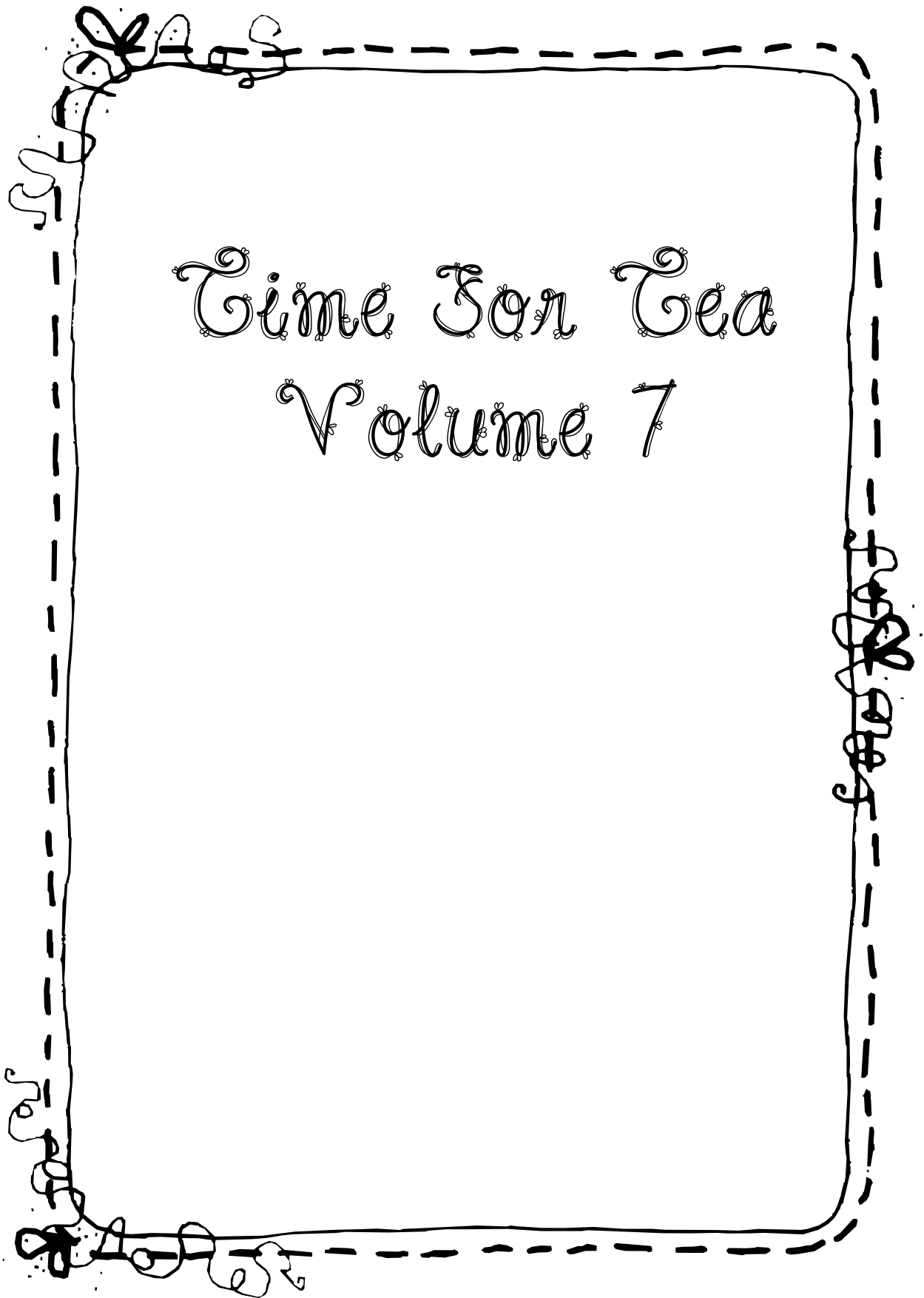


Time for Tea  
Reprint Book of  
Articles From  
Volume 7



By Cindy Rushton



Time For Tea  
Volume 7

## Time for Tea Volume 7

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### Our Email Discussion List... Time for Tea Online!

We welcome you to the parlor where it's always teatime - the sideboard is full of fresh pastry, the candles are lit to compliment the fire on the hearth and the hostess sits ready to pour. There is beautiful music from the CD player, original art upon the brocaded walls, fresh flowers upon each tea table. Sit down in a comfortable chair, relax a few minutes in your busy day, and chat with other Charlotte Mason families. Your hostess is the Cindy Rushton, noted Author and Editor of the popular magazine **Time For Tea**.

Conversation, companionship, and encouragement are the topics here. Questions on homeschooling with a lifestyle of learning are welcome at any time. You will also find us discussing articles from the magazine, or other beautiful thoughts - poetry, art, music, recipes and handiwork. We even plan to talk about how we apply the philosophy of Charlotte Mason to enrich our lives. Come join us for this little treat in each day...our Time for Tea!

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Time for Tea Reprint Book for Volumes 1 and 2  
Time for Tea Reprint Book for Volume 3  
Time for Tea Reprint Book for Volume 4  
Time for Tea Reprint Book for Volume 5  
Time for Tea Reprint Book for Volume 6  
Who? Me? A Virtuous Woman???

YES! YOU! A Vessel God CAN Use!

PLUS! Lots More Coming Soon!!!  
Stay Tuned!

## Welcome To Time for Tea!

Welcome to our new issue of *Time for Tea*!

*Time for Tea* is published by me, Cindy Rushton (pictured above), and our great staff at Rushton Family Ministries. Each issue is written as our little piece of encouragement from our home to yours.

Our prayer is that each and every issue will encourage, inspire, and equip you better for your journey! This issue is no different! In fact, we pray that this issue will give you a BIG DOSE of encouragement as you curl up and join us for this special MEGA Issue!!

Just to give you a little background on our magazine...This issue begins our seventh year of publishing *Time for Tea*. Three years ago, we divided it into two magazines, birthing our *Homeschooling The Easy Way* magazine and expanding *Time for Tea*.

Now, both magazines are available by regular mail subscriptions, email subscriptions, AND we even have past issues available in *Reprint Books*, featuring articles compiled from each volume into a book for each year! (see more information on those later in this issue!)

The focus of *Time for Tea* is to provide an atmosphere of "Titus Two encouragement" that helps us to get back to God's design for womanhood, the godly family, the godly home, the godly business, and the godly homeschool.

