

The Heartbeat



Monthly Newsletter of Life Saver Ministries
April 2020

Life from Death

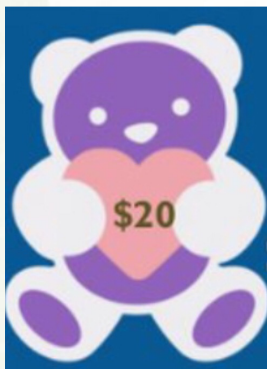
The first few months of 2020 were absolutely laden with circumstances that were totally unforeseen from my vantage point; there were passings of people into eternity whom I would have thought with certainty had many more years, if not decades, left here on this earth. Our immediate communities have been rattled by untimely deaths by way of suicide, accidents, illnesses with the suicides being, by far, the losses that my head and heart have the most difficult time wrapping around. Life, in and of itself, is so incredibly precious and death, is so incredibly inevitable; that space between is what we have to work with and that space between is what will echo into eternity. I find myself agonizing over wishing there was a way to reach the ones who chose to end their earthly life at their own hands and just breathe some hope into that moment, just say something, just hold them close and beg them to not do the unthinkable. Those opportunities never availed themselves and we all stand in utter disbelief when we hear the news of a life gone, a life taken, and the shattering impact to all those left behind as life fragments into a million pieces. I am forced to wonder how often that quick smile, a brief text of encouragement, that midnight prayer for someone God lays on our heart is doing more than we could ever imagine. All of that being said while all the evidence around points to an absolute epidemic of suicide. In this beautiful work here at Life Saver Ministries, we come in contact with so many people who truly feel themselves to be without hope and without purpose. It is a sad reality and what's even sadder is this mentality so often filters into the lives of the young ones being raised. What is so very tragic is the reality that there truly is an evil one who stalks the inhabitants of earth whispering those lies of hopelessness, of despondency, feeding the dead weight of regret, tightening the cruel chains of bondage; those of us who are believers have every power needed to defeat any attack that may come our way if we lean into and use the strength of the One Who defeated death, Who crushes the enemy under His pierced feet, Who leads us into paths of life. What a beautiful faith we have, what a beautiful faith to share and that is truly the core of Life Saver Ministries- hope. Suicide ranks as the fourth leading cause of death for people ages 35 to 54, and the second for 10- to 34-year-olds with numbers of suicides in the United States climbing to nearly 50,000 per year. An epidemic of hopelessness indeed and I can't help but ponder on just how devious a force hopelessness is. How often do we hear post abortive women say they regret their decision but made it because they felt...hopeless? How often do we agonize over what must have been going through someone's mind when they ended their own life only to assume it was hopelessness? The thing about hopelessness is the fact that it is a grand illusion. It is truly a feeling- an irrational, unreliable, flippant feeling not based in reality. There is always hope. Always, always, always. There is always room for a new beginning because this God Whose defeat of death we celebrate this month with Easter is a God Who knows nothing of defeat. We as humans are so clouded into thinking what we feel and what we can't see is the reality and I am so thankful to know God's voice so intimately that when I hear the sinister whisper of hopelessness, I know to tune out that static. I know that on this side of eternity, even as dark and horrible as circumstances can often be, even in how cruel and cutting the searing pain of loss can be, we are NEVER without hope. Ever. This message is one we have proclaimed for years to the lives who come through our doors and I pray we proclaim it even louder in the days to come as we grieve the losses but use that sadness to dig deeper, run harder and embrace the discomforts of the life God calls us to when we place Him on the throne and our service to others as highest priority. Daily dying to self is the most beautiful way to live and I pray that we will all-myself included first and foremost- see this miraculous season of Spring as a chance to embrace life, embrace the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior and be living examples of how God brings lives back from the dead every single day. The miracle of Spring is Him to Whom be glory forever as we all choose to let the joy of our Lord be our strength every hour of every day.

-Abbey Ballard, Ministry Director

Crowning Moment

Life has a way of turning on a dime and a few days ago when I drafted the first page of this newsletter, I –along with all of us- had no idea what was about to unfold. I am a privileged, privileged human being who has grown up in freedom, never been shot at, never gone hungry unless by choice and our children have enjoyed the same existence. Beyond blessed indeed, so by now we are all living a little differently, whether jobs have stopped, the house has become the longterm hub for all members of the family, children are settling in to homeschooling, among many other scenarios, some far more intense and ominous. This thing we call COVID-19, the Corona Virus among other labels has definitely turned life as we know it upside down and yet how grateful I am that the King of Kings is not surprised by all of this; I am so grateful for a faith that brings calm to my heart that is the peace that passes understanding. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that this life is a mere grain of sand on eternity's shore and that vast expanse is held in the Palm of His Hand. I pray, as we all do, that this pandemic will lift, that lives will be restored, that death tolls will be as minimal as is possible and that souls will find that crown of peace that can only be discovered through Christ. I pray that we will come to the other side of this challenge with a renewed passion for the intangible, eternal treasures of our existence—all that is done to serve others in His name is truly all that lasts. Wealth can vaporize in seconds, bodies can become lifeless and still in a moment, houses can be reduced to ash, fame can turn to public disdain in the blink of an eye, relationships can grow cold, causing us all to seek that which is eternal, that which transcends this life, all of which can only be found in the One Who defied death and defies it daily- the only One Who brings bodies back to life, forges hope from the ashes, and rebuilds lives from the rubble. May we crown Him with many crowns and lay all of our kingdoms and best laid plans at His feet; may we see life a little bit clearer through this, may we not take time for granted, may we welcome greater measures of suffering for His Kingdom's sake and the benefit of our fellow man, so they can see this radical love in action and the Great Physician at work through the lives of the redeemed. Heal this world, Lord we pray.

Love 4 Life



A huge bear hug (elbow bump, for now) of a "Thank You!" to all who participated in our Love 4 Life Fundraiser! Your gift of \$20 allows us to purchase over 100 pounds of bulk items for our many programs here at Life Saver Ministries; thank you for giving so very generously as we have seen our totals exceed \$3,500! This is a great blessing to us and the families we serve and we are so incredibly thankful for your support! It is amazing what we can do together to meet the needs of our community!

Proverbs 22:17

"A merry heart does good like medicine"

I have seen clearly that life is more than self. It is more than doing what I want, striving for what will benefit me, dreaming of all I can be. Life is all about my relationship with God. There is no higher calling, no loftier dream, and no greater goal than to live, breathe and be poured out for Jesus Christ."

Excerpt from the book "The Narrow Road: Stories of Those Who Walk This Road Together" by Brother Andrew, John Sherrill

Please pray for the families we serve in a special way during this time of school closures, jobs being suspended indefinitely, and a great deal of uncertainties. Many households will have many children at home all day, every day and that can create some intense situations as tempers flare, behaviors escalate, and patience, in general, wears thin. Many of these children struggle with changes in routine which makes matters more challenging.

Please pray for the mothers who make a living in the healthcare field as many of them report to work in the midst of this time; pray that their families be protected and that they be given physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strength.

Please pray for the newborn babies, pregnant moms, and those who have frail health and compromised immunity; one of our ladies had surgery to remove half of her lung weeks ago and is still in the recovery phase of that major surgery.

Please pray that we can find the best ways possible to meet the needs of the families we serve whether it be through offering online classes, emotional support and above all, a clear pointing of lives to the One Who is the source of all strength and all peace both now and forever.