



2018

## The Folded Napkin ... A Truckers Story

I try not to be biased, but I had my doubts about hiring Stevie. His placement counselor assured me that he would be a good, reliable busboy. But I had never had a mentally handicapped employee and wasn't sure I wanted one. I wasn't sure how my customers would react to Stevie. He was short, a little dumpy with the smooth facial features and thick-tongued speech of Downs Syndrome. I wasn't worried about most of my trucker customers because truckers don't generally care who buses tables as long as the meatloaf platter is good and the pies are homemade.

The four-wheeler drivers were the ones who concerned me; the mouthy college kids traveling to school; the yuppie snobs who secretly polish their silverware with their napkins for fear of catching some dreaded "truck stop germ" the pairs of white-shirted business men on expense accounts who think every truck stop waitress wants to be flirted with. I knew those people would be uncomfortable around Stevie so I closely watched him for the first few weeks. I shouldn't have worried. After the first week, Stevie had my staff wrapped around his stubby little finger, and within a month my truck regulars had adopted him as their official truck stop mascot. After that, I really didn't care what the rest of the customers thought of him.

He was like a 21-year-old in blue jeans and Nikes, eager to laugh and eager to please, but fierce in his attention to his duties. Every salt and pepper shaker was exactly in its place, not a bread crumb or coffee spill was visible when Stevie got done with the table.

Our only problem was persuading him to wait to clean a table until after the customers were finished. He would hover in the background, shifting his weight from one foot to the other, scanning the dining room until a table was empty. Then he would scurry to the empty table and carefully bus dishes and glasses onto cart and meticulously wipe the table up with a practiced flourish of his rag. If he thought a customer was watching, his brow would pucker with added concentration. He took pride in doing his job exactly right, and you had to love how hard he tried to please each and every person he met.

Over time, we learned that he lived with his mother, a widow who was disabled after repeated surgeries for cancer. They lived on their Social Security benefits in public housing two miles from the truck stop. Their social worker, who stopped to check on him every so often, admitted they had fallen between the cracks. Money was tight, and what I paid him was probably the difference between them being able to live together and Stevie being sent to a group home. That's why the restaurant was a gloomy place that morning last August, the first morning in three years that Stevie missed work.

He was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester getting a new valve or something put in his heart. His social worker said that people with Downs Syndrome often have heart problems at an early age so this wasn't unexpected, and there was a good chance he would come through the surgery in good shape and be back at work in a few months. A ripple of excitement ran through the staff later that morning when word came that he was out of surgery, in recovery, and doing fine. Frannie, the head waitress, let out a war hoop and did a little dance in the aisle when she heard the good news. Bell Ringer, one of our regular trucker customers, stared at the sight of this 50-year-old grandmother of four doing a victory shimmy beside his table. Frannie blushed, smoothed her apron and shot Belle Ringer a withering look. He grinned. "OK, Frannie, what was that all about?" he asked. "We just got word that Stevie is out of surgery and going to be okay." "I was wondering

where he was. I had a new joke to tell him. What was the surgery about?" Frannie quickly told Bell Ringer and the other two drivers sitting at his booth about Stevie's surgery, then sighed: "Yeah, I'm glad he is going to be OK," she said. "But I don't know how he and his Mom are going to handle all the bills. From what I hear, they're barely getting by as it is." Belle Ringer nodded thoughtfully, and Frannie hurried off to wait on the rest of her tables. Since I hadn't had time to round up a busboy to replace Stevie and really didn't want to replace him, the girls were busing their own tables that day until we decided what to do. After the morning rush, Frannie walked into my office. She had a couple of paper napkins in her hand and a funny look on her face. "What's up?" I asked. "I didn't get that table where Bell Ringer and his friends were sitting cleared off after they left, and Pony Pete and Tony Tipper were sitting there when I got back to clean it off," she said. "This was folded and tucked under a coffee cup." She handed the napkin to me, and three \$20 bills fell onto my desk when I opened it. On the outside, in big, bold letters, was printed "Something For Stevie."

Pony Pete asked me what that was all about," she said, "so I told him about Stevie and his Mom and everything, and Pete looked at Tony and Tony looked at Pete, and they ended up giving me this." She handed me another paper napkin that had "Something For Stevie" scrawled on its outside. Two \$50 bills were tucked within its folds. Frannie looked at me with wet, shiny eyes, shook her head and said simply: "truckers."

