

If we have a brain tumor and need serious brain surgery (the bad news) and we find a doctor who has performed it successfully 3,000 times (the good news); we will die unless we “act” on what we know. We must put our faith in this doctor by letting him put us to sleep, open our skull and remove the tumor.

We don't have to go to church and walk an aisle to give Jesus our sins to forgive and our lives to change. One of our greatest preachers, R.G. Lee, tied up a mule he was plowing and knelt under a tree. I prayed standing in the rain beside my car driving to Florida. God, forgiveness and heaven are only a prayer away.

Marks Gospel

Facing Life's Storms

(Mark 4:35-41 / 6:45-52)

(Continued)

SUFFERING CAN DRAW US CLOSER TO OTHERS

“I came to the exiles who were living in
Tel Abib / I sat where they sat,
overwhelmed with astonishment and
said nothing for seven days.”
(Ezekiel 3:15)

Suffering can draw us closer to God and also to others who are hurting. In our pain, we **share their pain**. When God called Ezekiel to Pastor and preach to the Israelites who had been taken from their homes and placed in Babylon; he “**sat where they sat**”. He tried to see life through their eyes and feel their pain.

This hard to do until pain knocks on our door. Then we go from having **sympathy** - “we care” - to **empathy** - “*having your pain in my heart*”. It's amazing how selfish we are. We cling to our clan, our family, our friends, our church, our health, etc. Looking at a blind person, a crippled person, a wheelchair, etc., we are uncomfortable and shy away. It is only when life throws us into some great hurt that we join them. Our clan changes, it grows larger.

Adam Walsh's son is murdered, and he gives his life to capturing criminals and helping parents like himself. Michael J. Fox, stricken with Parkinson's said goodbye to his television career. But he said, “Hello!” to finding a cure for Parkinson's and to working with people with Parkinson's. Hurts are turned into helping hands; when before the hurt, all most of us did was fill our hands with the things that make us happy.

As Christians we can also **share the power**.

“God / comforts (stands by us) us in all
our troubles so we can comfort those
in any trouble with the comfort we
ourselves have received from God.
(2 Corinthians 1:3-5)

Dr. L. D. Johnson, long time chaplain of Furman University, lost his daughter in a tragic car wreck on her 21st birthday. From the agony of that awful hurt, he wrote “*The Morning After*”. He said when we come through such an ordeal standing strong, we can be living proof of God's power to see people through awful times and we can turn MISERY into MINISTRY.

Charles Spurgeon suffered with constant bouts of depression and wondered, when he was young, why God allowed him to suffer so much. He said he found out when a depressed man came and told him his sermon that week kept him from committing suicide.

When we can't take away the hurt, we can always be there to care. What this world needs and what you and I can give is love. Tolstoy, the famous Russian writer, tells of being approached by a beggar on the street. He said he searched through his pockets and said, “Please don't be angry with me, my brother, I have no money with me. If I did, I would gladly share with you. The beggar's face beamed, and he said, “Sir, you have given me far more than I asked for. You have called me brother.”