

The Streetcorner

"I am the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the father but by me" John 14:6 NIV

STABBED to LIFE!

A testimony of God's
protecting hand.

By John Esau
as told to Ken Penner



"He lunged at
me with the knife,
attempting to
stab me in the area
of my heart."

It was November 1, 1972, and because I had forgotten that I was to be ministering at the woman's prison in Haney, I was at my usual place of ministry at the Grace Mission in Vancouver. As city missionary, my job was to help others with their physical as well as their spiritual needs.

The Department of Human Resources had phoned and told me that a fellow needing funds for rent and groceries was going to show up at our mission. He came soon afterwards and picked up some of the money to pay for his rent and some food, he then left. Later he returned and asked for more money but upon investigation I found he had not paid his rent; having instead bought drugs and alcohol with it and unknown to me he also bought a six to eight inch knife. Since he had spent his money in this way, I informed him that he could not have any more money. I told him that I would personally go and pay his rent out of the money that was left. He became visibly upset and followed me to my office complaining as he went. He walked away, and then quickly turned towards me with the knife in his hand. He lunged at me with the knife, attempting to stab me in the area of my heart. I was able to deflect his hand and the knife struck me in the lower abdomen. We both fell to the floor with him on top of me. He tried to stab me again but I grabbed his hand and kept the knife from pointing towards me.. He had a vise-like grip on the knife but I was able to direct it away from me and towards the wall. I called to my helpers to take the knife from him before he stabbed me again. My co-worker was able to pry the knife out of his hand, but in the process

I was cut again on my arm. The assailant then tried to get away but my other co-worker had locked the door so he could not get out. He then attempted to crash through the plate glass window but realized this would not work. While this was all going on, a co-worker had phoned the police. Within two minutes of the phone call, two detectives who happened to be nearby, showed up and came in with pistols in their hands. They pinned him against the wall and subdued him, meanwhile another police officer showed up and took the man away.

One of the detectives noticed that I had been stabbed and told me to sit down, so I sat in a chair as we waited for the ambulance. The ambulance was there in a few minutes, I got up to walk out to the ambulance but the paramedics told me to sit down, and they put me on a stretcher... On the way out, one of the fellows from skid row spit on me. The paramedics were very upset about this, but I told them not to be alarmed. I had been spit upon before and even more significantly, Jesus was spit upon too, when he was being crucified on the cross.

The trip to the hospital was a bit hectic as it was rush hour and we got caught up in the traffic. I lost consciousness once during the trip but was awake when we reached the emergency at St Paul's hospital in Vancouver. There a doctor came to check me out and after sticking his finger into the hole in my side, quickly decided to operate immediately. Then I passed out again and woke up after the operation.

The doctor informed me that the

knife had just missed my liver by one eighth of an inch but the stab wound was not my greatest problem. Due to the operation needed for the stab wound, they had found cancer in my stomach, which he said was a fast acting cancer, which needed to be operated on within the next week or so. They would have to remove two thirds of my stomach as well as some intestine to take out all the cancer.

This was a bit of a shock to me but I called all of my family to inform them of the recently discovered events in my life. I asked them to forgive me if I had sinned against them in any way. I also told them I was ready to die as I had received Christ as my Saviour many years ago. My children were not ready to see me die, so they prayed that I would be OK.

The doctor spoke to my wife privately, giving her more details about my condition and the operation. She informed him of our belief in God and his loving care over us. She said that the elders of the church would be anointing me with oil and praying for me according to the instructions given in the Bible in James chapter 5. She then told him they would be praying for him too, as he was about to do the operation. The doctor was visibly encouraged by this.

While I was waiting for this second operation, one of the men from skid row named Scottie came to visit me in the hospital. He was heart broken that I had been stabbed, saying this should not have happened to me, because I was there to help people and not to hurt them. I told Scottie that I was ready to die but asked him if he had received Christ as his Saviour and was ready to die. He then knelt beside my hospital bed and prayed to receive Jesus Christ into his heart.

