

Charlyne Cares

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AVOIDING SPIRITUAL BLOWOUTS

*"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." **Hebrews 12:2-3***

A few weeks ago, just prior to an out of state trip, I took our van to be serviced. You might know the feeling when the service manager seeks you out and shares those dreaded words, "You need tires." When he explained that we "might" be able to get a few thousand more miles out of the old ones without any problem, I envisioned sitting alongside an Interstate highway, cars whizzing by, while Charlyne and I waited for someone to change the tire on a one ton van.

While I waited for new tires to be mounted, I thought that sitting by the roadside was not the worse thing that could happen. A front tire could have blown out, causing us to leave the road or roll over. Either or both of us could be killed, because I pushed the old tires to the limit.

It breaks our hearts that Christian men and women are having spiritual blowouts every day, simply because they neglected the things which their journey with Jesus Christ rides upon.

Our Nation is abuzz with the news that another major church leader has suffered a spiritual blowout, disabling him by the road of life. Please allow me to remind you that your soul is just as valuable to God as is that man's. He does not want either of you to have a spiritual blowout.

The world we are now living in has values all confused. A religious leader falls, and the media is interviewing everyone who ever knew that person. We have yet to hear the first stern face anchorperson reporting, "Jill Smith, a stander, went out on a date with another man Saturday night and did not come home until Sunday morning. We have reporters looking for answers, but we are able to confirm that Jill did not attend church on Sunday. Stay tuned here for breaking news on this story of another fallen stander."

Even though it is not reported, we can assure you that standers have spiritual blowouts much more often than politicians and preachers. Anyone who falls into sin breaks the heart of God.

"It's different, because they are so important," someone is thinking. How do you know what God has planned for you and your spouse five years or fifty years from now? You might become the parents of someone like Billy Graham or Fanny Crosby, the author of thousands of the hymns we sing. It might be the will of God to give you a future pulpit to the world, if you can avoid spiritual blowouts. In addition, your circle of influence today is certain to extend far beyond what you can see. People are watching to see how you handle your marriage crisis. Please do not disappoint them by having a spiritual blowout.

How can spiritual blowouts be avoided. Just as I did with the van's tires, maintenance is needed before a blowout takes place.

Tire experts tell us that to keep our tires in the best possible condition, we need to keep them inflated to the proper pressure, as over time tires tend to lose a small amount of air. The same can be said of the Christian

life. A one-time salvation experience, where you confessed your sin and asked Jesus to forgive them, will not maintain your spiritual walk.

We need to consider church worship as the time when we allow God to put His pressure gauge on us, as we hear biblical preaching, and apply it to our lives, to determine how we are measuring up. If not done, someone will be going spiritually flat or suffering a spiritual blowout.

The garage where our auto work is done will check tire pressure any time a customer stops by. If a tire is low, they will air it up. Sadly, few customers take advantage of the offer until they have a flat. It is also sad that not all Christians show up to have God check their spiritual tires.

Just as a garage uses a hose to get tires inflated correctly, God uses our prayer time, (time spent in His presence), and time spent in the Bible to keep our spiritual walk inflated.

I suspect that every parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle, have had the experience of attempting to blow up a child's ball or toy by mouth. It looks so easy, but we can blow until the face turns purple and we are out of breath, and little progress has been made. A trip to an air pump blows up the toy in a few seconds. Time spent in God's presence is like a trip to His spiritual air pump.

Good tires also require proper balance. If not, the vehicle can shudder and shake. Likewise, every Christian (and every stander) also needs to be properly balanced. We have known standers to become so fixated on one issue that they ignore the rest of their spiritual journey. Sadly, some men and women allow their stand for marriage restoration to become their focus. They keep their eyes on their spouse and not of Jesus. All the talk is about what their spouse has done, not about what Jesus is doing.

Good alignment is also critical to maintaining good tires. Have you ever followed a car that was so far out of alignment that it almost seemed to be going down the road sideways? In living the Christian life successfully, it is important that we each personally be aligned with the Word of God, living every moment by God's direction. Alignment also helps to avoid spiritual blowouts.