By "Titus Two encouragement," I mean that each issue will endeavor to step up to the call of encouraging each of you to, "...**be sain and sober of mind (temperate, disciplined), and to love their husbands and their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, homemakers, good-natured (kindhearted), adapting and subordinating themselves to their husbands, that the Word of God may not be exposed to reproach (blasphemed or discredited).**" (Titus 2: 4-5 AMP)

Articles range from topics covering developing a closer walk with the Heavenly Father to ministering to the heart of your husband to discipling our children with a Godly heritage to ideas for home-making from the heart to getting back to God's design for the godly home to becoming a vessel that God can use! We endeavor to plan each issue so that it will be jam-packed with timely articles that are designed to give you a time for renewing your mind and refreshing your spirit during your *Time for Tea*!

Our goal in our magazine, as with our books and tapes produced by our ministry, is to encourage and equip families to step to the calling before us as godly families. We began *Time for Tea* as a "long-distance" mom-to-mom time of mentoring and sharing. We are committed to continue this magazine with this same vision. God has made us with a need for companionship... friendship... mentoring. God uses the means of companionship, friendship and mentoring to minister encouragement and biblical teaching. This is what we are here for!

Our prayer is that in each issue you will begin to see a glimpse of how incredibly special you are to the Lord. He loves you so very dearly. The greatest news I could ever share with you is that God loves you and wants to become your very best friend! He wants to walk with you, talk with you, and minister to you each and every day. His heart cry is for a relationship with YOU. Our purpose here is to be vessels that God can use to walk, talk, and help you to get to know Him better! But, that is not all!

We also pray that you will find a friendship through the miles. A friendship that God can use to inspire you to keep on, on those days you are weary and worn, troubled and perplexed, broken and hurting. I have been asked WHY we do what we do here in our ministry. Well, to sum it up, I simply cannot stand to see the broken hearted...the tired...the weary. My heart instantly pulls in those directions! Of course, we cannot KNOW just when you will need that word of encouragement...a good hearty giggle...or just a pat on the back. But, we bring each issue to you praying that God will fill your cup as we pour forth. We know that HE will take your needs and meet them ALL in abundance. We just want to be vessels that can be used by Him to meet those needs!

Finally, YOU are a vessel that God can use mightily. God planned from the foundation of the world to use YOU as a woman (or man--for the guys in the crowd!) of immense influence. We want to serve you as God uses you! Our heartbeat is to come alongside of you as your personal cheerleaders as you run the race that God has placed before you!

As you sit down to pour yourself a great big cup of tea, we pray that each issue will lead you to sit at the feet of the Lord for a special time of renewing your mind and refreshing your spirit. So, why not take a few moments, pour yourself a great big cup of tea. It is once again, TIME FOR TEA!

With Love, The Rushtons

# *What a Way To Battle! Worship!*

*By Cindy Rushton*

***"Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the [victorious] God of my salvation! The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]!"***  
***Habakkuk 3: 18-19***

In the midst of a great battle? Hear it approaching in the distance? Just want power in your daily walk as a Christian? Want to stand firm regardless of the storm or battle that is raging against you? Worship!

One of my favorite "battle" stories in the Bible comes from 2 Chronicles 20. In this passage, King Jehoshaphat is sent word that a "great multitude" was coming against him and his people. I don't know about you, but as for ME, I would have just freaked out! Stress is not the word! Oh, but Jehoshaphat did the RIGHT thing...he immediately "set himself determinedly, as his vital need, to seek the Lord." He proclaimed a fast in the whole land. What was the answer for the battle that was on the horizon? Praise! Worship! What a way to battle!!

Yes! The Spirit of the Lord came upon them. He instructed them to do just a few things:

1. Show up to the battlefield
2. Stand still
3. Watch God battle for them
4. And my point in sharing this passage: SING AND PRAISE God!

When we show up, stand still, look unto God, we please Him. However, nothing seems to unleash Him to do the battle like PRAISE and WORSHIP!

Oh, I am not talking about praise and worship like we have at most of our churches. I am talking about a lifestyle of praise and worship! Not just something we do for 10-15 minutes on Sunday Morning. I am talking about 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I am talking about praise and worship like David knew. You know, when he could soothe his enemy with his praise and worship? When he could dance in the streets in total abandonment as a worship to the Lord in spite of the opinions of those he loved the most (his wife)? When he could pray prayers and sing songs that could woo the heart of God?

I want this kind of worship! I want to praise God with all I am! Because of this, I make praise and worship a part of every day. You can too! How? Here are some QUICK and EASY tips:

⇒ Collect your favorite praise and worship verses from the Bible. Some of my personal favorites have been found in the pages of the Psalms. I also LOVE Bible prayers from the GIANTS of the faith. Begin your collection today! Copy them in your own Discipleship Notebook. Use them

as your prayers...read them when you need a word of encouragement...memorize them! Hummm...I guarantee that whatever your situation may be today, you will find that this will be a key to warfare!

- ⇒ Collect your favorite praise and worship songs and hymns. I keep copies of my favorites in my Discipleship Notebook. They are great for prayers and praise during those moments that I hear the rumbling of the enemies' feet! I also have a wonderful collection of my favorite praise and worship songs. You may also want to collect tapes or CD's that feature your favorite songs and hymns. I keep mine in my bag, ready-to-go with me anywhere I go. I pop them in when I am working on the computer, cleaning my house, riding down the road, or sneaking away for a walk at the park! Anytime, anywhere can easily become a place of worship of our God.
- ⇒ Write your own prayers/songs of worship! YOUR story is SO vital! One of my favorite NEW books is a compilation of simple prayers and thoughts written by Ginny Traylor. Ginny's faithfulness is journaling through her life has inspired me anew to keep even more organized journals of my journey. What may seem simple, may actually bring the greatest glory to the Lord for those that come behind us!
- ⇒ Finally, KNOW the power of praise and worship! Just as we see here in 2 Chronicles 20, worship unleashes the Lord to battle FOR US! Our worship is a sweet, sweet aroma offered to our precious Lord. It is our ministry TO HIM personally. Only in the midst of battle can we offer the sweet sacrifice of praise, it is no "sacrifice" when all is easy and fun! Then, watch out for Jehovah Nissi! Those battles are not ours—they are the Lord's!

So, hear the enemy coming? Fall flat on your face! Inquire upon the Lord! Pull out those beloved verses...songs...and even your own feeble prayers of worship to God. Oh, then! Watch what happens! You can stand still, watch, and see the battle fought by your Jehovah Nissi!

