

# ***Upward Bound Ministries Newsletter***

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## **Another Crazy Month**

Greetings, Upward Bounders! I have to apologize again for this month's letter is running late. That makes two months in a row! Long story short, my neurological setbacks from the accident have pretty much dominated my month with symptoms, appointments and treatments. The symptoms have not gone away. Sometimes they seem to get better, but then they take an immediate turn with no warning at all. All of my doctors and therapists have been very helpful and thorough, but we still haven't gotten to the bottom of things yet. I still stutter, utter noises, have breathing difficulties, have twitching, jerking, and body spasms. Sometimes these episodes get extremely intense and violent in nature.

On top of that, Tammy and I have noticed some behavioral and speech inconsistencies that add to the already bizarre turn of events. They are as follows:

- \* Short term memory loss
- \* Inability to concentrate for long periods of time
- \* Inability to find words as I speak
- \* Inability to actually articulate what I know I want to say – can't get the words out at all
- \* Totally forgetting my next thought as I speak, sometimes leading to total silence
- \* Not being able to process thoughts logically in order to make decisions
- \* Not being able to process stressful situations without becoming frustrated or angry

As a precautionary step, my neurologist has scheduled an appointment for me with a specialist in Gainesville, FL to test for dementia. We really think it's just more "head trauma" than dementia, but good doctors are always thorough. I am also getting speech therapy twice a week that is very helpful in trying to gain some control over this. But it's all going to take time. The neurologist tells me he thinks it will take at least most of the summer. There's just no way of knowing for sure.

## **Sidelined for Summer**

So in light of all of the above, and knowing I had to make a timely and rational decision about my summer calendar, just this week I had to contact my summer camp hosts and VBS hosts and cancel my summer events. It was one of the most difficult decisions I have ever had to make, and I really agonized over it. I wanted this summer opportunity so badly - not only for myself, but for my new girls. It's so hard to understand, but this accident and the recovery are just way bigger than me.

This part of things has been much more difficult to handle than the accident itself. With physical injuries, at least I can put a finger on them, can gauge progress, can set goals and see them accomplished. But with these neurological issues I have absolutely no control over them. I never know when they are coming. Every time I think I am getting better, I have another set-back. I can't put a time table on the healing. It's very frustrating.

That's where I just have to rest my faith in a sovereign God who loves me and wants the best for me. I'm sure that even though I don't see it now, that there is a plan in all of this, and that it will work together for me good. I heard a preacher say on TV the other night that if I am God's child, that things don't happen "to" me but "for" me – the Romans 8:28 principle.

## Time to Trust

Isaiah is a great book. In it, I find a lot of comfort. It reminds me that *"My times are in His hands"*. It reminds me that God is upholding me with His righteous right hand. It reminds me that when I grow weary, the Lord renews my strength as I wait on Him. It reminds me that though I pass through the fire or the waters, that they won't overtake me. It encourages me to fear not because God is with me.

This is one of those times I'm going to have to rely on the promises of God..... His promises for provision while my main source of income for the entire year is taken away from me. His promises that He will meet our needs, even in the wake of hospital bills that keep piling up before our very eyes. His promise to strengthen me as I wait on Him and rest my body as I deal with these new issues. His promise to give my new girls a wonderful plan for this summer without me. His promise that everything is going to work together for good.

God's promises are not there just to pacify us when we are feeling low. They are there to claim as our own as we seek Him and His will for our lives as we give Him the desires of our hearts. Those promises are there to work for us on our behalf. Everything under God's hand has a purpose. There are no accidents in His agenda for us. His ways are far higher than our ways. And we can rest assured that He sees the bigger picture while all we see at times is what is right in front of us. We can trust Him. I can trust Him to work in me, through me, and for me during this set back in my life. For whatever reason, He allowed this, so instead of asking why, I want to ask, "What purpose do You have for me in this?" Remember a long time ago I shared with you that I wanted to finish strong, and that I had prayed for God to make my second half more significant than my first half? Well, I choose to believe that somehow this part of the puzzle is going to fit in to that plan as He answers that prayer. As Yoda from Star Wars would say "The Force (God), trust you must!" *Thanks for that one, Jim.* ☺

## Time to Rethink

Take a look at these wonderful words of perspective! I can't take credit for them, as they were actually expressed to me in emails by various friends just recently. But they are worth sharing, as they not only apply to me, but to you – whenever you go through difficult circumstances in life.

