

'Well Done, Good And Faithful Servant'

Those of you who know me, know that I have a deep concern for the cultural, social and moral issues of our day. The depths of depravity that our nation and world have fallen to, the likes of which we have never seen before. And I have an especially sorrowful heart for our young people, growing up in a world of mass confusion.

Many of us often ask in desperation: *"What is the world coming to?"* When men claim to be women; when men "marry" other men; when one's gender is said to be "fluid;" when our tax dollars are used to murder innocent premature babies in the womb; when we roll out the red carpet for foreign invaders seeking to take over our country and we kowtow to their demands, while many of our own citizens remain homeless and starving. When we allow violent thugs to overtake our streets, their faces covered in masks as they loot, burn and destroy our cities, and violently beat those they disagree with bloody – and they are not only ALLOWED to do this, they are ENCOURAGED to do this, by those whose job it is to maintain law and order.

We have become desensitized to all the wickedness and evil in our world, and sadly, while all this is going on, 300,000 pulpits in America remain silent on every ONE of these issues.

I grew up in the church and came to know the Lord at an early age and I knew, even as a youngster, that He had called me for service. I have studied God's Word my whole life. I have served in nearly every area inside the Institutional Churches.

But it wasn't until just a few years ago that the scales were lifted from my eyes, and I came to see something very profound. After faithfully attending and supporting the

churches I belonged to for years, it became obvious that we were really NOT following Scripture. Oh, we were *studying* it, alright. But it never went beyond the four walls of the building. Then one day, while sitting in church, a thought came to me: it was as if we were all in SCHOOL, listening and “*learning*” every week, but it became obvious that we were never going to “graduate” to anything more substantial. It was all vain religion.

Church had become a place we WENT to, an activity we DID. But we were never taught to BE the Church. Jesus said we were to GO OUT into all the world and MAKE DISCIPLES, teaching them to obey all He had commanded. Jesus said we were to be salt and light. He told us to take up our cross and FOLLOW Him. But we were not doing that. It was all inward-focused, all about US and OUR personal salvation and happiness.

Shortly after starting full time ministry work, I began to meet some remarkable servants of God – people who actually FOLLOWED, and actually DID what I had been reading about all my life in God’s Word. These were men and women of God who took their faith beyond the four walls and were actually DOING something, instead of just being “spectator Christians.” These people were DIFFERENT. And you could tell that from the moment you met them. Yet these people were also spurned and ostracized by most churches – some so badly that they had left the Institutional Church and had never returned, because, as they found out, the Spirit had departed those places. God was no longer there, and hadn’t been in quite some time.

But let me tell you a story about one man I have come to greatly admire. Truly, he is a modern-day hero of the faith. His name is Rusty Thomas, and he is the head of an organization called Operation Save America, or “OSA,” based in Texas. Their mission is to ABOLISH abortion – not just regulate it. Not to just incrementally curtail it. But rather, to ABOLISH it altogether, for it is the most heinous crime against our own children, bringing what the Bible calls

“Blood Guiltiness” down upon our nation. Rusty also leads the Kingdom Leadership Institute, training up the young people of our next generation to be bold, courageous servant leaders for the Kingdom of God.

I first learned of Rusty and OSA in the summer of 2017. They were holding their annual national gathering in Louisville, Kentucky, and I followed their mission trip to Louisville via live videos on Facebook. There, I saw hundreds of committed Christians – all part of the OSA team, from all over America – who had come together to take part in the national event. The mission was to shine the light of truth on the darkness and evil of the abortion industry at the last remaining surgical abortion center in Kentucky.

Entire families had committed to a week-long mission trip (many far from home) to stand up and speak the truth about this evil – and share the GOSPEL of JESUS CHRIST to the lost and perishing on the streets of Louisville. Whole families, spending their summer “vacation” time doing something SUBSTANTIAL for the Lord. Yes, I was impressed. This was no mere “vain religion.”

I was further impressed at the mercy and grace the OSA team members showed to even those who attacked them – sometimes physically. And when the Spirit of the Lord fell upon the young people at this gathering, the young people rose up – without any prompting by their parents, and began preaching, praying, praising and worshiping all on their own. This became even MORE significant when these young people were assaulted by a large group of satanists who had come to curse and attack them. Some of these kids were literally trembling in fear, yet they stood their ground for Christ. Instead of fleeing, and instead of cursing back, they knelt and offered up genuine, tearful prayers for the satanists, even as those evil ones were screaming perverted profanities at them.

Afterwards, during the church service that followed, Rusty was

asked by one young man if he could be baptized... and Rusty did not leave that baptismal pool until three hours later, as one young person after another committed their lives to Christ and left the dirt and filth of their former worldly lives in that pool. Among those being baptized that day was his 15-year-old son, Jeremiah, whose life was DRAMATICALLY TRANSFORMED that day, in that place. As he came up out of the water, he beat his chest in triumph – a NEW CREATURE, transformed by the Holy Spirit of Christ.

I was further impressed as I watched the videos coming out of Louisville, when Rusty and a few others, determined to save the lives of God's precious little ones, sat down, peacefully, in front of the door of the abortion center. Yes, blocking that doorway – to the very gates of hell. Let me describe the picture for you: HUNDREDS of committed Christian families gathering to worship, praise, preach the Gospel and stand in the gap for the most helpless among us. Dozens of young people, POWERFULLY MOVED by the Holy Spirit to pray for those who were cursing them. And a few brave men and women willing to risk arrest and jail time in order to save the lives of precious babies.

