

Victory Center



Changing our Community ... Reaching the World

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THROUGH THE FIRE

By Teresa Gates

Christmas for some people is all about presents. But for me this year, Christmas was about a miracle involving my husband, Cash, and son, Cody. Miracles are not necessarily automatic. God has given His word in order to put us in position to receive one if we believe it and put it in our hearts. I have two favorite scriptures that I believe set the stage for what was about to happen. The first is Jeremiah 29:11: *“For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.”* And the second is 2 Corinthians 2:14: *“But thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph [as trophies of Christ's victory] and through us spreads and makes evident the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere.”*

Every day, I pray these two scriptures over my family and this December it was a good thing we had been standing on these promises. I have found that when you take the time to meditate on the scriptures, listen to God, and are always careful to obey what He tells you to do – even in the little things – that obedience brings blessings. Sometimes it may even be the difference between life and death. At least it was in our family.

About a year ago, I felt strongly impressed to purchase some good fire extinguishers to keep in the shop and house to replace the old used-up ones that we had had previously. I guess I was especially sensitive to the real dangers of a deadly shop fire because several years ago Cash's grandfather caught on fire

while welding in his shop. He died from his burns a few days later. We as a family had often discussed the possibility that if he would have had a fire extinguisher, things might have turned out differently. Sometimes in life there are no do-overs. So, when I sensed the Holy Spirit leading me to be sure there were working fire extinguishers in our shop, I was quick to obey. And I am so glad I did.

On December 8, 2009, Cash and Cody were in the shop taking out the fuel pump on Cody's pickup. Cody had been under the truck working on the fuel lines trying to loosen them, but he couldn't seem to get them to budge. Because Cash had installed several fuel pumps before, he exchanged places with Cody. In the process, Cash noticed a drop-light lying beside him under the truck. Even though he thought it had a shatter proof bulb, he asked Cody to move it out of the way just to be safe. Just as Cody was getting ready to move it, the gas line snapped. The gas must have hit the bulb because instantly there was an explosion of fire. Cash was horrified to realize that he was on fire and was stuck awkwardly on his back under the pickup with his shirt, vest, and jeans soaked in fuel. With the flames licking at his face and hands, he somehow managed to wiggle out from under the confines of the deadly fire. Thankfully, Cody had the presence of mind to grab the fire extinguisher and quickly snuff out the fire that was threatening to engulf all of Cash's gasoline-soaked clothing.

When the fire was finally out, Cash examined his injuries and at first decided that he probably would not need to go to the hospital. Then he remembered that his Grandpa's burns hadn't looked too bad either, but they were serious enough to take his life. So Cash relented and had Cody drive him to the hospital while Alix, our daughter, made sure the fire was all the way out.

In the meantime, I was driving back from Gruver, where I had spent the morning working, when I received the call. I was stunned to find out that my husband had been burned and was on his way to the emergency room. Right away I called several people in our church to pray for Cash. I so appreciate and love our church family, which includes some mighty prayer warriors who know how to pray. I am also thankful for Pastor Charlie and Margaret who have taught us the word that, in times of crisis such as we were facing, created a firm and stable foundation that we could stand on.

Nevertheless, when I arrived at the hospital, I burst into tears when I saw Cash. He had been burned on his forehead, the left side of his face, his cheek bones and the tops of his hands and wrists. However, the doctor and nurses were amazed to see him walking into the emergency room instead of having to be carried in. One of the things they were worried about besides the wounds was eye or lung damage. But right away we started to experience the grace and mercy of God. There was no sign of damage to either his eyes or lungs. But probably the most outstanding miracle that Cash experienced – except for the fact that the truck did not blow up in spite of the flow of gasoline from the fuel lines – he had absolutely no pain! Everyone knows how extremely painful a burn can be, but not the burns Cash had; he had no pain. The hospital and therapy personnel kept asking him if he was hurting. When he said no, they replied, “You must be really tough.”

“Not really.” Cash said. Then he quoted Isaiah 53:4 that declares that Jesus bore our pain.

During the three days Cash was in the hospital, when Pastor Charlie came to pray over him, he drew our attention to the promises in Isaiah 43:2: *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned or scorched, nor will the flame kindle upon you.”*

At first it looked like the flames had done a number on Cash because a couple of days after the accident the left side of Cash's face turned black, and swelled to double its size with ugly oozing blisters. (He laughingly remarked that he looked like he was two-faced.) His hands were covered with blisters that were at least an inch high. But within two weeks Cash's face looked perfectly normal - if not better than normal with all the new healthy skin. Both his face and hands healed

without one single scar in spite of having had second and third degree burns.

So in spite of some exceptionally frightening circumstances sent from hell to destroy, in the long run the flames were not able to successfully kindle upon Cash because we have such a great covenant with our wonderful God. Thank God that because of His everlasting love for us, instead of tragedy we wound up having a miracle for Christmas. We went through the fire; but because of God's word and His mighty delivering power, we came out unscathed. If you never go through a battle you never know what a victory is and this Christmas we truly became one more trophy of Christ's victory.

The Victory Kids and Victory Kids Clubs had a big day on Sunday, December 20th. The congregation enjoyed Christmas carols they sang during service. After service they had lunch and played games. They also made Christmas cards for the residents of Dunaway Manor. In the afternoon the kids delivered the cards to the residents of the Manor and sang for them also. The residents enjoyed the visit !

In case you missed it, the New Year's Eve gathering at the church was a HIT!! There was quite a crowd that had an awesome praise and worship time, communion, food, games, and fellowship. It was a great SUCCESS and THANK YOU to all who chose to spend part of their New Year's Eve at church.



**MANNA MAIDENS WILL MEET ON
TUESDAY, JANUARY 19TH
AT THE HOME OF JANET MOSHER**

THANK YOU!

Thank You!

Thank You!

Thank You!

willing to give of their time to make it look so nice.

Didn't the church look great during the holidays! Victory Center is blessed to have such talented women in the church who are

IT'S A BOY!



Keilon Jet Ortiz

Sunday, December 17th 2009 @ 11:17 am
7 lbs., 11 ozs., 21 in.

Son of: Amanda and Johnny Ortiz

Little brother to: Ezekiel DeHerrera and Jonathan Ortiz

Grandparents are: Gary and Susie DeHerrera
Ray and Lisa Ortiz



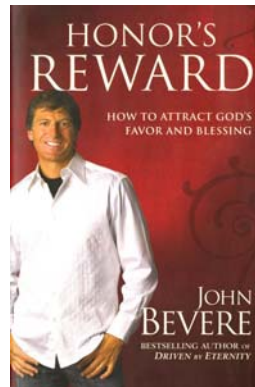
Valentines Day Dinner
The church is planning a dinner for Sunday, February 14th.
Be watching and looking for details



WHEN: 3:00 pm Saturday, February 6th

WHAT: Joe Simpson would like to invite everyone to celebrate the release of his new original music CD, "Just Passin Thru". The event will include live renditions of several songs from the CD accompanied by Beth Hamm Elliott and Tyler Simpson. Beth will also perform several original songs of her own at the event. Admission will be \$1 for students, \$3 for adults, and \$5 for couples. CDs will be available for \$10. All admission proceeds and 1/2 of the CD purchases will be donated to Voice of the Martyrs.

WHERE: Victory Center Church



Honor's Reward

6 Week Study
Begins Sunday,
January 10th
2:30 PM

**MARK HANKINS
RETURNS
MARCH 5TH - 9TH**