**\*I'll say this - you will know God in a way that would never have been possible if it were not for this pain that he's allowed in your life. Joy and suffering are not opponents - they're friends.**

**\*Beth Moore said a couple of good things. "The presence, purpose and power is best discovered in difficulty." And: "Peace means the absence of fear & turmoil (anxiety), not the absence of pain and grief."**

**\*Remember that Goliath's come into our lives so we can clearly see God and His power and look to Him not to the Goliath in our lives**

**\*Also remember that it's not so important what happens "to" us and what happens "in" us. I know there's a bunch of big stuff happening "in" you right now, but all for the best.**

**\*The most spiritual thing you can do now is rest and get well. Not push and perform.**

**\*“When I said “My foot is slipping” Your love, O Lord, supported me. When anxiety was great within me, Your consolation brought joy to my soul.” (Ps 94:18,19)**

**\*I want you to know that your testimony of your accident is already touching lives and people that either you are communicating with or who have heard of your plight. Even from your home - you can continue to let God shape the way people think through your relating of what you are going thru, how you are handling it, and how your very dependence is on God, and God only. People need to hear that. You don't have to be on a stage right now telling them that ---- just keep telling it to all those around you and in your newsletters and the word will go far and wide, I believe. And at the same time, you can be in a "SAFE", non-threatening environment which will be completely conducive to your recovery process.**

These thoughts helped me come to a point of understanding that God can use me even *in the midst of my healing process* by leading me to continue to share my journey - the good and the bad - with the audience God has given me. I used to think “nobody wants to continuously hear about somebody's struggles. They have their own lives to live.” But that's precisely the point! You do have your own lives to live, and life has a way of throwing all of us curve balls.

I know for me it was a great encouragement to read the book “*90 Minutes in Heaven*” by Don Piper.

Not just because of the incredible things he said about Heaven, but because he was vulnerable enough to share his struggles and victories, his good days and his bad days, through his recovery. I found myself not feeling alone in my thought process, in my emotional state, in the way I sometimes behave. To see someone else, especially a preacher, go through the same emotions I am going through, and to verbalize some of the very things I have been thinking, gives me great comfort. I thought to myself, “Don is sharing a lot of these things he was thinking long after he actually went through the bulk of it. Maybe someone else can benefit from my story *as I actually go through it!*”

So I am having to rethink the idea that sharing my issues and my feelings along the way is a negative thing that people don't necessarily want to take the time to hear. Instead, I am beginning to think that there are scores of people out there who feel alone in their battles, who feel guilty for their thought process as I did, who wish somebody else “*with skin on*” could identify with what they are currently feeling and struggling with while facing their giants. It gives fresh meaning to the verse in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God*”.

Notice everything in that verse is in “present” tense”?

Maybe there is something to letting people see my heart *through the trial*, not just after it. Maybe for now God is using me to minister to somebody who reads my newsletter and/or emails. I'm even open to the idea of taking my journals that I keep and putting them in book form so that someone in the future who goes through a fiery trial can see from someone else's perspective who's been there, done that – someone sharing from a day to day perspective what it's actually like going through a trial. Kind of an “insider's edition”. (Now I wish I could have done a better job writing down my thoughts on a daily basis consistently! Ha!) But who knows? Maybe that's one of the reasons God kept me around instead of taking me back in November? Who knows? ..... God does.

*Cya here, there, or in the air!*  
*We're Upward Bound!*  
Uncle Charlie