

REVISTA * 2022

EVOLUTION
ALL





ONE
TWO
THREE
FOUR
FIVE
SIX

Beka
Jodie
Shian
Nick
Esther
Jacob

SEVEN
EIGHT
NINE
TEN
ELEVEN
TWELVE

Conny
Caroline
Ben D
Shian
Nic J
Barry



CONTENTS



ONE

BEKA

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead - since he was about 100 years old - and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.
Romans 4:18-21

I love this chunk of scripture and how much it calls us to have faith. Sometimes we are asking and believing for God to come through in an area of our lives but we have seen nothing. Sometimes we know God has promised us something but it can be discouraging if in the natural it looks impossible and unlikely. Abraham had every excuse to believe nothing was going to happen based on what it looked like from a human perspective. But he knew that God had promised him children, so despite how it looked from his perspective, he chose to believe God. I love that it says that he didn't waver in unbelief - he kept reminding himself to believe and have faith in the promise. He was strengthened in faith and he was fully persuaded and believed entirely that God had the power to do what He said He would.

Is there something in your life that you are believing God for? A promise He has given you, a dream in your heart, a desire that you know is from him? Are you tired of waiting for it and believing for it even though it looks impossible in the natural? Be encouraged today that God is faithful. I encourage you to lean in with faith like Abraham did; come back to being fully persuaded that God has the power to do it.

TRIO

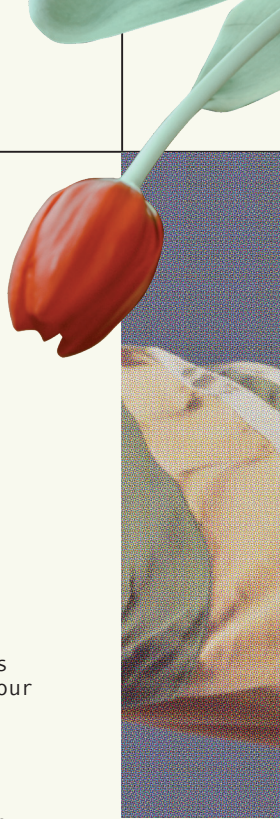
JODIE

Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.
Philippians 4:8

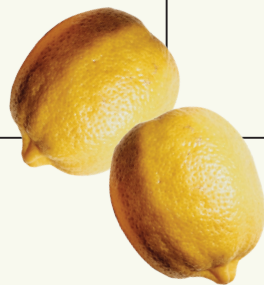
I love this scripture particularly in the message translation. Sometimes life is hectic and things can become really overwhelming. This verse is like a checklist for our minds. When our thoughts, emotions or circumstances are waging war within, it's good to stop and think about what we are thinking about.

Are our thoughts or feelings truthful? And we thinking about things that are honourable, pure, lovely and praiseworthy? If not, then we need to change what we are thinking and get back to the truth of the word of God and his promises for our life. When we do that our perspectives shifts and our feelings and thoughts come into line.

If you can use this scripture as a guide it will change your life.



THREE



SHIAN

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in you.
Isaiah 26:3



As Christians, our current circumstances and situations do not determine our peace. (Wow! controversial statement). But it's true... Jesus gave us everything: His life, His love, a restored relationship with Father God, the forgiveness of sin, His Holy Spirit, and His Peace. In John 14:27 Jesus said "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." Jesus gave us His perfect Peace, we have it, and it is the opposite of what we get from this world. So why don't we always feel at peace? Why do we often feel fearful, anxious, worried, attacked, hopeless, and depressed? It is because we live in a world that is against God and the things of God and there will always be troubles. But there is hope, for Jesus has overcome the world and the One who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4).

So now we could live in God's peace 24/7 if we wanted to. How? By keeping our minds constantly focussed on God and the things of God. Trusting Jesus and all the promises He has made to us. For He who promised is faithful. Jesus won't let you down.



FOUR



NICK

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2



This for me is my life verse, I love it. There are hero's of the faith in our church history and also in the Bible who have lived their life to following God. So like them let us do the same but knowing it isn't easy and it isn't a quick sprint, we've got a journey; a marathon, so let's lay asides sin or other things that are gonna distract us from our goal, following Jesus.

This is my life verse because for me I'm a goals oriented person, and I want to get them done as quickly as possible.

But the journey of our faith takes time, a journey that I can't rush growth in myself or with Jesus. So day by day, as I run the faith race I think what is gonna pull me away today, what today is gonna cause me to stumble or get me distracted?

What might that be for you today? Ask God to show you and ask him for help because he wants to run the race with you!