That was three months ago. Today is Thanksgiving, the first day Stevie is supposed to be back to work. His placement worker said he's been counting the days until the doctor said he could work, and it didn't matter at all that it was a holiday. He called 10 times in the past week, making sure we knew he was coming, fearful that we had forgotten him or that his job was in jeopardy. I arranged to have his mother bring him to work. I then met them in the parking lot and invited them both to celebrate his day back. Stevie was thinner and paler, but couldn't stop grinning as he pushed through the doors and headed for the back room where his apron and busing cart were waiting.

"Hold up there, Stevie, not so fast," I said. I took him and his mother by their arms. "Work can wait for a minute. To celebrate you coming back, breakfast for you and your mother is on me!"

I led them toward a large corner booth at the rear of the room. I could feel and hear the rest of the staff following behind as we marched through the dining room. Glancing over my shoulder, I saw booth after booth of grinning truckers empty and join the procession. We stopped in front of the big table. Its surface was covered with coffee cups, saucers and dinner plates, all sitting slightly crooked on dozens of folded paper napkins.

"First thing you have to do, Stevie, is clean up this mess," I said. I tried to sound stern. Stevie looked at me, and then at his mother, then pulled out one of the napkins. It had "Something for Stevie" printed on the outside. As he picked it up, two \$10 bills fell onto the table. Stevie stared at the money, then at all the napkins peeking from beneath the tableware, each with his name printed or scrawled on it. I turned to his mother. "There's more than \$10,000 in cash and checks on table, all from truckers and trucking companies that heard about your problems. "Happy Thanksgiving,"

Well, it got real noisy about that time, with everybody hollering and shouting, and there were a few tears, as well. But you know what's funny? While everybody else was busy shaking hands and hugging each other, Stevie, with a big, big smile on his face, was busy clearing all the cups and dishes from the table. **Best worker I ever hired.**

## Miriam and the Bitter Cure By: Karla Meza

From: *Women in the Word* (Presented by: Kay Cheser, Women Ministry Leader)

*“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:31, 32*

*“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiles,” Hebrews 12: 14, 15*

Have you ever struggled with bitterness? Have you questioned why others received honor but not you?

God wants to remove any bitterness in our lives because it is so destructive to us, and those around us. Miriam’s downfall was swift when she allowed bitterness to take control of her heart, but the Lord had a plan to transform her attitude. Her heart raced within her chest. She fought the urge to flee back to the relative safety of her slave quarters. But curiosity, love for her sibling, and a deep desire not to disappoint her mother kept Miriam’s feet from running.

From the day Moses was born, Miriam quickly assumed her role as a protective older sister. This certainly wasn’t surprising, especially considering the Egyptian decree that all Hebrew baby boys must be killed – a decree from which the entire family went to great lengths to protect baby Moses.

Miriam and her younger brother Aaron had godly parents who truly trusted God, but the king of Egypt, Pharaoh, hated her people. Because he was afraid of the Israelite slaves, he ordered that every baby boy be cast into the river. This decree pierced the heart of Miriam’s parents. They could not imagine losing their beautiful, extraordinary baby. Miriam helped her parents hide him for three long months. But after this time had passed, it became too dangerous to hide him in their home any longer. Miriam help her mother as she made a papyrus basket and coated it with tar and pitch to make it waterproof.

Early one morning, she accompanied her mother to the crocodile-infested Nile River. When they arrived at the water, Miriam watched as her mother carefully placed the beloved baby in the basket and floated it on the river. The girl then stood cautiously at a distance to see what his fate would be.

Minutes stretched into hours, and Pharaoh’s daughter arrived at the Nile to bathe – her female servants laughing and splashing nearby. Miriam caught her breath as the princess spied the beautiful basket caught amongst the reeds. She watched intently as a servant retrieved it and as the princess opened the lid. Miriam smiled in relief as the princess reached out, grasped the child, and spoke soothingly to him.

As it on cue, Miriam approached Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you?” she inquired (Exodus 2:7). “Go,” Pharaoh’s daughter commanded. Nearly before the command had reached her ears, Miriam’s feet were already pounding the hard dirt road, racing back to tell her family the good news. If Miriam had only known that not only was she rescuing her baby brother, but also that someday this helpless little child would grow up to become the long hoped for rescuer of the Hebrew nation!

As an adult, Miriam also played an important role in the leadership of the Hebrew nation. The same strengths and quick discernment she demonstrated by the riverbed helped her in her new role over Israel. Miriam was the first to be named a “prophetess,” inspired by His Holy Spirit to proclaim the will and purpose that God had revealed. Because of her calling as a prophetess and her close relationship with Moses, Miriam exerted great influence and power over the camp. But, sadly, this influence led to pride.