One week after I had been stabbed, my operation for can-

cer took place. Three days after the operation the doctor came to see me with three other doctors and told them "This is the fellow I was telling you about.". I am not sure what he had told them but he had told me that I would be in the hospital for about a month or so to recuperate, but thank the Lord I healed quickly and was out in one week, only two weeks from the time I had been stabbed.

The doctor kept me under his personal care for the next two years. During one of my checkups He found a calcium deposit that was growing abnormally in my chest that needed to be removed. I underwent another operation for this. After this operation he informed me that they had checked out my stomach and had found no sign of cancer at all. I had been cured!

About fifteen years later I was able talk to this doctor again and he told me that he thought I would have been dead a long time ago. I noticed that he had Christian literature in his waiting room. It seems that God had spoken to his heart too.

One scripture verse that really means a lot to me and has become a motto for my life is "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death."

Philippians 3:10 NIV. Another couple verses are "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13 NIV and "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us." Ephesians 3:20 NIV

All of these verses from Gods word tell me that I am in good hands when I trust in Him. He even works out what we think is a disaster into something good, such as he did with me on Nov. 1, 1972.



John Esau and his wife Eva

"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." Romans 8:28 NIV

"This I Believe"
by Ken Penner

THE SAFEST PLACE

The Center of God's Will.

Do you remember the war in the Falkland Islands? I remember hearing a radio reporter talking to a fellow who had just moved there two weeks before the war started. He moved because he was concerned about getting caught in a war and thought the Falkland Islands were the safest place on earth. This interview was taking place in his basement as there was the sound of explosions from the fighting in the background.

Just like this fellow, we are all looking to live in safety.

Our cover story tells of John Esau, who found himself in a very touchy predicament because, in obedience to God, he was working among the street people in Vancouver. God used this physical attack on him to allow the doctors to find the cancer that was growing within him. John was in the center of God's will and God looked after him even though he was looking death in the face.

There are recorded examples of people in biblical times who had similar experiences such as Daniel in the lion's den and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the furnace of fire. (Daniel chapters 3 and 6). These people, while seeking to follow the will of God, found themselves in seemingly impossible situations, but God intervened miraculously.

You might ask, "Why is this so?" Because God knows everything and we know very little when it comes to the grand scheme of things. Often we try to find the safest place in our own way but God knows what is best for us because he knows all things and is all powerful. If we trust God and submit to him we cannot go wrong. Even death cannot thwart the plans of God. Jesus said "I tell you my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: fear him, who after the killing of the body, has the power to throw you into hell. Yes I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs on your head are numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." Luke 12:4-7 NIV "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Proverbs 9:10 NIV

The Falkland Islands in the middle of war, or doing mission work on the streets of Vancouver could be the most dangerous place on earth or it could be the safest place if that is where one has been called to by God. Let us seek God for his will in our lives and let us obediently follow, knowing we are safe in his hands, in the center of God's will no matter where that takes us in our daily walk..

"The fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe." Proverbs 29:25 NIV. This I believe!

The Center of God's Plan for You

1

GOD'S DESIRE

God created man to live with him for all eternity! Scripture tells us that he is our Creator, that he knows each of us by name, and that he cares intimately about us. It says in 2 Peter 3:9, that God is *"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* (KJV) This is God's heart! He wants you to be with him. He wants you to live with him forever. He wants you to enjoy a perfect relationship with Himself. The Bible clearly teaches that GOD LOVES YOU! (1 John 4:10)

2

MAN'S PROBLEM

There is one thing, however, that keeps us from this relationship with God—OUR SIN! Scripture teaches that *"without holiness, no one will see the Lord."* (Hebrews 12:14 NIV) In other words God's standard is perfection. There must not be one sin on our record if we are to be acceptable to God. However, Scripture tells us that *"...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* (Romans 3:23 NIV). It also says that *"the wages of sin is death."* (Romans 6:23 NIV) or separation from God for all eternity! If we physically die in this condition, there are no second chances. It is too late to turn to God then.

