



2018

The Story of the butterfly

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to squeeze its body through the tiny hole. Then it stopped, as if it couldn't go further. So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bits of cocoon. The butterfly emerged easily but it had a swollen body and shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch it, expecting that any minute the wings would enlarge and expand enough to support the body, Neither happened! In fact the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around. It was never able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and goodwill did not understand: The restricting cocoon and the struggle required by the butterfly to get through the opening was a way of forcing the fluid from the body into the wings so that it would be ready for flight once that was achieved.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. Going through life with no obstacles would cripple us. We will not be as strong as we could have been and we would never fly.

So have a nice day and struggle a little and teach well.

- ◆ God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.
- ◆ If God is your Co-pilot-swap seats!
- ◆ You can tell how big a person is by what it takes Todiscourage Him!!!

A PENCIL MAKER TOLD THE PENCIL

5

IMPORTANT LESSONS JUST BEFORE PUTTING IT IN THE BOX:

1. EVERYTHING YOU DO WILL ALWAYS LEAVE A MARK.

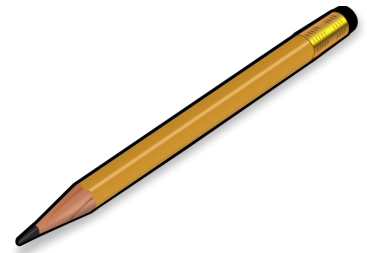
2. YOU CAN ALWAYS CORRECT THE MISTAKES YOU MAKE.

3. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS WHAT IS INSIDE OF YOU.

4. IN LIFE, YOU WILL UNDERGO

PAINFUL SHARPENINGS, WHICH WILL ONLY MAKE YOU BETTER.

5. TO BE THE BEST PENCIL, YOU MUST ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE HELD AND GUIDED BY THE HAND THAT HOLDS YOU.



We all need to be constantly sharpened. This parable may encourage you to know that you are a special person, with unique God-given talents and abilities. Only you can fulfill the purpose which you were born to accomplish. Never allow yourself to get discouraged and think that your life is insignificant and cannot be changed and, like the pencil, always remember that the most important part of who you are, is what's inside of you and then allow yourself to be guided by the hand of God.

Truck Story



When Kay and I had been married a few years, our lives, over time, became a bit more interesting. They say there's an old Chinese curse, "May your life be interesting," and I suppose that became the case for us – *interesting*, that is. But I won't go into details just now, other than to say we had a number of medical bills and I was trying to find a part-time job to supplement my income. Well, way back then, almost all police departments had the partner system – that's to say two officers in each patrol car. That's the safest way as far as the officer is concerned, but not the most economical one, as far as the city or governing body is concerned, but that's another story. Anyway, my partner had this brainstorm to supplement our incomes – driving an eighteen-wheeler for a coal hauling company. *Us* as in each of us driving alternating days. This was, of course, in addition to our regular night shift jobs at the Bessemer Police Department.

When, on our job interview, the owner of the trucking company asked if I had driven an eighteen-wheeler before, well, I lied – *sort of*. I had driven one before. I had driven my half-brother's rig home from the shop, exactly once. A total of about ten miles. My partner claimed he had driven before, but, that might not have been true. But... I was raised on a farm and had driven our old, and I do mean old, two-ton, farm truck which didn't have a synchromesh transmission. That worked out fine for me, because after driving that farm truck for several years, I was certainly familiar with double-clutching when shifting. I asked the trucking company owner for permission to ride with one of the drivers on a trip to Florida, using the trip to memorized the shift pattern. At that time, a Road Ranger 13 speed transmission was standard in most everything except Macks. These days, in modern eighteen-wheel tractors, you can usually shift without the clutch except when pulling away from a stop, but back then, you had to double-clutch to down-shift as well as using the clutch to shift up. So, I was in business, but... my partner – well, maybe not so much. He bailed out on me the first day when he had to back the dump trailer into a tight spot. Time rocked along. I had Tuesday and Wednesday nights off at the police department, and Saturday and Sunday off with the truck driving job. Sleep remained in short supply. *This was before I became an Adventist, but I was a Christian.*

I usually made three round trips per day from the Drummond Coal Mines just past the town of Brookwood, near Tuscaloosa, to the Alabama Power's Gaston Steam Plant just outside Wilsonville. Now, I'm referring to the town of Brookwood almost to Tuscaloosa, not where the Brookwood hospital is in Birmingham. It's a roughly 200 mile round trip, and I made three trips a day – about 600 miles. I had just dropped my first load at the plant and was halfway back to the mine when I stopped off at the Twix and Tween restaurant in Centreville for a cup of coffee to go. The coffee stop usually took less than five minutes. I didn't stop to eat any time during the day, but rather ate the lunch Kay had prepared for me. If I stopped to eat in a restaurant, I wouldn't get much sleep at all. And, indeed, my wife, as she still does now, fed me well. If I had a good day, I could be home by 8:00 P.M. and sleep two hours before going back to work at the police department. Remember, though, that I had four days a week that I only worked one job and could sleep normally and maybe catch up a bit then. Anyway, it was midmorning and the coffee refill was a regular thing for me to do. When I walked up to the takeout window, the lady quickly filled my go-cup, I paid and walked the few feet back to the truck.