Coach Dave Daubenmire got on the PA system and gave a message to the police officers that were present. He pointed out the STARK CONTRAST between the satanists, who continued to violently curse and swear and scream profanities at these young children – and the young children on their knees, crying out to the Lord for the souls of those who were cursing them. And he asked the police, *"What do you see here? You see the kingdom of darkness on one side, and the kingdom of light on the other. Who or what do you want ruling in America today?"* THIS was REAL Christianity. Not vain religion. And I never saw it portrayed so beautifully ever before in my life.

And then Rusty and those sitting peacefully and praying in front of the doors to the killing center were arrested and hauled off to jail. They were found not guilty in the local

court – but they still face years of jail time in federal prison, for PEACEFULLY praying and standing in intercession for babies about to be murdered. And so the police, instead of arresting the murderers, arrested those trying to stop the killing. Such is the state of lawlessness in America today.

When OSA held their regional event in Indiana last November, my wife and I joined them and it was an honor to meet Rusty in person and all those who are part of OSA. This past March, I invited Rusty to speak at our annual Ministry Expo and Conference in Wisconsin, and he graciously accepted. He gave the most passionate, tearful message, pleading for Christians to WAKE UP and SEE what 45 years of child murder has done to our nation. Two weeks later, Rusty called to ask me to speak at this year's national OSA gathering in Indiana this past July, and it was an honor to be among those wonderful speakers and those faithful, true servants of Christ that week.



But a week after he called me, life for the Thomas family changed forever. Their son, Jeremiah, who was baptized in Louisville, and who was now FULLY committed to Christ like no young person I'd ever known, had been having pains in his chest... in the same exact spot where he "beat" his chest after rising from the

baptismal pool. Jeremiah was a "star" player on his high school football team, and they all thought it was just a minor football injury... But they went to see the doctor. And then

they learned it was NOT just a minor injury. It turned out to be a rare form of bone cancer that attacks teenagers, and Jeremiah had it.

The doctors gave the prognosis: only 10% of those with this type of cancer survive. The doctors said there was really nothing they could do for him. The Thomas' sought alternative and natural treatments, and then chemotherapy, and some of these treatments seemed to be helping. Jeremiah boldly preached the sermon on Easter Sunday at his church. But then, he lost his ability to walk, and with that, his dream of ever playing football again. His response? *"It's ok. I'll just preach from my wheelchair!"*

And preach he did – every chance he got, Jeremiah and several other young people from OSA had been out on the street preaching the Word of God at every opportunity since that incredible transformation in Louisville 8 months earlier. The cancer didn't stop him. In fact, it only emboldened him, and Jeremiah was determined that whether he lived or died, he would spend the rest of his life serving the Lord with everything he had. And so he did.

When the Make a Wish Foundation heard about Jeremiah, they offered him anything he wanted. He could have gone to Disneyland. He could have met a celebrity. He could have taken the "trip of a lifetime." But Jeremiah's wish was different. He wanted to speak to the Governor of Texas to ask that he abolish abortion in that state. The Make a Wish Foundation couldn't make that happen. But GOD could. Governor Abbott called Jeremiah on the phone and the two had a long conversation; Jeremiah, just waking from sleep and heavily medicated, was remarkably articulate as he spoke with the governor. And the governor promised to make Jeremiah's wish come true. *"Your wish is granted,"* he said, promising to make abolition of abortion a priority in the next legislative session in Texas.

Over the next several months, Jeremiah's story went world-wide. Literally hundreds of thousands of Christians around the globe were praying for him. And Jeremiah continued to preach out on the streets as often as he could, pressing on, even through tremendous pain, and paralyzed from the chest down.

Meanwhile, the curses of the God-haters continued. He received thousands of hateful comments on social media and elsewhere, wishing him dead, bidding "good riddance," and even callously calling his situation a "late term abortion." But Jeremiah responded in love, asking, *"How can I pray for you?"* Such grace, such maturity, such selflessness... I have never seen before – not in any adult, and certainly not in any 16-year-old young man. Truly, he WAS filled with the Holy Spirit, and his story touched more hearts and lives in a few months than any I've ever known – and his legacy is one that will likely remain unmatched by anyone in my lifetime.

On the evening of August 25th, I was wakened in the middle of the night and prompted to pray for Jeremiah, as I had been doing for months. But this night was different. This night, I later learned, I was just one of thousands who had been wakened also – joining in an all-night vigil. And then the next evening, we got word that Jeremiah had completed the race, and he finished it well. My wife and I attended his funeral in Texas this past weekend. What a tremendous outpouring of love and what a celebration of a life well lived, by a courageous young man, for his Savior. Truly, he lived by one of his Dad's favorite Scriptures found in Revelation 12: *"And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony and loving not their own lives, even unto death."*

Near the end of the funeral service, Rusty took the podium and called all the young people in attendance forward. He charged them with the duty to pick up where Jeremiah had left off. To put away the frivolous things of this world, pick up the baton

and continue running the race. To dedicate their lives to serving their Savior. And later he made sure they understood: *"Jeremiah is not to become an 'idol,' but he IS to be an example"* of a good and faithful servant. He has now entered in to the joy of His Lord. Jeremiah and the other young people of OSA give me hope for the next generation. You see, it's not about "playing church" once a week. It's about a life transformed. You can have that too, if you want it. Time does not permit me to share more here, but you can find out PLENTY MORE online, as his story is one that has literally touched MILLIONS world wide.

Rusty will be joining us again back here in Wisconsin for an event we are calling **"CHURCH ARISE, OPERATION SAVE WISCONSIN,"** – in Marshfield October 17 and 18 and in Milwaukee October 19 and 20. I encourage you to come and meet Rusty and our other great speakers, and learn more about how YOU, too, can be a part of something bigger, living your life and running the race well as a good and faithful servant to your Savior. Call me for more details.

Audio CDs and transcripts of this message are available when you call me at (715) 486-8066 or email Rob@WisconsinChristianNews.com. Ask for message number 234.

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