

**GSSM NEWS-BRIEF
AND
RUSS' REFLECTIONS #11**

JUNE/JULY 2021



MANY PANDEMIC AND POLITICAL-WEARY CHRISTIANS ARE NOW BEING HIT HARD BY THE FOUR “D’s”

- Discouragement** which often leads to
- Depression** which frequently creates
- Doubt** which could result in some form of a
- Destructive** force that targets your faith

If you thought that the four “D’s” was enough unfortunately there is more on the horizon.

The forces of evil and their allies are moving into position to mount an all-out attempt to eradicate Christianity. They have boldly made public statements to that effect.

If in fact these threats are real, what is one who wears the badge that states very clearly that they are a follower of the Son of God, Jesus Christ?

Go hide? Give up? Be very quiet? Surrender?

NO!

Grab your sword ...the word of God and start checking out Ephesians, chapter six which states:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of peace.

In addition to all this take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for the saints.

Before the battle begins in earnest, I thought most of you would like some good news that is straight out of God's playbook. We will turn a few pages in this book that most people call a Bible and look at some of the promises made by our Lord. And never forget, God never breaks His promises. For starters to help erase some of the four "D's", be encouraged as you savor the meaning and the expression of love that God has for His children:

1. "I will never leave you nor forsake you". (Hebrews 1 3:5 NIV)

2. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path." (Proverbs 3: 5, 6 NIV)

3. If you stumble, make a mistake, fail to believe or feel unworthy grab hold of this promise: "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and will purify us from all unrighteousness". (1 John 1:9 NIV)

4. "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well". (Matthew 6:33 NIV) Things like your basic needs such as food, clothes, etc.

5. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". (Philippians 4:13 NIV)

Feeling a little better but could use some additional doses of encouragement along with some more good news? Let's check out some amazing answers to prayer as found in the scriptures and there, as a little glimmer of hope begins to appear in you, we will check out some modern-day answers to prayer that just might bring a smile to your face and possibly cause you to lift your eyes heavenward and say thank you to the Lord.

Billy Graham in one of his devotional books entitled **Hope for Each Day** summarizes a few of the amazing answers to prayer that reminds us of God's incredible power coupled with a love that is beyond definition:

“Hezekiah prayed, and God spared his nation when the Assyrians attacked. Elijah prayed and God sent fire to confound the false prophets. Elisha prayed, and the son of the Shunammite woman was raised from the dead. Jesus prayed, and Lazarus came forth from the tomb. Paul prayed, and new churches were born. The early church prayed, and Peter was delivered from prison.”

Dr. Graham, in the same devotional book, also shares a modern-day story that took place during World War II:

During the war, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker and his crew ran out of fuel and had to ditch their B-17 bomber in the Pacific Ocean. For weeks nothing was heard of him, and across the country, thousands of people prayed. When Captain Rickenbacker and his crew members were finally found barely alive, Rickenbacker shared the following incredible answer to prayer as the men were on the edge of starvation. A seagull came out of nowhere and landed on Captain Rickenbacker's head. The Captain reached up his hand very gently, killed the gull and then divided the bird equally among the men. They ate every bit of this life-saving animal, including the bones. This miraculous incident saved the men from starvation. Psalm 34:7 states: “The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him and delivers them.”

Russ' Reflections #11

But there is more...much more in the modern era to lift your spirit and expose more of the power of our Lord and His incredible love and concern for those of us who are His children.

It is my prayer that the following true stories will pull down any curtains of doubt that the enemy put up to blind you and cover you with hopelessness.

Story #1 took place in Uganda approximately ten years ago. A woman dying of AIDS was sent home from the hospital by her doctor in order to die while surrounded by her loved ones. Some members of GSSM's staff were friends of this woman and went to her home to be with her and to pray for her. Rather than mourn her upcoming death

THIS SMALL GROUP PRAYED FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE: HEALING.

The "team" of believers surrounded the woman in bed and laid hands on her and prayed that the "Great Physician" would touch her and heal her. The next day the prayer team returned to the woman's home. This dying woman was up and feeling much better.