Now, for several days prior to that morning, I had been having a feeling of... foreboding, I guess you could call it. A feeling of intense dread that seemed to increase by the day, yet it didn't seem to have anything to do with my police job. But when I got into the cab of that truck every morning, the feeling was there, yet again. This morning was different only in the intensity of those feelings. I couldn't get them off my mind. Trust me. I was doubly careful that morning, but no matter what I did, the feeling persisted. What I would worry the most about during my day job, in addition to the normal concerns about brakes, other drivers and so forth, was dumping the load without damage to the truck. At Alabama Power, I had to drive up on a giant pile of slack coal roughly the size of a football field. The pile was so big that the power company had road machines up there to keep it level. It *had* to be kept level or the dump trailer would overturn along with the tractor when raised all the way up to dump the coal. But, no matter what the equipment operators did, there were soft or unlevel spots remaining that sometimes made life very interesting for the drivers, indeed. The coal was so fine that the giant pile of it looked like a dirt football field raised up fifty feet or so above normal ground level. During that year, more than one truck had overturned while dumping, and I didn't want to add to the total. I needed the job, and turning a trailer over was a certain job exit, not to mention what it would do to me physically. The tractor used hydraulics to raise the trailer until it literally stood on its back wheels to dump the coal. One gust of wind at the wrong instant and the rig would go over. The driver had to keep maneuvering until he was positive the trailer was absolutely level. When I got to the steam plant with my first load, the wind was gusting as the tractor struggled to drag that forty tons of coal up the steep ramp onto the coal pile. Yeah, that's right, I was way overweight, and dumping coal on that pile was just plain dangerous, anyway. It's awesome to see that loaded trailer swaying in the wind above you as you dump the load. But this morning as the trailer reached its highest – nothing happened – literally. The coal just sat there. It was washed before it was loaded onto our trucks, which tended to make the load stick to the trailer – as this one did. Now I had a choice: let the load back down, then raise it back up hoping the movement would cause the load to shift enough to dump, but there were other trucks waiting behind me and this procedure would take several minutes. The alternative was to goose the clutch, shaking the trailer. Long story short, I had to goose the clutch *twice* before the truck bucked as the load slid off normally. I don't really remember, but I imagine I let out a sigh of relief. This *had* to be why I had the sense of dread/foreboding, but I had gotten by it without turning the rig over. Unfortunately, even before I was off the coal pile and headed to the scales to weigh the empty trailer, the foreboding was *back*.

To Be Continued on the back page

Alice C. Lowery Jones

September 19, 1932 - February 4, 2018



Alice S. Lowery Jones, 85, of Jemison died Sunday, February 4, 2018. She was born on Monday, September 19, 1932 in Alabama, Daughter of the late George W. Langston and the late Ellen Blackmon. She was a Homemaker. Surviving are Son, Richard (Rita) Lowery of Jemison, AL; Daughter, Wanda (James) Cleckler of Thorsby, AL; Sister, Geraldine (Woodford) Lucas of Jemison, AL; Brother, Joe Earl (Nancy) Langston of Thorsby, AL; 4 Grandchildren, 12 Great-Grandchildren, 2 Great-Great-Grandchildren, A Host of Other Family. Friends will be received from 1-2, Tuesday, February 6, 2018 @ Pates Chapel Baptist Church. Services will be held Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at 2:00 P.M. at Pates Chapel Baptist with Rev. Gary Jones officiating. Martin Funeral Home directing.

She had been a member of the Clanton SDA Church since 1993.

Anne Chandler said: She was a member and married to my Uncle Lamar Jones also deceased years ago. She had a stroke just before Christmas and continued to slowly go down hill after that .

Heart Fox Craft - for the young people.... Materials needed: Orange, white and black paper, Scissors, Glue

Circle Punch – optional, Emma loves using it! Presented for your enjoyment by: Elizabeth Rodriquez



Cut out a large orange heart. We found that a skinny/pointy heart looks more fox like, since foxes generally have a long pointy noses. Also cut out a smaller white heart. Cut the heart in half and glue in place. Next, you need to glue on the heart shaped ears, beady eyes and finally the nose. That's it! Super quick and easy! Have fun and help your young children to enjoy this.