When tires are purchased, the store might offer a road hazard warranty. In the event you damage a tire because of some obstacle you struck, the warranty will replace the tire. God also offers us a warranty against damage to our soul, caused by sin. Regardless of what you have done, during your marriage or during your stand, when you confess and repent, He is ready to forgive you.

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." **Romans 3:23-24***

If we go on a 2,000 mile trip, and everything is fine until we have a blowout a mile from home, our tires failed us. Our goal was to finish well by arriving home safely.

Many a religious leader, and many a stander, have run the spiritual race with excellence, but they had a blowout before arriving at their eternal home, Heaven. If Jill had been standing for Jack for ten years, and then had a blowout, God's will is not accomplished in that marriage. We know of some many man and women who ran well, but allowed the Enemy to come in, by some small way, causing a blowout before they reached home. A race not finished well has not been run.

There's one more thing about tires. Unless you are riding a unicycle, tires function in multiples. I could have bought one tire, but left the other three in danger of a blowout. That would not have helped much. Nevertheless, there are people who attempt to walk through the Christian Life alone. They are not active in a church, nor do they have a personal prayer partner in whom they can confide; someone who will agree with them for the Lord to meet their needs. These Lone Ranger Christians are setting themselves up for a spiritual blowout.

One week ago, I introduced myself to a new woman at Rejoice Pompano. I asked what city she was from, thinking she would name some place here in South Florida. Instead, she replied, "Houston, Texas." This serious stander was so hungry for what was happening here on Monday nights that she had flown in Monday afternoon, reserved a hotel room at The Forum, where we meet, and was flying home Tuesday morning. On the other extreme, there are standers living only a few miles from The Forum who have a different excuse every week why they cannot come to Bible Study. Which stander do you suspect will finish well and which is at risk of a blowout?

Please understand there is nothing spectacular about Rejoice Pompano. It is simply a small group of men and women getting together to worship God together and to hear Charlyne teach from God's Word, to pray together for marriages, and to fellowship together. Charlyne and I are "airing up the tires" for those who attend so that they can stand strong with Jesus, and avoid a spiritual blowout.

Charlyne's recent audio teaching, *"18 Hindrances To Your Prayers,"* could have been named *"18 Ways To Avoid A Spiritual Blowout."* The same things that hinder our prayers, when ignored, can also cause a stander's spiritual blowout.

Religious leaders who are headed for spiritual blowouts are the first to know of their own approaching problems. They do not suddenly wake up one day and say, *"Good morning, Lord. Think I will sin today."* Satan has planted a seed of sin in their unprotected head. Given time, that seed will be fertilized by a lack of attention to the things of God. It will go from head to heart to hand, where they act upon it, and have a spiritual blowout.

Standers who are destined for spiritual blowouts also are the first to recognize what is happening. They become too busy for time alone with God. Hours at the computer, or on the phone, chatting with others, becomes their spiritual time. Their values start to slide ever so slightly. Maybe coffee with the opposite sex isn't so bad, or the wedding band comes off. They go from reading the Bible to reading of worldly magazines with no thought. Secular television replaces the praise music that once filled their home. They have a stack of unopened mail from Ministries. Left unchecked, casual dating with a male friend starts. Eventually, thoughts of their stand are only a memory. Their former spouse, for whom they once prayed so fervently, can literally go to Hell.

We praise God that He is the AAA service for spiritual blowouts. Regardless of how spiritually disabled you may feel today, once you call on Him and repent, (change your ways), He will soon have you traveling the Christian highway, the road to restoration, once again.

Our goal is to see you traveling the highway of life, arm in arm with Jesus, moving every day toward a marriage restored by Him. It must be healed in His way, and in His time so that it will last. Charlyne and I are thankful that He has called us to help you to keep your spiritual tires in good shape, so that you will see victory, not end up in a ditch with a spiritual blowout.

"For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones." Proverbs 2:6-8

Making the journey with you,
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