

Kathi Pelton

"THE CHURCH WILL COME OUT OF A TIME OF HOPE DEFERRED--GOD WANTS YOU TO SEE YOUR DESIRES FULFILLED!"

This Saturday my husband and I have the honor of watching our oldest son, Corey, walk through his high school graduation ceremony. As parents we are so proud of him! He has walked a journey through high school of purity and Godly character that has been such a joy to us and an example to many of his peers. He will finish his senior year with a scholarship in hand and a "well done" spoken from his family and friends. But his character and achievements, though they are a wonderful blessing, are not the only things that we will be taking notice of that night, because our son is a walking miracle, and we will be giving the Lord that honor as he graduates.

Hope Deferred

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick; but when dreams come true at last, there is life and joy" (Proverbs 13:12).

When our son was seven years old, he began to experience some physical problems that had no explanation. He had always been extremely healthy. What began with some small seizures gradually turned into a neurological nightmare for all of us. Though the doctors eventually gave us a diagnosis and placed him on medication that would help the symptoms, his life was severely altered. From that time on, he had no control over many of his bodily functions.

Corey had been an avid baseball player but could no longer play without a great struggle. He couldn't function in school any longer, and we had to pull him out and home school him. He was also alienated from most of his friends. This ailment not only affected his body but his emotions, leaving him weeping for hours for no apparent reason.

From the day that he was diagnosed, Corey began to tell everyone that God was going to heal him. We stood with him on this statement, although our faith was tested, and often we found ourselves in doubt. Corey never wavered in his faith. As the years went by, this ailment worsened. It began to define his life more and more. Whenever Corey got the chance, he would get someone to pray over him for healing (of course, we were always praying over him). I remember, on two occasions, him literally running after Todd Bentley to get him to pray for him. He wasn't satisfied with briefly getting touched in a "healing line" but wanted to actually be prayed for by Todd (and he was). Although Corey would get discouraged when the healing didn't come, he still never lost faith that he would be healed. My husband and I battled with the sense of hope deferred as the years rolled by without any breakthrough.

The Visitation

"O Lord, You alone are my hope; I've trusted You from childhood. Yes, You have been with me from birth and have helped me constantly--no wonder I am always praising You! My success--at which so many stand amazed--is because You are my Mighty Protector. All day long I'll praise and honor You, O God, for all that You have done for me" (Psalm 71:5-8).

As Corey's 15th birthday approached, he came up to us one day and stated, "God has told me that on my 15th birthday I will be healed!" As a mother I was thrilled and terrified all at the same time (probably more terrified than thrilled). I wanted to believe his statement to be true, but I struggled, wondering if he wanted to be healed so badly that he had "heard" what he wanted to hear, rather than a true message from God. Though I never expressed my fears to Corey, everything in me wanted to protect him from disappointment.

On the morning of his 15th birthday, Corey walked into our kitchen for breakfast with his body manifesting symptoms severely. I asked him if he was discouraged (because he wasn't healed) and he said, "No, I think my body is so bad today because I'm so excited! Tonight I will be healed." He was absolutely sure that he had heard from God.

I would love to tell you that I am a woman of such faith that I was able to put all my fears aside and rejoice with him throughout that day, but that would not be true. It was a terrible day for me. As we celebrated his birthday, I was on the verge of tears the entire day. I didn't know how we were going to comfort him if he woke up the next morning without his healing. Once again, I didn't tell Corey that I doubted. It really was worse than doubt, it was absolute fear. I felt like King David when he wrote:

"I am losing all hope; I am paralyzed with fear. I remember the glorious miracles You did in days of long ago. I reach out for You. I thirst for You as parched land thirsts for rain. Come quickly, Lord, and answer me, for my depression deepens; don't turn away from me or I shall die. Let me see Your kindness in the morning, for I am trusting You. Show me where to walk, for my prayer is sincere" (Psalm 143:4-8).

That night I went to bed wondering if we would wake up to rejoicing or devastation. I struggled to get to sleep, but eventually it came. During the middle of the night I was awakened by the Spirit of the Lord heavy in the house. Angels had filled our home. It felt crowded with the presence of something Heavenly. I didn't get up because I knew that this was for Corey, and I didn't want to interrupt this visitation. I don't know how long this went on, because eventually I fell back asleep, but when I got up the next morning, Corey came into the kitchen and said, "Mom, did you feel that last night?"

Corey had been visited in his sleep, and he was completely healed. He had control of his body and his emotions again. Within a week he was off all of his medications. The next year, Corey went back to public school and was an honors student. He was playing sports again, this time it was rugby, and won a high school award for it. Overnight we had our son back to the way we had known him so many years before. We were living in the joy of desire fulfilled. So, this Saturday, when Corey takes his diploma, it will be not only a great joy for us, but for Heaven!

A House of Miracles

"Hallelujah! I want to express publicly before His people my heartfelt thanks to God for His mighty miracles. All who are thankful should ponder them with me. For His miracles demonstrate His honor, majesty,

and eternal goodness. Who can forget the wonders He performs--deeds of mercy and of grace?" (Psalm 111:1-4).

That night, over three years ago, our home became a "house of miracles" as our son was miraculously healed. Although there are many untold stories like this throughout the world, I believe that the Body of Christ is entering a time that the Church will be known as "A House of Miracles." I am not just talking about church buildings, but the Church (the Body of Christ) will come out of a time of hope deferred and will begin to see unprecedented miracles once again. I believe that we will even see resurrections from the dead.