***"Give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy and  
lovingkindness endure forever!"  
2 Chronicles 20: 21***



## *Pray Bible Prayers...*

Have no idea WHAT to even pray? I would like to share one of my favorite ways to pray when I have no idea what to even pray! Why not take a look at some of the prayers in the Bible? In fact, do a study to find prayers in the Bible that are perfect for YOUR situation! Put your own words in to personalize. Make them YOURS! Here are just a few to get you started...

The Lord's Prayer...Matthew 6: 9-13  
Mary's Prayer...Luke 1: 47-55  
Hannah's Prayer...1 Samuel 2: 1-10  
David's Prayer...2 Samuel 7: 18-29  
Solomon's Prayer...2 Chronicles 6: 14-42

Oh! Don't forget to find prayers in the Psalms that are PERFECT for your situation!

## *Quick Tips for Busy People Who Want To Get Things (Well...the Best Things!) Done...*

*By Cindy Rushton*

- ⇒ **Don't let the urgent crowd out the important.** The urgent tends to wage war against the important. It screams much, much louder. Plus, it steals away time and you don't even notice it until MUCH time has just flown by! Constantly remind yourself of what is REALLY important. Look at life from an eternal perspective. What really counts? What will matter when all is said and done? What can you AND ONLY YOU do? Stick with the important. Watch the urgent get in its proper place!
- ⇒ **Work at YOUR pace!** Find a pace that is stimulating, but not stressful. Be sure to choose extra commitments very carefully. Remember that for everything that you add, something must go. That makes choices of what we do or choose to do very important! Get too many and the only option is overload!
- ⇒ **Get and Stay Organized!** I find that it only takes a few things to make my life run a whole lot smoother: an overall daily plan, a plan for keeping organized/clean, a place for everything, and a personal organizer (WITH me all the time—I call my organizer "*my personal brain-in-a-binder!*") It contains my lists of to-do's, my life goals (to constantly keep my perspective on track!), contact information, details that give my brain a rest, and even space for me to jot down those ideas/articles/more details!). Take a look at what will help you to get organized. If that is no problem or once it is not a problem, then look at what will help you to stay organized. You will accomplish so much more that is WORTHWHILE when the distractions are gone!
- ⇒ **Add variety to your routine!** Would you believe that studies show that those who accomplish the most usually have a nice variety of tasks in their routine? Actually, they have regular breaks and a good variety of tasks in each day. Monotony and boredom not only limit us, but reduce productivity. So! Give yourself a break! Literally!
- ⇒ **Find a mentor.** There is nothing like a friend to help you keep your perspective through the thick and thin of life! Find someone who believes in you and is willing to help you stay on track. Be sure to also look for someone who will encourage you to set and keep godly priorities. Most of all, find someone who will hold you accountable!
- ⇒ **Be nice to yourself!** Yep! Especially if you want to stick it out for the long-haul! Slow down! Keep a do-able pace! Stay balanced! Constantly look at your priorities and prune anything that conflicts with them! Schedule in fun, recreation, and most of all, quiet time! Learn new, fun things that you would like to learn! Have fun! You will find that you will get much, much more done—and it will count!

# *A New Beginning!*

## *Time for Tea with Tracy Traylor!*

*Interview and Story*  
*By Cindy and Elisabeth Rushton*

On one side of a bridge Tracy Traylor had it ALL! Freshman at Baylor University. Realizing her lifelong dream of majoring in Interior Design. A full life of beloved friends, good clean fun, gifted at anything she ever tried to do, and part of an incredible, godly family.

On the other side of the very same bridge, life forever changed for Tracy and her entire family!

That dreadful Easter weekend would find doctors fighting for the life of this precious vessel while over 100 churches began 24-hour-a-day intercession. Tracy's whole life would enter into a tale-spin as dreams were shattered...life was brought to a complete halt...and the entire Traylor family would find a new beginning!

### **The Accident...**

When Tracy left Waco, Texas on her way home to Laurel, Mississippi for Easter weekend, no one would have ever imagined that her life would be turned upside down and inside out.

My first memories of Tracy go back to our beloved Alma Mater: R. H. Watkins High School. There are people we remember from High School with backstories that, well, are not what we want to remember. But, Tracy was always different!

Tracy became a Christian as a very little girl. She would tell you, in her always humble way, that she really did not live for God in a way that she should have. Of course, that is coming from a young woman who lives a life of complete surrender to God and His awesome call on her life.

My memories of Tracy are very much like my renewed memory that was made in our recent interview for this issue: always cheerful, bubbly, a ray of sunshine, fun, FUNNY, optimistic, and completely full of joy. There was something different about her that set her apart from the crowd. It was not her PERFECT call to cheerleading—that was JUST too Tracy Traylor (no one could encourage you like Tracy!), but there was MORE to her! It was not her incredible gift of artistic design—incredible, but we saw NOTHING until that same gift resurfaced giving her a completely new beginning. No...Tracy Traylor was a vessel set apart for a mighty calling from the Lord! Perhaps, this is what made Easter weekend, April 1988, such a time of devastating tragedy for the Traylor family, the entire city of Laurel, Mississippi and for everyone who had ever come in contact with Tracy.

Tracy was within an hour of her family home when her car hydroplaned, left the road, and hit a tree. Tracy was thrown from the driver's side to the passenger's side and was found miraculously sitting straight up in the seat—if not, she would have died from injuries from her near fatal accident. Knowing that this was a complete miracle—the first in a whole story of miracles—Tracy is the first to declare that her life was saved by a *Mighty God Who "has a different view than we humans do."*

The miracles began as Tracy, suffering from a severe traumatic head injury, lay comatose for five months. Ginny, Tracy's mother, clung to her only hope—God. Bad reports would come and God would step up with yet another miracle astounding the doctors. Truly, their story is a testimony of just how incredible God is as He steps up to the call in response to our prayers!

Over 100 churches went to the mercy seat of God on behalf of Tracy. Churches prayed. Students prayed. Friends prayed. Hospital staff prayed. Complete strangers prayed. And...did God work miracles!

Again, the first of the miracles began at the scene of the accident. Tracy would tell you that she looks back with great regret that she did not have on her seatbelt at the time of the accident. However, God never lets us alone without His protection. Immediately upon impact, Tracy was thrown around in the accident sustaining severe trauma to her brain. Yet, completely unable to do anything for herself, God protected Tracy's life by charging His angels to *"position Tracy so that she might have breath and life."* Even as Tracy was transported to the hospital in those very delicate moments after the accident, God was there providing the very best staff and facility available for her care. Surgeries and even later rehabilitation proved to be moment-after-moment of God providing miracle-after-miracle and open-door-after-open-door into a new beginning.