3

GOD'S GIFT

Fortunately, this is not the end of the story. For God saw our helplessness, and in great compassion sent us what we needed most, a Savior, His one and only Son - Jesus Christ. Scripture tells us that, *"...the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord."* (Rom. 6:23b NIV)

How can Jesus save? He took our sins on himself and took the death we deserved. *"(Christ) Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree..."* (1 Peter 2:24 NIV) *"He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our sins; the punishment that brought us peace [with God] was upon him."* (Isaiah 53:4,5 NIV)

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8 NIV)

4

MAN'S RESPONSE

God has made a way for us to be acceptable and right before Him. *"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out."* (Acts 3:19 NIV) *"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."* (Acts 16:31 NIV) Jesus said: *"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."* (John 11:25-27 NIV)

You can be saved right now, whoever you are, whatever your situation. Confess to God that you are a sinner. Thank Jesus for taking the punishment for your sins by dying on the cross. Place your life in Christ's hands. Trust Him to forgive your sin. He alone has the power to save!

IF THIS IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE JUST DONE, PLEASE CONTACT A PERSON WHO YOU KNOW IS A SINCERE CHRISTIAN AND TELL THEM THE GOOD NEWS! FEEL FREE TO CALL US AT STREETCORNERS IF YOU NEED TO. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU HAVE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE AS YOU BEGIN YOUR NEW LIFE AS A CHRISTIAN!



“Long-Term Vision”

By
David
Ducklow



After John Esau signed in at the hospital, the doctors told him “the stab wound was not [his] greatest problem.” They had seen a bigger problem than he had seen. That must have been difficult for him to understand. “What do you mean a greater problem? I just got stabbed and am in excruciating pain, there can’t be a greater problem than that!” But the doctors had long term vision and saw his greater need.

Some of us suffer from a problem called ‘short term memory’ and because I am one of those people, I understand how frustrating it can be. I forget people’s names, conversations I have had, or responsibilities I may have just been given. Another, greater, problem that we all experience could be called “short term vision.” Something might happen to us where we can only see the short term consequences that will result from previous actions done to us.

For example, if you’ve just lost your job, short term vision would probably result in anxiety, discouragement and very few answers to a growing list of frantic questions. Or your computer may crash for no known reason, and the immediate problems you will face may be endless! Problems like these seem so big when we have short term vision and it is the only thing we can see. What will you do?

Many times we exhaust ourselves thinking about how we will find a way out of these problems. But Jesus offers a different solution for those facing difficult circumstances. In the Bible, He beckons us to *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28 NIV).*

Jesus does not promise to fix all of our worldly problems, especially in the same way we want them to be fixed. But he will give us rest, the one thing we all seek but rarely find.

To his surprise, John Esau discovered there was a greater problem than his stab wound that needed to be fixed first. If you will let Him, Jesus wants to show you the greater wounds in your life that only He can heal, and are more important than the problems you can see like a lost job, or a computer that shuts down. Jesus wants to give you long term vision, something that only he can give because only He has a proper perspective of all!

Lord Jesus, teach me to see what only you can see, The eternal things that are currently invisible to me.

Give me long term vision so I may trust you to make me free,

And take away my anxious thoughts and replace them with faith in thee!



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WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Bible and Its Authority

a) We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith and conduct.

The Eternal Godhead

b) We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Man and His Need

c) We believe that man was created in the image of God; that through sin man incurred both spiritual and physical death. Consequently, man is totally depraved, alienated from God, under his righteous anger, and in need of the new birth.

Jesus Christ and His Work

d) We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary and is true God and true man.

e) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that all who believe in him are justified on the ground of his shed blood.

f) We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his ascension into heaven, his present life there for us as High Priest and Advocate and in his personal return.

Salvation for Sinners

g) We believe that by the grace of God, all who in repentance and faith receive the Lord Jesus Christ are born again by the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. Such are sealed unto the day of redemption. Nevertheless, the believer is commanded to be filled with the Spirit, moment by moment.

The Future

h) We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, in the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and in the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

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