FINC

ESTHER

"The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs. I will put in the desert the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive. I will set junipers in the wasteland, the fir and the cypress together, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the Lord has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it." Isaiah 41:17-20.

These verses have encouraged me deeply throughout my life but especially during my time in youth ministry. I am reminded of the deep passion, love and desire God has for His people. I live in a lush neighbourhood surrounded by many tree-topped hills and valleys of springs. However, in the spiritual realm, I often feel like there is a dryness in my community. I love the relevance of the imagery dictated in these verses. I believe that Holy Spirit, given the opportunity, can transform my community and yours - from a wasteland to a place of beauty and life. He is a God of restoration, and a God who keeps His promises of restoration to us. He cares about those who are thirsty, desperate, poor and homeless - both physically and spiritually. It reminds me, despite external appearances, that everyone is desperate for a loving, good and just God. I often pray these verses over my community and use them to revive God's passion in my heart for His people.

What are you believing for him to restore & bring new life to in your life, family & community?

IX

JACOB

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Proverbs 4:23

Why is our heart so important? This verse isn't talking about our physical, blood pumping heart. It's actually talking about the center of who we are. From our heart comes the decisions we make, the thoughts we think, the words we say and the motivation behind all these things. So why do we need to guard our hearts?

Jesus makes it pretty clear why we should guard our hearts. In Matthew 15:17-18 he says "Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. But the words you speak come from the heart - that's what defiles you. For from the heart comes evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying and slander." That's some pretty crazy stuff! Our hearts need protecting! You may not have had a physical heart attack, but our hearts - the center of who we are - are always under attack. Every single person has something that tries to attack their heart, everyone has a weak spot. For some people it might be comparison, others it may be greed or jealousy, while for someone

else it may be sexual temptation. Everyone has a weak spot; you have weak spots and I have weak spots. But there's a strength to knowing your weak spot because you know where to be on guard! And just because something tries to attack your heart or you are tempted in an area doesn't mean that you've done something wrong, it's about how you respond to it! And the best way to respond is by going to Jesus. Jesus himself was tempted! He knows what it's like to have things try to attack your heart! But he always responded by going to the word of God and saying "it is written."

I'm believing that we will be a generation whose hearts are incorruptible! That no matter what tries to attack our hearts, nothing will corrupt our hearts because of how close we stay to Jesus.

So what areas of your heart need to be guarded? Ask God to help you know what areas in particular you need to guard yourself against. And what steps do you need to take to help guard your heart from those weak areas?





to be
fully
Known,
yet fully
Loved.

HOW TO

read your bible

S

scripture:
what did you read in the
bible?

O

observation:
what does it tell you about
who God is?

A

application:
how does that impact my
life with God?

P

prayer:
pray about it

HOW TO

talk to Jesus

P pause

wait for God to speak. praise can fit here too. come to God by first of all praising him for who he is.

R reflect

reflect on what is in your heart and mind. repent can fit here too - check your heart with God.

A ask

ask God for what is on your heart with boldness (Philippians 4:6)

Y yield

bring your heart back to the place of surrender as you trust him with the things in your life, trust that he knows best and surrender to his will and his good plan.

SEVEN

COXY

Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:30-31

I was 14 years old struggling with life, when I found this Bible verse on a little scrunched up piece of paper, stashed in a box under my bed... "Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:30-31) A couple of years earlier a kids ministry leader had given it to me and I'm sure she didn't have any idea how much of an impact it was going to have on my life! That verse at that time, made me realise that God might actually be able and even want to help me through the difficult time I was going through. Among other things, that verse led me to giving my life to Christ and it has continued to minister to me in different ways over the years since.

I used to think it meant if I was trusting God I wouldn't get tired or worn out - that was wrong! Even recently I found myself meditating on this scripture again in a busy, stressful season. It tells us 'EVEN youth will get tired and fall in exhaustion', BUT there is NEW STRENGTH, refreshing and renewal for those who 'trust/wait/hope in the Lord!' God doesn't want us to run on empty! Jesus gave His life on the cross for us, to be made whole and to be filled with the Holy Spirit! Day by day, week by week, year by year - let's make time to draw aside and wait, hope and trust in God - allowing Him to be entwined with every thought, every decision and action - that we might truly soar with Him!

EIGHT

CAROLINE

“Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”” Genesis 18:13-14

I love these underlined words; and they bring both a challenge and a promise to me. The challenge comes from my own thoughts (or maybe the lies that satan wants me to listen to) that sometimes say “Can I really trust God that nothing is too hard for Him? I’d that true for me and my situation?”