Sitting down with Tracy today, you would find that God has truly "shown out" for Tracy! Not only is Tracy's exuberant, joyful personality still a "ray of sunshine" that can make everyone with a tough day come away refreshed and renewed in their commitments, but you cannot even sit with her without being reminded anew of God's awesome grace...lovingkindness... sufficiency... sovereignty...faithfulness... and love!

### **The Other Side of The Bridge...**

Tracy's story really doesn't begin in High School at our beloved Laurel High...nor at Baylor University where all of her dreams were seemingly being "made reality." No, the real story began on the other side of the bridge.

April 1988 would bring the Traylor family into a lifestyle her father, Wayne, describes as *"walking each and every step by faith...not by sight."* Of course, Tracy, our valiant warrior, would tickle you by declaring that she has been *"ROLLING by faith and not by sight!"*

Tracy spent around five months in a coma, while her family stayed at her side in constant prayer. The whole time, they were not given any hope that Tracy would ever come out of the coma. Yet, this bad report did not change their focus! Ginny, Tracy's mother, would tell you that all she had

was God. She was forced to trust in God—it was her only option!

And...trust she did! Everything Ginny had ever believed...been taught...or even heard went through her mind. She hashed out crazy doctrines that could not hold up in the midst of her great tragedy. She found the all-sufficient God right there with her all along the way. Sure, she battled with her fears and motherly concerns as any of us would. But, something was very different about the way that the Traylor's suffered. Ginny recorded in her journal, *"Lord, I could not stand it if I didn't know how much You love Tracy. You have promised, Father, that this will work for Tracy's good; If I never see how, enable me to trust you. Oh God, I love her so much. By human eyes, it is all tragedy. Right now, Tracy is severely handicapped. She could not marry and have a family of her own. And yet, Lord, You know the plans You have for Tracy, plans for her good and not disaster, to give her a future and a hope. Give me a divine perspective."*

Yes...God did! He did not change the entire situation, but He did give Ginny, Wayne (Tracy's father), and Tracy a different perspective! A divine perspective. An eternal perspective. Well, but not at once...and still even today, they would tell you that they still do not "see" in complete fullness. Some things they will never completely understand. But, God has proven Himself completely trustworthy throughout the last 15 years!

Ginny records in her journal in May 1991, *"I've learned that the trust is not in everything going perfectly, but rather that God is in control, and He is at work bringing about His will and His purpose in Tracy's life. I always have to go back to the truth that I have learned the hard way: if God is sovereign, and He is, if God is love, and He is, Then God is trustworthy. Loving Sovereign God, I choose to put my trust in You."*

Ginny is not alone. In fact, Tracy has written in her weekly newspaper column, ***Tracy's Side of the Story***, *"Trust can be that last leg when everything else is gone. Wherever you are having a problem that you can't control, the best thing to do is accept it and move on to the next thing. I might be a slow learner, but God has taught me to let God be God rather than let Tracy be Tracy."*

Of course, Tracy is not a superhuman, she struggles with trusting God just like all of the rest of us. She shared in our interview that *"every single morning"* she has a *"choice to make."* She shared that she has *"to choose to trust God, or not to trust God."* Tracy's choice each day is not based on what she feels or thinks; but on what she KNOWS! In turn, she has found God to be faithful and worthy of her trust with every little detail of her life—even those things that she may not understand on this side of eternity.

Now, Tracy is definitely not trusting from an ivory tower. She assures us that she has had to ask the Lord to give her everything—even the ability to trust Him. I love that she has written in her columns about her true struggles in trusting God in the reality of her every day life. She writes, *"...sometimes, I just do not feel like trusting God. Tracy's will seems more important to Tracy. I know I cannot walk or talk, but I can choose to trust, and that is so important to God. Maybe my trust will put a big smile on His face."* Feel Him smiling now? Yep!

Well, good news! Tracy has lived a testimony of trusting God "no matter what" with her "no matter what" meaning to include living with a head injury.

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Head injuries are often misunderstood. Even articles have been written about Tracy's life that have wrongfully described her as a paralyzed quadriplegic. Our family has been delighted to take the opportunity to learn more about head and spinal cord injuries through our interview and study through Ginny's journal (recorded through her grief journey) and through reading Tracy's compilation of articles from her weekly column *Tracy's Side of the Story*, published weekly in *The Laurel Leader Call* (also the first paper I WROTE FOR—OH! For those that have watched my writing journey, you must know that I found that Tracy and I DID have the SAME English teachers! Hummm... warped from an early age into this writing thing!).

Learning about head injuries brings us to awe of what God has done to bring all things, even Tracy's head injury, to *"work together for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose."* My! How God has done JUST that!

Tracy has had to die to her ideas of how things "should" work together, but the awesome praise of her story is that she has seen God work things together in ways she would have never thought of!

The whole story would take you through three months in intensive care...five months of coma...fifteen months hospitalization...a year of rehabilitation. Surgeries...delays...setbacks.

Ginny recalls the hardest part of the journey, *"She really has had to learn how to do things all over again."* Tracy had to work for years to learn little things all over again that we take for granted--sucking from a straw...how to eat...how to speak, THROUGH her mother and family...how to sit by herself ...how to transfer from her chair to another...how to take a few steps with help...

I found myself weeping as Ginny shared about how hard Tracy worked to learn. One of the sweetest things was her diligence in learning how to say, "I love you" to her father. She worked for an entire week. At the end of the week, she was able to say, "I love" and sign "you" to him. Can you just imagine the delight? The simple delights that WE take for granted?

Today Tracy has "come along way baby!" Every part of her body was affected by the head injury. Even though Tracy still battles with the devastation of not being able to speak (Well, she does speak through sign language, her alphabet board, interpretation by her family members, and, NOW--excitedly, through her weekly newspaper column—more on that in a bit!) or to walk on her own. Tracy also lives in the reality of depending on her devoted family, even though she would much, much more prefer those carefree, self-sufficient days before the bridge! Now a business owner, jewelry designer, and professional writer, Tracy's old dreams may have died; but God has granted Tracy a new beginning with completely tremendous dreams!

Yes! Tracy may have endured the pain and suffering from a head injury that raises its "ugly head" all throughout the journey, but she has not lost that spirit that her mother aptly describes as *"a give-it-all-you-got-spirit!"*

I get tickled thinking back over how Ginny described the early transition into this "God-thing" that has resulted in a phenomenal ministry and business. You may think, even if it is for a brief moment,

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about how much the story and life of Joni could encourage the Traylor's. Ginny cracked me up when she shared about how God brought the business about. She shared that *"TV was demoralizing and...although Joni is great and inspiring...there is only so many times you can watch Joni..."* Seriously, she shares that God miraculously brought about an outlet for the creativity (that the doctors projected WAS NOT there and would NOT likely return after the injury!!!!) AND unleashed a full ministry and business to do more than just pass the time, but to also to provide for Tracy's medical and financial needs!

