



## The Testimony of Daniel Clark

Nineteen ninety-five was not a bad year. I became a licensed real estate appraiser two and a half years earlier and in 1995, upgraded my credentials to Certified Appraiser. Business was good enough to upgrade the appraisal vehicle and we were making our living costs without difficulty, even though our living costs were higher than they should have been. The summer months were prosperous and the slower winter months did not feel threatening. My wife and I were able to go out to dinner several times a week. We still only had one vehicle, but she worked days and it was not difficult to meet her at quitting time to take her home.

In August our daughter, who lived in New Hampshire flew to Oklahoma on a two-week visit to show us our two-year-old granddaughter. The visit was wonderful. She had done the same thing when her oldest daughter turned two. Three years earlier I was driving a truck across country and we were able to stop in New Hampshire to see the grandchildren. I would take my wife with me when these trips were made but trucking being what it is, we usually never got to stay very long to visit. In nineteen ninety three my wife went the help during the time the baby was born. I quit driving in nineteen ninety and although we went to visit then it was my last visit and I had never seen our youngest granddaughter.

A month after our daughter returned home her marriage started falling apart. My office was at home and she began calling to tell me about the problems. By October the frequency of these calls reached four or five times a day and they lasted from twenty minutes to an hour as I resisted any attempt to see her leave her husband, even though the one-sided account became more ominous with each call. I do not believe in divorce, but she started telling me her and the children were abandoned without transportation

for days at a time and when the report of no food in the house and oil not being available for heat, my wife and I discussed it in depth and decided it was time to go to New Hampshire and bring them back to Oklahoma. I made the trip alone. Renting a trailer in Oklahoma and driving the eighteen hundred miles, loading her, the kids and animals up and driving back was very taxing. I rented the trailer on Friday morning and returned it early the following Tuesday. I scheduled the trip thinking she would drive part way back but the thought of pulling a trailer was more than she was ready for and she did not help drive back.

On Thanksgiving, over a month later, I was not recovered from the trip. I drove for years and never experienced this continuing fatigue. Thanksgiving we had a late meal and sat in the living room watching the little girls play when I experienced a strange sensation. As I got on my feet to go to the bathroom, my left side would not work right. I knew I had a stroke. Being a man of faith, I decided to stay up and speak the word to my body. I did that until six the following morning and remembering something, I wanted in the pickup I went to get it. As I placed the key in the door, I stumbled backward, falling and breaking my leg while attempting to catch myself. Having no health insurance but being a veteran my wife took me to the VA Hospital where they set the fracture and rather than putting a cast on it, put screws into the bone and attached a metal brace that looked like the tie rod from a car.

I spent about a week in the hospital and returned home. After six weeks, the tie rod was removed. I was left with a pronounced limp but otherwise could do most anything I wanted.

The problem was that financial pressures were mounting and now with extra people in the bedroom that was once my office and child care needs that had to be met for our daughter to get her life restarted, it was hard to get any work done. My office moved to the master bedroom and my wife went to work early so the pattern of working until one A. M. had to change.

By March, I was saying things like, "It would just be better to go home to the Lord than live like this". Such comments were directed to God and never to anyone else, but they were the words of defeat and they took a toll. Progressively, my attitude worsened, and those kinds of statements became more frequent.

On August 13, 1996, I had an aneurysm of the brain. As is usually the case, it was accompanied by another stroke. I had a light day that day and had no problem getting to my wife's job in time to pick her up. We stopped for dinner on the way home. I had fought a headache all afternoon and while we waited for our order to come, the headache increased. Along with it came a sharp pain behind my eye. It became so strong that all my attention was consumed by it and in a totally uncharacteristic move I asked my wife to drive the three miles home from the restaurant.

