

Encouragement

Published by **Barnabas International** • PO Box 11211 • Rockford, IL 61126 • Volume V • No. 12 •
December 1991

LAREAU LINDQUIST, Founder

Good Morning Friend,

How are you handling your chains of affliction? More about that in a minute.

Several evenings ago I watched Joni Eareckson Tada give her testimony on a Billy Graham television program. I was deeply moved to watch her radiant face, to hear her victorious story, and to observe her sharing it all her confinement in her wheelchair. Most of us have heard her story her book her movie. Let me refresh your memory. As a teenager she was swimming with friends when she dove into shallow water at the Chesapeake Bay and immediately became a quadriplegic. And now several decades later God is using her in a world wide ministry to people with a variety of handicaps. I have heard her speak of her injury as a gift from God. I have heard her say that she would probably never have had this extensive and persuasive ministry without her injury. She has learned to serve God effectively *because of her handicap* and not *in spite of her handicap*.

Several days ago I received a brief note from Dave Dravecky, a former starting pitcher with the San Francisco Giants. He just recently finished his baseball career following a series of physical problems with his pitching arm. The conclusion came when doctors were forced to surgically remove his arm because of a spreading malignancy. His note said, *"Thank you for your recent expression of concern about my health. Please know that your support and prayers are very important to my family and me. Things are progressing according to God's timing for His plan. It is a blessing to feel the manifestation of His love through you."* God is now using and magnifying Dave's ministry in a powerful manner *because of his physical crisis*

Again, how are you handling your chains? In Philippians 1, Paul mentions his "chains" three times, referring to his prison experience. His chains were beyond his control. Paul did not choose his chains. He would probably have avoided them if possible. But repeatedly he speaks of the benefits, blessings, and open doors for ministry that came to him *because of his chains* (Philippians 1:14). Paul's overwhelming goal was to serve God. The issue of chains was incidental.

All of us have chains of one sort or another. Most of us have some kind of a handicap. It might not be the same kind of "chains". Yes OF YOUR CHAINS, there might be the beginning of a new chapter of effectiveness through your life and ministry.

How are you handling your chains? Too often quickly I see my chains as hindering my ministry my ministry even silencing my ministry.

Satan hopes that you will get discouraged with your chains and that you will “throw in the towel” bitter with God. God has a better idea. In your weakness, He can display His strength *your ministry could be maximized for His Glory.*

Be encouraged,
Lareau Lindquist