



The Living Choice

In The Dominican Republic, Caribbean

November / December 2007

Let *Our* Plans Fail!

“Often our plans fail that God’s plans for us may succeed.” Ministry of Healing p. 473. Elizabeth and I woke up Monday morning, discussed the day’s plans, and I went out to warm the truck so we could go to the city and complete some errands necessary for beginning a concentrated city outreach we had been praying for. The night before it had rained a lot; hard enough that the sound of clashing rocks in the nearby river woke me from my sleep, but I never imagined that when I turned the corner to enter back into the house, that from the patio, I would see the river, normally tranquil and hidden beyond the hill of trees and brush, now muddy, loud and violently bubbling over into the back yard. It seemed as if every moment it was getting closer and closer. We called the neighbors who had lived there for years to come and see. “We never saw the river like this, not even during hurricane David!.” They said.

Wow! We realized that through the night some great phenomenon had occurred, and apparently did much damage in the area. One brother tuning into the local radio station began to give the account of how many homes and roads were swept away in other areas during the night, and how many people were clinging to coconut trees in the middle of the same river, but further down where it had expanded into half-mile wide fury.

I shut off the car and walked down the road we were planning to travel to see if it were feasible to take the family to the city in case the river washed away the house, because three more days of rain were predicted. We all saw quickly that less than one hundred yards from our house on both sides of the road there were landsides that completely covered the road. We were staying put and putting our faith in Christ. We cared nothing for our things. Everything in our home had a purpose and was dedicated to His service, and if He wanted to take it all including our lives, His will be done. The next three days seemed to boil down to nothing more than listening to the radio, measuring the river’s rise and how much of our back yard it had eaten, and many, many private and family prayers for deliverance if it were His will, and readiness to perish if it were not.

Refugees from further up came to stay in our four-house community because their houses were even higher risks. We began to realize there was an audience of several souls around us who had not the calm assurance in Christ that we had during such a frightening time. Every one of us was stuck and had to wait it out that first week. Elizabeth quickly capitalized on the opportunity, and invited all of



Above: The river throwing up it’s waves in this pictures is at this point about twenty feet deep and within seventy five feet of our home. Before this storm it was hardly a foot deep and more than one hundred and fifty feet from our home. It drew us all closer to God.



Left: It is nearly impossible to tell in many places, as in this photo, where the road was. This is just one of thirty landslides that have made the use of our vehicle out of the question for now.

evaluating the losses of property and so forth, but the studies continue two nights a week. One man named Nirio, though he doesn't know how to read, decided that what he was hearing was truth and has begun attending Sabbath services. Another, Miguel, the owner of 75% of the land in our area and a very successful cow and coffee farmer, has openly declared that he does not want the mark of the beast but will do whatever it takes to be found on the side of Christ in the end time events even though he knows it will be relative few who will do the same. Another, the farmers wife, a strong and faithful Catholic, also recognizes a need for change and wishes to honor God and keep ALL His commandments. Dominga is her name. She has started keeping Sabbath and is learning more.

them to learn why something like this could happen to the whole country and if it had anything to do with the Bible and prophecy. All said yes. Every night for two weeks we studied with them, the most spectacular of Bible prophecies because that is what they wanted. They were frightened and their eyes and hearts were open to hear the truth undiluted. Things are now returning back to normal. Everyone is

Even though there has been a definite delay in our evangelistic plans for a larger city. I am certain the Lord wanted us to not overlook those souls right within our reach at home. We will still get to the city as soon as they are able to make it to our area with bulldozers and rescue our truck by cleaning up the landslides that prohibit travel by more than animals. However, until then we still have a work to do. We lost some land but I personally received nothing but good from the storm. I was drawn closer to my Lord, and received renewed vision of how to work for Him. *Often our plans fail that God's plans for us may succeed.* Elvin

My Last Look at My Childhood Home



Above: Before her visit to our house we had never seen Tiquito so happy.

Tiquito is an eighty-six-year-old widow and the longest standing member of the Seventh-day Adventist church in our district. In fact, long before there was any church buildings in her village, she opened her home to have worship services and evangelistic meetings. Knowing this, it was very sad to find out through our acquaintance with her that for years she was not any longer fellowshiping with the small group of believers in her community because of problems that she was having in her back that doctors told her was sciatica. You know for an old woman who doesn't know how to read this is very hard spiritually, because it is in the worship services where she would hear God's word being taught.

We were blessed to stay in Tiquito's home on several occasions when we were property hunting in her area. We realized that she suffered much during the night and early morning because of the cold climate in the mountains. When we were finally established in our home we offered Tiquito to come up into the mountains to our house and receive

treatments but she always refused. She excused herself by saying the truck ride might do her harm. Then one day when the offer came while we were making a short visit to see how she was, she decided that after all the doctors she visited, and all the medicine she had been taking didn't work, she'd better give what we had to offer a chance. None of her adult children could believe it because it had literally been years since their mom had gone anywhere besides to the hospital or doctor. When she accepted she expressed how thankful she was that we had shown concern for her health.