And then there’s the promise which for me comes because of two things. Firstly, I trust that God’s love letter to me (the Bible) is truth and is His instruction about how to live life for Him and with Him. And secondly, because I have experienced in my own life that nothing is too hard for Him. This verse that I love is from a story where God promises a child to a couple who was childless and now are way too old to have a baby!! This was a promise for the now and the future; for both Abraham and Sarah and also for the generations to come. Do you believe that in your life there is anything is too hard for the lord to step into? Why do you think we think that? Perhaps we don’t fully trust Him? Or perhaps we have only really given Him parts of our lives / dreams / thoughts / actions / activities. God’s heart is first and foremost to have a close and real relationship with you where you trust Him fully as Abraham did. Read the whole story - it shows that nothing is too hard for the lord... NOTHING. It shows us that as we take time to read His book, we get to understand His heart for us and for humanity, and we choose to get on board with His ways, then I believe we will see and experience that nothing is too hard for the Lord.

MIND

BEN D

Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

No one would have noticed the two small coppers coins. It was not big, it was not flashy, it wasn't even important in the scheme of things.

Yet to the widow, it was everything. For her, it was a struggle. Can you imagine what it would be like to stand at the offering box and give everything you have? Not knowing where your next meal would come from, not knowing how you were going to make it. I imagine that God was challenging her to trust Him and not base her decisions on her circumstances.

In the same way, God is challenging us to trust him in every circumstances. Sometimes what we are going through feels mundane and normal. Yet sometimes it feels like being faithful will cost everything and we can't see how things are going to work out. In all circumstances,

we have to trust that our sustained faithfulness will produce fruit, even if we don't see or understand.

I don't think the widow understood how her faithfulness had an eternal impact. To her knowledge, no one saw, and no one probably cared. Yet generation upon generation of believers have been impacted by her faithfulness. Undoubtedly there have been those who have read her story and decided to give everything, trusting in God and not their circumstances.

God sees you. He sees your circumstances and he's not surprised. He isn't calling for you to have the biggest, or flashiest gift. He is calling you to sustained faithfulness. Stop trying to control the circumstances and step out in faith. It is in that faithfulness that God is going to bare fruits for generations to come.

SHIAN

Put on all the armour that God gives, so you can defend yourself against the devil's tricks. 12We are not fighting against humans. We are fighting against forces and authorities and against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world.
Ephesians 6:11-12

The Devil is real. Yea, a real loser, a defeated enemy with nothing better to do than to lie, steal, and trick you into walking away from your relationship with God. You see, when we believe in Jesus, His Holy Spirit comes to live with our spirit, and by faith, we become spiritually alive. We are dead to sin, dead to the culture of this world, and have a new eternal home in Heaven. We become spiritual beings. Now, as spiritual beings, we are automatically involved in a spiritual battle. The battle against Light versus Dark. (Spoiler alert Light has already won).

This verse in Ephesians teaches us that we are not fighting against humans. But our fight is in the spiritual realm, against spiritual enemies, and we fight with spiritual weapons. That's right, the rude people around us and bullies are not our enemies. Jesus showed us clearly that we are to love everyone and pray for them. Hey, that's one of the spiritual weapons God has given us, prayer. When we are confident in knowing who we are, we know our true identity is found in Jesus alone. Then, we can unleash a force of authoritative prayers that can change our circumstances and bring God's victory and light into every area of our lives and the lives of those around us.

A prayer to get you started: "I am a child of God, I am loved. I have a purpose to shine God's Light. Jesus, help me understand more about Your Bible and Your life, so I can walk in victory every day of my life changing the world around me and standing against the darkness. In Jesus name, amen."

ELEVEN

NIC J

Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! The Sovereign Lord is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights. Habakkuk 3:17-19 (NLT)

Sometimes life sucks. How good would it be if putting our faith in Jesus meant that everything just 'worked out' for us, all the time? Unfortunately, even as a Christian, throughout your life there are going to be times where your faith in God is pushed to its limit because of the circumstances you find yourself in. These circumstances may make you feel as though God isn't there, isn't helping, doesn't care or isn't good.

These circumstances may be things like a fallout with a friend, loss of a loved one, a break-up, medical conditions or mental health struggles which are hampering you, a family member or friend, divorce impacting your family, persistent bullying or rejection - But there can be many, many more as well.

Perhaps you are going through a circumstance right now - today even - that is making you feel this way... You feel like saying "God, what the *swear words* are you doing?!" (let's be honest).