When we arrived home, I went into the living room and plunked onto the couch. Sudden sleepiness came over me and I lay back against the cushion. A few moments later, my wife woke me up, telling me to go to bed and take a nap. She was going to the store and would return in a few minutes. As I got up to comply, I noticed our oldest daughter was home from work. We had shared housing with her and her husband for several years. He was an independent trucker and was gone most of the time but she worked just a few miles away and was at home nightly. Her car had been in the driveway when we got home but my attention was on this pain behind my eye and I did not pay attention enough to notice.

I had no difficulty falling asleep, but it was short lived. I awoke suddenly having to vomit and ran to the master bath. When I was done, I walked back to our bed but lost my balance and collapsed across my desk, breaking part of it. I staggered backward and fell on the bed. As I pulled myself into a sitting position our oldest daughter, who heard the commotion, came into the room. When I looked up another wave of nausea hit and I asked her to hand me the trash can beside the desk, knowing I could not stay upright to go to the bathroom again.

Once I was done, she asked if she could call the church and ask a certain man to pray with me. I said yes and she attempted to reach him, but he was not on staff and had to wait for him to return the call. There was a man at the church named Richard willing to pray and she asked if that was all right. I said yes. In all honesty, I knew I was dying, and the response was mostly to humor her. The strange voice came on the line as she handed me the telephone. He introduced himself and then asked two questions. He asked if he could pray for me. After I said yes, he said, "David said, "I will not die but live and declare the works of the Lord," will you do the same?" Again, I agreed. He said, "I agree", and the conversation was over. It took months for me to understand what happened because of that conversation. I mostly wanted everyone to go away and let me die in peace and I was not really thinking during the prayer, but this prayer was a critical component of my survival, whether I knew it or not.

I crawled back under the covers when I got off the phone only to be awakened again. The man our daughter called for was returning her call. He prayed for me when she handed me the phone. Then I tried to go back to sleep but another call came. This time it was a young man who I had heard was killed in a head on collision a few years earlier and called back to life by a lady attending our church. A church I had only attended three times in the previous year. He prayed for me also.

I was sitting on the edge of the bed when he hung up and I just fell back onto the bed and closed my eyes. In a very short time I heard my wife, both daughters and granddaughters but my eyes stayed closed. I was dying and I knew it. Everyone else thought I fell into unconsciousness, but I could hear every word and every inflection of their voices as they tried to decide what to do. During all the activity our youngest granddaughter, who just turned three years old, climbed on top of me. I had on a V neck shirt and the buttons were not buttoned and she was going to button the shirt. She was told to get off and out of the way but was determined as she ignored the command saying we need to praise for Gramps, we need to praise for Gramps. As I lay there unable to move and not wanting to try, I knew this little girl saw an emergency and was needing

to do something to end it. I had a sinking feeling of cowardice as I realized her and her sister had been abandoned by their father, uprooted from everything they knew and dragged half way across the United States and I was the only sustained male influence they knew and I was deserting them by dying. In my heart and at that moment, I changed my mind about dying. Now, I had not only said I agreed to live with my mouth, I wanted to live in my heart.

My wife and daughters got me dressed then pulled me into my office chair and rolled me through the house to the garage. My wife called a friend, her husband came and helped load me into the pickup, and my wife drove to the hospital.

On arrival a team from the emergency room loaded me onto a gurney, someone crawled on top of me and pressed on my Blatter until I wet myself (obviously, their attention is not directed toward appearance but saving life). I remember being wheeled into emergency and vaguely remember comments about immediate surgery. Then I found myself standing in the sharpest clearest darkness imaginable and three men appeared beside me. They are probably best described as light beings. However, this description is not sufficient, and words just do not seem to do the job.