They asked the doctor to come and examine the individual who was expected to die within a day or two. The doctor came, carefully examined the woman and then announced to those gathered that he could find absolutely no sign of AIDS. "This is impossible", the doctor told those who had been praying, "There is no known common cure for AIDS. Yet, somehow, this woman has been completely healed".

And what did the prayer team do? With tears of joy flowing down their cheeks, they bowed before the Lord and gave Him thanks and much praise.

From Mexico comes another incredible story of God's love and concern for His children. A dear friend of mine shared this true story of a widow who had run out of food and turned to the Lord for help. She did not have any money and didn't know what to do.

This elderly woman got up from praying and felt led to go to a nearby "big box" store similar to our Walmart.

Although feeling a bit uneasy, she said she was told by the Lord to fill her cart with all the food she needed. When the cart was completely full she was told to go to check out counter number 7. In obedience, she went to number 7 but the clerk told her she was leaving for lunch and told her to go to another checkout counter. The elderly woman said her "Father" told her to check out at station number 7 and therefore she would wait until the checkout station reopened. The clerk was stunned and told her that it would be an hour before her station would reopen. When the widow said she would wait the clerk shook her head and left for lunch.

The fact that this widow had a cartful of groceries and no money to pay for even one item should have sent most people muttering to themselves that this made no sense at all. But not this woman. When the clerk returned, she began to ring each of the items in the widow's shopping cart through the scanner. As item after item was rung up the woman stood frozen on the other side of the counter waiting for her Heavenly Father to act. Then suddenly a voice over the loudspeaker announced that today was the store's anniversary after serving the community for several years.

IN CELEBRATIONS OF THIS EVENT, THE STORE WAS GIVING AWAY A FREE CART OF GROCERIES TO ONE OF THEIR SHOPPERS. TODAY'S WINNER THAT HAS BEEN DRAWN IS THE CUSTOMER CHECKING OUT IN STATION NUMBER 7! CONGRATULATIONS!

The widow cried and gave heartfelt thanks to the Lord. And wouldn't you if you had been that widow? **5**

Closer to home I would like to share a few personal experiences of God answering prayer in my life and that of my family.

I grew up in a non-Christian family during the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II in the 1940s. My mother and step-father would tell my sister, Daphne, and me on Sundays to “go to church” and sent us off with a dime for the offering.

The closest church was about a mile away. One of my friends and teammates on my elementary school sports teams was Larry Sizer whose family attended the church. Our Sunday school fifth grade class of boys was taught by an elderly widow named June Gard.

Mrs. Gard was not very attractive but somehow there was something wonderful about this woman that made her beautiful in another more meaningful way. It was during this time I began to ask some serious questions about God and Mrs. Gard was the springboard that opened that door. Later, while a senior at Santa Barbara High School a Westmont College student began showing up at our football practices.

His name: Jay Beaumont. During our midweek practice for our Friday night game, I tackled a player during one of our scrimmages and his cleats caught my lower lip and split it open causing blood to flow somewhat freely. As I walked over to a drinking fountain to rinse my mouth out and hopefully stop the bleeding, Jay came over to see if I was ok. I said I would be fine and Jay then asked if he could talk to me after practice. I agreed and that was the beginning of a friendship that lasted for years. Jay told me about Young Life and wanted to start a club at our high school and asked me to help him. The very first Young Life Club meeting for Santa Barbara High School was held in my home with about 35 or 40 kids who showed up, mainly a number of the football players, cheerleaders and a few other friends.

During the Christmas break, Jay asked if I would like to go to a winter Young Life camp held in the mountains of Southern California. Since I didn't have any money Jay and his "team" managed to get a scholarship so I could attend.

The founder of Young Life, Jim Rayburn, was the principal speaker and Don Moomaw, a U.C.L.A. All-American football player and number one draft choice shared his testimony and how his life was changed by Christ.

At the end of the 3-day camp, I responded to an invitation by Jim Rayburn to come forward to accept Christ as my Savior. It was a serious commitment to become a follower of Christ and thus I began my journey with the Lord. A number of Westmont students began discipling me and helped me mature in my faith. Lynn Berntson, one of Jay's friends became one of my best friends.

My girlfriend at the time was Sue Witherspoon. She, too, was searching and before long she invited Christ into her life as well.

