

MORE THAN SURVIVORS

† Romans 8:37



Head Injury from a Christian Perspective

November 2009

Compiled monthly by Phyllis King, Head Injury Survivor

Volume 20, Number 11

The following is from a book of devotions by Linda Lamb, Head Injury Survivor of Brookville, Pennsylvania.

He Knows

"I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance."

Revelation 2:2 (NIV)

I went into a store today because I needed to pick up a package which I had paid for and forgot to bring with my other bags several days ago. I was pleasantly surprised when a clerk in the back of the store called me by name and asked if I'd picked it up.

Our names are important to us, as is who we are and what we do. Isn't it wonderful that JEHOVAH, the GOD of Heaven and earth, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe not only knows our name but all about us and He loves us.

In a day when computers do various work and people are many times identified by numbers, it is a great comfort to us that GOD sees us as individuals, for HE made us each.

Find comfort in Him who understands how you feel and why He made you.

He cares about you and every detail that concerns you. You are special and precious to Him. He loves you and knows you.

Dear LORD,
thanks for Your love.

In JESUS' name, amen

(Your Name)

This is yours!



Choosing the Way of Truth Part 1

by Martha Hutcheson
Augusta, Georgia
Head Injury Survivor

Psalm 119:30 "I have chosen the way of truth; thine ordinances have I laid before me" (KJV).

How can I choose the path of Truth?

This verse (Psalm 119:30) jumped out at me January 1, 2009. After I read this verse several times, these questions came to my mind, "In **everything** that I do, am I choosing the way or path of truth?" Immediately, some things came to mind that are not necessarily in the path of truth. What is truth? What is the way of truth? How can I choose the path of truth?

John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Jesus was replying to Thomas's question concerning how we can know the way to where Jesus was going; Jesus had told His disciples in **John 10:15**, "I lay down my life for the sheep." Then in John 14, Jesus was telling His disciples about His Father's house and that He (Jesus) was going to go and prepare a place for them. Thomas wanted to know about this place to which Jesus was referring. Thomas wanted to know how they (Christ's disciples) were going to know how to go with Jesus. For three years, the disciples had followed Jesus everywhere He went. That is why Thomas was curious as to where Jesus was going and how they could follow Him to this new place.

John 17 is the prayer of our Lord before He was to be crucified. He was praying for those He would be leaving behind, as well as for those of us who would become His children and followers in the centuries to come.

John 17:17 "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Christ prays this prayer in reference to those who were following Him at that time as well as for those who would follow Him during the many centuries to follow.

John 1:1-2 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." These two verses show that Jesus (who is the WORD of God) is God Himself. If you read on through verse 3, you will see that, in the beginning of time as we know it, Jesus Christ, who is God, created everything. ↗

(The beginning of time for us was when God created the heavens and the earth: **Genesis 1**). Jesus Christ as God Himself did not have a beginning or birth like we have had, because God has always been and will always be. He is from eternity past. He will always be and will live forever, which is eternity future.

Just as God is eternal, so His Word is eternal.

Psalm 119:89 "Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in Heaven."

Please also read the following verses: **Psalm 117:2; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35.**

To summarize the verses of **John 17:17** and **John 1:1-2**, Jesus is God, and God is eternal. Jesus/God is the *Word of God*. The *Word of God is Truth!* Now let's add another verse to this summary.

John 1:17 "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Again, the *Word of God is Truth* and Jesus Christ, who is God, brought the *Truth* to us through His life and His Word (the *Word of God*). See **Psalm 119:151 and 160.**

Let's go back to our introductory verse: **Psalm 119:30** "I have chosen the way of truth; thine ordinances have I laid before me." To choose *the way of truth*, we must first accept **Who is truth**. Jesus Christ is **the truth**. He said so in **John 14:6**. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." How do we accept Jesus Christ?

We must realize and accept the following truths from God's Word, the Bible:

1. **God loves us.** He demonstrated His love for us when He sacrificed His life to pay the penalty for our sinful lives. **Romans 5:8** "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The word *commendeth* means "demonstrates."

2. **We are sinners** (people who disobey God's truth and laws). **Romans 3:23** "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Those sins of disobedience to God's ↗

laws will keep us out of Heaven. **Romans 6:23** "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

There is **absolutely NO sin** in Heaven because our God is Holy, Righteous, Just, Perfect, and Pure. He cannot look on sin favorably. Heaven is Holy, Righteous, Just, Perfect, and Pure because our God is all of these characteristics and so much more.