Miriam and Aaron began to criticize Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1). While she was ostensibly against the wife of Moses, the dissatisfaction ran much deeper. “Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He near spoken through us also?” And the Lord heard it.” (Numbers 12:2). In her criticism, Miriam was questioning God’s wisdom in choosing Moses as the leader.

*Daughters of God* share this insight. “In the affections of the people and the honor of Heaven she stood second only to Moses and Aaron. But the same evil that first brought discord in heaven sprang up in the heart of this woman of Israel, and she did not fail to find a sympathizer in her dissatisfaction. God had chosen Moses, and had put His Spirit upon him; and Miriam and Aaron, by their murmurings, were guilty of disloyalty, not only to their appointed leader, but to God Himself.” (p. 33)

This bitterness and questioning of God did not go unnoticed by Him. Miriam was soon struck with leprosy, a certain death penalty. With horror, Aaron gazed upon his sister’s stricken flesh. Quickly realizing the foolishness of their words. Aaron repented of his sin, and Moses cried to the Lord, “Please heal her, O God, I pray!” (Numbers 12:13). After a long week or isolation, Miriam was healed and returned to camp, greatly humbled by the experience.

Miriam, a gifted leader of God, quickly fell when she allowed bitterness to fill her heart. Bitterness may begin as just a small seed, but as it takes root, it soon controls us and others as our influence affects them – just as Miriam’s influence affected Aaron.

How can we overcome bitterness? How can we experience healing in our own lives so that our pain isn’t transferred to others through our angry words? Hebrews 12: 2, 3 provides the answer, “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand at the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

As we continue to keep our eyes fastened on Jesus – considering the sacrifice that He endured for our salvation - our own hearts will be healed and strengthened. Today, if you feel bitterness beginning to take root in your life, remember to look to Jesus, consider His life, and choose to spread only positive influences to others.



# PASTOR'S CORNER

## WALKING GOD'S WAY

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." [Isaiah 30:21](#)

"We're going *this way*," I said as I touched my son's shoulder and redirected him through the crowd to follow his mom and sisters in front of us. I'd done this more often as the day wore on at the amusement park our family was visiting. He was getting tired and more easily distracted. *Why can't he just follow them?* I wondered.

Then it hit me: *How often do I do exactly the same thing? How often do I veer from obediently walking with God, enchanted by the temptations to pursue what I want instead of seeking His ways?*

Think of Isaiah's words from God for Israel: "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it' " (Isaiah 30:21). Earlier in that chapter, God had rebuked His people for their rebelliousness. But if they would trust His strength instead of their own ways (v. 15), He promised to show His graciousness and compassion (v. 18).

One expression of God's graciousness is His promise to guide us by His Spirit. That happens as we talk to Him about our desires and ask in prayer what He has for us. I'm thankful God patiently directs us, day-by-day, step-by-step, as we trust Him and listen for His voice.

***Father, You've promised to guide us through the ups and downs and decisions we face in life. Help us to trust and follow You, and to actively listen for Your guiding voice.***

***God has prepared a place for us and now he is preparing us for that place! PTL***

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

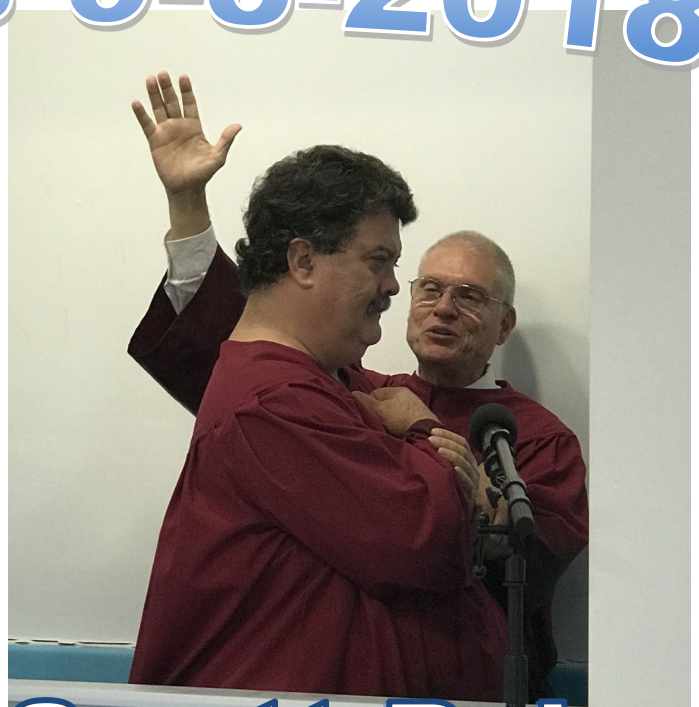
**Clanton Seventh-day Adventist Church**  
401 North 18th Street  
Clanton, AL 35045