**SHE LATER BECAME MY WIFE AND
RECENTLY WE CELEBRATED OUR 68TH
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.**

This now leads us to the next chapter in our faith walk with the Lord and some of the amazing answers to our prayer as Sue and I tiptoed through some challenging times learning more about trusting the Lord even though it didn't make sense.

Note: The remainder of Russ Carr's reflections #11 comes from a segment taken from his book, The Coach Who Lost It All In Order To Win It All. The story picks up as the Carr's boot camp on faith training was about to begin. Russ and Sue were married earlier and now they were seeking Russ' first teaching position which they thought would be in Southern Oregon where they would link up with Lynn and Della Bernston. The two couples planned to start some Young Life programs in the region. But the Lord had other things in mind. it was to be a continuation of learning to trust the Lord even when it didn't make sense.

Following graduation from college, Russ applied for teaching positions with a focus on Southern Oregon. He was convinced that this was where the Lord was leading him. However, no openings were available in this region. All positions had been filled for the year. “Try again next year,” stated some of the school district’s responses to him.

Obviously, the Lord had other plans. The month of August was swiftly passing and the Carrs still had not accepted a teaching position. Several other offers came in but Russ just did not have peace about any of them. And so, they continued to wait and pray as the dog days of August marched on.

THEN, TOWARD THE END OF THE MONTH, A CALL CAME FROM SPOKANE, WASHINGTON. MYRON BLACKWELL, THE PRINCIPAL FROM NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL (NWCHS) HAD BEEN GIVEN RUSS’ NAME FROM AN UNKNOWN SOURCE AND ASKED IF RUSS WOULD COME TO CENTRAL WASHINGTON TO COACH AND TEACH MULTIPLE SUBJECTS.

Now Russ had never been to Spokane before but agreed to pray about the matter and get back to Mr. Blackwell by the end of the week. He also asked a number of questions about the school and what the approximate salary would be.

As Russ and Sue pondered the offer being made at NWCHS, the logical response should have been to decline. The school was offering \$2,400.00 for the year with no guarantee that they could meet that figure since they were having financial “challenges”. The salary was half of what other school districts were offering and slightly less than what Russ and Sue earned during their last year in college. As a matter of fact, in figuring their expenses against their earnings, **it was evident that they would come up \$20.00 short every paycheck and that didn’t allow for any emergencies or unknown costs that always arrive uninvited each month.** Nevertheless, after much prayer and in spite of the figures before them, Russ concluded that God wanted them at NWCHS for the coming year.

Russ called the principal and accepted the offer noting that he would only be there for one year since he had a commitment to go to Southern Oregon to teach and help establish some Young Life Clubs. The principal said he understood and would welcome him for the one year commitment.

When Russ and Sue broke the news to Sue’s mother, she was quite pleased. However...

WHEN SHE SAW THE RICKETY OLD TRAILER RUSS WAS GOING TO PULL TO SPOKANE LOADED WITH BABY FURNITURE, A BEDROOM SET THAT WAS SUE’S AS A CHILD AND A LOT OF MISCELLANEOUS “STUFF” THAT THE CARR’S COULDN’T AFFORD TO REPLACE, SHE WAS CONCERNED.

In fact, Russ had built up the sides of the little trailer in such a way that it was a bit top-heavy and had a tendency to sway back and forth. It didn't look at all safe especially considering the steep, mountainous roads full of hairpin curves that lay ahead. The trailer was to be pulled by an old Plymouth station wagon that Russ bought to run an "Adventure Camp" for the kids at Crane Country Day School where he had worked earlier.

After surveying the vehicle and trailer preparing to leave in two days, Sue's mom purchased airline tickets for Sue and the two children and wished Russ a safe journey. With the extra room, Russ carved out a place to sleep and stacked the remaining items in the station wagon. Two days later he was off to Spokane, pulling his overloaded trailer. Stopping just once to rest for a few hours, Russ continued through Eastern Oregon and on up to Spokane. Sue and the children joined him the next day.

While looking for housing, the principal allowed the Carr family to stay in the school's chapel.