3. **Christ Jesus died** (or sacrificed His life) **to pay the penalty for my sins.** He came back alive the third day after His death on the cross. He came back alive to prove that (a) He was God in the flesh, (b) that He has All Power and was able to resurrect Himself, and (c) that if He could raise Himself from the dead, then He has All the Power needed to forgive our sins, to save our souls for eternity, and to change our lives forever.

4. **I must confess my sins and receive Jesus Christ as (a) my Savior from my sins and (b) as the LORD or Boss of my life.**

5. Once I confess my sins and receive Jesus Christ as my personal Savior from my sins, then **I have become God's child** and have received His salvation from my sins.

This article first appeared on the website <www.edifys.net >.

Dear Phyllis

Martha Hutcheson sent me two *More Than Survivors* newsletters. After reading through them, I thought I would send you a copy of our book. If you think you could use it in some way, we would be delighted, for the purpose of it is to bring glory to God and encourage others.

Jill Vanderhoof

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

OUR TESTIMONY OF GOD'S HEALING

"Don and Jill Vanderhoof and their two children, Ben and April, are church-planting missionaries in the country of Germany. In August 2000, Don was the human version of Mad Cow Disease. The diagnosis was made based on characteristic patterns of brain degeneration indicated on MRI brain scans and Don's unmistakable symptoms. The Vanderhoofs were told that this disease is always fatal. This story is their testimony of God's healing" (from back cover).

"As we have been prompted to put these happenings in writing, it is our desire to glorify God and declare His abundant grace. This is a testimony of God's unending faithfulness, sure guidance, bountiful provision, and unexplainable comfort in a time of heart-wrenching trial. We would not have chosen this trial for ourselves, but we would not trade what we have learned and continue to learn through it. We will praise God for His wonderful goodness to us for the rest of our lives.

"The phrase 'From Strength to Strength' comes from Psalm 84:7a, which says, 'They go from strength to strength.' This refers to the way God granted Don strength, one small measure at a time over a period of many months. We learned to be grateful and content with each measure of strength that God chose to grant. This phrase also represents the strength God granted to me each and every day to carry on during the time of Don's illness and recovery" (page IX).

You can purchase the 52-page book by sending \$4.50 to

Don & Jill Vanderhoof
1 Cross Court
Greenville, SC 29607



In upcoming issues of MTS, I will be sharing "gems" from this book.



Prayer Requests



For Steve Sauder

Dear Friends,

In addition to the severe TBI and Parkinson's disease, doctors have now diagnosed Steven with "progressive brain deterioration." Basically, they feel that the neurons that were rejuvenated or that took the place of others at the time of the brain injury are now dying out at a fairly fast rate, probably accelerated by the Parkinson's and by a manufacturing mistake in a prescription medicine several years ago, plus by mistakes doctors made in prescribing. Plus the stroke several years ago.

That is why the right side of his body is also getting very bad. He can no longer stand up or transfer, and he can no longer use anything but his right index finger and (slightly) thumb. They've tried, but it's not working. He also has opisthotonus (body in a C shape backwards, so his head is back pretty hard, causing him to choke a lot. His short-term memory has greatly worsened, as has his speech. He still has a great attitude and is a joy.

His favorite time of day is still singing praise songs in the eve around the piano. Steven's greatest desire is to go home to His Lord. Each night he says, "Maybe Jesus will take me home tonight." He knows his diagnosis and prognosis. So his prayer request that he would ask from you would be that God would take him home soon, provided he has the work finished that God desires him to do. And that he would persevere with joy until that time.

My (Vicki's) Bible reading this morning was Col 3:12. "As God's own picked representative—purified, holy, and well-beloved by God Himself—clothe yourself with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, a humble self opinion, gentle ways, and patience (which is tireless and longsuffering and has the power to endure whatever comes, with good temper)" (partly from the Amplified Bible).

I (Vicki) would very much appreciate you all praying that I would daily wear those exact "clothes." Thank you so much for your love and prayers.

God is so good.

Very much love,

Steven and Vicki Sauder

Sarasota, Florida

For Marty

The Spirit was with us yesterday (October 14) for Marty's sake. We had a small meeting at the hospital, which was very good news.