Tracy writes about her miraculous open door into the jewelry business, *"Mom and I were in New Orleans for therapy one year after my accident. Mom got a belt with a bunch of dangling baskets on it. I communicated to Mom how the baskets would make cute earrings, so she snipped off a couple and we spent days making earrings. Surprisingly, they turned out cute. When I was asked what I wanted to do with all the earrings, I had a fast reply. I told Mom I wanted to take "the girls" at Roberts some. They were so sweet to me when I was in the hospital. They sent me a card every week. Roberts is a nice dress shop owned by Joy Roberts. It's the kind of store you go into and just dream. It was embarrassing to bring them some dinky little earrings I made. My earrings were so ugly compared to some of their stuff, but they took my earrings with such gratitude and acted like they really liked them. That night, Joy called Mom and said she wanted to put the earrings in her store. Our first reaction was to snicker. It took Joy a while to convince us she was serious. Before we knew it, we were in business."*

Ginny began and continues to this day to be Tracy's "hands" in this incredible business. She says, *"I'm her hands. She's the designer. Tracy visualizes the pieces and the order of placement. It's all in her head."* Tracy writes about their working relationship that she and her mom make a great team! She shares, *"I get to boss her and tell her what to do."* To see this mother/daughter pair, you would know that there is much, much more to this team than just that!

Ginny has laid down her life in complete surrender just as Tracy has. Tracy shared in interview that in the beginning, right after the accident, the doctors advised that Tracy be admitted to a *"Professional Assisted Living Center."* It would have been easy for Ginny and Wayne to have given up at that point, but they wanted ALL God could give Tracy. The commitment has brought much fruit!

Just watching the interaction between Ginny and Tracy is incredible! I have NO words to describe how life-changing it is to watch this pair! There was a chemistry there that can only result from a lifelong commitment. I could only covet the patience and respect for one another. It was simply tremendous to watch a mother take the time to really HEAR her child. Tracy cannot speak as you and I, but Ginny faithfully listens and communicates for her. In addition, Tracy has gone from the life of the independent college freshman before the accident to depending upon her loving mother to be dressed, fed (she says that she CAN feed herself, but it is much tougher than it looks!), etc. This duo has it all down though! While Ginny feeds Tracy, she also makes jewelry. While Tracy types her articles, Ginny packs up orders for their jewelry.

Now, notice that I slid in the bit about typing articles? Yep! This is yet another miracle that God provided for Tracy.

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## Speaking Through Writing!

Tracy graduated from my beloved Alma Mater much the same as I did. We laughed about the fact that we both had NO intentions to write—but God had other plans! Funny how He does that! Our beloved high school is not the only coincidence that we can celebrate. The same “crazy” editor brought us BOTH out of hiding into international writing ministries!

Jimmy Pippen, editor of *The Laurel Leader Call*, read a special article written by Tracy that sparked his interest in her writing. He came across a piece Tracy had written entitled *Tracy's Side of the Story*. He immediately contacted the family for permission to share her work with others AND to continue a weekly column featuring articles by Tracy.

Even this open door has a tremendous story! Ginny was out of town one weekend. Life at the Traylor home is very different without Ginny. Tracy was bored out of her mind! Typing—that good old skill from high school was still there although now Tracy types with one finger after the accident—preoccupied Tracy for the weekend and would change her life forever. She began typing and ended with her story of experiences from the previous seven years up to that time. It was this work that caught the eye of Jimmy Pippen, opening a door for Tracy to begin to share what life was like for someone dealing with a handicap. Since her column began in February 1995, she has done just that and more! She also shares her intimate walk with the Lord in a way that inevitably draws her readers to God.

Miracle? Oh! Yes! Another miracle that shed light on just a few of the things that Tracy's new beginning could bring! Only eternity holds the complete impact that this one life has had through pain, suffering, and loss!

## Today with Tracy!

So, this brings us to today with the Traylor family. Tracy's two younger sisters, with incredible stories of sacrifice and family commitment of their own, are now grown. I was blessed richly to meet Tracy's darling niece, Della during our interview—girl time! Even Della has a part in this “family ministry.” She showed me how she places the “price stickers” on each card that eventually goes out with the jewelry. This little helper works hard too!

Tracy's father has recently retired after a full career as a banker in Laurel. Tracy's mother, who immediately after the accident closed her Real Estate office to be with Tracy and the family, is still busily caring for her family and for Tracy's needs. In addition to daily care of Tracy and helping to be Tracy's hands for her jewelry business, Ginny also writes and speaks around the world to churches and women's ministries. Tracy stays busy writing her columns and with her jewelry design. She travels with Ginny as situations allow. For many of the speaking engagements, Tracy types up a special message for her mother to share with the groups. They carry their jewelry and make their trips into sweet family memories.

*Prims*, the name of Tracy's jewelry business, has grown immeasurably! Tracy has developed neck-

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laces, bracelets, earrings, watches, and key chains that each have handmade clay Christian symbols. Each piece of jewelry consists of clay symbols that have an accompanying Scripture reference. The clay is specially mixed, cut by hand and baked in the Traylor oven. Tracy then visualizes the placement of the pieces in each necklace and tells her mom which way she wants for them to be placed. Ginny uses those old macramé skills from her past to help put each necklace together. Over the years, this awesome duo has created several theme necklaces that have become very high in demand! They have necklaces with accompanying tags for many different themes such as "Joy," "Grace," "Faith," "Noah's Ark," "Sovereignty," and "The Messiah." Sales have become so popular that *Prims* now has a mail order catalog with pieces ranging from \$6 to \$55 (We are enclosing a copy in this issue so you won't have to wait even one day to order one—or five—of your own! Tell them we said HI!).