FORTUNATELY, THE SCHOOL OWNED A HOME ON THE CAMPUS THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD AGREED TO RENT TO RUSS AND SUE.

The house was really an old army barracks building converted to a home and was quite adequate for the Carrs. Unfortunately, the house was not insulated as this newly transplanted family from California would soon find out when winter set in. Meanwhile, the Carrs attempted to furnish their home by salvaging a broken team bench that had been discarded and which Russ repaired and it became the living room couch. A pair of wooden apple crates were also put to use as end tables and a table lamp that had been thrown out in a nearby garbage heap was retrieved, repaired, and put on one of the apple crates.

Sue's bedroom set filled the master bedroom and this became the only room that had matching furniture. The children's room had a crib

for Jill while Mark slept on a bed and mattress that the Carrs had purchased while attending college. The kitchen came furnished with a table, 4 chairs, a refrigerator and stove and so it was that the home was functional as the Carr family prepared for the opening of the school year.

Meeting with the principal, Russ was given his teaching assignments for the year. **He was to coach all sports including starting a football program, serve as the athletic director, teach freshman Bible, U.S. history to juniors, social science to 8th graders, biology to juniors and seniors and teach all physical education classes. Also, since he had a psychology minor, he was asked to be the school counselor,** an assignment that came with one perk...the only office available for faculty members.

Having not taught before, Russ accepted all of this as somewhat normal and proceeded to fulfill his duties.

Since the principal asked him to start a football program, Russ asked what his budget would be in order that he might get started. Mr. Blackwell marched him down to a rather large closet which, when opened, revealed some used basketballs, 3 rubber footballs, some baseball bats and a couple of balls, several softballs, a volleyball and a set of old basketball uniforms. Russ looked at the principal and asked where was the football equipment? There was none and no budget to buy anything.

Russ scratched his head and put the matter to prayer. Then he got to work. There were two colleges in the area and both had football programs. He drove to Whitworth College first and met with the athletic director and football coach. They had just purchased new equipment and were discarding their old items most of which appeared worthless. Russ took it all, delighted to hit this "gold mine." He and a few of the players painted the helmets, repaired the shoulder pads sewed up the torn football pants and the practice jerseys that did not have a school name on them became their game jerseys and presto...the team was equipped.

Just before classes started, Russ got on the telephone and drove to small towns in the area in order to put together a schedule for his team. Obviously, it was very late as most teams would begin to play in about 2 weeks. Larger schools set their schedules 3 – 5 years in advance and so Russ got on his knees again.

To his delight, he found out that six-man football was being played in the region among small high schools and this particular type of football also spilled into nearby Idaho. This was perfect since the total turnout for the football team at NWCHS was just twenty players. Of the twenty, Russ observed that he had two very talented players, three mediocre and a pair of others who could play but would need help. The others would simply be window dressing and used only in extreme cases and, of course, to fill in the blanks when scrimmaging at practice. By God's grace, Russ was able to put together a five-game schedule. All of the games would be away games and the next task would be to raise funds for travel expenses.

During his lunch break, Russ' only "free" time, he set up a concession stand and sold candy, popcorn and sodas, and anything else that people might buy. He also showed films that were obtained free, charging an entrance fee to attend with all the proceeds going to the football program.

Using his old station wagon, one of the player's vehicles, and a parent's car, Russ and his rag-tag team began their season like a patchwork quilt. With only a few minor injuries which the trainer-less coach treated,

**THE TEAM STAGGERED THROUGH THE INITIAL
FOOTBALL SEASON AT NWCHS WITH A
REMARKABLE THREE WINS, ONE LOSS AND A TIE.**

More importantly, the lives of the young men who participated were being touched and stretched exhibiting a certain kind of confidence and maturity that was being developed.

Back on campus, the school year was in full swing. Sue was busy caring for the children, hosting a parade of students and supporting Russ with his multiple responsibilities.

As the Carrs became involved in a local church, the word got around that they could really use some furniture for their living room. That was after some of the Carr's new found friends came for dessert and sat on the old bench and the rather rickety kitchen chairs that were carried into the living room. Before long an old faded couch was loaned to the Carr's while others dropped off some over-stuffed chairs that were badly worn out and threadbare, but Russ and Sue were delighted to have some "real" furniture since lots of students dropped by to see them.