I brought up the fact that Marty needs teeth removed, and they were very receptive to getting that taken care of. They said that the saliva around those teeth just sits there, acquires more germs, and then goes into Marty's lungs.

Marty's pneumonia is going away. They said there is barely anything there!

Since the visit at the hospital, Marty has primary care physicians who will come to the house.

I also brought up the fact for speech therapy. They are going to issue a script for a speech evaluation. Please pray that Marty will feel good enough to cooperate and get speech therapy. I will continue to have the fund-raiser for physical therapy. PLEASE continue to pray Marty's atrophy. Now all we have to do is pray that all that we discussed take place.

God is good. I know that HE was standing right there with us yesterday.

Anne Marie Willett

Reading, Pennsylvania

Sister of **Head Injury Survivor**

REDEEMING LOVE

Oh, the loving hand of God,
That created us so long ago.
He even gave us a will of choice,
And in us, His breath He did blow.

Made in His image, and after His likeness,
He didn't create us to sin.
But Satan was clever, and came in disguise;
He hasn't changed any, since then.

He came to Eve, and just posed a question—
Of this tree, can you tell me why,
If God really loves you, why would He forbid you
To eat of this tree, and then die?

The question was good—It appealed to her reason,
The temptation, she could not resist.
Then, she convinced Adam to join in her folly,
Thinking, surely one fruit won't be missed.

Now God sought them both, alone in the garden,
And asked: "Why from me do you hide?"
They replied, "We are naked, and cannot look on
your face."

So, God judged them, and placed them outside.

Because the penalty for sin has always been death,
God had already devised His own plan.
The shedding of blood was the instrument, then,
Which would blot out the sins of a man.

One day, God looked at Jesus, His precious own son,
And said: "I want you to live down on earth.
You'll be conceived by a virgin, born in a manger,
And the angels will herald your birth.

Yes, Jesus was willing to come in that way,
From His throne, He so quickly came down.
The promised Messiah, announced by the angels,
Would some day wear a different crown.

One day, in the garden, as His sweat turned to crimson,
He cried, "Father, if it just be thy will,
Please let this bitter cup pass from my lips.
If not, then I'll walk up Calvary's Hill.

When He cried: "It is finished," Satan thought he
had won,
And he laughed at the Father, above;
But, because death had no vict'ry, from the grave
He arose,
Restoring man with His Redeeming Love.

REDEEMING LOVE COMMENTARY

The essence of God's Redeeming Love cannot be fully appreciated unless one knows the entire story, from the beginning. Of course, one small piece of literary work could never hope to accomplish this task, but the intent of this piece is to apprise the reader of the tremendous price paid for our salvation.

It has often appeared to me that we, as believers, often minimize, or just take for granted, God's wonderful grace. Sometimes we think God owes us something, when the absolute truth of the matter is: God owes us nothing! Grace is dispensed, and mercy is granted, but not due to anything which we have done, or ever could do, to merit either one.

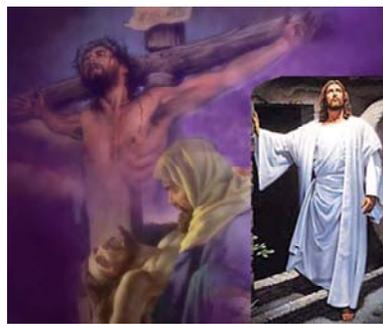
As His followers, we often are beguiled by the subtle ways of Satan, too. Just as Adam and Eve were, we are aware of our wrongdoing. Instead of calling out, "Father, help me," so often we, too, run and hide, heaping coals of guilt upon our already burning souls.

Now, God had plainly said: "If you eat of this tree, you shall surely die." That was very explicit. Yet man continues to fall into this, and he begins same age-old pit. His reasoning gets in the way, and he begins to ask foolish questions, such as: "Does God really mean that?" That's an open invitation for the father of all lies, Satan, to jump right in with his thoughts on the matter. He says: "No, no, if God really loved you, He would not punish you for sinning." However, we need to fully understand that God did, God does, and God will punish sin, and the penalty has always been the same: death!

HOW then, if we are all sinners, do we escape such a plight and find restoration for our souls? We accept the fact that Jesus, God's only begotten son willingly gave His own life to purchase our redemption, and that Redeeming Love was poured out through His blood, which was spilled on Calvary's tree. All who ask for forgiveness, are washed in this blood, and are brought into renewed fellowship with God, and begin a right relationship.

