

The remarkable link between faith and weakness

23 May 2012

The original article was written one month after the compulsory acquisition of our farm by the Zimbabwean government. We were given three months to move off the farm, so this was written one month into that time. I wrote this to help people understand the deep spiritual battle that one goes through at such a traumatic time. I trust that it will be an encouragement to you, whatever your personal battle might be.

Words seem inadequate to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the hundreds of thousands of Christians in many parts of the world who have been carrying us in prayer over the past few weeks. We feel so undeserving of all the wonderful love and kindness shown to us. Thank you so very much.

Our spiritual journey

I need to give a brief update to explain the situation on the ground, but more importantly to explain the amazing spiritual journey Mandy and I have been on. Firstly, our present situation. There is very little to say here. Our last visit from the "*new occupier*" was some two weeks ago, and I have not heard anything more.

We parted in a friendly manner. I asked him if he would kindly bring the offer letter that he was supposed to

have, as well as a copy of the government gazette targeting our farm for acquisition. He informed me that the documents were just waiting for collection from Harare, and I said that I would kindly assist him in his acquisition as long as things were done properly, and that would of course mean that the paperwork had to be in order. There's no need to be angry and hateful.

I actually feel sorry for him because he is trapped in a terrible grip of pride and greed. That will certainly bring him and all who get caught by that trap to a fall, no matter which side of the fence one sits on – or so I understand from the Scriptures. So, at the moment, as far as the farm occupation is concerned, we are at a status quo.

I had received so much advice on what I should do and who I should see, and how people would connect me to those who could *"sort the problem out for me"*. I kindly thanked them for their advice, but declined. I needed to withdraw myself from the *"many voices"* so that I could *hear God's voice*. So, I waited, and waited for almost two weeks. Then a godly African man came to visit me and asked if he may suggest something to me. As he spoke, I recognised that this was a word from the Lord, and so I meticulously followed the advice. Unfortunately, due to the sensitivity of the situation I cannot now let people know what it was that I did. I await the outcome of that one action.

On a personal side, Mandy and I needed to throw ourselves absolutely into the hands of the Lord. My decision had been to not fight the case in any way except by means of love, prayer, humility, and absolute dependence upon the Lord to fight my battles for me *HIS*

WAY! This started us on an amazing spiritual journey. I think the biggest thing I have learnt so far has been how *very small I am*, and how VERY BIG my Heavenly Father is. A few Scriptures have become very real to me indeed – one particularly:

2Cor 12:10 "Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, ... for when I am weak, then I am strong."

As I observed the press coverage that my simple letter received, and the many of messages of encouragement, and at the same time some criticism, I spiralled downwards into a deep sense of *utter weakness* in a situation that was far bigger than I could even begin to cope with. This was not depression, but rather a sense of *my own inadequacy*. However, as I spiralled downwards in the awful sense of my own smallness, I was at the same time spiralling upwards into an awesome sense of being absolutely protected and held in the hollow of my Heavenly Father's right hand. Both of us have felt a *supernatural peace, joy and confidence* that whatever happened, He would see us through, and He would receive all the glory.

I see then an incredible *link between utter weakness* (I cannot do this myself), *and faith* (my Heavenly Father is all powerful and His Word is completely dependable). Let's look at one or two examples in Scripture which emphasise this.

At the end of a long list of the great things that men and women of faith did, we find the following verse, referring to most if not all of these great people:

Heb 11:32-34 "... from weakness were made strong ..."

One common denominator with all these heroes was that they were weak. Here is one of them, a precious lady of whom not much is written, but whose simple act of faith eventually ended in the deliverance of the entire nation of Israel from bondage in Egypt.

This lady is Moses' mother (Hebrews 11:23).

Letting your baby go

Ladies, tell me how you would have felt. Imagine taking that precious little bundle of joy, your baby, giving him a last feed and watching him suck at your breast - for possibly the last time - then after burping him, gently rocking him to sleep and laying him lovingly in a wicker basket smeared with tar to stop it from leaking. You pull a little blanket over the basket to ensure that your precious baby is shaded from the rays of the fierce Egyptian sun.

