

Sorrow like sea billows rolled over my heart and soul, after the death of my beloved wife, Annette, from cancer in October 1985. I wept every day for four and a half months. Then sixteen months later on April 28, 1987, somewhere between 1 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. my beloved daughter Patricia left this world to be with her Lord and Savior.

The Lord prepared me for this last tragedy by giving me a parable at 4 a.m. on the morning of February 27, 1987. I pass it on to you that it may be a blessing in memorial to my beloved daughter Patricia who loved the Lord with all her heart and believed in her daddy 110%. I still hurt from her cruel and untimely death.

Once there was an oyster living at the bottom of a shallow ocean bay. One day its worst enemy wrapped its five powerful arms around the oyster and began to apply pressure to open its shell.

The star fish squeezed with all its might and the oyster strained to its limit to hold tight against such deadly force.

The battle to the death continued until finally the oyster's shell opened just a tiny crack. Then during the struggle a grain of sand fell inside the oyster's shell and landed right in the middle of its tender flesh.

Finally, with one mighty heave the oyster brought its shell tightly together again. The star fish then gave up and withdrew.

The oyster was free. But that grain of sand remained, grinding and cutting the tender flesh of the oyster. Now there was no way the oyster could pick up that wounding, irritant and throw it out. So it began to cover those sharp cutting edges with a silvery fluid. Layer after milky white layer was applied to the grain of sand until finally that lowly grain of sand was transformed into a smooth round pearl with the glow of the moon. That lowly oyster had turned its wound into a wonder.

All the oyster's friends came around and began to admire the lovely pearl. They all said, what a rare and beautiful jewel, Where did you every get such a magnificent gem. It has the glow of the silvery moon.

I got it from my enemy in the struggle for my life, replied the oyster.

All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purposes.....if you will not cast away your confidence during trials.

If you hold on tightly to the Lord and his Word you will find the glory in the pain, and become a valuable jewel in the service of others in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The strength we develop while struggling through the trials of this life, remains with us long after the victory is won and the pain of the battle is past.

You see, I had asked the Lord for pearls, and God gave me trials and pain that nearly tore my frail shell apart. I called for glory and he gave me a grain of sand and said, I have answered your prayer.

But we know that nothing ever comes into our lives, until it first passes right through the love of God.

The Lord requires that we participate in our miracles.

Robert L. Bufkin, February 27, 1987.