During one week, Russ was asked to speak in Chapel. He was requested to talk about tithing which made Russ a bit nervous and so he asked if he could also challenge the students to get involved in verse memorization as well. Russ was very involved with the Navigators program of verse memorization at the time. The chapel committee agreed to this and Russ was able to share these two topics with the students.

Following the chapel service, a young woman, a senior, asked if she could speak to Russ. Ramona was invited into Russ' office and once seated, she began to share with Russ that his chapel message deeply touched her. She said that she would like to start on the Navigators' verse memorization program but that she also had some questions about tithing.

Ramona explained that last year she was involved in an accident and received a substantial settlement from the insurance company. "**I have never tithed before,**" she said, and wanted Russ to recommend some organizations to which she could send her tithe.

Russ recommended her local church but Ramona replied that she was still searching for a home church and, therefore, wanted to give to some other Christian organization. Russ then suggested several, including Young Life, Campus Crusade, Billy Graham, and a number of others. Finally, he recommended that she spend time praying about the matter. Ramona thanked him and Russ raced off to his upcoming class.

A few weeks later, Ramona stopped by the Carrs' home on a Saturday afternoon. Russ was chopping wood in the backyard when Ramona arrived and asked to see him. He proceeded to open the back door for her, but Ramona asked if she could come through the front door. Puzzled, Russ walked through the house to open the front door.

**WHEN HE OPENED THE DOOR HE WAS STUNNED TO SEE
RAMONA STANDING NEXT TO A FURNITURE TRUCK THAT
HAD BACKED TO THE CARRS' FRONT STEPS.**

“Ramona” Russ asked, “What’s going on?” Ramona replied that she had some furniture for our family. Russ replied that he could not accept such a gift...even though he was very grateful for her thoughtfulness. Ramona then reminded him that he had urged her to pray about the matter of tithing, God spoke to her and told her to do exactly what she had done.

Russ and Sue were speechless and in tears as the furniture was carried into their home. A brand new couch with matching end tables and lamps and an easy chair filled their living room as the old, badly worn items were moved aside and ultimately returned to their generous owners since they had been on loan. God’s love and faithfulness had struck once again...

As Thanksgiving approached, the school was having financial difficulty. They were only able to provide a partial check for the staff and Thanksgiving looked pretty grim. Sue and Russ paid their most urgent bills, including the electricity and heating bills which just about took everything they had.

It appeared that they would have to forego the traditional Thanksgiving dinner that everyone in the family eagerly awaited. Russ and Sue took an inventory of their food supplies and realized that they were just about out of everything.

They had less than one dollar left for food. They prayed and then left to purchase whatever they could with what little funds they had. They picked up the cheapest food items they could find including pork and beans and one or two other items that they could stretch into a meal for four...until the last penny disappeared. This was on Wednesday, the day before Thanksgiving.

When they returned home from the store and entered the kitchen they were startled to find on the kitchen table a large box of groceries including a turkey with all the trimmings! The Carrs never locked their doors in those days as there wasn't too much for someone to steal. But who came into their house was the big question. To this day they don't know. They never found out who their benefactor was and all they could do was praise God once more for His faithfulness.

As winter set in and ice began to form inside the windows of their house, the Carrs became well aware that they were ill-prepared to battle sub-freezing temperatures. Fortunately, they had a fireplace and Russ was able to scrounge some wood from different sources including a small forest nearby.

However, another challenge surfaced. Jill, now two years old, had outgrown her shoes and was walking on the cold floors barefoot. She was catching a cold and Sue prayed for God's intervention. A short time later a knock was heard on the front door. Sue wondered who it could be. School was in session, Russ was teaching, the students who normally came over were in class and no one else was scheduled to come by.

