



A Ministry of Arise and Shine Evangelistic Association

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life"

May 2017

Some of you know about what has happened within these last few months, before Tina's father died. We feel compelled to share what the Lord God did, and what He called us to do, in the midst of this sober situation of life. Here is a brief but descriptive account of God's doings: Tina's father, Bob was a very kind and considerate handyman that had wandered into the life of Tina's mother. Carol had adopted Tina and her sister when she was just eight years old. **Bob saw a woman in great need with five children.** He began by fixing a daycare sign that was in disrepair and then purchased a refrigerator to replace igloo coolers they were using to preserve perishable foods. Soon he married Carol and became the instant father of five children! Tina saw him as the **answer to her prayer** and her families, "**Knight in shining armor.**" It wasn't long before the whole family worked together to make a thriving daycare business in Fort Myers, Florida. It was about this time that I (Steve) came into the picture. Tina and I met in high school and became great friends and then married about five years later. God's goodness of salvation was upon our lives and He opened many doors to share the Gospel to Tina's family and the many that were in their lives from the daycare business they operated. Tina and I went off to Bible College then onto the mission field in the Philippines, within the next five years. It was in this time that Tina's mother and Bob divorced and their lives spun out of control. Bob searched out many extremes of depravity while Carol's health declined. Each time Tina and I returned to the United States to itinerate God opened many blessed doors to share the Word of His Life into Bob's life. Bob continued to be hunted by the law for his offences and eventually (at the age of 75) became quite ill himself and needed to be hospitalized numerous times. Although he had told us, "**I enjoy living life on the edge, ... the edge of life's reasoning came to meet him.**" Two months before he died he tried to call us in London to talk and ask us to pray for him. His phone would not call internationally so he asked his son Bobby to make the call on his phone. Bob shared with us his fear of death and the failures of his life and humbly asked for us to pray for him. This was the beginning of numerous conversations that Tina had with her father. Her joy overwhelmed her soul and she expressed to me, "**I have never had such a deep and beautiful relationship with my Dad before.**" Tina asked Bob to start reading in John chapter one and when they talked on the phone, and then they would discuss the things that God was speaking to his heart and mind when she called next. **It was a beautiful transformation that God's mercy had brought to a desperate soul, and we were rejoicing in His goodness! What a mighty God that we serve!** The next news that we received was from Tina's brother that Bob had suddenly passed away. Our hearts were struck with sorrow mixed with elation as we considered God's loving-kindnesses. We knew that He had done mighty things beyond our expectations. The memorial service was scheduled and miraculously God enabled our renewed passports to be extradited to us in less than two weeks. We flew to Florida from London as early as we could to help out with the ceremony preparations. I (Steve) had several scriptures in mind and all from the book of John's gospel, which I felt the Lord had laid upon my heart to share in the memorial service. As we helped Tina's brother Bobby go through some of the items that he had collected from their father's home I noticed a Bible that sat open and bookmarked with a black silk ribbon on Bobby's glass shelf. Upon asking, Bobby replied, "**That's Dad's Bible, I found it in Dad's house opened exactly like that.**" I took it in my hands and noticed a small business card for a doctor's appointment that marked the page. The silk ribbon was on John chapter fifteen. I spoke out loud and said to Tina and Bobby, "**Wow, it looks like he had read fourteen chapters of John!**" Bobby replied, "**That's what I thought when I saw it sitting open like that.**" Amazingly, just a few days before this we had discussed a scripture to use for the memorial cards that we were having printed for the service, (John 11:25) "**Jesus said to her, I Am the resurrection and the Life, the one who believes in Me will live even though they die.**" We all felt deeply encouraged. When I got back to my sister's house, where we were staying I looked in my Bible notes and found that all the scriptures that I felt impressed to minister on in John's gospel were all ones that Bob would have read and deeply considered. I was overjoyed. I knew this was going to be very relaxed memorial service. Even though 98 percent of those that were to attend were unsaved, they would want to desperately know what Bob was thinking about the last few months of his life. **They respected him and would now respect the Word of God that he had come to respect!**

I began my message by sharing about the woman of Samaria who was asked by Jesus at the well, "**Give me a drink.**" (John 4:7-26) "**Her response to Jesus was one of surprise that a Jew would even talk to her, yet Jesus continued speaking and said, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who it is who says to you, 'Give me a drink,' You would have asked him and He would have given you Liv-**



ing Water." Jesus then compared the physical benefits to the spiritual advantages of His truth by explaining to her, "**Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.**" "**This woman could not calm her excitement!**" I shared, She said to Jesus, "**Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty, nor come all the way here to draw.**" "**As Bob was reading this passage was he also asking God to quench his spiritual thirst?**" I queried those at the memorial service. I continued, "**Jesus revealed to her that He was the promised Messiah that would forgive the sins of those that would receive Him. This woman was so in awe of God's goodness and gift to her to that she immediately left to tell her entire village about Jesus. When they came out from the village to talk with Jesus by the well they came to the profound conviction, 'It is no longer because of what the woman said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Saviour of the world.'**" I looked into the eyes of the people that had come to the church to honor Bob's life and said, "**I believe Bob would have been asking himself as he pondered this amazing encounter with Jesus and a woman at a well, 'Are my sins forgiven? Is Jesus my Saviour? ... I believe that this Biblical account of a woman in need would have been very familiar to him as he considered how he first met Carol at that daycare with her five children.'**" I lifted up the memorial card that we handed out to everyone who came before the service began. Lifting it up in my hand I said, "**On the memorial card you all have to remember Bob by, this scripture he would have read not to long before he died, 'I am the resurrection and the Life. The one who believes in Me will live, even though he die.'**" **But what Bob would have been urged to respond to was the next verse, 'I read out excitedly, 'And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?'** I looked across the church and asked them, "**So I ask you all here today.... So what about you? Do you believe this?'**

After the service Tina shared with me a discussion she had before the service began, with a woman that lived with Bob. "**When I introduced myself to her I wondered who she was?**" Tina explained. "**She was very kind as she talked to me and it was obvious that there was something on her mind that she wanted to tell me.**" "**I wanted to let you know that your dad was a very good man.**" She told me, "**He was reading his Bible every single day for the last few weeks of his life.**"

What a great privilege it is to serve the Living God!

**In His everlasting love,
Steve and Tina**

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