# Baptisms 9-8-2018

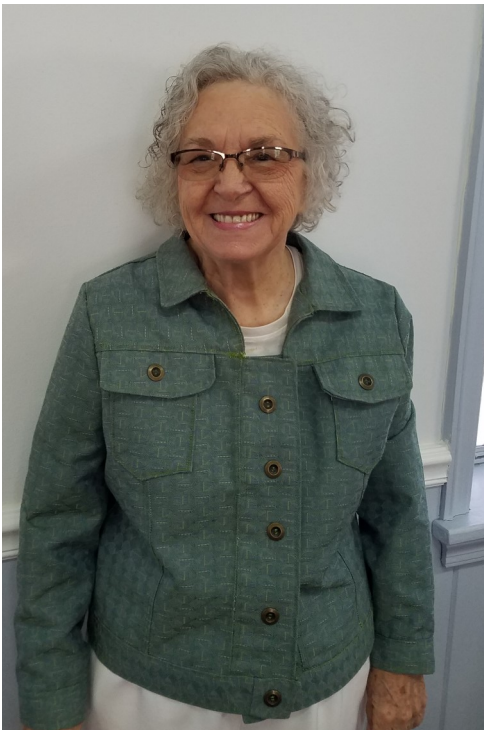


**Alice Jungmeyer**



**Scott Pyka**

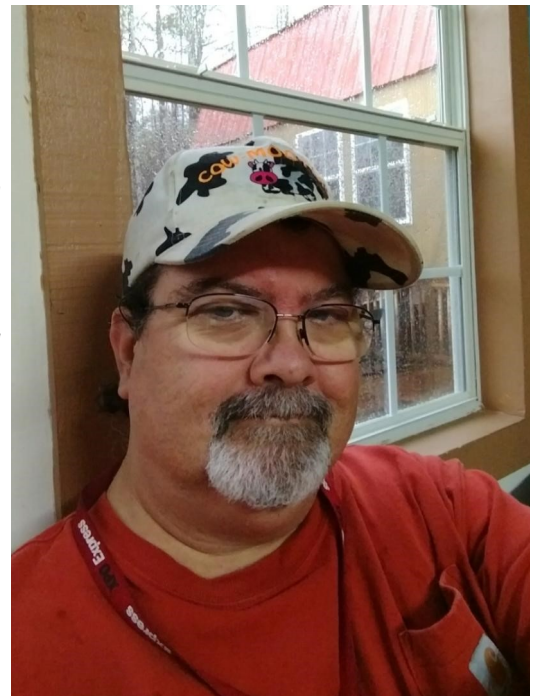
**Pastor Dan Thompson**

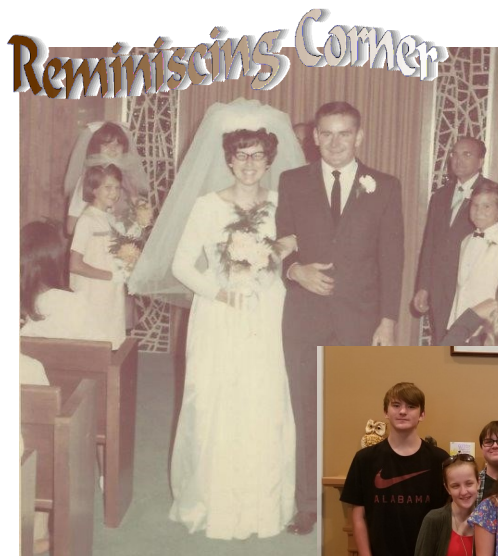


A Special welcome Alice, so glad you were baptized and have joined the Clanton Seventh-Day Adventist Church. It is wonderful to have you as part of the Family of Clanton and especially part of the family of God. May God be with you in your continued walk with him. She says to "thank everyone for welcoming me"

A welcome also to Scott and "Yes. I would like to thank the congregation for their prayers and for their making me feel like one of the family. This is one of God's true family churches. Also thank you Pastor Dan for the baptism and the tsunami was a great idea. Just kidding. And also Bob and Donna Ernest for taking me into their home when I was a stranger. Ralph Shepard for making motel arrangements for me for that one night it made all the difference. And Kay Cheser for the gas in my truck and Terry, David Mahan, Gary and Florine Linkous, Tony Plier, Sam Smith, the Radford family, Bill and Anita Wiese, Kay Houston, and Kathy Lide, and a thank you Brenda for all you do and the pens, I don't go anywhere without them. I love you all. God has blessed all of us. To God be the glory. Amen"

Yes, Alice let me take her picture this week, since Scott wasn't here, took one he had sent as a text previously. He had a terrible accident in his work 18 wheeler truck this past week. God is good and he is alive but beat up a lot. As always, let's pray for each other. Until next month, Brenda





Anniversary,  
Friday, Sept 7, 2018  
Pictures of all our Grand-  
kids, and Great Grand-  
daughter, oh, a grand-  
daughter in law also.

