

Dear W.C.,

2/28/11

My husband and I are struggling to get by. We are in our 30's and have two young children. I have been unable to work due to illness. I have been battling breast cancer for several years. I have been through surgeries and chemo. I did not have health insurance. Since I was young I thought I would be fine without it. It was one more expense we couldn't afford even when both my husband and I were working full time. I tried to return to work but ended up back in the hospital. I receive disability. My husband's employer cut his hours due to the economy. He pleaded with him to work longer hours but they could not afford to pay him. We have fallen behind on our utilities and our car needs repairs. I will be trying to pay my medical bills off for years, if I live that long. My doctors are not very optimistic on my outcome and I have had to come to terms with not being able to beat this disease. I worry every day about being able to buy food, pay our rent and utilities, and leaving behind this financial mess for my husband and children.

Please help, I do not want to give up. It seems that everything is against me. First we lost our income, then we lost our home, my cancer came back, and the bill collectors for my medical expenses keep threatening us. We have no money left to give them. The shame and fear of having to live in our old car forces us to pay the rent, leaving us to struggle to put food on the table and we go without daily necessities. The doctors told me a long time ago, keeping positive would be good for my immune system. How can I keep positive in this recession that is affecting so many people? Recently, my Dr. told me I am losing my fight with cancer.

Please help me and my family! I need to know my children will not be poverty-stricken and homeless. That miracle will give me the peace I am praying for. I know there is not a government program that can help. After reading the Time is Now column for years, only all of you who help from your heart, can help my family.

Dear Readers,

I called this family. The woman on the phone asked me to please come as soon as possible. I arrived thirty minutes later at a small duplex. I went up the short flight of stairs and knocked on the front door.

After a few moments the door was opened by a very thin woman looking much older than the thirty year old woman I was expecting. I asked if she was the woman that had written the letter and she confirmed that she was who I was looking for. I was surprised and saddened. I

knew the illness and stress of poverty had made her age beyond her years. She was very pale, and her face was lined and drawn. She invited me inside and I followed her into a small dim living room. The shades were drawn and the room was cool. She explained she was struggling with headaches, fatigue, and nausea from her most recent treatment. I could see she had been lying on the couch with blankets before I arrived. I told her to please get comfortable so we could talk.

She told me about her cancer diagnosis. She said she never thought the lump in her breast would be that serious. She thought if she waited it would go away on its own. She had put off the biopsy and tests due to her lack of health insurance. By the time it was diagnosed it had already spread to her other breast and lymph nodes. She could not believe the turn her life had taken. Her husband and herself had both been employed at good jobs and had a loving marriage. Her children were her pride and joy as she pointed to various pictures of them on the walls. She explained they were at school.

We went over their financial burdens one by one. The duplex was a rental. They had already lost their home the previous year due to being unable to make their mortgage payments. Their second car had been repossessed due to nonpayment of car payments. They only needed one car now because the wife was no longer able to drive. She told me, on some days she was so weak, she needed help to get out of bed. She said today had been a good day and she felt it was because God wanted her strong for our visit. I thanked God for her strength.

She told me that their only car kept breaking down. The husband was working only 30 hours a week at eight dollars an hour; this was the only job he could find. His pay and her disability were not nearly enough to pay all their bills. The utilities had not been paid for two months. I asked if she minded if I took a look in their refrigerator and cabinets. She said to go ahead but warned me there was not much to see. I opened a very sparse refrigerator and nearly bare cabinets. She said her children had breakfast and lunch at school and that helped a lot. She said she had been fighting this disease for over three years and knew her time was nearly up. As she began to cry she said, "All I'm looking for is the peace of mind that my children will be fine." I tried to console her as my eyes filled with tears. She looked up and said, "Please don't cry for me. Just help me to get my family in order before I am gone."

I went over the budget and offered some suggestions. I excused myself and went shopping for food to fill their cupboards and refrigerator. Before I returned I called a very gracious and God loving couple, telling them of the situation. When I returned to the apartment the husband was home from work and the children were also home. They helped me fill the cupboards and refrigerator. The children were all excited seeing all the food. I could see the father hiding his swollen, reddened eyes from the children. We visited for quite some time.

The children were very sweet and loving to their mother. The father was very loving to his children and I could see his heart was breaking with so much love for his sick wife. After seeing this loving family together and feeling their struggle. I knew in my heart this was the right people we had to help.

I told them, I knew a couple that had told me they had an extra house and if I found a worthy family that was having a financial hard time they could live in the house indefinitely. The couple with the house had told me, they had been blessed and had been led by God to give back. The woman could not believe someone would help them in that way. We talked for almost an hour as the woman broke down in tears and repeatedly asked, "Are you sure?" We finally came to the happy conclusion that God had put the right pieces of the puzzle, of life, together. By this time the mother and father were crying happy tears. The children kept asking the mother what was happening. The mother hugged her children, telling them, in between her tears, everything is great and God heard our prayers.

It took two weeks to complete the move. Everyone met several times. The well-to-do couple, felt so good about filling their extra empty house, they also cried and thanked God. In all my years of helping, this is the first time a fellow creation, a fellow American did something like this. I cannot express my gratitude enough to this couple, who have been blessed, and pause to bless others. Due to their generosity the family was now able to focus on caring for the mother without the constant stress of poverty. The Time Is Now to Help supplied them with some much needed household necessities. We had their older car repaired as we wanted them to have a reliable vehicle.

I thank all of you for all that you do in making The Time is Now to Help able to fill the desperate needs of those suffering in the pains of poverty. God bless all of you!!!

At this time, we have been blessed by the Summertime Foundation with a \$5000 matching grant. For every dollar you donate another dollar will be matched. Please help us help our fellow Americans.

*Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C.*

**Please Help:** Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 70, Pell Lake, WI 53157. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing exactly what every penny of your donation provided for the poverty stricken.

**A Very Special Thank You:** Summertime Foundation, Michael & Sue Borden, Rebuild & Restore LLC, Sylvester & Virginia Seick, Martin O'Brien, Shawn & Donna

McLafferty, Dennis Frederick, John & Susan Piala, Bernard Gilding, James & Janice Batten, William & Kimberly Basford, Gerald & Marilyn Wilkin, Susan Russella, Steve & Betty Thornton, James & Karen Goodrick, David & Teri Bahl, Sidney Johnson, Mark & Jackie Hagedorn, Michael & Barbara Lakin, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, and all the God loving volunteers of all our caring food pantries, ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262)249-7000.

**Memorials:** Michael Luttrupp in memory of Anne Luttrupp. Stephen & Janet Rostkowski and G.W. Niegelsen in memory of Anne Luttrupp. Alverda Riese in memory of Keith Tiffany.

**We Desperately Need Cars:** Please donate a used car to help our fellow American's get to work and other daily necessities.

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