One thing that I love about Tracy's jewelry is that each piece of jewelry is completely original, like a piece of Tracy's heart with you all the time. Tracy and Ginny blessed me with my VERY OWN Noah's Ark necklace and Sovereignty necklace to add to my growing collection! The Noah's Ark features the ark with a cross in the center (because Jesus is OUR ARK today!), precious animals shaped intricately for the necklace, all ready to share your testimony AND match anything! Since I am a nut for anything with timelines, history, and Bible study, you would have to know that nothing was more precious than to be blessed with a Sovereignty necklace. Each of those necklaces features a complete timeline of world history symbolized by handmade clay symbols. Ginny uses that necklace as she shares her message of God's awesome love and sovereignty to Ladies' groups around the world. She shares the meanings behind each of the clay symbols and her testimony—*incredible!* However, Ginny and Tracy are not the only ones sharing the gospel through these necklaces...the doors open for each of us to share too. Just wearing my *Prims* has opened the door for me to share my faith in God's total sufficiency regardless of our life situations. Just miraculous! Of course, these miracles are more to add to the list of miracles resulting from this new beginning!

*Prims...even the name of the business is a miracle! The name means much, much more than just a short way to describe Tracy's "primitive jewelry." Joe Roberts, the late husband of Joy Roberts, was responsible for naming Tracy's business. Tracy shares, "We were stumped on what to call it. With his sense of creativity, Joe came up with the name, "Prims." Primitive means "beginnings." That's got a double meaning for me, since jewelry making is my new beginning. I know the jewelry came from God—it's something we would never have thought of."*

This GOD THING has had an incredible impact on the Traylor and all who come in contact with the line of jewelry! God has used this business to provide for Tracy's needs—medical costs, insurance, and therapy. The business has carried Tracy all over the globe. She has been able to represent Mississippi at the "Very Special Arts Festival" in Washington, D.C. While there Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister of the former President J.F. Kennedy and mother-in-law of newly elected Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, purchased one of Tracy's necklaces. Tracy also represented Mississippi in an International Special Arts Festival in Belgium. She was able to lead a workshop, teaching her students to make a necklace with beads.

Not only has this little girl been taking her necklaces all over, but she has received letters about where her jewelry is going without her! One necklace has a fun story! Tracy writes, "*God has also*

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*used the jewelry in special ways. For example, a school teacher from Illinois received a necklace from her niece from Oklahoma, who purchased it in Colorado. The teacher wrote and told us that she used the necklace to tell students about Jesus."* The teacher could not openly share her faith with her students. However, isn't God so cute? She COULD answer questions about her jewelry! And...think for a moment...it all began on the other side of the bridge! Tracy's "new beginning" continues to offer others hope that they too can have a new beginning as well!

### **New Beginning!**

New beginning! On one side of a bridge Tracy Traylor had it ALL and probably did not ever consider a need for a new beginning! On the other side of the very same bridge, life forever changed for Tracy and her entire family—a new beginning was there whether they wanted it or not!

Everything about Tracy's story indicates that she is a walking—well, rolling! (that one is for you Tracy!)—miracle! Tracy has had a choice to make each and every day of her life after the bridge—to trust or not to trust! To laugh or to just cry! To hope (and pass on hope!) or enter into a life of despair! To thank God for what He is doing to bring good from the accident or to blame God for allowing the accident to happen! To become bitter or to become better! To concentrate on the losses or to stay focused on the gains! To hold on to her own will or to let go and grasp onto God's perfect will for her life! To be who God designed her to be or wish she could be someone else! To stay in yesterday or to ROLL into her new beginning!

Tracy has learned that the exchange is worth it all! Her body may not have the strength that she would like for it to have... She may have battles that she would rather than charge into... But, if you were sitting down to girl-to-girl tea with Tracy, she would encourage you that **YOU TOO CAN** do all things through Jesus Christ! She and her mom would take you by the hand and reassure you that you TOO may not "see" how all in your life can work together into something "good" that God can use as mightily as He has used Tracy's trial, but that, *"When He does something, He goes all the way. His grace really does abound!"*

So, beloved...ready for a new beginning? Are you on one side of your bridge, ready to cross over into your new beginning? Beloved, ROLL on over with God...He will go all the way with you too!

## *Too Funny!*

### **In Trouble...**

"At the end of the day, I parked my police van in front of the station. As I gathered my equipment, my K-9 partner, Jake, was barking, and I saw a little boy staring in at me. "Is that a dog you got back there?" He asked. "It sure is." Puzzled, the boy looked at me and then towards the van. Finally he said, "What'd he do?"

### **Prayer...**

One four year old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

### **Shhhh...church!**

A Sunday School teacher asked her children as they were on the way to the church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

### **10 Commandments...**

"A Sunday School class was studying the Ten Commandments. They were ready to discuss the last one. The teacher asked if anyone could tell her what it was. Susie raised her hand, stood tall, and quoted, "Thou shalt not take the covers off the neighbor's wife."

# 50+ Secrets for Surviving Your Struggles!

By Cindy Rushton

*Struggling? Going through a tough time? Storm raging all around you? Beloved friend, my heart goes out to you! Tough times are pure exhausting! But! Here are some secrets that I pray will help you to survive—well, MORE than survive—stand STRONG and very COURAGEOUS in your struggles! I hope that here you will find a way to fill your cup and minister to your heart! Here goes:*

- ⇒ **Laugh!** Just sit there right now...laugh! Start small...just a little giggle! Then...laugh about laughing! Roll on the floor laughing! Feel better?
- ⇒ **Begin a new Bible Study!** Either find a Bible Study guide...or dig out Words to study on your own! For Word Studies, I LOVE my Strong's Concordance. It helps to find all of the references of a certain word of interest. I also love my Vine's Dictionary. I use it to look up the meanings of the words AND it also has other references for uses in Scripture. Another great help for Word Studies is my good old faithful Webster's 1828 Dictionary. I LOVE it as a reference to deepen the studies. Usually it helps me to also find OTHER great studies to dig into also! Dig into the Word! It will feed your heart and soul during this tough time!
- ⇒ **Go for a drive** around the city—look at the lights!
- ⇒ **Look at photo albums!** Remember the silly stories!
- ⇒ **Watch the sunrise!** Or, not an early bird? Watch the sunset!
- ⇒ **Collect jokes and funnies!** Barb Johnson...Chonda Pierce...Becky Freeman are just a few of my PERSONAL favorites!
- ⇒ **Chocolate!** Chocolate Candy...Chocolate Bars...Chocolate Shakes...Chocolate Latte's... CHOCOLATE! REALLY! Chocolate helps to release endorphins in the brain—plus! It tastes great to boot!
- ⇒ **Watch an old movie!** Curl up under a great big quilt—even if you have to turn the air down COLD! Don't forget to turn down the lights and turn off the phone!
- ⇒ **Look at your old school albums!** Your HAIR! Ha!
- ⇒ **Got a grassy hill nearby?** Go to the top and just roll down it! Like a child! (Snowy? Get a sled! And SLIDE!)
- ⇒ **Take the kids to the park—**just WATCH them! They are adorable!
- ⇒ **Begin a "Quote Book!"** Collect quotes that encourage you to keep on, keeping on! Keep them in a special journal dedicated only to keeping the quotes!
- ⇒ **Memorize your favorite Psalm!** Try out Psalm 91...or Psalm 61...or Psalm 35...or Psalm 37...Oh! Enjoy!
- ⇒ **Begin a Tea Ministry!** Doing for others ALWAYS lifts even the heaviest spirit! Get a tea basket to keep your goodies in...visit a shut-in...bless them! Then! Watch the blessing boomerang! You won't be able to leave without a blessing!

