PROGRAM TRANSCRIPT

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WELCOME

Daniel Pawlus: Welcome to *30 Good Minutes*! We're happy you've joined us for this half-hour of reflection on faith. I'm Daniel Pawlus.

Lydia Talbot: And I'm Lydia Talbot. Our guest today is Lloyd Ogilvie, returning to *30 Good Minutes* after a long absence during his tenure as Chaplain of the United States Senate. He's going to speak to us about what he calls "the five dimensions of God's blessing."

Daniel Pawlus: We also welcome back Joy Rogers, who will be one of our regular commentators this season. Joy was a frequent guest on *30 Good Minutes* in the early 90s and recently returned to Chicago, where she is Provost of St. James Episcopal Cathedral.

Lydia Talbot: And we begin, as usual, with the story of a spiritual journey. Today we meet Kris & Ray Hallowell, proprietors of the Lakeview Funeral Home in Chicago. For two decades, Kris has led a grief support group to assist in the important steps of healing and acceptance after the death of a loved one. Let's watch.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Ray Hallowell: As a funeral home, we never thought it was our job to help people after the funeral. It was never done.

Kris Hallowell: Well, welcome everybody. Thanks for coming tonight.

Ray Hallowell: It was basically from my own family's need for grief recovery support that began it. Some twenty years ago, my sister died. And then a year and a half after that my brother died.

Kris Hallowell: We just had loss after loss after loss in about an eighteen month period. Our grief support group meets twice a month now on Monday night from 7 to 9 p.m. We've had some people that are very concerned about coming into a funeral home for a support group but we try to let them know that all will be well.

Donna: My name is Donna and my father died December 31st, 2006, and my mother died 25 years ago. And all my aunts and uncles have died except for one aunt.

Kris Hallowell: One time somebody asked me what do you do in your support group and I said, "We laugh, we cry and we share and talk."

Ray Hallowell: People that are grieving are not sick, they just need a safe atmosphere, a safe place to share their feelings and to be listened to.

Support group member: I thought that getting over my mother's death made me a champion of death and I could handle any other losses, but I've learned that that's not the case.

Kris Hallowell: We have exercises that we work on and that includes taking a look at misconceptions of grief.

Ray Hallowell: When you have a significant loss, you get better but you're never the same person again.

Kris Hallowell: The biggest death I ever had was the loss of my mom who was my co-facilitator for fifteen years of this group. When she died I had told her everything she needed to hear. The last thing I told her before she died was, "I love you, mom." And I know she heard me.

Ray Hallowell: I love you and goodbye.

Kris Hallowell: Ah, yes. And goodbye I think was the hardest word I ever said to her.

Ray Hallowell: This is where we all start to cry!

Kris Hallowell: We come together this morning to...

Ray Hallowell: Every year our memorial service is held in December.

Kris Hallowell: It's a community memorial service and we open it up to anybody who has lost a loved one whether we've served them or not.

Memorial participant: We light a candle in memory of those to whom we ourselves were privileged to give the precious gift of life.

Kris Hallowell: Everybody must grieve whether they are willing or not.

Ray Hallowell: if they try to stay busy and work, work, work, it's just delayed. And I fully believe that avoided grief or unresolved grief is hypertension, it can be cancer, it can be all kinds of things.

Kris Hallowell: You're saying goodbye to the physical person. That person will always be with you no matter what. As my mother's button said when she was at her funeral, "Always there."

SPEAKER INTRODUCTION

Daniel Pawlus: Lakeview Funeral Home has been a part of Chicago's Lakeview community

since 1927. For more information about the Hallowells' work, you can visit our web site at www.30goodminutes.org. Now, let me tell you about today's speaker.

Lloyd John Ogilvie began his ministry in 1957 as pastor of the Winnetka Presbyterian Church in Winnetka, Illinois. He made his first appearance on this program in 1963, and in 1972 accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, California, where he remained for over two decades. In 1995 he was appointed the 61st Chaplain of the United States Senate, a position he held for eight years. Lloyd is the author of more than 50 books, including "Conversation With God" and "Praying Through the Tough Times." We are honored to have Dr. Lloyd Ogilvie return to *30 Good Minutes*. Welcome, Lloyd.

MESSAGE

Lloyd Ogilvie: Thank you, Daniel. And to you my friends in the television audience, I really pray that our time together today will be like a conversation between two friends.

God loves you! He always has and he always will. And right now, he wants to bless you. So my message today is really a benediction, a "good word," a blessing especially for you.

When I think of the challenges and opportunities you face, I long to share an inspiring benediction to help you expect and pray for the Lord's very best for your future. I feel your hopes and hurts, your problems and perplexities because I have mine. We are one in needing a blessing from our Lord. And here is the essence of his presence in the five dynamic dimensions of how he wants to bless us.

"May the all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere- present Lord be with you: may He go before you to show you the way, behind you to protect you, beside you to befriend you, above you to watch over you, and within you to give you peace."

First of all, the Lord goes before us to show us the way. We don't need to be afraid of tomorrow; the Lord is already there. Isaiah affirmed this awesome assurance. And when he said, "The Lord will go before you," (Isaiah 52:12), you and I can move forward under the Lord's guidance, expectantly anticipating his direction for our lives.

