



Life Saver Ministries  
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## A Thanksgiving Story

by Cathie Coffey

At My Father's House, we are always grateful for what the Lord is doing, but it is often difficult, if not impossible, to be thankful in the situations we often find ourselves. The Lord tells us His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts not our thoughts...and He also tells us that He is with us and will not forsake us, and that we will see His goodness here in the land of the living.

We are often asked about our success rate and the numbers of moms who graduate our program. But what is success? At My Father's House we consider success differently than the rest of the world. Success might be getting through the day without crying yourself to sleep, or cooking a meal that someone would actually eat. The best successes, and those things for which we are most grateful, come from the inside where only God can affect a genuine change.

I would like to share a real story about a real mom, that we see as not only a success, but for whom we are eternally grateful.

Tee came to us pregnant in early spring of this year. She was depressed and anxious and struggled terribly with the aloneness she was feeling, being far from home and uncertain about her future. She signed into the program, but left unexpectedly to go live with a friend. We were concerned for her as a first time mother with little support and education and worried what could happen as weeks went by without any word. But six weeks later Tee called to request readmission, if it were possible. We granted her the interview.

What struck us all was her genuine regret for leaving the program and not appreciating what we were trying to do with her. She also said she would understand if we would not take her back. We reminded her that rules and expectations had not changed, but we also were willing to give her another try.

The next few months were a beautiful and unexpected journey with Tee, where we witnessed a new heart and spirit. She was open to our input, to learning from our classes, and getting the physical and emotional help she needed. She followed our program, assisted other mothers without anyone asking, playing with their children, taking on their chores, and more. But most of all the fear and anxiety she had been drowning in about her pregnancy and future, were slowly replaced with pure joy and hope.

Her son had a name and we joked about who he was and what it would be like to have him finally here. Even when placed on bedrest, Tee looked at the positive. We were seeing a new creation, as she was growing her new creation. Tee had found her purpose and plan and was trusting the Lord and His word.

On July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, Tee prepared to go home with her mother for the weekend and get things ready for her son's arrival. His due date was merely a few days away. We teased her about coming home with her baby so we could all finally see the precious baby we had all been praying for.

Later that morning, after she and her mom had left for a follow up doctor visit before heading home, we received a call from her mother. The baby had died, and there was no explanation. In a moment we went from exultation to despair.

I talked with her mother who could barely speak, and then with Tee. We cried and questioned and cried some more. They would soon be transporting Tee by ambulance to the local hospital to deliver her baby, and she asked if our Chaplain and I would come.

When we arrived, Tee was in a labor and delivery room, a place where joy and new life is the norm; it was heart wrenching to witness her mom comforting her, wiping her brow with a cool cloth while the nurse was asking her questions. Tee alternated talking with crying and questioning what she might have done to cause her baby's death and still hoping that maybe they were wrong. Each of us reassured her she had done everything right.

We stayed for a while, praying together and thanking God for this precious baby that we all loved so dearly and for his mother who was facing the ultimate sacrifice as a parent, and still trusting that God had her son. Though she would not see him grow up, Tee was grateful that he would also never suffer pain, never know fear or sadness or disappointment.

We left her shortly after with her mom and the nurse so they could begin the labor. At 4:00 a.m. our little O was born. By 6:00 a.m. we received another call to come and pray over the baby before they took him away.

The Chaplain and I arrived early in the morning. Tee was cradling her son in the traditional little hospital cap and blanket, showering him with kisses and tears, stroking his little hands. He was perfect.

Our Chaplain anointed O as we all laid hands on him and prayed. We stayed until the nurse came to take him away, while new moms with healthy newborns were wheeled up and down the corridor. Tee thanked us again and again; she was discharged the next day.

We have stayed in touch over the last few months, each of the staff taking turns calling, sending notes or cards or little gifts. Tee called often at first, especially when having a difficult day and struggling with the ache and emptiness in her heart, but we always finished with prayer and the confidence that O was safe and well, and one day they would be together forever. Tee never hung up without thanking us and thanking God for the best gift of her life. Tee had become a mother in the most beautiful and eternal sense of the word.

This was one of our most difficult and painful experiences, but we are so grateful to have had the honor of sharing in Tee and O's lives and seeing the graciousness and mercy of God in their lives and those she touched. We all consider Tee a "success story" and thank God that even when we doubt, we struggle, we fail, that each of us matters to Him, and that He never lets go.

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 5:20

Everyone at My Father's House wishes you and your loved ones a very Happy Thanksgiving.

We are always thankful for your support of this ministry. You make success stories possible. Please remember us in your Christmas giving. We are very far behind this year.

God bless,

*Kevin*