- ⇒ **Take the kids to a candy store**—sample the Jelly Bellies...or Sweet Tarts...or Sour Gummy Worms!
- ⇒ **Fly a kite!**
- ⇒ **Take a ride in the country!** Turn up your praise music...roll the windows down...sing to the top of your lungs!
- ⇒ **Watch a funny video!** Chonda Pierce is one of my picks! My children LOVE old comedy shows like I Love Lucy or The Three Stooges. Oh, you may want to watch anything! Just find something that will make you laugh hard!
- ⇒ **Scrapbook!** Pick photos that you **MUST** tell the story behind! Kick up your favorite music...spread out your goodies...and Scrap till you drop!
- ⇒ **Read a biography of a GIANT in the faith!** My favorites are Corrie ten Boom...Hudson Taylor...George Mueller...Amy Carmichael...Jim and Elisabeth Elliott...etc!
- ⇒ **Get today's newspaper** and read the comics!
- ⇒ **Get a yo-yo!** PLAY!
- ⇒ **Make Chocolate Chip Cookies** with the kids! On a diet? Take them to someone who blesses you! Include a note of thanks and encouragement for all they do to bless you!
- ⇒ **Go out and sit on your boat**—watch the stars! (Oh, watch the sunset or sunrise, if you can too!)
- ⇒ **Dig into the Bible** and study what God says about trials...suffering...faith...death...depression...oppression...warfare...battle...
- ⇒ **Read a new book!** Normally ready non-fiction/how-to's? Get a fiction book for a change! Normally read fiction? Get a humorous book! Renew your weary heart and mind!
- ⇒ **Take a break and go for a long ride on a motorcycle!** Don't forget your headset and praise music!
- ⇒ **Take a hike!** Really! Find a nice nature trail OR go for the tough stuff!!
- ⇒ **Go to the mall with your teenager!** ENJOY!
- ⇒ **Buy a walkman and some great praise music—turn it up!** My favorites are Michael W. Smith's Worship CD's AND Hillsong's Praise and Worship! The moment you enter into worship, you will enter into the very presence of God—so, turn it up and devour the presence of our precious Lord!
- ⇒ **Pull out that old sewing machine** and make some of those goodies that you have been wanting—new purse/tote...outfit...home decorations...doll clothes...etc!
- ⇒ **Buy a "whoopee" Cushion...or "Bubba" teeth...** At least your family will laugh!
- ⇒ **Write out the funny family stories!** Reminsce! Enjoy!
- ⇒ **Go skating!**
- ⇒ **Try an afternoon of "Laser-Tag" with your teens!** Get um!
- ⇒ **Make Homemade Bread**—KNEAD yourself!
- ⇒ **Get a pet!** My bird, Harley, has ministered to my heart MORE than I could remember! He is just SO funny! HE had the idea to "boogie" for Jesus! I had not danced for years! AND it is decent! Elisabeth's new puppy, Tooty, is a TOTAL delight! I say all the time that she is JOY in fur! Struggling? Get a pet just for YOU...see that puppy in the window??
- ⇒ **Take the day to go for a flight!** Look at the whole world from a different perspective!
- ⇒ **Dance!** Turn up your favorite music and dance! Dance your heaviness away! Dance till you laugh! Dance in worship to the Lord! Jump! Lift your hands in praise and worship!
- ⇒ **Clean out your house** (only if this is NOT your struggle! Ha!). Attack those closets...cabinets...dusty bookshelves...paper piles!
- ⇒ **Go out for a cup of coffee...tea...or a good old Coca-Cola!** Meet your sweetheart! Or...take your

- Bible and make it a special time with the Lord!
- ⇒ **Find some silly-putty or slime—PLAY!**
  - ⇒ **Get up earlier** (or take regular breaks throughout the day!) for your quiet time! You may feel SO weak that you can barely concentrate—if so, just turn on praise music and lift up your arms in praise and adoration. Watch what happens! Make a list of your heartaches—lift them to the Father (then, hide them in your Prayer Journal—later they will be a praise record!). Dig into the Word for comfort...perspective...and hope for tomorrow! Really tough days? Well, when the Israelites had very HOT days, they had to gather MORE manna—in the heat of your battles and toughest trials gather a surplus! It will help you survive your struggle!
  - ⇒ **Make a quilt!** You can EVEN cheat by making it on the sewing machine! ENJOY!
  - ⇒ **Take an afternoon to go to the movies!** Get a big bucket of popcorn...a super-HUGE Coke...sour Gummy Worms (unless you are due a BIG DOSE OF CHOCOLATE!). Take your sweet-heart...or a friend if you want to share! Pick a movie that will make you laugh like crazy...OR CRY your eyes out! ENJOY!
  - ⇒ **Ride three-wheelers!** Get MUDDY!
  - ⇒ **Treat yourself to a leisurely afternoon** (or a bunch of afternoons!) at the pool...park...or creek!
  - ⇒ **Try your hand at BOWLING!** Take some friends!
  - ⇒ **Take time for tea—each day!**
  - ⇒ **Exercise!** Swim...walk...jog...hike...go skating...aerobics! Relieves stress AND boosts your health to boot!
  - ⇒ **Learn a new hobby!** What have you been putting off that you have ALWAYS wanted to know? Pottery? Quilting? Flight Training? Smocking? Scrapbooking? Jewelry Making? Sewing? Crochet? Horse-back riding? Go for it! Now is the PERFECT time!
  - ⇒ **Treat yourself to a nice loooooonnnnnngggg Bubble Bath!** Don't forget to set up your favorite music to play during your Bubble Bath! Also...be sure to fix a nice cup of tea (or a Latté!) or a nice big Coke that will last till the water gets cold! ENJOY!
  - ⇒ **Go to the park and just swing—HIGH!**
  - ⇒ **Go get an ice-cream cone—with a double dip!**
  - ⇒ **Do a "Promise" hunt in Scripture!** Keep in a "Promise Notebook" of your very own! KNOW they are yours!
  - ⇒ **Snuggle up for the afternoon to read a great book!**
  - ⇒ **Don't let this limit you! Let your brain GO!**

## *Die Hard!*

*By Amy Carmichael*

"Die Hard, my men, die hard!" shouted Colonel Inglis of the 57<sup>th</sup> to his men on the heights behind the river Albuhera. The regiment was nicknamed the Diehards after that. The tale may have been forgotten but the name lives on, and in spite of foolish uses, it is a great name. It challenges us.