Sandra N. Lehmann

Phoenix, Arizona
Head Injury Survivor



From Phyllis

I have received **\$120** toward the approximately **\$155** cost of printing and mailing. My special thanks to

Barb, Mary Jo,
Marilete, and Randall



All of the MTS family appreciates any contribution you make as our Lord leads and provides!

Phyllis

We Would Like to Hear from YOU!

More Than Survivors is a monthly Christian support letter for the brain injury community. The MTS family of subscribers extends across the United States, Canada, England, and South Africa.

Share with the MTS family

- What God is doing in your life since brain injury
- Prayer requests
- Requests for pen pals, including a little about yourself and about what you are looking for in a pen pal

Include your address, e-mail address, and/or telephone number if you wish to let readers contact you. Everything will be edited, just to make sure it is clear and understandable.

Send your notes, letters, articles, artwork, and poetry to: More Than Survivors
6903 Cherry Meadow Dr.
Austin, TX 78745-5333
(U.S.A.) or
e-mail: phyllis.king@yahoo.com



We would like to hear from you, whatever your connection with brain injury.

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Neither I nor those who help me put MTS together necessarily agree with all the opinions shared in it. If you read something that doesn't ring true to you, pray about it, see what God says about it in the Bible, and seek out the opinions of others who are qualified on the subject.

Phyllis

**“The God of all comfort...comforts us in all our troubles,
so that we can comfort those in any trouble
with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.
† 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)**



Check out www.headtohead.org, where Paul and Mary Lou Webb work to provide the love of God and His hope to the brain-injury community of survivors, caregivers, family, friends, and the

body of Christ. Included are articles and essays, poetry, sermons to listen to, a section for caregivers, one for veterans, a pastor's corner, Bible studies, prayers, resources, testimonies, tips & hints, and much more.

Recommended Reading



Refined in the Furnace of Affliction

by John McCulloch

John's son received a head injury at birth, resulting in blindness. A second injury at age 28 resulted in confinement in a nursing home. These afflictions and others lead the family to a positive result. You can purchase this 135-page book in most bookstores, at <amazon.com> or <barnesandnoble.com>, or by sending a check for \$14.95 U.S. or \$18.95 Canada to
John McCulloch, 2400 Durston Rd. #67, Bozeman, MT 59718.



In Sickness and in Health Memoir of a Marriage

by Becky Rumney

After 24 years of marriage, Becky's husband, Ron, sustained a brain injury. "I'm a firm believer if you are truly committed to the vows you take on your wedding day and have a faith in God, you will persevere." You can order this 107-page book for \$13.50 by calling 1-866-638-6884 or at <www.trafford.com>.



Ransomed:

Let the redeemed of the LORD say so...

by William Stewart Whittemore

"My cry to God did not keep me from pulling the trigger."
You can order this 90-page book about Stewart's experiences for \$9.99 at <amazon.com> or through Xulon Press at 866-909-2665.



Nola: A Journey of Hope after Traumatic Brain Injury

by Judy Sprik with Ron Sprik

If you are struggling as a **Head Injury Survivor** or a caregiver, find encouragement and ideas for finding help here. More information is at <nola.sprik.com>. Get this 157-page book by sending a \$12 check to Ron Sprik, 3513 Las Vegas Dr. NE, Belmont, MI 49306.



The brochure "**Why Me, God?**" by Steve and Vicki Sauder gives excellent information about the effects of brain injury and the faithfulness of God. I recommend sharing it with everyone you know, especially those who haven't yet come to Jesus. This brochure is free, so let me know how many you want me to send you.

Especially for Families and Friends, Vol. 1

Ten MTS articles 1990-1992. Family members share about dealing with the head injury of a loved one.

Number ordered: _____ x \$2.00 = \$ _____

Especially for Families and Friends, Vol. 2

Nine MTS articles from 1992-1994.

Number ordered: _____ x \$2.00 = \$ _____

Head Injury Survivors' Stories, Vol. 1

14 MTS articles 1990-1992. How God has worked in their lives.

Number ordered: _____ x \$3.00 = \$ _____

Head Injury Survivors' Stories, Vol. 2

Twenty-four MTS articles 1992-1994.

Number ordered: _____ x \$4.00 = \$ _____

Head Injury Survivors' Messages

Survivors share spiritual lessons they have learned.

Number ordered: _____ x \$4.00 = \$ _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

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