The way that my son ran after Todd Bentley to get healing prayer, many people in the world who need a healing touch will run after those in the Body of Christ to be prayed for. They will run after Jesus like the woman with the issue of blood in Mark 5:25-29:

"A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind Him through the crowd and touched His robe. For she thought to herself, 'If I can just touch His robe, I will be healed.' Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition."

These miracles will stun the medical field, and they will not be able to explain what has happened to patients that they had given up hope for. Many of you reading this will feel a bit like I did when my son announced that he would be healed. Some of you will doubt, and you will wonder if we want this so bad that we "think" we have heard this from the Lord. But, don't be discouraged by your doubt...remember, my doubt did not stop God from healing my son! What God says, He does! Begin to remind your spirit of these words,

"But I have witnesses, O Israel," says the Lord. "You are My witnesses and My servants, chosen to know and to believe Me and to understand that I alone am God. There is no other God; there never was and never will be. I am the Lord, and there is no other Savior. Whenever you have thrown away your idols, I have shown you My power. With one word I have saved you. You have seen Me do it; you are My witnesses that it is true. From eternity to eternity I am God. No one can oppose what I do" (Isaiah 43:10-13).

The Power of Hope Deferred Broken

"Lord, when doubts fill my mind, when my heart is in turmoil, quiet me and give me renewed hope and cheer" (Psalm 94:19).

Part of the healing that we will experience in the Church is a healing from hope deferred. Due to seeing many in the Body of Christ not receiving physical healing, it has caused us to live without true expectation of seeing miracles. It has been like a disease that attacked our faith. If there was a "cancer of the faith," this would be it. It is not that we are faithless people, but it is that we have lived in a season of time that has been very impotent of witnessing healing miracles. But, that is about to change, and we will be a people

who are witnesses of God's miracle working power, because He has said so!

We are entering a season where God is renewing the hope of His people. Though many have been faced with trials that have challenged hope to the very core of their faith, we will see an overcoming spirit arise in the Church that will have the power to overcome the chains of hopelessness, doubt, and despair.

"I am the Lord, Your Holy One, Israel's Creator and King. I am the Lord, who opened a way through the waters, making a path right through the sea. I called forth the mighty army of Egypt, with all its chariots and horses, to lie beneath the waves, dead, their lives snuffed out like candlewicks. But forget all that--it is nothing compared to what I'm going to do! For I'm going to do a brand new thing. See, I have already begun! Don't you see it? I will make a road through the wilderness of the world for My people to go home, and create rivers for them in the desert!" (Isaiah 43:15-19).

#### A Door of Hope

Recently I was reminded of a dream that I had a few years ago. In this dream, I was walking down a narrow corridor that was filled with people "going nowhere." At the end of this corridor, there was a door, but no one was going through it. As a matter of fact, the people in this narrow place were sitting down, some curled up in a fetal position. There wasn't any movement forward, and no one was trying to get through the door at the end of the hall.

I asked the Lord, "Where am I?" And He answered me saying, "In the hallway of hope deferred." Then I asked Him, "What is the door at the end of the hallway?" He responded by saying, "A door of hope."

In this dream I just wanted to get through that door and out of this corridor. But the closer I got to the door, the more crowded it was, and the more depressed the atmosphere became. I could feel myself being pulled down by the very hopelessness in the room which made it very hard to continue forward. The Lord kept calling me forward though. By the time I got to the doorway, I was crawling and feeling such deep pain and despair. It almost seemed comforting to just give up and curl into a ball and let the hopelessness take me over. The closer I got to the door of hope, the harder it was to continue.

Finally I reached the door. I reached for a door knob to open the door but there wasn't one on the door. I cried out to the Lord, "How do I get through the door?" Then He answered me and said, "You must go through this deep pain and fear and push through to joy." As I began to push through the blinding hopelessness, the pain and fear increased, but I didn't stop. I kept pushing through the pain and fear. Then suddenly I remembered His joy again and passed through the door. When I passed through, I entered into a place that was not like anywhere I've ever been. It was a Heavenly place with many colors, no walls, no floor, no ceiling and yet I was held in absolute security. Absolute joy was in this place.

I interacted with people in this new place, and the only way that I can describe what I was experiencing is by saying that I entered into the

"Desire of the Nations." It was a place of desire fulfilled, and yet every desire was fulfilled completely in Christ. It was like we were in Him, and waves of desire poured over each of us, and just as desire came, so did the fulfillment. The people in this place were absolutely unified in oneness, because all of our selfish desires had been washed away, and our true desire was being fulfilled again and again...together.

As I remembered this dream, the verses in Hosea 2:14-16 came to me;

"But I will court her again and bring her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her tenderly there. There I will give back her vineyards to her and transform her Valley of Troubles into a Door of Hope. She will respond to Me there, singing with joy as in days long ago in her youth after I had freed her from captivity in Egypt. In that coming day," says the Lord, "she will call Me 'My Husband' instead of 'My Master.'"

I believe that there is a door of hope standing in front of many of you. The process of getting to that door has been very long, difficult, and painful. It seems as though the closer you get to breaking through, the harder it is to want to continue to move forward. Be encouraged! Once the Lord told me that at every one of life's thresholds, there is great warfare, but just as a bridegroom does with his bride, this is the time to let Him carry you over. Don't try to cross over in your own strength, but push beyond the pain and fear, and let Jesus carry you through the doorway. Remember from the Scripture above, "...she will call Me 'My Husband' instead of 'My Master'". He is your Bridegroom, and He is pleased to carry you over this threshold.

You will make it! Push past the place of allowing pain and fear to be your master. You have a Husband who cares for you. Know this: what the Lord says He does! We are His witnesses and He alone is God. No one can oppose what He does! (Isaiah 43:10-13). He loves you and loves to give you your heart's desire.

Rejoice!