

11-01-2011 KEEPING THE FAITH

In tough times, when things are consistently going against you, KEEPING THE FAITH is difficult. It is also most essential at these junctures. I'm Ken Trahan & Welcome to Walking in the Word with Williams Blvd. Baptist Church.

Many songs come to mind with this topic. Bon Jovi's "KEEP THE FAITH" said this: "You know you're gonna live through the rain. Lord you got to KEEP THE FAITH. Don't let your love turn to hate. Lord, we got to KEEP THE FAITH!"

Mary Chapin Carpenter's "KEEPING THE FAITH" said, "KEEPING THE FAITH everyday, keep KEEPING THE FAITH. All the style, all the money, all the power you can buy. Won't do nothing if there's something missing way down deep inside."

Even Michael Jackson opined about KEEPING THE FAITH: "The power's in believing, so give yourself a chance. KEEP THE FAITH." It doesn't get any tougher to KEEP THE FAITH than when you lose a child. In 2008, Maria Sue Chapman left this earth at the age of five. She was the daughter of Contemporary Christian Music Superstar Stephen Curtis Chapman & Mary Beth Chapman.

Tragically, Maria Sue, who was one of three daughters the Chapman's adopted from China, was struck & killed in the driveway of the Chapman home by a vehicle driven by her teenage brother. Maria Sue had just graduated from pre-school. Ironically, the Chapman family was hours away from a graduation party for son Caleb. They had just celebrated the engagement of daughter Emily.

The agony & the ecstasy of life....This reminds me of November of 1989. On November 21, 1989, my grandmother, Frances Barracco, passed away. Three days later, our beautiful daughter, Sabrina, was born. My late mother said it was God's way—one life ends, another begins, from darkness to light.

Why this family which formed an adoption ministry? Why this man who has touched many lives for Jesus? At the memorial service, the Chapman's raised their arms, singing songs of worship & sought comfort in their faith. "We spoke with Maria about what it meant to be with Jesus. I had no idea how soon it was going to be, but we know she is in His amazing house, playing in the water," said Stephen.

KEEPING THE FAITH....Why do these things happen? In Isaiah 55:8-9, there is this: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. For as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, & My thoughts than your thoughts."

God's ways are unknown to us. In tough times, we must take comfort in Psalm 27:13-14: "I would have lost heart, unless I believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, & He shall strengthen your heart. Wait on the Lord!"

Joshua 1:6 says, "be strong & of good courage." Psalm 46:10 adds, "be still & know that He is God." Ironically, Chapman's latest hit, Cinderella, is about watching his daughter, Emily grow up. It is beautiful. He will not see Maria Sue grow up but he trusts she is with Jesus & that he will see her again.

In his hit, "Miracle of the Moment," Chapman captures KEEPING THE FAITH & of his daughter's loss: "It's time for letting go. We are who & where & what we are for now, & this is the only moment we can do anything about. So breathe it in & breathe it out, listen to your heartbeat. There's a wonder in the here & now, it's right there in front of you. & I don't want you to miss the miracle of the moment."

There's only one who knows what's really out there waiting in all the moments yet to be. & all we need to know is He's out there waiting. To him the future's history & He has given us a treasure called right now. & this is the only moment we can do anything about & if it brings you tears, then taste them as they fall & let them soften your heart. & if it brings you laughter, then throw your head back, & let it go, let it go, you gotta' let it go. Listen to your heartbeat."

There is only One who knows. All things to a purpose until Heaven, Ecclesiastes 3. Stop trying to make sense of it. One day we will understand how KEEPING THE FAITH produces the greatest Miracle of the Moment we will ever know!

For a text copy, e-mail me @ kentrahan@aol.com & ask for KEEPING THE FAITH. For Pastor Tim Williams, thanks for joining us. I'm Ken Trahan. God bless you!