In 2008 I was diagnosed with moderate/severe Crohn's Disease - an incurable illness which impacts the digestive system and can cause many complications throughout life. By December 2009 I became so unwell that I was unable to properly finish off my year 11 schooling, and my future looked bleak. I was getting closer and closer to being bed-ridden by the day; I couldn't keep any food down, I had no energy, and was in near-constant pain and discomfort. Being a Christian who believes in God's miraculous power, I had hoped I'd be healed, but I'd only gotten worse. I had many "God, where are you?! God, what are you doing?!" moments. I've still not been healed.

I'd love to tell you that I read the Bible and it fixed everything. It didn't. And if you're going through something right now you, too, will know it is difficult to have hope in God in those times. Sometimes it even feels impossible. How could God do this? How could He let this happen to me and my family/friends? However, whilst nothing I write here can make circumstances like those you're facing 'better', I can say that I found great encouragement in God's Word when dealing with my own pain and suffering. I still do! Especially that God can handle my emotions! Yep, He can handle my anger, my disappointment, my frustration, my bitterness, and any other emotions I may have towards Him in the season I'm facing. I do not need to hide them - and neither do you.

What's all this got to do with the verse above? Well, the prophet Habakkuk (great name) wrote at a time when the enemies of his nation (Israel) were thriving, whilst Israel languished. It was a really difficult

time to be alive. He was incredibly angry and frustrated at God!

For the first 2 chapters of the Book of Habakkuk, the prophet essentially argues with God - "Why is this happening God? What are you doing?! This doesn't seem right!" (I'm paraphrasing, of course)... Sound familiar? Maybe you're feeling the same right now.

What I love about Habakkuk is that despite all these issues and struggles, in chapter 3 he circles back around and chooses to praise, despite the unsolvable problem before him. I would summarise Habakkuk 3:17-19 like this:

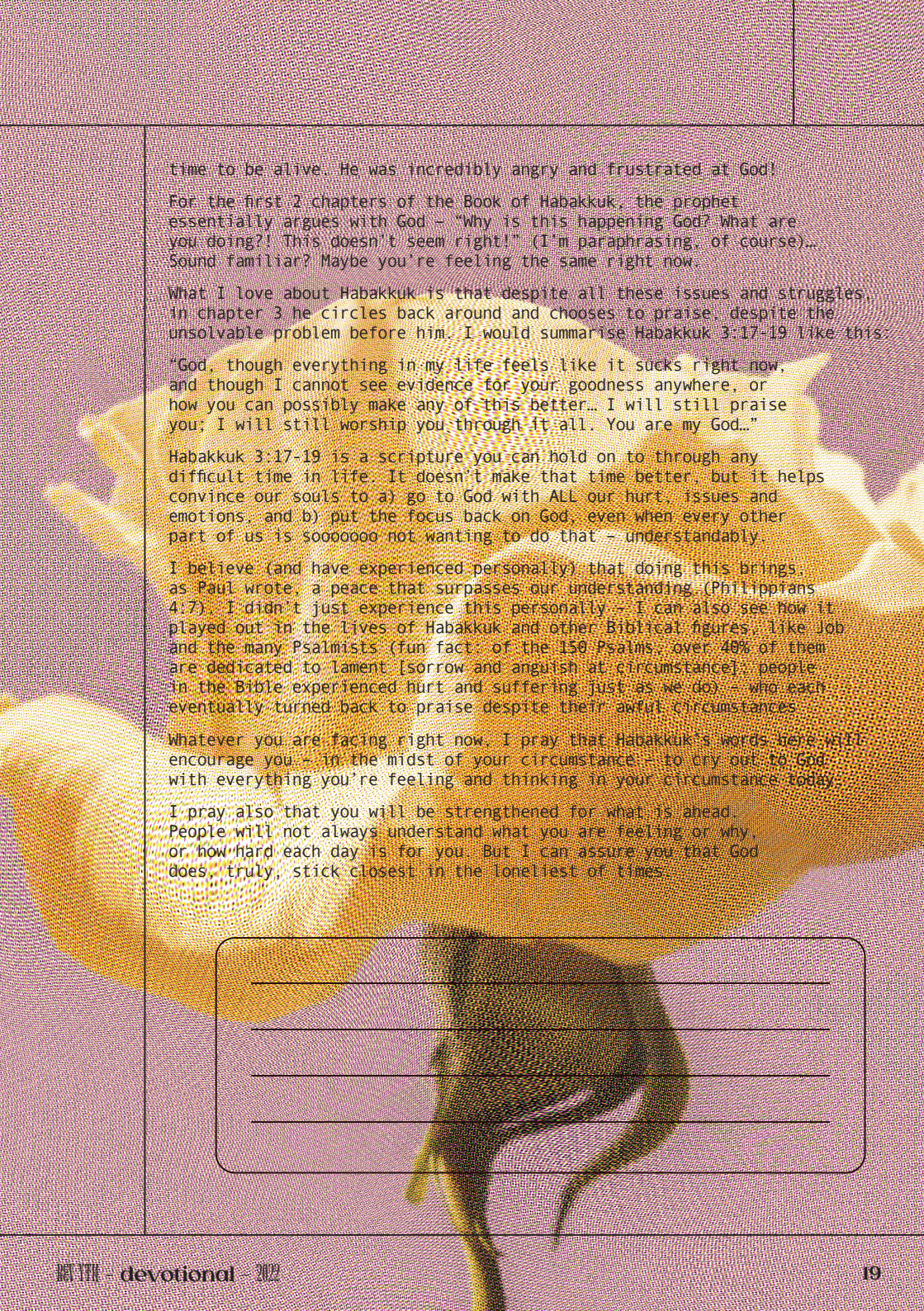
"God, though everything in my life feels like it sucks right now, and though I cannot see evidence for your goodness anywhere, or how you can possibly make any of this better... I will still praise you; I will still worship you through it all. You are my God..."