I only knew one of them and I do not know how I knew Him, but I knew it was the Lord standing closest to me. Although they stood right beside me, it never crossed my mind to look into any of their faces. In fact, I never looked above about waist high. I was not forbidden to do that, but the thought never entered my mind. I intuitively knew the one standing nearest me was the Lord and He was the only one who spoke to me during the entire encounter. I directed all my attention toward Him. I experienced no fear, only calm. It was not a normal calmness but was very deep, as though having arrived home, with all the comfort home should bring. He pointed downwardly before us and I saw a hole open in the darkness. It was much like the map on the old TV program Ponderosa, at the opening of the program a map of Nevada catches fire and a hole burns in the center of the map. Through this hole, I saw my wife sitting in a waiting area as a doctor approached and said, " Well, he survived the surgery and is in recovery now.

However, his brain is burned out because the aneurysm caused a lot of blood loss into it. He only has a 15% chance of surviving the night and then if he survives until morning, he will still only have a 10% chance of being able to get from a wheel chair to his bed unaided for the rest of his life. He will not be able to speak or walk. [As I heard this my thoughts were, "he is condemning her to slavery over a hopeless invalid for life."] As we stood, looking at this scene the Lord lifted his hand and it was as though we were flipped back about 50 feet. I could still see and hear clearly but everything was farther away. The Lord said, "Do not worry you are mine and complete healing is yours." Then He asked, "Will you go back"? I knew He meant return to the life I had been living just a moment before. My answer came immediately without having to think. I said, "Whatever you rather." He responded, "I would rather you do." Instantly I was in a different place, it was dark also but more like a murky darkness was surrounding me and the three light beings were gone. In the distance, I could hear a female voice asking questions. "What is your name"? "How old are you"? "What day is it"? "Where are we"? "Where do you live"? "Who is the President"? I spoke to answer that one saying, "We don't have one she just thinks she is". The voice responded, "He's a real smart aleck isn't he". At that, I knew I was back in this world. When I spoke, I was amazed that anyone was able to understand me. My thoughts were clear about what I wanted to say but my body just would not follow instructions. The words came but they were not understandable. My tongue was thick, and my lips felt dead like after a visit to the dentist. My words were so slurred I had difficulty understanding myself. I do not know how anyone else could have understood what I said.

Two very important things happened that I have not told you about. These were not things spoken but nonetheless clearly communicated. It was in the form of a knowing certainty. The first being certain knowledge that **we do not understand life or how important we are to God. There was an understanding of that importance extending beyond my mind. I could feel or sense that importance in every cell of my body. Literally every square millimeter of my body cried out with that sense of importance. It was not just about this physical life but life as a whole.**

The second was a certainty that **we do not understand either space or time. All space and all time is now.** These two things have marked my life even more than the rest of this encounter.

I could say that I died; there was a time when I considered it probable because of the life support equipment connected to me, nobody may have known it. I did not consult the hospital records to find out, nor did I intend to do so. However I have been told since that I had to be resuscitated four times while on the operating table. I know the word says to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I was present with the Lord. Of that I am certain, but it may not require the body to be dead for that to happen. Even now, I occasionally am caught up in the spirit while in worship or praying and although the experience is different, there are similarities. Another thing I do not know is how long did all this take. It could have happened in an instant, as we know it, or it could have taken days or maybe more. I do not know. It could be of interest in the future but right now, it is not important. I am confident in this; when the Lord considers it beneficial for me to know the details, I will know them.

So where am I at now? I am not the drooling nitwit staring at the flies on the window. That was the picture painted for my wife. Seven years have passed and although it is not as easy and smooth as before, I walk and I talk. I am also the Minister of Finance at The Church at the North Gate. I am the Ministry Director of New Promise Ministries International. I have written a prayer book, one full-length book, seven study booklets and an article all of which have been published on the Internet. I have learned much about Godly authority and order.

I would not be alive today if:

1. Our daughter had not pressed for prayer on that day in 1996.
2. Richard had not asked for authority to intercede.

3. Richard & Charlotte and others at the North Gate did not take the time to do the work of intercession.
4. Our granddaughter had not motivated a decision for life in me.
5. The Lord did not offer me the opportunity to return

**I do not live today except the LORD made it to be so.** I am by no means a product of my own righteousness.