



# RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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*Paul and Gretel Haglin*

EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

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## Letters of Faith

January 2015

**For I am convinced  
that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,  
nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,  
nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God,  
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Romans 8:38-39 NASB

In response to the urging of trusted friends and the Holy Spirit, I want to share with you the message I delivered at the recent funeral of a 59 year-old disciple of Jesus who was like a responsive son to me. Tom had been in the hospital for three months. He had undergone surgery that successfully removed the glioblastoma tumor from his brain but did not yield the anticipated result of his fully regaining consciousness. We were praying corporately for a miracle resurrection, but that didn't happen. Although this message speaks specifically of Tom, I pray that through it, God speaks something deeply applicable to you in your life...something to inspire and add power and purpose to your life and to bring a bit of sense to our oftentimes seemingly senseless life situations.

Dearly Beloved,

We can celebrate today, even as we grieve our loss of Tom's presence, because we believe what the Apostle Paul said: **"...to be absent from the body [is] to be at home with the Lord."** (2 Cor. 5:8)

We know where Tom is right now...he is at home in our Father's house with Jesus!

When our 11 year old son, Chris, died in his sleep, the Lord comforted us with the first words we ever actually heard directly from Him in our ears: *"There is a heaven, and Chris is here with Me now. And you will see him again one day."* These words from a loving God to us in the midst of our shock and grief, not only comforted us and brought healing to our broken and stunned hearts, but they drew us closer to a very real God in a very real way.

I speak these same words to you now about Tom: Beloved, there is a heaven, and Tom is there right now with his deeply-loved Lord, Jesus, and with his loving Heavenly Father God and with His Holy Spirit, and all of you who know Them will see Tom again one day!

While we can genuinely rejoice over Tom's graduation to his heavenly home, we are all still experiencing and learning how to handle the void his absence from this world leaves in our lives. Get in touch with the pain of this loss. It is real and deep and new and raw to all of us!

There are waves washing over us of wanting to shed tears instead of rejoicing, and that is all right—shed those tears—they are cleansing, and Godly tears lead to joy! But when you are really in touch with that pain, you will see that Jesus is right there with you in your pain, so listen to hear what He is saying to you.

He will speak to you! For He is there in pain with you! **“The Lord's loved ones are precious to Him; it grieves Him when they die.”** (Psa. 116:15 NLT)

For as surely as Jesus bore our sins on the cross, **“...our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried...”** (Isa. 53:4) Jesus' carrying away your grief and pains over Tom's untimely death is as much a provision of His crucifixion on Golgotha as is your redemption! So let Him have them! You honor Tom by having them. Now pass them on to Who can and has carried them.

Many of you invested your heart before God in your prayers for Tom to be healed physically. I want each of you to know deep in your hearts that Tom did not die because you didn't pray enough...or didn't pray hard enough...or because Tom had some secret sin...or because we used the wrong brand of oil when we anointed him...or for any other reason that the Devil himself might suggest to you!

As Tom's condition worsened, there was one way, and only one way, that he could possibly survive—and that was if God intervened divinely on his behalf with a resurrection miracle. We all asked Him to—to the best of our ability and faith we asked Him to! As best we knew our hearts, we really believed He would do it. But He didn't.

Now we all have to decide how we are going to come into God's peace over this, because not only does Jesus want that, but Tom wants that!

We can come into God's peace only by walking according to the Scriptural truths locked in our hearts! Philippians 4:4-5 is one such truth: **“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.”**

Romans 8:6 is another such truth: **“For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.”** (and that is a capital “S” in Spirit, meaning the Holy Spirit of God).

I declare to you, Beloved, that it is not important that we don't know why Tom died, but it is of utmost importance that we keep our minds set on the things of the Holy Spirit that we do know, and receive His peace about all those things we don't know!

If we concentrate on the “why” or “how come” Tom wasn't healed, or on the pain of our loss, or on the contradictions of our faith, we are setting our minds on the flesh! That leads us away from our being

healed and away from our appropriating the *comfort and truth* of Jesus' having born our griefs and sorrows on the cross for us.

But if we set our minds on the things of the Holy Spirit, we are led into His peace!

I laud you all as a congregation! You honored Jesus with your love of Tom and your gifts and services of love to Susan. I am proud of you, and I thank you personally, and on behalf of Susan and the whole family, for being the Comforter in the flesh!

And while you keep your minds set on the things of the Spirit, remember the precious words of the Apostle Peter: **“Dear friends, don’t be bewildered or surprised when you go through the fiery trials ahead, for this is no strange unusual thing that is going to happen to you. Instead, be really glad—because these trials will make you partners with Christ in His suffering, and afterwards you will have the wonderful joy of sharing His glory when it is played to all the world”**

(1 Pet. 4:12-13 NLT)

Look around you right now! See the brothers and sisters that you haven't seen for months and even years. Beloved, saints and family that you were close to at one time, but have been separated by distance or by events...by disagreements...or by misunderstandings...or by judgments...

You are together now because of your mutual love for Tom and Susan.

God's love for you brought Tom into your life, and God's love through Tom so affected your life that you have taken time this morning to come together to honor him and to bless Susan and their whole family, and to express your praise and thanksgiving to God for the blessing that Tom was in your life.

Open up to this Jesus love! It is healing! Jesus is here right now to heal you deep in your shocked and grieving soul! Let Jesus have Tom right now...no strings attached...no holding him back! Put your trust in Jesus to take Tom, and to heal you. That's why Jesus is here right now: to receive your complete release of Tom from you, and to bring you complete healing of your soul and spirit over his departure!

The Apostle Paul proclaims that **“...the breadth and length and height and depth...”** of Christ's love surpasses human knowledge. (Eph. 3:18-19) Let us let that supernatural love draw us all together again, to salve old wounds, and to heal any breaches we have allowed in our families and in the Body of Christ! Beloved, we can let it heal us of the pain of missing Tom, and let it turn our mindsets onto the same spirit of joy that he is experiencing in these first moments of the eternity of being home in his Father's House!

With my engineering training, I've long been fascinated by this description of God's love as being four-dimensional. I've always thought of the fourth dimension as being a supernatural depth...a spiritual depth of love not available in the natural! I still think this is true as far as it goes, but I have seen a fuller understanding of this four-dimensional description of Christ's love:

Breadth: it is wide enough to cover all of us!

Length: it is long enough to last into eternity!

Height: it is high enough to include our moments of greatest joy and triumph!

Depth: it is deep enough to sustain us through our most overwhelming grief and sorrows!

I have experienced the depths of God's love...it sustained me through the death of our son and drew me to Jesus. It prevented me from even thinking of getting mad at God! It has kept me standing through deceptions and betrayals, and it is even now healing the deep wound in my heart created by Tom's unexpected death.

Let the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit bathe you in Jesus' love...in His healing and restoring and renewing grace!

I can think of no better way to seal this service than to give thanksgiving to God...praise and thanks for all the blessings of having known Tom...as a caring son, as a faithful husband, as a loving brother, as a precious friend, and as a dedicated servant of Almighty God in Jesus' Mighty Name!

So Beloved, let us raise our hearts and voices together in praise and thanksgiving for the life of Tom that God privileged and blessed us to experience and share. Let us proclaim our Thanksgiving to God for giving us Tom for all these years:

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!**

**Praise Him all creatures here below.**

**Praise Him above, ye Heavenly Host.**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**