Then, wading deep into the formidable Nile River, its treacherous waters surging, gurgling past your legs - pushing on until you fear you might be swept away by the powerful current - you gently lower the basket into the water and make sure it floats. Then you take a last look at your little darling boy lying so peacefully in the soft blanket you wrapped him in, maybe a last kiss on his soft cheek. You then push the basket gently but firmly away from you, for the Nile to take wherever ...!

Do you think she was feeling strong at that moment? I don't think so. I think she turned around and ran back

home, fell onto her bed, buried her head in her pillow, and sobbed her heart out. Nevertheless, she gave her baby to the Nile with her faith in God because she refused to obey the wicked Pharaoh's edict to have her baby cruelly murdered. She would rather entrust her child to God on the Nile, than to have her child killed. The Bible calls this act of hers an *act of FAITH*, and it is recorded amongst the heroes of faith.

That act was not foolish – it was faith. It is not reckless irresponsibility, it is an act of *casting all you have upon the Lord*, knowing that you are powerless in your own strength to do anything more about your situation.

The CROSS has always been a symbol of Christianity. What does it mean? Death! Jesus said,

John 12:24 "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies it bears much fruit."

The next verse says,

12:25 "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal."

The greatest point of weakness is death. Paul spoke of *"crucifying the flesh"* and he said, *"I die daily"*. What does this mean?

Abraham and Isaac

Abraham experienced this when God told him to sacrifice his son, Isaac. He had waited a hundred years for this precious gift – his son, and now God tells him to sacrifice

his precious son of promise! We are now able to see God's plan with hindsight, knowing that at the last moment God stopped Abraham from plunging the knife into his dearly beloved. But Abraham did not have that hindsight knowledge at the time. Before killing his son, Abraham himself must have *died ten thousand deaths!* How would he explain to his wife Sarah that he had sacrificed their only dearly beloved son?

If ever we are to walk a walk of faith, there will come a time of personal "*death*". I must die to my own dreams, desires, and pleasures – yes, to life itself. Only when such a death has taken place can we experience the resurrection life of real victory in Christ. Until we go through such an experience, we are *playing in the shallow waters of Christian immaturity*, and we will never be able to accomplish much for His kingdom. The kingdom of God is all about HIM, and there is therefore no place for our own plans or glory.

Casting our crowns (glory) at His feet

The elders who had suffered much for Jesus, and as such received their golden crowns, were seated before the throne. When the LAMB emerged as the only One WORTHY to take the book and open its seals, the elders fell down before Him, having already cast their crowns at His feet. He alone is worthy of all honour and glory (Revelation 4:9-5:8).

The Lord has often spoken to us of this test (losing our farm) as being similar to that of Abraham. Amazingly, as Mandy and I were discussing this concept of Abraham's test, we opened our e-mails, and there we received an

e-mail encouraging us along exactly the same lines of thought. We don't know if the knife has to plunge, or if an alternative will be made at the last minute, just like Abraham. But one thing we are certain of, is that the Lord will make a way for us through this wilderness, and we are at complete peace with that.

Retaining the farm is not the goal for us. *Death to our own desires, and resurrection to God's perfect will is our goal.* If we retain the farm as a bonus, we will be thrilled, but we *hold it with open hands.*

The one Scripture of direction the Lord has given me which stands out above all else, is from the Psalms:

Psa 74:18,19 "Remember this O Lord, that the enemy has reviled; and a foolish people has spurned Thy Name. Do not deliver the soul of Thy turtle dove to the wild beast ..."

I feel totally vulnerable and incredibly small in this whole situation. The turtle dove (mentioned in the above Scripture) must be one of the most timid, gentle and innocent of all creatures – totally vulnerable, *absolutely weak.* Yet, the Lord is in charge!

2Cor 12:10 "When I am weak, then I am strong."

It is only when we, in faith, *cast ourselves entirely upon the mercy of God,* that we see the supernatural power of God step in to act on our behalf. I want His way, His answers, His plans. So, *I must die,* and *I do it willingly,* that His life may be lived in me.

(Read my book [Another farm in Africa](#) to find out how amazingly the Lord turned this situation around for His glory and for our protection and blessing.)