



POWER *for* LIVING

April 28, 2024

I Can Do All Things Through Christ



The Power of Prayer

“Pray Me Back to Life”

BY BETH LUEDERS

On Mother’s Day 2008, Sandy Beechler was too ill to celebrate the joys of motherhood. She lay motionless on the couch, depleted of strength to even open her eyes.

“I could feel the clarity of being

right on the edge of life—I felt I could just go to sleep and then wake up in heaven. I had such peace. I had no sorrow and no fear,” Sandy recalls. “I knew God was there and His presence was in me and with me. That day I thought I might leave my earthly body.”



Two weeks earlier on April 27, Sandy had found herself on the bathroom floor in a pool of blood. Sandy, screaming from excruciating abdominal pain and cramping, was rushed to the closest emergency room.

“I didn’t have that kind of pain even when I was in labor,” explains Sandy who lives just outside Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Somewhere in those early hours of agony, a 40-something man stepped into the doorway of Sandy’s room. With a broad smile, he stated with emphasis, “You are not going to die because you are healthy.” In an instant, the man turned and left.

Who was that guy, and why is he talking about death? Sandy wondered between her writhing fits of misery.

By morning, the normally vivacious 61-year-old was in a quarantined room where staff and visitors had to wear protective gear. Bloodwork revealed Sandy had the deadliest strain of hemorrhagic *E. coli* intestinal infection.

This form of *E. coli* bacteria produces the potent Shiga toxin that damages the intestinal lining and causes bloody diarrhea. The World Health Organization estimates that globally nearly 200,000 people die of *E. coli* every year. The rest who are infected often wish they could die.

To combat this virulent disease that was now on a rampage in Sandy’s body, her family and friends tightened their spiritual armor and prepared for heavy artillery.

Her husband, Daryl, their three children and their spouses, and other family members prayed fervently for

the typically-healthy wife, mother, and grandmother. Sandy led the prayer team in her former church in Florida, and these friends also steadied their ammunition against the enemy.

Because of her earlier days in the occult before becoming one of Jesus’ own in 1975, Sandy knew firsthand the intensity of hostilities when Satan orders a mafia-style hit on someone’s life. The truth of 1 John 4:4, “the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (NIV), was front and center in Sandy’s *E. coli* combat zone.

Because of the contagious and life-threatening severity of *E. coli*, local food safety agencies attempted to trace Sandy’s solo case. The culprit was contaminated beef, but the source was never determined.

Meanwhile, Sandy was literally in for a life-and-death brawl. After a grueling six days in the hospital, the woman who invested years as an intercessory prayer warrior for others, was now on the receiving end of petitions to Jehovah-Shammah, the Lord Who Is There.

When doctors determined they could do no more, Sandy was discharged. Back home, her health continued to spiral. Nausea rocked her weakened body. If she did attempt to eat or drink, she would profusely vomit. Eventually, ice chips were too much for her deteriorating gastrointestinal tract.

“Every second my head was going bang, bang, bang with the beating of my pulse. The constant thump, thump was relentless,” Sandy shares. “Medically, this kind



The Beechler family celebrating Sandy and Daryl's 50th wedding anniversary in 2016

of headache happens when a person is dehydrated and starving. The pain was such a tormentor. I thought I'd lose my mind."

With no food or liquid sustenance, Sandy was losing energy. She dropped significant pounds in just a couple weeks. The once strong and feisty intercessor found it difficult to stand or walk without help.

Sandy's skin looked greenish. Her internal organs were starting to falter. *E. coli* was ravaging her body and working overtime to take her out.

While Sandy may not have felt like standing her ground, she held onto favorite Scriptures and held her ground in prayer, refusing to budge to total defeat. Her countless loved ones were right there with her, even

though many of them lived out of state.

"God's Word to me was personally comforting in a time of unanswered questions. Proverbs 18:14 from the Amplified Bible was impressed in my thoughts. *'The spirit of a man sustains him in sickness, But as for a broken spirit, who can bear it?'*" Sandy shares. "That verse was a lifeline as constant head pain, nausea and thirst became regular torment when no medicine brought any lasting relief."

Older daughter, Tami, longed to fly to help her ill mom, but an intense sinus infection kept her from catching a flight to North Carolina. One night, to help from a distance, Tami sang worship songs



PHOTO COURTESY OF SANDY BECHLER



Sandy with her local sisters who helped her through her illness

for hours on the phone to her hurting mama.

But then came that frightening phone call from Sandy on Mother's Day.

"My mom called to say goodbye to me," Tami recalls. "It was horrifying. She was not upset or crying, but just so weak and just kind of done."

Tami remembered that her prayer warrior mother had once told her, "If I'm ever in the hospital and unconscious, do not let them pull the plug. You pray me back to life."

Pray me back to life. On Mother's Day 2008, those words resonated for Tami. She felt God prompting her not to give up.

Feeling the need to call in

experienced intercessors, Tami felt led to reach out to local pastor friends from Nigeria. She explains, "Christ-followers in Africa are often called upon to pray over individuals plagued with serious diseases, impoverished living conditions, and in some cases, interference by witch doctors."

Within hours, Sandy received a phone call from a Nigerian bishop who lived 100 miles away in Raleigh. He interceded for her, taking authority over the deadly illness and proclaiming healing for her.

The next morning, Sandy awoke at 5 a.m. and sensed the Holy Spirit directing her to go downstairs to the kitchen and "do what my hands found to do." Sandy who still needed help to walk, wobbled to the stairs and eased down the steps on her bottom.

She washed a few dishes and placed receipts in the checkbook. When fatigue rolled in, she curled up on cushions on a banquette bench and slept peacefully for three hours.

