

Hope Is Fulfilled

Luke 24:36–48

He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

April 19, 2015



Thought for the Week

One Ohio State University student's quick trip to a Cleveland, Ohio, CVS prompted her outraged mother to post an open letter on Facebook appealing for people to understand that just because an illness isn't visible doesn't mean it's not there.

"You should be ashamed!" read the note tucked onto Harley Jo Skorpenske's windshield. "When you take a handicap spot an actual disabled person suffers. You were not raised as you should have been."

The issue wasn't that Harley didn't have a handicap-parking sticker; she did, but that the person who wrote the note didn't believe she had a disability because of her ability to walk in and out of the store unassisted.

However, what wasn't visible was the 20-year-old's intense battle with Lupus, a chronic autoimmune disease that at least 1.5 million people in the United States battle on a daily basis, according to the Lupus Foundation of America.

The effects of Lupus can be *debilitating*, leaving those who suffer from it with *agonizing pain* throughout their skin, joints and internal organs. Despite the pain, many sufferers go through their daily lives without showing any obvious external effects.

In response Harley's mother, Corinna Skorpenske, wrote the letter and posted it, along with a photo of the scribbled note, on Facebook.

"To The Person Who Left This on My Daughters Car-

Wishing so much for you to have stopped and talked to this amazing person before leaving this. If you had, you would have known that my daughter has a disease. Since she was 16 years old, she has been suffering from LUPUS. Basically, her immune system thinks her body inside and out is something bad and attacks it. It started with her joints swelling and the pain being so bad she could hardly walk. But she continued going to school and keeping up with her community service."

Corinna goes on to describe the intense challenges and pain her daughter has faced over the years since her diagnosis, including hearing loss, multiple collapsed lungs and constant pain, along with a month-long hospital stay that forced her to drop out of college for a semester.

"She struggles every day with permanent damage she has had, to one side of her body, and with hearing loss, but baby she keeps going!" Corinna continued in the letter. "...Many people suffer with these 'GHOST' diseases, which you can't see but are just as bad as a physical disability."

"My first reaction was anger," Corinna tells of how she felt after Harley told her about the note. "On top of everything she deals with she didn't need this. Harley is very strong, and many times she just lets it go. But because she is human I know she feels something."

Corinna says her daughter's positivity through the pain and desire to help others, inspired her to do her part to educate people about invisible illnesses like lupus, depression, Crohn's Disease and fibromyalgia.

"Harley is very passionate about disabilities of all kind and I knew I needed to do this for her," Corinna continues, adding that she'd like to find the person who left the note so he/she can see why it's important to not "judge a book by its cover."

"People with ghost illnesses are often labeled as lazy or fakes," Corinna says.

"We never know what burdens people struggle with. Often we are so quick to judge or make assumptions, but if we just take the time to ask them, they are often very willing to educate them on it. Their pain and discomfort is real."

Prayer Thought for the Week

We thank you, God, for the blessings of life.

We confess our shortcomings. Forgive us when we misuse our agency, individually and collectively. Hear our petitions, we humbly ask,

We pray for peace among the nations of the world, and in particular we ask your blessing on the people of Japan.

May all people find acceptance and peace.

We pray for the just and equitable use of the resources of your earth.

May all people be wise partakers of your bounty.

We pray for all those on our Prayer & Praise List

that they may feel your Holy Comforter and experience your presence in their lives.

Be with their families and friends as they support them through their afflictions.

Hear our prayer, O God. Today we offer ourselves as instruments of your peace. Amen.

Stewardship Thought for the Week

Loving Money

Let us love God supremely and use money to help people and honor the Lord. 1 Timothy 6:6-10 NIV

What do you think about genetic research? We have already developed the ability to do things we only imagined a few years ago. One lingering fear of this research is expressed in the oft-repeated statement, "Someday someone will create a monster," meaning that the research could become detrimental to humankind rather than make a positive contribution.

The Bible affirms love; the love of God, for God, and for others, as perhaps the greatest attribute of God and His children. What about loving money? Think of all the hospitals, church ministries, and mission efforts made possible by the giving of money.

But to love money is to "create a monster," an attitude, a way of life that holds no promise for good. Holy Scripture counsels, "People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with a lot of grief"