

January 2023  
Newsletter



# Julie's Heart Cry

*Bringing Hope to Women Globally*



## God reminded me everything would be OK

By Lynette Woodward, *Donor*

I was raised in a Christian home and received Christ as my Savior around age 11. I was baptized and became a member of a fundamental church, along with my parents, shortly thereafter.

But it was as an adult believer that I began to be deeply touched by the suffering of others. As I prayed for family and friends who endured the pain of burying a child, suffered through dreadful diseases or had close loved ones ensnared in debilitating sin, I realized something – I had little understanding of the pain they were experiencing.

Little did I realize God was about to change all that.

### I wrestled with the Lord

After college, I served on the mission field in the Central African Republic. Later, I met and married my husband, Tom, and we soon started



our family.

On October 12, 2004, I delivered my sixth child, a little girl we named Olivia Joy. This pregnancy and labor were normal like my other five, but upon delivery it was evident this baby was born with Down's Syndrome. She had the flat face, almond-shaped eyes and low muscle tone – all characteristics of Down's babies.

The night Liv was born, I felt like Jacob in the Old Testament when he wrestled with God. For the first time in my life, I really wrestled with the Lord and His will in my life. I didn't want a disabled child. I didn't want a retarded child. I was so disappointed and frustrated at the life she would have. By morning, God had changed my heart. He reminded me of everything I already knew as His child. He was her Creator, I was her mother, both of us would love her unconditionally, and everything would be OK.

*(over)*

Olivia endured a lot her first few years – heart surgery at 4 months to repair a defect, living with a feeding tube, club foot surgery, four years of speech and feeding therapy, countless doctor visits and more. We were so happy when we could finally remove the feeding tube and she could eat on her own.

### **Abortion was not an option**

Because I had delivered a child with a congenital defect, I was at a higher risk for another one with my seventh and final pregnancy. I was repeatedly pressured to endure prenatal screenings. Why? “If I do, is there something you can correct in utero?” I asked. “No,” I was told. I explained to my OB that abortion was not an option for me.

Some women say they like to be prepared for an unhealthy newborn. The Bible tells us over and over not to borrow trouble. Matthew 6:34 says don't fret! 1 Peter 5:7 tells us not to worry! I was going to enjoy my pregnancy! I would choose peace, trust and rest in God.

I find it presumptive of those who have this insatiable desire to delve into that sacred place, the womb, where God declares to have sovereignty (Jeremiah 1:5), snuffing out life for every whim. By taking advantage of the unborn, and exploiting the womb, they sacrifice our most vulnerable, heaping evil upon evil. Through all of the challenges, though, I enjoyed another normal pregnancy and another beautiful newborn. And Olivia had a little sibling with whom she would grow alongside.

I'm thankful for all the Lord has brought us through. Throughout the years, He has proven Himself over and over.

Olivia is now a senior in high school and a cheerleader. We continue to monitor her heart function and manage other new health

concerns. As our special-needs children grow, their needs do as well. Currently, I am struggling under some of the rules of my state government. Please pray as we transition Olivia into adulthood; it hasn't been easy.

If you're the parent of a special-needs child, I encourage you to enlist supportive friends who will pray for you, physically help you and who will learn and meet your child's needs. Their strength and comfort will be invaluable.

Consider these Scriptures as you ponder God's heart about the womb and the unborn:

**Genesis 20:18, Genesis 29:31, Genesis 30:22, 1 Samuel 1:5** – God “opened” and “shut” the womb.

**Genesis 25:23** – Jacob and Esau were each declared a father of a nation from the womb.

**Judges 16:17** – Samson was determined a Nazarite from the womb.

**Job 31:15** – Job declares that he was made in the womb; that everyone is fashioned in the womb by God.

**Psalms 22** – the psalmist declared that his beginnings were from the womb and that God is the God of the unborn.

**Psalms 127:3** – the fruit of the womb is a reward, an inheritance.

**Psalms 139:13** – we are formed by God in the womb, He forms our parts.

**Jeremiah 1:5** – Jeremiah was ordained a prophet before he was formed in the womb.

**Luke 1:15** – John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb.

**Galatians – 1:15** Paul declares that he was separated and called from the womb.