PASTOR'S CORNER

Pastor Michel's Ordination: For those of you that missed this very nicely presented program on Sabbath afternoon the 17th of March, I thought I would include part of the info from then. I have never been to a program that was bilingual and it was quite interesting, the program booklet was in both languages, almost everything was interpreted very clearly by Ruwie Vasquez-Juarez whether it was presented in English & then she interpreted it for the Hispanic and visa versa. The highlight of the program was Emma singing "When He Cometh" for us in Spanish. It was well attended including Pastors from the Conference and the Hispanic church members. Hope you were there to be blessed.



Ordination Charge For the Gospel Ministry

As an ordained minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, you have been called to the sacred work of gospel ministry. By the Biblical admonition of the laying on of hands, a sacred rite instituted by our Lord in ordaining His disciples for the proclamation of the gospel, you now serve the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in the capacity of an ordained minister and are authorized to exercise the rights and privileges of that sacred office. We, therefore, charge you to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ, a diligent student of the Word of God, and a servant to all mankind. We admonish you to be an example to the believers and to be faithful to your high calling. May your thoughts, your words, and your actions exemplify the Savior whom you serve. Minister to the church in tenderness, feed the flock of God, bring sinners to repentance, and by precept and example point them to the Lamb of God who cleanses the hearts of those who confess Him as Savior. In ministry, remember there are three things that abide forever: faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and forevermore. And we all say Amen!

Michel & Elizabeth Rodriguez

Michel Rodriguez was born in a little city in San Antonio de Los Banos, Havana, Cuba on July 7, 1984. He was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home by his parents Marta and Miguel Rodriguez. In 2006, Michel came to the USA in a homemade boat. In 2008, God opened a door and Michel decided to attend SW AU in Keene, Texas and while being at school he sensed the call to dedicate his life to pastoral ministry, and graduated in 2012 receiving his BA in theology. Since then it has been an adventure to live serving the Lord.

In August 2012, the Lord gave him the greatest gift he's ever received and he married his friend, girlfriend, and love of his life, Elizabeth. His ministry would not be a blessing without his beautiful wife. Elizabeth has been a true encouragement in his life, sacrificing some of her own dreams for the cause of the gospel and her desire to serve the Lord as well. In 2015, another gift arrived from heaven and it was a baby! Emma, brings love and joy to his family.

Michel Rodriguez has a passion for preaching about Christ, for him nothing is more important than the gospel. He feels that preaching the Three Angels Message is his biggest priority and that it is the foundation of his ministry. Michel had a dream when he accepted the call to serve Christ, to baptize many souls and get them ready to see Jesus. God has made his dream come true. In these last 6 years God has used him to bring more than 300 souls to the feet of Jesus.

After his graduation from SWAU in 2012, he started his ministry at Birmingham 1st SDA Church as a youth pastor. One year later he was called to serve as a full time minister in Montgomery Hispanic Church and Clanton SDA Church.

Pastor Michel Rodriguez & wife Elizabeth and daughter Emma Isabel —Phone: 817-219-7347

104 Homewood Ct. Millbrook, AL 36054 email: wintermich@icloud.com

Head Elder, Robert (Bob) Ernest— 205-280-1297 Email: RobertE699@aol.com

Assistant Head Elder—Linkous, Gary—256-377-2244

*Clanton Seventh-day Adventist Church
401 North 18th Street
Clanton, Al 35045*

March Birthdays

- 5 - Pat Gill
- 9 - Emma Isabel Rodriguez (2015)
- 13 - Cleo Smith, Keiona Lucas
- 20 - David Mahan

Anniversaries

- 4 - Shawn & Natalie Smith

Happy, Happy Birthday to everyone this month. If I don't have your special day, let me know. We want to celebrate with you. Brenda

Tentative Speaker Schedule: Mar: 3rd - Pastor, 10th - Tony Harriman, 17th - Ted Winslow, 24th - Shane Hostetler, 31st - Pastor & Communion, Apr: 7th - Gary Linkous, 14th - Pastor, 21st - Ted Winslow, 28th - Pastor

Church Organ Fund: We are now in the process of starting to get funds for a newer organ. The organ is old and we can't get rid of the growls, please help with this endeavor.

Pre-Nominating Committee: To be elected & voted on March 3, 2018.

Harriman Bonfire: March 3, 2018 - Mark your calendar

Communion Service: March 31, 2018

Religious Liberty - Please help reach our goal of \$800 by March 31, 2018.