Habakkuk 3:17-19 is a scripture you can hold on to through any difficult time in life. It doesn't make that time better, but it helps convince our souls to a) go to God with ALL our hurt, issues and emotions, and b) put the focus back on God, even when every other part of us is soooooo not wanting to do that - understandably.

I believe (and have experienced personally) that doing this brings, as Paul wrote, a peace that surpasses our understanding (Philippians 4:7). I didn't just experience this personally - I can also see how it played out in the lives of Habakkuk and other Biblical figures, like Job and the many Psalmists (fun fact: of the 150 Psalms, over 40% of them are dedicated to lament [sorrow and anguish at circumstance]; people in the Bible experienced hurt and suffering just as we do - who each eventually turned back to praise despite their awful circumstances).

Whatever you are facing right now, I pray that Habakkuk's words here will encourage you - in the midst of your circumstance - to cry out to God with everything you're feeling and thinking in your circumstance today.

I pray also that you will be strengthened for what is ahead. People will not always understand what you are feeling or why, or how hard each day is for you. But I can assure you that God does, truly, stick closest in the loneliest of times.



A large, faint, stylized illustration of a person with their arms raised in prayer, serving as a background for the text. The person is depicted in a dark, textured style against a lighter, textured background.

WELLS

BARRY SILVERBACK

Whatever you find to do with your hands, do it with all your might, because there is neither work nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave, the place where you will eventually go. Ecclesiastes 9:10

Here is probably the most significant verse that has guided me all my years from my early beginnings after coming to Christ in November 1958, In Geelong Victoria Australia.

For me this verse meant and still does today, that I should never say no when asked to do something for God regardless of the feeling or circumstances, and in those early beginnings as a Christian I was nervous, uncertain, hesitant because it was entering into the “unknown” for me.

But I had made a commitment to God as result of this one Scripture that I would always respond to what ever task was asked of me.

And, even if I felt disappointed with myself because I felt I didn't do a good job, I still needed to remain being available regardless of how felt - simply because I made that commitment to the Lord.

Being urged to be faithful to that promise I made to God to always be available helped me deal with failure, disappointment, discouragement, hurt, offence and often being misunderstood. I had to go on regardless- I could not have a personal “pity party” in the corner somewhere, etc.

This verse meant that I should always be available at anytime and anywhere to do any job asked of me. It also meant that my hands referred to my work - what I do for God. It meant



“finding” work - looking for things to be done, maintaining an attitude of being observant to see what needed to be done and taking the initiative and doing it. Finding work not hiding from it, eagerly waiting to see what else I might be asked to do. It meant having and maintain a good work ethic, regardless of the circumstances or personal feelings.

Also, I understood that this verse states that I only have this life in which to love, serve, and worship God.

The famous Indian Apostle, Sadhu Sundar Singh said: “We only have this life to carry the cross of Jesus.”

Sadhu Sundar Singh was an Indian Christian missionary. He is believed to have died in the foothills of the Himalayas in 1929. Born 3rd September 1889, Ludhiana, India - Died 1929, Himalayas.

It is only this life that we have the amazing opportunity and privilege to live fully for God taking every opportunity at our disposal because there is no work or praise or planning in the grave.

This is the verse that has had a significant bearing on my life until now.

Blessings,

Pastor Barry Silverback



Four horizontal lines for writing, enclosed in a rounded rectangular box.

NOTES

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CITY & YA
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REV YTH - devotional - 2022