When she opened the door, a well-dressed woman stood on the doorstep holding up a child's pair of shoes by the shoe laces that tied them together. The woman asked Sue, "Do you know of anyone who could use these shoes?" Then as Sue was attempting to answer her, the woman handed Sue the shoes and walked away. Sue had never seen this woman before, nor did she ever see her again. She had no idea as to how this stranger knew of the Carr family's plight but the little shoes were exactly Jill's size **and the family concluded that she had to have been an angel sent by God...and once again they praised Him for His faithfulness.**

In order to clothe the children and replace their outgrown and worn clothing, Sue shopped at the local thrift store. When things really got tough, she talked the thrift store manager into trading her children's outgrown clothing for something that would fit them. The manager's compassion in allowing Sue to do this was another blessing and Russ and Sue rejoiced once more for God's care and provision. For someone like Sue who had grown up in an affluent home and who never had to want for anything, **this was a humbling experience, but an important part in the maturing of her faith.**

Also during this time, a friendship evolved between Russ and Sue and a couple they had met at church, Dale and Allene Decker. The Decker's would prove to be special friends as they opened their home time and time again and helped the Carrs with programs at school, cared for their children and helped with some of the needs that surfaced quite often. Many years later the Deckers would become staunch supporters of Sports Outreach and later Global School of Sports Ministry.

As the school year moved forward and the basketball season was in full swing, Russ was forced to play in the alumni game since the alums were a bit short-handed and had suffered an injury. The game was being played in a church gym, the cracker box variety, and when Russ drove in for a lay-up, he was fouled in the air and came down on a protruding pipe near the basket and turned his ankle.

Not having any trainers or medical help, Russ taped his own ankle as it was swelling quickly and then finished the remaining 12 minutes of the game.

When he got home, he removed the tape, iced his ankle, and just before bedtime applied some heat as the ankle pulsed with pain. The next morning the pain continued but since there was no money for a doctor's visit or any insurance, Russ taped up his ankle once again and hobbled off to class. This went on for two days, but the pain increased and would not subside. Finally, Sue insisted that Russ go to the doctor...they would simply have to make some installment payments. **After X-rays were taken at the medical clinic, the doctor informed Russ that his ankle was broken in two places and would require a cast. For the next few weeks, Russ moved about campus on crutches.**

As the temperature dropped to 18 degrees below zero, the Carrs old station wagon would not start. In addition, the heater was not working when they purchased the vehicle and when Russ drove it to Spokane, he never was able to have it repaired. Ice would form on the inside of the windshield and Russ kept an ice scrapper close by to scrape off the ice inside so he could see out. When the family rode in the car, they would bundle up by bringing blankets with them to stay warm.

About this time, Sue's mother, a widow, announced that she was going to remarry and the Carrs were asked to attend the wedding in California. Emily Witherspoon, Sue's mother, had been courted by an old friend of the family, David Frawley, who lost his wife to cancer two years earlier.

It was a perfect match. The Frawleys and Witherspoons had been best friends in Pittsburgh where Sue was born. In fact, Sue's dad would often take her with him when he went to visit Dave who lived only two blocks away. Dave used to hold Sue and play with her when she came to see him. Sue also remembers when she was very small sitting on Dave's lap as he read the newspaper. "What are you doing", she asked.

“Reading the paper,” he responded. “Why?” she asked. “To find out what is going on in the world,” Dave replied. “Well, what is going on in the world?” she wanted to know. **Even then, God was at work.** As Sue later became a follower of the Lord, His plans would indeed show her what was going on in the world and the great needs that existed.

Since there was limited time before the wedding, Sue’s mother provided air tickets to Southern California for Russ and Sue. The Deckers offered to care for the children during the time they would be gone and so off Russ and Sue went to celebrate this special event.

Upon leaving for her honeymoon, Emily handed Russ and Sue the keys to her Ford sedan and said,

**“I DON’T KNOW IF YOU CAN USE
THIS OR NOT, BUT THE CAR IS
YOURS IF YOU WANT IT.”**

Need it? A car that ran smoothly, was relatively new and had a heater and defroster that actually worked? What a gift! What a blessing! And once again God demonstrated His faithfulness.

