

WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE

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by Karen O. Allen

Following my testimony at church, Cindy called one Sunday night to inquire about the Bible study I had written, *Confronting Cancer with Faith*, thinking it might help her mom. I knew Cindy from church because her name was on the prayer list. She was dealing with a vascular problem in which she almost lost her leg. In the midst of the conversation I learned Cindy was also dealing with something else: childlessness. Infertility was not the issue; she had experienced two miscarriages. She was told her autoimmune disorder would make it difficult to carry a child to full-term, yet she persevered only to discover the doctors were right.

Children of God

The thought of Hannah and Sarah in the Bible crossed my mind while talking with my new friend. Both barren women traveled the same hopeful path. Both women loved the Lord and appealed for His mercy, and both women were ridiculed for their childlessness.

Hannah was a woman of grace and devout prayer. Her experience and the scorn from her husband's second wife Peninnah, who boasted of her children, helped mold Hannah's character and faith. She vowed to give God back the thing she wanted most: a child (1 Samuel 1:9-11). God answered her prayer and granted her a son who would become a great judge and prophet.



Sarah would become the mother to the Jewish nation (Isaiah 51:2). Her pregnancy was delayed so that the glory of God could be exalted, but Sarah wasn't concerned about God's glory like Hannah.

Sarah wanted to build a family with Abraham (Genesis 16:2). She knew of God's promise to her husband to make him into a great nation (Genesis 12:2), but she had not been specifically identified as the mother of that great nation (though it could be assumed). Maybe God had other plans. So she gave her Egyptian slave to her husband as a wife, which was legal in that day. Hagar conceived and bore a son, but this was not God's plan. How many times do we get ahead of ourselves trying to rush God's plan?

Unlike Hannah, Sarah showed impatience, disobedience, and distrust. She laughed at the possibility of conception at her advanced age. Her doubtful response prompted God to ask her husband,

“Is anything impossible for the LORD?” (Genesis 18:14 HCSB). I found myself asking Cindy the same question. The Bible answers it—“Nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:37 HCSB)—but do we believe God will do the impossible for *us*?

God’s Ways, God’s Timing

Cindy and I became fast friends and spent hours on the phone. On one occasion I told her I felt the Lord wanted her to be a mother. *How could I say such compelling words?* Because they weren’t just words; I believed them. I believed God’s plan included a child for my friend.

When Cindy called to say she was pregnant again, we were ecstatic and celebrated over lunch on the day of her ultrasound. This new life seemed to be the answer to our prayers.

For the next several months, Cindy called to give periodic updates and to thank me for my prayers and encouragement. Then one evening she called to say she had lost the baby. A third miscarriage. I cringed when she thanked me for allowing her to fall in love with this unborn child. We cried together and wondered how this could happen. Still, I couldn’t shake the idea that God wanted Cindy to be a mother.

“You *will* be a mother,” I said.

Adoption seemed to be the next logical step. Cindy and Scott decided to resurrect the notion they had previously pursued with skepticism. All was proceeding painstakingly slowly including a



home visit, when Cindy received devastating news: she might have breast cancer. Adoption seemed out of the question. Options were exhausted. Maybe it wasn’t cancer. I maintained my confidence and conviction for motherhood but prayed with fervor that Cindy’s biopsy results would be negative. This was not to be the case. *What now, God?*



I reminded Cindy (and myself) that God can do the impossible. I was surprised at the empowerment and demonstration of faith from my words. They were exactly what she needed to hear. I realized what I had said and hoped I had not projected a false sense of optimism. *So what if I had? Was that so bad?* God’s Word is Truth, and I was verbalizing my faith to lean upon its promises.

Later that night I retreated for some heart-to-heart abandoned prayer time. I pleaded with God to give the Darnell’s a child somehow, someday. In my heart I felt it would happen but had no idea how. I didn’t have to!

Cindy and Scott withdrew advancements towards adoption, allowing Cindy’s health to take priority. She opted for a mastectomy with reconstruction and had the surgery in the hospital where she worked as a Labor and Delivery nurse.

A few days later I received a phone call at work. Scott’s message was short and energized.

“Pray, pray, pray,” he said.

A young woman had come into the hospital emergency room about to deliver and inquired if there was anyone that wanted a

baby. One of the employees from Labor and Delivery was quick to answer.

“Yes, I know someone,” she said.

She contacted Cindy who was still an inpatient. Of course, she was interested. *Could this be the miracle, the impossible thing we’d been waiting for?* Yes, yes it was. It was indeed. Who could have imagined such an incredible, remarkable, unmistakable God thing?

I came back to the hospital the next day to meet Miles Morrison Darnell. A few weeks later I attended his adoption at the courthouse. Birthday parties and Christmases have come and gone as I’ve watched Miles grow into a handsome young man. He looks nothing like his parents but has the smile of God upon his life.



Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life (refrain from the hymn “Wonderful Words of Life” by Philip Bliss) were used to speak life into a difficult situation. We know God does not call for all married women to have children, but God does call each of us to trust Him. Completely and wholly and at all times. Are you able to trust Him and His ways in your life?



Prayer:

Dear Father, Your Word is true; however, sometimes we have a difficult time leaning on Your promises in the midst of our circumstances. Help us, Lord, call upon You

and to trust in Your ways to do what is best for us in the plan You have. Strengthen our obedience. In Your name I pray, Amen.

Questions:

1. How did not getting what she wanted, affect Hannah? How did it affect Sarah?
2. Are you usually inclined to one or the other?
3. Have you ever come alongside someone struggling with an impossible situation? If so, what helped?
4. How does it affect our relationship with Him, when “Nothing will be impossible with God” becomes our reality?
5. How should we handle it when the impossible thing that we are hoping for, is not God’s will for us?
6. What are some *wonderful words of life* spoken to you by a teacher, friend, or loved one?



Karen O. Allen has a passion for music, ministry, and dogs. Recently retired from cancer research, she maintains her position as an organist. Her Bible study *Confronting Cancer with Faith* (www.confrontingcancerwithfaith.com) has brought hope around the world. Connect with Karen on her new Ewe R Blessed Ministries blog (www.ewerblessed.com/blog) that highlights everyday and unexpected blessings.