The Lord knows us better than we know ourselves. The Psalmist realized this, "O Lord, You have searched me and known me...you understand my thoughts afar off"(Psalm 139: 1-2). The Lord knows what is best for us. His ultimate will is that we should experience his love and accept our status as his loved ones who are destined to live forever. He also wants us to enjoy an abundant life now, filled with his presence and power, and discover his individualized strategy for each of us.

Listen! The Lord whispers in our souls, "I have plans for you. I'll not allow anything to happen to you that will not bring you closer to me. Trust me. Don't be afraid of the future. I'm already there!"

Now let's claim the second part of this blessing. The Lord also goes behind us to be our rear guard to protect our backs. Again Isaiah helps us with a momentous promise: "The God of Israel

will be your rear guard" (Isaiah 52:12).

Often we hear the warning, "Watch your back!" It is at our backs that the enemies of life attack us by surprise. I find there are three enemies that sneak up behind us: hurting memories, troublesome people, and Satan himself. We need the Lord, our rear guard, to step in and proclaim, "That's enough! This is my beloved person. You'll not get by me in your harassing attacks!"

The Lord keeps at bay the spears of hurting memories with the shield of his power. Unresolved hurts from the past try to sneak up behind us and attack us with stabbing memories of what we have done that causes us remorse, or what others have done to us that makes us long for retaliation. Only the Lord, our rear guard, the healing power of the world, can heal the pain of the past. He can expunge from our minds our disturbing memories.

We also need protection from troublesome people. Our rear guard gives us discernment, x-ray vision, in order to be able to see what is causing their desire to undermine us—sometimes jealousy, competition, envy, anger. He holds our enemies at bay until we can receive his strength to love and forgive them in spite of their undermining strategies.

But our rear guard's most crucial defense is against the insidious influence of Satan, the force of evil in the world. The Lord has all power. Evil cannot resist the power of his name. He forms an impenetrable membrane between our souls and Satan's influence. "I am your rear guard. Do not be afraid!" he commands us.

Next, consider the third part of the blessing of the Lord's presence: he comes beside us in life's struggles. He takes us by the hand and reminds us that he will never leave nor forsake us. That's a good thing! Struggles are the stuff of life for most of us. Few of us ever consistently feel good about ourselves; we have times of insecurity and self-doubt, times when we lack self-esteem. Anxiety is a stranger to none of us. Fears and frustrations track us like angry dogs.

But not all our struggles are internal. We face difficult situations in our families, at work, and in the community. Progress is slow; conflict seems inevitable. But here's the good news: the Lord can turn our struggles into stepping stones. First, he helps us identify the struggle that is our deepest need. Second, he comes to us right now. Tell him all about that struggle. Now turn that struggle over to him completely. Leave the results to him. Third, instead of asking, "Lord, get me out of this!" dare to ask, "Lord, what do you want me to get out of this?" And fourth, praise the Lord that he can and will intervene and unleash unanticipated strength you never could have imagined. Be sure of this: when you least expect it, the Lord will break through with help—perfectly timed, magnificently suited to your needs.

All this is possible because of the next part of the blessing I want you to receive: may the Lord go above you to watch over you. Perhaps this is the most familiar image of the Lord's omnipresence. From his perspective he knows the past and the future, and can see what we need

in every moment. With watchful care, he arranges circumstances, deploys people who will be able to help us, he opens doors, and does what might seem impossible to us. Isn't that wonderful? He has you and me as the focus of his faithfulness!

The final phrase of my benediction is, "May the Lord go within you to give you peace." One of the greatest promises in the Bible is Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you." In the Hebrew text, there is not a word for perfect; the word *shalom*, peace, is repeated twice: "You will keep him in *shalom, shalom* whose mind is stayed on you." God's peace is total peace encompassing all dimensions of our thought, emotion, will and body, as well as our relationships and our responsibilities for justice. It is knowing we are loved and forgiven, that we have trusted the Lord with our needs, and have invited him to take up residence in our minds to think his thoughts and in our emotions to express his love.

This perfect peace is given to those whose mind is stayed on the Lord. But note the Hebrew word for "stayed," *samuk*, is a passive participle. The Lord stays our thinking on his grace and goodness. The result is that our mind, *yeser*, in Hebrew, "the constitution or tendency of the mind," is riveted on the Lord by the Lord himself. What a great assurance! You and I can live knowing that the Lord is not going to let us get him off our minds because we belong to him.

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27) When we invite the Lord to live in us, we experience the full-orbed power of his peace.

Well, there you have it, the essence of the Lord's presence: before, behind, beside, above and within you. He wants to bless you now!

CONVERSATION

Lydia Talbot: If you'd like a printed transcript, audio copy or DVD of the message you just heard from Lloyd Ogilvie, we'll tell you how to place an order at the end of the program. Or you can visit our website at 30goodminutes.org to watch the video and read the text anytime. Now, let's talk with Lloyd.

Lloyd Ogilvie: It's great to be here with you!