While driving back to Spokane in their new car they encountered patches of black ice. Suddenly a large semi-truck was coming from the other direction on the two-lane road when Russ’ vehicle hit some ice and went into a 360 degree. As the semi bore down on them the Ford straightened out momentarily as the 18-wheeler sped by and then completed the spin move after the truck had passed. Russ and Sue pulled off the road and gave thanks to the Lord once again for his help and protection. Thinking tire chains might help on the icy road, Russ installed a pair and then slowly proceeded on the way home. The chains soon broke and began banging on the side of the car and Russ was forced to stop and remove them. Needing to get home and retrieve the children, they drove slowly for the next three hours until they reached Spokane and climbed, exhausted, into bed after 20 dangerous hours of driving.

In order to supplement their funds, Russ took on added jobs. He officiated high school football and basketball games, and umpired baseball games. In addition, he worked during the holidays at a department store selling men's clothing.

Russ would tell you he is not a salesman. When one poorly dressed couple walked into the men's department, the other salesman who worked on salary and commission, moved away, snickered and let the "rookie" help this forlorn couple. Russ at once liked the elderly couple. The man was a farmer and needed a suit for church the wife explained. Russ proceeded to show them what was available but could tell they were uncomfortable. He suggested that before they buy they should look around at several stores for the best value since that is what Russ would do. The couple thanked him and disappeared.

The other salesman approached some well-dressed men and was helping them when the old farmer and his wife returned. They came to Russ and wanted to buy several items. And buy they did! Two suits, shirts, sports coat, ties, dress pants, socks...the works! Russ thanked them as they left and looked up at the other salesman who was in shock.

The school continued to struggle and only partial checks were issued. Fortunately, a large dairy, the Early Dawn Dairy, was owned by a Christian who donated all of his surplus to the local mission and the local mission, in turn, donated its surplus to Northwest Christian High School.

Strange meals were in store for the Carrs as they and other staff members lined up at the back door of the principal's home to receive gallons of milk ladled into whatever containers they brought. Large cartons of cottage cheese, eggnog and other dairy products filled Russ and Sue's refrigerator as they experimented with cottage cheese recipes and entertained guests with the large quantities of eggnog graciously provided by the Lord through the Early Dawn Dairy.

As the school term entered its last two months, NWCHS ran out of funds and could not pay their teachers or staff. Amazingly, all of the teachers stayed on in order to finish the school year. Russ and Sue were forced to take out a loan in order to pay all of their bills and keep some food on the table. In the meantime, Russ was offered a teaching job at Gold Hill School in the Central Point School District in the heart of Southern Oregon.

However, the job would not start until September and it was only April. A “real” paycheck was five months away.

This location was exactly where the Carrs wanted to be in order to work with Lynn Berntson initiating Young Life Clubs and building a Young Life camp at Squaw Lake that they had envisioned the year before.

While still in Spokane and attending church one Sunday in April, a man came up to Russ and stated that he had heard that the Carrs were moving to Southern Oregon. He was sorry to hear that they were leaving but wanted to inform Russ that he was planning a vacation to that part of Oregon and would be happy to help move the Carrs household items in his truck if Russ would pay for his gas. Russ was delighted, accepted the man’s offer and praised God once again for his faithfulness. However, he reminded God that he would need some gas money as they were without any funds except for the few dollars left from the loan.

Sue celebrated her birthday at the end of May and instead of a package with some clothing that her mother usually sent, a lovely card and a check arrived instead. When Sue opened it in front of Russ, they were both blown away! Never before had her mom sent her a check for an amount such as this. Sue’s mother was totally unaware of the young family’s plight since she had not come for a visit nor had Sue ever told her about the financial straits that they were facing.

The check allowed the Carrs to pay back the loan, pay all of their bills, buy the gas for the truck, provide the finds for their trip to Southern Oregon, enable them to purchase a few groceries and put a deposit on a rental. Once again, God's care for them was demonstrated in such an incredible manner that Russ and Sue couldn't help but to praise God for His amazing faithfulness. Then, overwhelmed by all that God had done for them they broke into that glorious hymn from their Westmont days "**Great is Thy Faithfulness**". Indeed the Lord is faithful to all who are willing to trust Him, even when it doesn't make sense.

To all who dared to read this true story of a "**Coach Who Lost It All In Order To Win It All**", Russ's prayer is that each of Christ's followers remembers that Proverbs 3:5, 6 sums it all up. "**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.**"

Blessings!

Russ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ Carr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "C".