they doubt and run away from God to find answers and comfort in flawed methods and sources. But where there is confidence, there is obedience and perseverance. Our hope is in the Lord our God, maker of heaven and earth, ruler of everything that is seen and unseen. In Him we trust, in Him we find rest and comfort for our souls.”

3-27-2007

“I am at Logan airport, ready to be launched to back to Colombia. It was a real gift of God to be able to be with you this weekend, worshiping God, sharing our lives together, feeding from His word of truth. My heart is divided as I go back to Colombia, yet I am certain we will all be back soon with overwhelming victory. I ask you to please pray for wisdom. This week will be crucial for Emily. Ana and I need to decide what we will do

as far as her future treatment. Ana tells me Emily had a horrible night with acute pain in her legs. She is not tolerating the feedings very well.

4-4-2007

“Just wanted to jot down a quick note to ask you to pray for strength. Emily's pain has increased so much this week. Ana is tired. I want to send her to see her mom for a week so she can rest. We do ask for wisdom as we try to discern the right time to come back.”

4-5-2007

“The meeting with the doctors ended at around 10 p.m. The participation of a recognized immunologist from Bogota via internet was crucial tonight. He shared the results from a test done on Emily days ago, which showed clear evidence of a strong infectious process taking place in Emily's body. The results show evidence of a battle against bacteria (most likely borrelia) and a viral infection at the same time. No wonder she has been so weak, and disconnected from the world. These last results at least removed the disbelief that was beginning to plague the team, which frustrated Ana and I so much.”

4-12-2007

“Please continue to pray. Emily is at her lowest. She can hardly speak or move. The pain is like a vacuum that is sucking everything out of her. Doctors are lost. She is on her second day with Lyrica and things seem worse.”

4-13-2007

“Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are his riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his methods! For who can know what the Lord is thinking? Who knows enough to be his counselor? And who could ever give him so much that he would have to pay it back? For everything comes from him; everything exists by his power and is intended for his glory. To him be glory evermore. Amen.” (Romans 11:33-36).

4-16-2007

“Thank you for all your prayers for Emily. Four days ago, Emily had one of her worse nights ever. I remember calling Ana at 3 am (she was still in Bogota) so we could both agree in prayer for our daughter.

Well, get ready for this: Emily will be out of the hospital this Wednesday!! God did in two days what we have not seen in months. I can't explain it. All we know is God's hand is moving mightily.

Yesterday, Emily wanted to go to church real bad. The doctors gave us permission, and off we went till 5 p.m. She was prayed for in church by a very loving multitude, and hours later she was eating ice-cream, drinking yogurt, and chicken soup with cheese later that night. This had not happened in months! She still complains of pain, but it seems to be coming less often. She slept last night almost 8 hours.”

4-20-2007

“We really need special prayer so we can all come back to you soon. We are believing God for Emily’s full recovery in the coming days, which includes the use of her legs, the complete removal of pain, and normal use of her digestive system. Ana and I are praying specifically for miracles in these areas.”

God-chosen servant-leader in the body of Christ, are you in the middle of a severe trial of your faith? Keep crying out to our Lord Jesus Christ, for He is with you in your trial. More than this, He has His hand on you and on the circumstances seeking to eat away at your faith. What appears to you to be bad is actually good, for you are experiencing the love and grace of God testing your faith, proving to angels and demons and everything else in creation how truly genuine it is! How it delights the heart of our Father in heaven to see you standing firm, refusing to give up, and thereby affirming the genuineness of the faith He has given you! In your present trial you are being prepared for greater ministries which God can only give to those who have proven faithful in their present assignments.

1 Peter 1:3-9

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” NIV