We are called to be the Lord's diehards to whom can be committed any kind of trial of endurance and who can be counted upon to stand firm whatever happens.

It is written of Cromwell: "He strove to give his command so strict a unity that in no crisis should it crack." With this aim in view, he made his Ironsides. The result of that discipline was seen not only in victory but in defeat; for his troops, "though they were beaten and routed, presently rallied again and stood in good order till they received new orders" (*Oliver Cromwell* by John Buchan).

This is the spirit that animates all valiant life: to be strong in will—to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield—is all that ever matters. Failure or success, as the world understands these words, is of no eternal account. To be able to stand steady in defeat is in itself a victory. There is no tinsel about that kind of triumph.

There is a curious comfort in remembering that the Father depends upon His child to not give way. It is inspiring to be trusted with such a hard thing.

## *Time Out! To Fill Your Cup!*

*By Cindy Rushton*

Parched? Dry? Weary in your well doing? You are not alone! Studies overwhelmingly show that today's Christian woman is busier than ever balancing more demands than ever before! The typical Christian woman balances a wide variety of demands ranging from marriage to mothering to home-making to homeschooling to home-business/career to ministry, in addition to somehow fitting in time to develop and deepen her relationship with the Lord.

If you are like me, you don't have to read a study to confirm your suspicion that you have a heavier load than ever before. You sure don't need to hear that we are busier than ever. You KNOW it! However, if you are like me, one thing that may need to be a constant reminder is that YOU need time out in the midst of your busy life so YOUR cup can stay full to overflowing! Well, just how do we do it?? And what can truly fill our cups back up? Well, let's go back in time and learn from our Master! Let's look at the life of Christ!

### **A Ministry That ROCKED the World!**

You know, when I think about ministry or my life's impact after all is said and done, I really want to come to the end KNOWING that I have stepped up to the call and been faithful. But, I also want to know that what I did had purpose and meaning! This is how God has designed us!

Looking at the life of Christ, we see the ultimate example of a life that had purpose and meaning... a life that made a difference! Not only did Jesus Christ ROCK the world while He walked upon the earth, but He has impacted lives for eternity!

If we look at busy lives, we may think that today's Christian woman is busy, but I still do not know of anyone with a "daily planner" as packed as Jesus' daily planner was! Skeptics may think that I have lost my mind completely. But, we can take a glimpse into His jam-packed schedule, along with His priorities and insights, by looking into the pages of His "daytimer" that is in print to this day JUST FOR US! In fact, I love that each of us have a benefit of owning our VERY OWN personal copy of His "daytimer." Yep! We have the four gospels right at our fingertips!

In the pages of our precious Bibles, we see "appointments" that Jesus had set...we see His "to-do's" that were to be accomplished...we see a record of His "life purpose" and goals that helped Him to meet His awesome life purpose...we see added "meetings" and "bookings" that He constantly added into His planner...we see a VERY BUSY MAN!

Christ lived His whole life for THE CALL. He lived out a world "rocking" ministry lifestyle! But how on earth did He have strength to do it all...to make it through the tough times—even death on the disgraceful cross? How did He keep His perspective? What were His secrets to keeping on in the face of adversity? What did He do to keep His cup filled up so He could minister to the whole



world in the midst of heartache, grief, loss, persecution, pain, and even death? Glimpses into His "daytimer" show us the most life-changing ideas for keeping on, keeping on for the long-haul in spite of the demands of each day! So, let's go back in time and take a look at the Master!

### **KNOW the Call!**

Yes! I love that in the life of Christ, we can see that even in the tough stuff, He KNEW His call, the purpose for His life, and He stuck to it EVEN when it hurt—even to death on the cruel cross!! Temptations did not sway Him. Loneliness did not sway Him. His flesh did not sway Him. He knew the call, counted the costs to fulfill the call, and stuck it out—to the point of death (the ultimate fulfillment of His life purpose!!)

Key #1 from the life of Christ: get to KNOW the call before you! If you have jumped into your daily life without giving consideration to WHO you are and WHY you are here, now is the time! Otherwise, it is so easy to get busy with life, live a complete lifetime and come to the end having done it all, but it really not counting!

So, first of all, take time to get to know YOUR CALL! What is it that YOU and ONLY YOU can do? Look at your gifts...talents...strengths...interests... Who are you? What DO you have to offer others? Live for it! What is your hold-up? Go for it! Yes, go for it with your WHOLE life! The rest just keeps you going, but this is the way to set forth on the path toward a life that counts! Know YOUR call!

### **Watch Out for Prayerlessness!**

Look at the life of Christ! Go back and take a peek at His life just looking at His prayer life! It is astonishing! Want to know one of the greatest keys to His greatness? It was His commitment to living a life of prayer! Sound simple? Well, I find that this is one of the areas that tends to be my weakest link!

Oh, I really KNOW the power of prayer! I KNOW the strength in prayer! I KNOW the satisfaction in prayer! I KNOW the contentment that comes from a life committed to prayer! I have watched prayer extinguish fiery darts and javelins that have come my way. I have watched God miraculously answer my deepest needs that were only a whimper through prayer! BUT! I still find that at my most parched moments—those moments that I am battle weary, frustrated, touchy, and ready to give it all up—that somewhere along the way I have lost that passion for prayer and moved into a state of prayerlessness! Talk about an easy defeat! My enemy doesn't have to do ANYTHING at that time, I EASILY throw in the towel! I take my own self out!

Relate? We ALL have a deep personal need for a deep personal walk with our Almighty God. This relationship does not sizzle without building a deep relationship! Just as our marriage could not survive without spending time together talking, listening to each other's hearts, seeking to know each other's heart-beats, and wanting to grow closer and closer; neither can our relationship with God grow and deepen without a passionate prayer life.

It is through prayer that we can share with God those things that come up in our daily walk—excitement, problems, passions, fears, praises, needs. It is through prayer that God can wrap His caring arms around us to care for us, comfort us, restore us, affirm us, instruct us, and whisper