

Don't Miss the Obvious Needs

I love to eat out, don't you?

Nothing better than kicking back and enjoying the food someone else has prepared in pans that you don't have to scrub served on plates you don't have to wash and put away.

But I recently heard a story about a dining out near-tragedy that made me quiver in my boots.

My friend, Laura, attended a church-affiliated planning meeting of 15 people, including her husband and herself, at a local pancake house. The speaker stood at one of the clustered tables set for four and began speaking while the food was served.

Laura was seated at a table with her husband and another couple. My friend had only taken a couple of bites when she suddenly began choking. She struggled for the next 10 minutes, holding her throat (the universal sign for choking), keeling over, turning purple, gasping for air, gurgling, and coughing up food and water.

One of the people seated at her table was the group's trained "CPR" person, but he never noticed Laura's predicament. *He was her husband.* Although he was right across the table from her, he never saw or heard a thing.

As Laura choked, the speaker was standing right behind her and kept right on speaking as if nothing was wrong. In fact, for inexplicable reasons, only one person in the entire group saw what was happening to her. He later said he had never seen anyone go through something like that and it thoroughly upset him.

But he never tried to get anyone's attention while she was struggling.

I wonder if this thoroughly upset guy would've just apathetically sat by while she died right in front of him. Why on earth he never attempted the Heimlich—or alerted someone else to perform it—is a sad testimonial to the passivity of mankind. Or just plain laziness.

Laura's husband and the other attendees were stunned when they learned of her horrible experience right beneath their noses. Laura could find no explanation except Satan's wickedness as to why an entire roomful of Christians were somehow blinded to her "attack" and she had been kept in total isolation while suffering in plain sight.

Besides avoiding pancake houses, my takeaway from this story is that I vow to be more aware of those around me. I pray for Papa God to open my eyes to needs of others that should be evident ... if only I'm looking for them. Because I never, ever, *ever* want to be so blinded that I don't see someone suffering in plain sight.

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