"Upon waking, I suddenly began to crave a fudgesicle," Sandy recalls. "That's when my husband made me sit up and watch GOD TV until he returned with tofu fudgesicle bars from Whole Foods. I was able to take two bites."

With her first sustenance in more than two weeks, Sandy was showing signs of life again. But the next day, Sandy's shooting pains and distress in her kidneys worsened, and she picked up the phone to call her doctor again. This time though, she sensed God telling her, "Get dressed as though you're going somewhere



and not feeling ill.”

Sandy, who hadn’t been able to dress herself since the *E. coli* first attacked, sat on a stool in front of the bathroom mirror. “I could only lift my arm to a certain point to even brush my hair. It took me maybe an hour to wash my face and brush my hair,” Sandy says. “These are normal everyday things we take for granted. When you can’t do them, you realize that your life is in God’s hands. He gives you the strength and the power to do the simplest things.”

Suddenly, Sandy started craving a bologna sandwich on white bread with mustard, something she hadn’t eaten since childhood. She called her sister, Pat, and asked her for a ride to a sandwich shop. Pat hesitated because she couldn’t believe Sandy could handle any type of food at this point. Pat picked up their mother first and the three of them ended up at a popular bagel shop.

Incredibly, a woman who couldn’t keep down ice chips a few days earlier was now chowing down on chicken salad on a sesame seed bagel with a side cup of fruit, a cup of coffee, and a glass of water.

After leaving the bagel shop, Sandy asked to stop at a grocery store where she picked up a lime iced tea. Then the trio went to Sandy and Pat’s mom’s house where Sandy ate a cookie and grapes.

“My mom and sister were so astonished, they couldn’t speak,” Sandy explains, adding, “From that day forward, I began to eat. Life is spiritual, so we need to recognize these miraculous things when they happen. How could anyone go through what I did and all of a sudden have an appetite unless the Lord shifted it?”

Incredibly, Sandy had no ill effects from eating normally again. About six weeks after she was bleeding on the bathroom floor, Sandy was back at her part-time job and praising God more than ever for her healing and revived strength.




And that smiling man back in the hospital who promised Sandy that she would not die? Sandy smiles at the possibility that he was an angel assigned to encourage her during her battle for life. 



PHOTO COURTESY OF SANDY BEECHLER

Sandy and a friend, Belinda, who attend a prayer group together

Publisher: Ed Stucky  **Managing Editor:** Karen Scalf Bouchard  **Designer:** Susan Murdock

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Volume 83, Number 3, March | April | May 2024

The Six-Month Experiment



BY TAMMY BROWN

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I was pregnant and working more than full time hours in a city an hour away. As my due date came closer and closer, I knew that I wouldn't be able to continue the hours I was working. Especially since my heart's desire was to be my baby's primary caretaker rather than send my newborn to daycare.

Unfortunately, my husband and I were in the beginning years of our careers, and our salaries reflected that. Whenever I talked to him about my desire to stay home, he would simply comment that it just wasn't possible. Convinced that he was wrong, I created a budget, cutting corners in every way possible. We could go down to one car, one cell

phone, no cable, etc., but even with these changes to our budget, I was always \$200 short of being able to pay our projected bills.

As the next few months passed, I redid that budget over and over again, but the \$200 didn't magically correct itself. Still, the overwhelming longing to be a stay-at-home mom only got stronger.

One day, I went for a walk around my neighborhood, hoping that some idea would come to me. A neighbor, pregnant with her second child, passed by and stopped to say hello.

"When's your due date?" she asked. "Are you planning to stay at home once you have the baby?"

"April 26—and I really want to stay

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

SUNDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Luke 24
MONDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	John 1:1-18
TUESDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	John 1:19—2:25
WEDNESDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	John 3
THURSDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	John 4
FRIDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	John 5
SATURDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	John 6



home, but I haven't quite figured out a way to make that happen."

"You won't believe this, but my due date is at the end of April also! And yeah, I get it. Two years ago, when I was pregnant with our first, no matter how many times my husband and I redid our budget, it always showed that we were \$200 short. I've been at home with our son now for almost two years, and somehow it always works out."

I was speechless. The only explanation I had for this short conversation was that God was working through this neighbor. I went home and told this story to my husband. He still wasn't quite convinced, but agreed that we would try living off one income for six months and then reassess.

Those six months were interesting, but we got through them without going in debt. After our baby was born, I became an expert at clipping coupons, and we learned to make some sacrifices. My favorite example of this was when the IGA near us had canned vegetables on sale for 25 cents each. I only had a few dollars left before my husband's next pay day, so I bought eight cans of different vegetables, then splurged on a 79 cent can of tomato soup. I heated the contents of the nine cans with a little water, and that was our dinner all week.

I had many moments during that six-month time period that I doubted

my decision, but God worked through that same neighbor to remind me to keep on course.

One day, I was out of diapers, so I made a makeshift diaper for my son out of an old t-shirt and some duct tape. I looked in every corner of the house for whatever coins I could find, and I was in the process of rolling the change in hopes that I could buy a pack of diapers.

The doorbell rang, and I opened it to find my neighbor standing there with an open pack of diapers in her hand.

"Madison has moved up to a size 4 diaper, so I thought Carson might be able to use the rest of this pack."

Madison was smaller than Carson, so there was no way she was ready for a size 4 diaper before Carson was. My neighbor had somehow sensed that we were in need, and the only explanation I had was that God put that on her heart.

At the end of our six month experiment, we realized that with enough determination, we would be able to survive on one income even after we added a daughter to our family dynamic. Both of my children left for college last year, and some of those early days with my children are my favorite memories.

Just think! If I hadn't taken that leap of faith, I wouldn't have given God the opportunity to provide for the longing He had so clearly placed on my heart.

