

Chronological Deep Dive Reading Program – Pause Week Remarks... from Pastor, Troy Phelps

Hello everyone,

God's precious word reminds us that "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). This is true for all of us in the Body of Christ. Through these trials we grow, are refined, are better prepared to serve and walk beside others, and ultimately long for God's Kingdom to come.

As I worked on week one of the New Testament reading program, my family needed me this week as we've been going through a difficult trial. Therefore the reading program will not resume on Sunday, but will be delayed another week.

I debated how much to share in this email, but I've ultimately decided to be very open and transparent with you all. One, in case it is something that can be used to help others in the future as needs arise, but two, because we are all in this difficult life together, and how do we walk alongside each other toward the Kingdom if we don't let each other into our lives.

With that said, it's with a heavy heart that I request your prayers for our 17 year old wonderful daughter Ciara.

Over the past few years, Ciara began struggling with eating appropriate amounts of food. Maybe a year or so ago, she was diagnosed with anorexia from her pediatrician. We did our best to support her, but over the last few months, her anorexia took a turn for the worst with her going multiple days without food and then eating very little (several hundred calories), before missing days of food again. While we had initially made an appointment with specialists for October to have her evaluated (the soonest they could

schedule us), we recently became concerned that she was nearing the tipping point where her organs would begin shutting down and have to be hospitalized to keep her alive. After speaking recently to several friends who had either personally gone through anorexia, or had a child that had struggled with this disorder/disease, on Monday of this week, I began an urgent search to find her a residential program where she could get the help she needed. After hitting a couple dead ends, a doctor pointed us to a place where God has clearly opened doors and blessed us with help. After initially being told that it would likely be several weeks before a bed would open up, we found out yesterday that they had an unexpected opening down in Menlo Park (near San Jose) that was "first come first serve". We worked quickly to get her medically cleared (blood tests, EKG, urine analysis, etc...) and this morning, Cindy and I, drove Ciara down and she was admitted.

This has been a very heavy and hard day. Ciara did not want to go. She didn't fight us to go, out of her respect for us, but she doesn't want to get help, even though she acknowledges that she has anorexia and that it would soon kill her. She was afraid and anxious, and it was very hard to hand over our daughter to strangers and leave her there. At the same time, I know that we had to do this in order to get her the help she needs. The house was nice, and has beds for six young people from ages 10 to 18. All the staff were very friendly, caring and showed a willingness to partner with her and help her. That part exceeded my expectations. Most often, people are there for 6 to 8 weeks, which means she will be at the facility through the Feast of Tabernacles, which is going to be really hard on all of us. She will be allowed to zoom our Orinda services each Sabbath and they will work within God's food laws. We will be able to visit her after services each Sabbath for about 2 hours.

She has no phone or email access while at this home.

Thank you in advance for remembering our family at this time and we greatly appreciate your prayers for her healing!