**October Birthdays**

- 2 - Olivia Clark (2014)
- 8 - Gary Linkous
- 12 - Matthew Stewart
- 17 - Michael-Shepherd Chrishon (2016)
- 19 - Elden Collum (2005)
- 21 - Gary Boggus
- 25 - Bill Wiese

No Known  
Anniversaries

Happy, Happy  
Birthday and  
Pray that you  
are blessed with  
many more. If I  
don't have your  
special day, let  
me know.  
Brenda

**SPEAKERS:** Oct: 6 - Brian Halley, 13- Bernell Mapp, 20 - Pastor Thompson 27 - Pastor live streaming from Montgomery Church, presenter will be Uchee Pines.

**CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING:** October 7, Sunday, 8:30am Breakfast, 9:30 Meeting. It would be wonderful if all our church members could attend.

Sabbath, Sept 7, 1968  
at Madison Hospital  
chapel in Tenn with Elder  
Clark officiating.



September 7th was our 50th Wedding anniversary. Since I didn't get a reminiscing picture turned in, You are going to get mine. Don't forget you need to share your memories also. Until next month, Brenda

I WANT TO BE SO  
FULL OF **CHRIST**  
THAT WHEN A  
**MOSQUITO**  
BITES ME SHE FLIES  
AWAY **SINGING**  
THERE IS **POWER**  
IN THE **BLOOD**  
DAYSTAR

**The Pit**

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out.  
A SUBJECTIVE person came along and said: "I feel for you, down there."  
An OBJECTIVE person came along and said: "It's logical that someone would fall down there."  
A PHARISEE said: "Only bad people fall into a pit."  
A MATHEMATICIAN calculated how he fell into the pit.  
A NEWS REPORTER wanted the exclusive story on his pit.  
A FUNDAMENTALIST said: "You deserve our pit."  
An I.R.S. man asked if he was paying taxes on the pit.  
A SELF-PITYING person said: "You haven't seen anything until you've seen MY PIT!"  
A CHARISMATIC said: "Just confess that you're not in a pit."  
An OPTIMIST said: "Things could be worse."  
A PESSIMIST said: "Things will get worse!"  
JESUS, seeing the man, took him by the hand and  
LIFTED HIM OUT of the pit!

**His House** It was a cold Sabbath morning when members started arriving at church, snow flakes had just fallen, people were rushing in to get inside. To the warmth, to the dry sanctuary. As the members were walking in they were astonished to see a homeless person laying on the sidewalk by the front door. He was bent over all covered up with an old black trench coat, that had many holes in it. His shoes had holes in it and you could see his socks filthy from months of grime on them. The man had a black hat on that covered his face. His hands filthy with dirt from probably digging in a garbage can some thought.

As the members made their way into the sanctuary, they were all discussing how this horrible filthy man, had the nerve to sleep at THEIR church doors! Finally the pianist started playing and the members all sat down in their seats. They were all looking around, wondering where the Pastor could be. You could hear people whispering, saying, "Pastor Joe is probably telling that homeless man he needs to leave the property." "What would visitors think if they see him."

All of a sudden, you could hear a gasp! The homeless man was walking down the middle of the church aisle, he made his way to the front, and then to the platform!!! When the homeless man got to the microphone. He said "Good morning, how are you all?" The homeless man was their Pastor Joe! Not a word was said, no one moved around. Even the pianist stopped playing.

Then Pastor Joe said, "Did any of you see Jesus outside this morning?" "He was cold, He was dirty, His clothes were filthy!" However no one asked Him into **HIS house.**"

**I hope and pray that this will never happen in our Clanton SDA Church!!**

- ◆ Websites Bill Weise has set up & would like special prayer about the responses from these sites.  
[www.steppingupward.org](http://www.steppingupward.org) [www.eqwhiteclassicquotes.org](http://www.eqwhiteclassicquotes.org) <http://www.grandmastidbits.org>
- ◆ We have a website!! **UPDATED - Church Website: <https://www.clantonsda.com/>** 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. Remember if you don't want to get the Newsletter, Let me know. Thanks, Brenda

**Return Address:**

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