

## God's strength made perfect in my weakness

On this 'Remembrance Sunday 2018,' I want to pay tribute to all those who gave, and continue to give their lives, so that we can live in peace today. Among those who fought in 'The Second World War,' were both my grandfathers:

- Colonel Lennox Pusinelli  
and
- Major Christopher Mayhew

My paternal grandfather, • Major Christopher Mayhew saw first-hand the horrors of 'Belsen,' a Nazi concentration camp based in Bergen, Germany. I am only discovering now, in these days, just how awful their experiences have been, in the war. I can only imagine how traumatic it must have been.

Many soldiers, today, in war, experience post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, as a result of going through the atrocities of war. I know that PTSD is an experience many had in response to living with and through 'The First World War,' which has its centenary to celebrate the end of that war, this year.

All war is traumatic for those who live through it. The only way I can relate to 'war,' in a wider context, having never lived through a 'world war' myself, is to realise that my own difficulties with mental health issues are my own 'personal war.'

The difficulties I have begun in 1997, when I was sixteen. I went on an expedition to Uganda, East Africa. I was instructed by my doctor to take an anti-malarial drug called 'Lariam,' which has been documented in the press as being used to treat soldiers going to war in areas where malaria could be contracted. In the media, it has been reported that soldiers have had psychoses, anxiety and depression, as a result of taking 'Lariam.'

I am here today to tell you of my experiences of psychosis, anxiety and depression which I believe God allowed to happen so that I could endure it, trusting in Jesus, pointing the way for others to find peace and hope in Jesus. I believe that God allows us to suffer in order to develop our character, so that we can overcome it, for his glory and through his grace.

I returned from Uganda with clinical depression. I was prescribed 'seroxat,' an anti-depressant at the age of sixteen. I began to improve, during my A-level course, however when I told my GP that I felt better, they suggested that I came off 'seroxat,'

A psychosis followed.

I believe in Jesus, and have done since I gave my life to him in 1989 at a Billy Graham Mission relay at Newcastle City Hall. My psychosis was a delusion that Jesus' return was imminent. I believed that Mitford Vicarage garden was the 'Garden of Eden,' and that I had direct revelation from God that 'The Second Coming' was in 1999.

I am standing here today with a current diagnosis of schizo-affective disorder, (Bi-Polar Type), which means that I have a propensity to suffer from;

- Hallucinations
- Delusions
- Paranoia
- Anxiety
- Mania or Elation
- Depression

Currently I suffer with occasional depression, paranoia and anxiety as well as elation.

The reason I speak today is to tell you that if you are suffering with any of these symptoms, God is:

‘Capable and able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine.’

(Ephesians 3:20)

I can testify to this truth, today.

I have been hopeless and lost, traumatised and in dark places in my life.

Jesus has given me hope and peace, and has transformed my darkness into his glorious light. He alone has given me:

‘Life in all its fullness.’

(John 10:10)

One of the ‘dark places’ I have been to is ‘depression.’ If you feel depressed today, know that you’re not alone.

‘Jesus wept’ in ‘The Garden of Gethsemane’ before he died on the cross, (John 11:35).

‘Jesus wept’ is a famous verse in the King James’ version of the Bible because it is the shortest verse in that version of ‘The Bible.’ It is also one of the most significant verses in the Bible.

‘Jesus wept.’

He knew deepest sorrow. He was human, yet divine. He lived a life without sin, died on the cross and rose again, defeating sin and death!

Hallelujah!

If you’re feeling hopeless, know that God has given you:

‘A hope and a future,’ today.

(Jeremiah 16:6)

Standing here now, I believe that my schizo-affective disorder (bi-polar type) is a blessing from God.

It has meant that I have had to be fully reliant on God. Trusting, despite the pain and circumstantial evidence to the contrary, that he alone has the power to:

'Break Every Chain' of suffering.

If there is anything that still enslaves you, I pray now, in the name of Jesus that you are freed, Amen.

At 'The Second Coming':

'In the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord!'

The verse that was given to me, which this message is founded on, is 2 Corinthians 12:8-10:

'My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.'

To the glory of God!

Amen.

Nicola Mayhew