After a week of water therapy, natural supplements, and exercises she began to feel better and didn't have any pain. She walked straighter. She walked all by herself in the morning and in the evening. She could now sleep well in the night because her back didn't hurt from the cold.

She mentioned one morning at breakfast that she hadn't seen her property in the mountains for many years. Her property which is a half-hour horse ride further up into the mountains from where we live is now home to her youngest son and his family. Imagine, because of her back pain, prior to coming to our home she couldn't walk the five minutes it took to get to her village church. Could she now ride a horse up the mountain? I dared to ask her, would she like to go and visit her son up there? To my surprise she said a definite "yes." We urged her son to drop all that he was doing early the next day and come with a horse to pick up his mom. She felt so good that she could hardly believe herself. Daddy was shocked at how naturally she rode the horse, and took off into the mountains with her son and grandson after they helped her get on. She stayed the night and returned the next day to us. Everyone had been so happy to see Tiquito again in her land. After we brought her back to her home down in the community below our mountain outpost she began to attend church again faithfully, Amen?



Above: Eighty-six year old Tiquito, hadn't ridden a horse in twenty years or visited her childhood home in seventeen years or more, but she felt so good she was able to do both after one week of T.L.C. from our family in our home.

One week later came Tropical Storm Noel that devastated our area and much of the trail that lead up to her son's home. They are currently using makeshift trails with very steep and difficult passages to go to and from, but Tiquito will probably never be able to return again. Thank the Lord that He gave her one last look at her childhood home and sent her back to church! *Elizabeth*



Above: While supporting his family in the field, Brian loves playing with Griffy, a two year old Chijuaajua lent to us by a friend, and riding Wycliffe our family workhorse.

I Want To Encourage You

In these days I was studying about Abraham. God told him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." That is the calling God has given to our family and to each one of us. I thank God for that calling because it brings so many blessings. It brings joy, peace, and happiness. If you answer that call you find a lot of things to do. You can do mission work like giving Bible studies. I encourage you to do the same but remember that it is not easy. I say it is not easy because of my own experience. It took us a whole year or more to find God's place for us here. We always need to remember that holding on to Jesus' hand everything can be done. **BRIAN**

All Means All

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13. This is my grandmother’s favorite Bible verse, but why?



Above: Monica Martinez, Elizabeth’s foster mother, led a very sad life until she came to realize the love and help of God in the mountains.

When we still lived in the states my mother occasionally spoke to Brian and I about her foster mother. We heard that she had been through a lot of suffering. Because of this she developed chronic insomnia and depression. For this reason she was on lots of drug medications. Every now and then I was able to speak to her briefly on the phone, and always she would be crying and lamenting her life. I felt really bad for her but chances were slim of her every being with us because she lived in Puerto Rico caring for her sick husband. Mommy often prayed for her and encouraged us to pray for her as well. She always asked that God would give her happiness peace and health after so much suffering.

By the time we moved to the Dominican Republic, her husband and the last of three sons died which sunk her deeper into depression and stronger drugs. She was taking over ten different prescriptions for problems in her body and still no relief. Her insomnia became so intense that if she took her medications and was able to sleep three hours she counted it as good. She also had a mysterious sense of burning in her body which increased until she said it were as if hell were burning in her. She was very lonely now, which caused her

depression to deepen. She lived alone now with no one to talk to, no one who seemed to care.

Mommy made it clear that we would help but she would have to come and stay with us for that to happen. In the past she would make short visits but because all her doctors were in Puerto Rico she never wanted to stay with us long. Finally she made the decision to trust in God in leave there for good and settle down again in her homeland of the Dominican Republic. Mommy made it clear to her that in staying with us she would not be in a place where she could run to the doctor every other day which was her custom.

Before mommy went to go and get her from Puerto Rico she told me, “Pray, because I don’t only want to help her in her physical problems but I want her to be healed spiritually, which is the most important, because God alone can heal the mind.” Well my grandma had been a nominal Christian for several years, but she hadn’t realized that Jesus could take all her pain and suffering away, and that she didn’t have to live in depression because Jesus had borne all her pain and suffering on the cruel cross.

I really didn’t know what to expect when she came because although I loved her, I didn’t know her all that well. I prayed that God would use us in a special way while she was with us. I felt so bad for her when she arrived. She was shaking nervously, and walking very unsteadily and slow with a cane. It was as if she were in slow motion all the time. The shaking was so bad she could hardly hold her Bible in her hands. One of Mom’s main objectives was to get her off the incredible strong and damaging insomnia pills. She believed they were the root of all her other medical problems and that they would eventually cause her death.

We repeated to her often her theme text Philippians 4:13. Mom would repeat, “All means all, even leaving drugs that you have been addicted to for over thirty five years.” Mom prayed for her each morning and gave her teas to calm her nerves. Brian would take her for strolls to see the river and nature around us. The second week we put her on vegetable juices and fresh fruit for three days. We

gave her cleansing teas and put her feet in COLD water to help relieve the burning she was feeling inside. By the end of that week, without thinking, she was walking faster and without her cane! Her shaking began to subside and she began to develop a positiveness in her speech that previously was only negative and depressing.