I asked for strength and I was given DIFFICULTIES to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom and I was given PROBLEMS to solve.

I asked for prosperity and I was given a BRAIN and BRAWN to work.

I asked for courage and I was given OBSTACLES to overcome.

I asked for Love and I was given TROUBLED PEOPLE to help.

I asked for favors & I was given OPPORTUNITIES.

I received nothing I wanted but I received EVERYTHING I needed.

Live life without fear, confront all obstacles and know that you can overcome them.

Reminiscing Corner



Last months reminiscing: Robert and Dot Higgins for those of you that might not remember 15 years ago.

Who knows who this couple is? He says, 1964. Prettiest girl in Tennessee... how fortunate I have been the last 53 years.. She still has a beautiful heart...

Someone wanted to share the picture below. Do you know who they all are? Until next month, Brenda



Truck Story - Conclusion

Anyway, at the Twix and Tween, I was halfway back to the coal mines, having almost finished my first trip, gotten my coffee, and go cup in hand, walked the few steps back to the truck, put a foot on the step, opened the door, reached inside to put my cup in its holder, and knew beyond the shadow of a doubt. The only way I can describe it – if I manage this morning as I talk to you, is to say that I realized that I was in the presence of something *holy*.

I remember little of the trip between Centreville and the long straightaway on highway 5 at the outskirts of the town of Woodstock, some twenty miles from the Twix and Tween, and that's the part that has always refused to come out of my mouth, anyway. Now, somehow, most of it has gone from my memory. I've finally come to the conclusion that I just wasn't supposed to tell that part of it. *But let me be clear about this.* I did *not* see the angel, nor did he speak to me – at least that I remember. But knowing me and my curiosity, I probably said something or a whole *bunch* of somethings. But... I guess I'll have to wait for Heaven to find out. I certainly didn't know why the angel was in my truck when I left Centreville, but I was to find that reason out shortly. Well, the presence – the angel – the eighteen-wheeler and I were tooling up Highway 5 on this long straightaway. Now back then, with the coal mines and the steam plants going full blast, the eighteen-wheel coal trucks were plentiful, and since this is a state highway, there is now and was then, plenty of other eighteen-wheelers on the road. At that time, the road had practically no shoulder, at least certainly not wide enough to put an eighteen-wheeler on, although the shoulder has been widened somewhat over the years. There was a drop-off of eight or ten feet where I was, then a solid line of big trees. And I do mean *big* trees. They've all been cut now and scrub timber has grown back over the forty years are so since then. The point being that leaving the road doing fifty-five miles an hour would have been *certain* death.

And suddenly, I *sorely* needed to be elsewhere, because an oncoming eighteen-wheeler had just swerved *fully* into my lane. Back then, there were laws against tinted windows, so his window was clear and I could easily see the driver slumped over the steering wheel – asleep I suppose. Now, keep in mind that he swerved into my lane when it was *way past* too late to do anything – well other than die, I suppose. I was running the speed limit – 55 – and I assume he was too. There was little more time than it would take to gasp before we *hit* head on – *and passed right through each other.* I felt something for the briefest instant – almost a chill, but that was all. And, yeah, I know that's impossible, but tell that to the angel. And no, I was fully awake. Come on, there was an *angel* riding in the seat beside me, I wasn't going to sleep. When I sucked in a breath and looked in my mirrors, the other eighteen-wheeler was still in my lane. His truck swerved hard, almost turning over as he went back to his lane. I saw his brake lights come on for a couple of seconds, then go off. We couldn't stop. There was nowhere to get off the road. I went on my way and so did he. I was suddenly alone in the truck.

Hallucination? After almost forty years, saying anything about the incident instantly brings goosebumps. Hallucinations don't do that. *Why did God save me that day?* Me? My life is no better than someone else's, probably much worse than some. I didn't deserve for God to send an angel to save me, yet there's no other explanation. Maybe He will tell me one day. Thank you.

Olan Suddeth, as he introduced himself as married to Kay, still happily married and attending church at the Clanton SDA Church. He presented this at church January 27 but there were several individuals out sick or not there so I asked him to share with us.

- ◆ Websites Bill Weise has set up & would like special prayer about the responses from these sites.

www.stepsingupward.org www.eqwhiteclassicquotes.org <http://www.grandmastidbits.org>

- ◆ We have a website!! <http://clantonsda.org/>, Tony Plier has posted sermons, music & a lot of info, look under Newsletters to find this publication on line each month. Tony has made it so the previous couple years are there also.

Return Address:

Brenda K Davis
187 County Rd 313
Stanton, AL 36790



To: «AddressBlock»