Lydia Talbot: Wonderful to have you back. Thank you for your remarkable gift of drawing us all into a profound and authentic spiritual moment. The way you distill the five dimensions of blessing, it's almost like, not only a benediction, but an assurance for us the way you presented it. How has that been a guiding assurance in your own personal life?

Lloyd Ogilvie: It was very early in my spiritual journey that I discovered these five dimensions and often I would experience one more than the other. But collectively, all five gave me the courage to press on. I've known ups and downs, mountain peaks and valleys, illness, loss of loved ones, caring for people in a congregation, the leadership of our nation, times when my

heart would ache over people, and I'd say, "Lord, help me!" And then I'd feel his presence saying, "This is the way. Follow me. Go in this direction. And I'm behind you as your rear guard. I'm going to hold off the enemy!" Then I'd hear, "Take my hand," and give me the assurance that he was there. Then I knew that somehow he was working everything together for the good. Then I would invite him to take up fresh residence in my being and then I could go on.

Daniel Pawlus: You've had such a fascinating career, Lloyd. I'd love for you to talk with us a little bit, share with our viewers, what—in your capacity with the Senate as the chaplain—you did on a daily basis. What does that role involve and how do you minister to the leaders of our country in that capacity?

Lloyd Ogilvie: It starts every morning with a prayer for the Senate. And you find out the night before the time the Senate's going to open, but you have to write your prayers so it can be submitted to the Congressional Record. So you have to give the prayer as it has been written. That certainly changed on 9/11, I'll tell you! But after the opening prayer I would have time to study and prepare for five major Bible studies which I had with the Senators, the Senator's spouses and with the chiefs of staff, and then, too, with the general staff of the Senate. Those five Bible studies became the objective content and input, the spiritual and intellectual input, into the pastoral caring that took place with individuals. Then after the noon hour when I'd have Bible study everyday, then I'd counsel in the afternoon. I made a list of the Senators and I would go to each one of their offices throughout the year and that gave me a personal contact. Then usually in the evening there was some state occasion where you had to give the opening prayer. So midnight you got home and were ready to start the next day!

But one of the most fascinating experiences was that I decided that I could not care for the Senators unless I prayed for them consistently. So I made up a list of all the Senators and I put down twenty for each day and five days of work, if my math is right, that's 100. And I would march around the Capital early in the morning every day and pray for those particular Senators on their day. Well, one day I was walking down the corridor of the Senate and one of the Senators who I would least expect to be impressed, had found out I had this list. He had asked to get it and he knew what day was his day. So here he was coming at me, and he said, "Chaplain! This is my day!"

Lydia Talbot: Lloyd, you've ministered to the business-professional world, families in the steel industry, Hollywood, Senators as well as elevator operators in the Senate when you were chaplain. In all of this what have been the greatest sources of ministry to you personally?

Lloyd Ogilvie: Well, I was pleased that in addition to teaching Senators, there were five of them who came to me and said, "We want to be your support group." And so we would meet every week for prayer and guidance. As a matter of fact, you know, I've never been without an accountability group. I've always had a few people in my parishes or wherever I've been with whom I could meet and study the Scriptures and pray and then be accountable. These *cinco amigos* in the Senate were wonderful friends!

Lydia Talbot: We just have 30 seconds, but you just spoke with Billy Graham. What did he say to you?

Lloyd Ogilvie: Well, he said that he was very thankful for all that God had done in him and through him. He misses Ruth, his wife, very much, who has graduated to heaven. And we read the Scriptures together. I read all of the Scriptures I knew were his favorites. But I looked down while I was reading and his lips were moving. He knew them all by memory.

Lydia Talbot: That's wonderful.

REFLECTION INTRODUCTION

Lydia Talbot: We turn now to another in our new series of reflections on the "Fruits of the Spirit." Today, Joy Rogers, Provost of St. James Episcopal Cathedral in Chicago, reflects on "peace."

REFLECTION

Joy Rogers: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; ...not peace, but a sword." A harsh note from Jesus as he journeys to Jerusalem. But a Risen Lord returns to say to his friends, "Peace be with you. My own Peace, I give you, not as the world gives." Jesus wields a cross shaped sword. It pierces the barriers between earth and heaven, between humanity and God, between sin and forgiveness, between death and life. The Peace of Christ pours through the tear in time, moving among us as power and passion, harder and heavier than mere serenity, more extravagant, more elusive, more poignant than simple contentment. Jesus' Peace comes as courage to stand fast in violent times, to stay free in the face of oppression, to stay open to love, to life, to others and to God in a turbulent world. Peace, not as the world gives.

CLOSING

Lydia Talbot: Thank you, Joy, and our thanks again to Lloyd Ogilvie, Kris & Ray Hallowell, and you for being with us today on *30 Good Minutes*. I'm Lydia Talbot.

Daniel Pawlus: And I'm Daniel Pawlus. As we go, I encourage you to visit our website at 30GoodMinutes.org for more information about today's program and an extensive collection of other messages, reflections, and stories to deepen your faith. Now, from all of us at *30 Good Minutes*, may peace be with you in the week ahead.