We have the custom that each of us individually gives thanks to God during our morning and evening worships. Whenever it was her turn, she would start by mentioning all her sufferings and illnesses, and by the end she was crying and everyone was sad. However, after much prayer and mommy reading to her the chapter entitled “Mind Cure” from the *Ministry of Healing* by Ellen White, she took a different outlook on life. Now she was saying, “I thank God for giving me life and restoring my health, for the birds, the trees, the flowers, for His love and care etc.,. God and God alone was showing her that, yes, there is a positive side to life; that yes, He allowed the thorns to come with the roses, but He still provided the roses to perfume our lives. It was so amazing watching God reveal this to her without much effort on our part.

Now throughout the day she would smile and even laugh out loud at my brother’s silly sayings. It was such a blessing seeing someone finally experiencing joy and happiness. Every morning she would wake up and say, “I am in victory today!” That meant much.



Above: One month of treatment and Monica was a very different person.

The third week was tough. She came off all the medications except the insomnia pills, of which she had been taking two every evening for thirty-five years. Mom told her, “To resolve your sleeping problem, we need to get to the cause not treat the effect.” With much prayer she was weaned from two pills to one and a half, then one, then just half of one, until Mom could say “Let’s switch to the herbs I have for sleeping.” and “Why don’t we do one night tea and one night the half pill until you feel comfortable?” It was a struggle but at last she yielded. The “tea only” nights were at first very discouraging. I slept in the bed next to hers at night in case she needed something. Those nights I slept very little while she slept none. Sometimes mom didn’t sleep either. During those nights she would have horrid nightmares and wake up crying. The heat would come back and intensify during those nights. We would touch her and feel her skin very cold but inside she would say she was very hot. She sometimes would spend all night fanning herself.

At one time she was ready to give up. Then mom calmly explained to her that always before healing comes there comes a crisis where it may seem you are getting worse but in reality you are getting better. “Anyway,” mom reasoned with her, “If without the pills you feel the heat only, but with the pills you feel the heat and ALL the other side effects, going natural is still better than slowly killing yourself.” She yielded on the condition that she wouldn’t have to take Valerian Root tea to sleep because she believed that to be the cause of her nightmares. That was all we had for sleeping so mom put her on alfalfa pills which are basically good for giving oxygen to the blood and brain nothing more. The first night she took the alfalfa she slept better than ever before! She didn’t wake me up anymore and decided that that was the herb for her. She said, “Don’t give me any other herbs, I want to take that one for sleep.” Mommy and I looked at one another and smiled and said, “O.K., if that is what you want, then AMEN.”

From then on she followed the program and continued improving. Though some nights she slept more than others she didn’t mind. By this time she was completely off of all medications and was a new woman, able to walk well, think clearly, read her Bible, hold her hymnal and overall function as a

normal person again. Praise the Lord! *"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."* All? Yes, ALL! Kathy

The Secret of Saving Your Children

"Parents, when difficulties arise in your families, do not speak severely. Often we may pass over the offense as unworthy of notice. If you have been in the habit of speaking in passion; if you have allowed your children to do as they please, you must give account for this to the Master. You must answer for the education you have given them, for the mold of character you have placed upon them. There are none who want to have judgment passed upon them because of neglect. God forbid that you should hear the words spoken to you, "Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Rather let us strive that we may hear the blessed words of commendation pronounced upon the obedient.



"When the heart is stirred by a spirit not of God, at such times silence is eloquence."

"Let there be no impatience, no fretfulness. You will meet things that are provoking, but do not be provoked. When the heart is stirred by a spirit not of God, at such times silence is eloquence. Your very silence will have a convincing power. We must be thoroughly converted if we would do our appointed work in the world. This is no cheap fancy work, but a work that calls for heart service, for diligence, and the strength of divinity united with our humanity. It requires determination of purpose to lead souls to accept the truth as it is in Jesus." Manuscript Releases p.111

"How many parents are lamenting the fact that they cannot keep their children at home, that they have no

love for home! At an early age they have a desire for the company of strangers; and as soon as they are old enough, they break away from that which appears to them to be bondage and unreasonable restraint and will neither heed a mother's prayers nor a father's counsels. Investigation would generally reveal that the sin lay at the door of the parents. They have not made home what it ought to be--attractive, pleasant, radiant with the sunshine of kind words, pleasant looks, and true love.

"The secret of saving your children lies in making your home lovely and attractive. Indulgence in parents will not bind the children to God nor to home; but a firm, godly influence to properly train and educate the mind would save many children from ruin." Adventist Home p.530



Above: The family ministering in music in church.

Your Part in T.L.C.

In light of current world events and the impression that the Holy Spirit is making on our hearts we believe the best thing you can do for T.L.C. and the work of God everywhere is be ready for the second coming of our Lord Jesus. He is coming soon and He is looking for a people who will perfectly reflect His image and do ALL His will. (See this newsletter online at www.thelivingchoice.com.)

Donations that need tax deductible receipts should be made out to Amicus SDA Church and mailed to our address with "Dominican Mission" in the memo.

T.L.C. Medical Ministries,
P.O. Box 36, Oak Park, VA 22730, (540) 948-6277 / missionfamily@gmail.com